

Monday Message from President Walker



Bennington College - Laura Walker <president@bennington.edu>

Mon, May 17, 2021



BENNINGTON COLLEGE

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Dear Bennington community,

Happy Monday, Bennington. I am grateful today for the lovely weather and for the chance to hear from many of you last week at the Town Hall. We discussed a number of tough topics and I received useful feedback that will inform our path forward. I can assure you that there will be more opportunities like that one in the coming months.

COVID-19 Update

- We currently have NO cases of COVID-19 within the Bennington community!
- If you have not yet [signed up for vaccination](#), please make an appointment as soon as possible.
- For students who are fully vaccinated and haven't yet submitted verification, please [fill out this form](#) and see the [FAQ for Students page](#) if you have questions.
- Staff and faculty who have been vaccinated are encouraged to upload proof of vaccination to [ADP](#).
- As you may know, the CDC and State of Vermont relaxed their [guidelines](#) for vaccinated people last week. While we heartily agree that getting everyone vaccinated is the surest path to normalcy, we have not changed any of our campus policies at this time. **Please continue to mask up if you are inside, regardless of your vaccination status.**

Announcing the Career Launch Program

- I am thrilled to announce that Bennington has partnered with the Career Launch Program to provide direct training to students who may not have connections in the workforce. It's an opportunity for 25 students to learn to effectively communicate with professionals, land informational interviews, use referrals, and find rich internship opportunities.
- Upon completion of the program, Bennington will help match participating students with paid opportunities from hand-selected employers that match their skills and experience.
- In the latest [episode](#) of Career Convos, Career Counselor Jocelyn Salcedo '18 speaks with Partner & Director of Impact Marieli Rubio about the program, professional relationships, and how to boost confidence.

Soup's On!

- Yoko Inoue's Make Kitchen Communal Practicum class has been nourishing this community from the Student Center kitchen this term by providing delicious free soups weekly for essential/on-campus staff, made entirely from scratch with local ingredients.
- We can all support this incredible work by [purchasing tickets for soup](#) this week. The fundraiser runs from Tuesday, May 18 through Thursday, May 20 or until the tickets run out.
- The project aims to support students who will remain on campus who are unable to return home this summer due to the prolonged travel restrictions and other challenges prompted by Covid-19.
- All proceeds go to the student-led CSA initiative for them to enhance direct relationships with local, small-scale, sustainable farms by purchasing their fresh vegetables, meat and dairy products throughout the summer and to continue meaningful dialog about local foodscape, consumer awareness, nutrition and affordable food access.
- There will be 28 varieties of delicious soup, including vegan options, bone stock and foraged ingredients.

Art for Access

- Just a reminder that the next Art for Access [online auction](#) commences on June 2 at 11:00 am and [registration](#) is open.

- The auction consists of contemporary art donated by Mary Bucksbaum Scanlan '91 from her late mother's collection to benefit Bennington's [Art for Access](#) program.
- About 250 works will be available for sale in various forms including prints, drawings, paintings, and sculpture. There will be a range of price points.
- 100% of the proceeds will go to Bennington scholarships.

Celebrating Senior Accomplishments

- As we gear up for Commencement festivities, join us in celebrating the accomplishments of the Class of 2021.
- The opening for the [Senior Show in Visual Arts](#) is Tuesday, May 18 from 6:30-9:00 pm. The Senior Show features projects in a range of media by graduating students in the Visual Arts. Works are installed in Usdan Gallery, as well as other campus locations, including the landscape.
- On Thursday, May 20 from 6:00-7:00 pm at Crossett Library, a [reception](#) will be held to celebrate Senior Theses and Projects. Due to COVID-19 limitations, attendance is limited to the seniors who have submitted theses and projects being honored and members of the faculty. Faculty member Andrew McIntyre will deliver remarks.
- Will Shepard '21, Ben Watson '21, and Ariel Mora '21 will present their [Advanced Works in Science and Mathematics](#) over Zoom on Friday, May 21 from 12:30-1:30 pm.
- Join us for an [Animation Showing](#), featuring work by graduating seniors and other Animation class students, on Friday, May 21 from 9:00-10:00 pm on VAPA Lawn. Projection will be outdoors on the west-facing wall of Margot Tenny.

Support and Solidarity

- I want to acknowledge that the level of global unrest in the world is exceptionally high today and many in our community are directly affected by it. From violence in Gaza to the devastating COVID-19 crisis in India and anti-Asian hate crimes in the U.S., there are real challenges before us.
- If students need additional support in these final weeks of term, please don't hesitate to [reach out](#).
- More generally, remember to check in with your friends and colleagues in this especially busy phase of the academic calendar, and take care of yourselves right now. We are a community first and we have to look out for one another.

And finally, I appreciated the opportunity to talk further with students about our Commencement speaker, Darren Walker, at last week's Town Hall. I am pleased to share that Darren will meet with seniors on Friday afternoon, May 28, before graduation; you can expect more details from us in the coming days.

Thank you and have a great week,

Laura Walker
President