

Bennington Bulletin

Bennington College -
Communications <communications@bennington.edu>

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PM

Dear students, welcome to the Bulletin!

The Bennington Bulletin is a weekly e-newsletter for faculty and staff, put together by the Communications Office. It includes stories about our students, alumni, faculty, and staff, as well as announcements and events.

In the interest of making sure everyone has access to the same information, the College is expanding the Bulletin's audience to now include students. If you want to submit stories to the Bulletin about your academic, Field Work Term, or personal projects, [please let us know](#).

We will also plan to share any non-urgent updates about the College's COVID-19 response in the announcement section below.

Please also continue to check the following channels:

- **College Week**—will continue to share ways to engage, now remotely. Student Life has transitioned College Week to electronic delivery. It will remain weekly, but will be shifting to a Wednesday delivery beginning April 15, to allow more up to date information about weekend events. Please [email your submissions](#) by Mondays beginning April 13.
- **Academic Minute**
- **Faculty Notes**

Works on Display

Alexander Terjak Wall '20 is the recipient of a Juror's Choice Award for his piece *Periscope Mask*, which is included in the Saratoga Arts 120° Intercollegiate Regional Exhibition. Works by Sebenele Ndlangamandla '21, Ella Stewart '22, James McBride '20, and Matthias Mann '20 are also featured in the exhibition, [viewable online](#).

One Thousand and One Songs

Komitas Museum-Institute [published](#) the second volume of *One Thousand and One Songs*, which is devoted to Armenian folk dance-songs. Songs in this volume are accompanied by paintings from Nare Harutyunyan '20, who painted them as part of her Field Work Term internship at KMI.

Writers at Work

Muse [interviewed](#) Natalie Warther MFA '21 of 72andSunny Los Angeles about her experience working from home. *The Believer* [interviewed](#) Nicolette Polek '15, author of the short story collection *Imaginary Museums*.

Scholarship for Poets

Bennington Writing Seminars is [pleased to announce](#) that Jessica R. Fischhoff is the recipient of the Donald Hall Scholarship for Poets. She will begin her studies in June 2020.

Updates from the COVID Task Force

Health updates and advice from Dr. Randy:

- Health and psychological services remain available to students on campus and in neighboring states via telehealth, and in-person for medical issues as needed.
- While we have not had a test-confirmed campus-related case of COVID-19 to date, we continue to work under the assumption that we eventually will, and remain on high alert with dogged efforts to “flatten the curve” so that we will be best poised to manage when that day comes.
- Case counts for COVID-19 continue to rise in VT, but some recent models have made reassuring predictions regarding the ability of the health care system to meet demand.
- I continue to collaborate with other Vermont college health directors and Dr. Mark Levine, the Commissioner of Health in weekly meetings where information, best practices, and resources are shared.

Connecting

We are all learning how to connect and be together in this new remote environment. Keep an eye out for new programming and initiatives—both social and academic—designed to support the Bennington community even as we find ourselves in different places.

Campus Access

For the health and safety of everyone, all faculty and staff who are working remotely must submit a request using the [access campus form](#) if they need to visit campus for any reason.

Technology updates

- The IT@Bennington team would like to remind the faculty and staff that you can [check your Bennington Voice Mail remotely](#).
- There has recently been significant media focus on the issue of security in online meeting spaces, particularly with Zoom. The IT@Bennington team has put together

materials outlining strategies to harden yourself as a target against "Zoom-Bombers," which is available in [Appendix N](#) of the [Remote Instruction Technology Support document](#).

COVID-19 Relief Fund

The College has launched a [COVID-19 Relief Fund](#). This emergency fund will allow us to offset some of the costs associated with this crisis, including providing modest grants to our highest need students to help defray unexpected costs they have incurred related to COVID-19 costs, such as internet access for remote learning and food insecurity for students not living on campus. Eligible students received an email last Friday directing them to a simple application to apply for a COVID-19 Relief Fund grant. We recognize that this will not address the needs of all students but we must first focus on the most critical needs the fund can support at this time.

Masks

Vermont Health Commissioner Mark Levine announced a recommendation that everyone wear face masks in public. Specifically, the recommendation states people should wear cloth face masks, not medical-grade masks, which should be saved for health care workers. We are sharing information on how you can make your own. Here are instructions for making a mask [without sewing](#) and instructions for [sewing a mask](#).

Update on campus employment

The Office of Career Development and Field Work Term—in partnership with staff, faculty, CAPA, and leaders from SEPC and the International Student Task Force—is pleased to announce that we have sourced remote job openings to supply work for nearly all 335 students with work allocations who applied for continued work. Half of these openings represent new types of work and community volunteer opportunities—and thanks are due to faculty and staff who have responded quickly and creatively to source these new types of work. To support equity, students were limited to one job and priority was granted to students with high levels of need. Questions can be addressed to campusjobs@bennington.edu.

Update on Financial Aid

The Financial Aid office is working with those families experiencing financial hardship due to the coronavirus and employment interruptions. We encourage students to [complete their aid application](#) for the coming 2020-2021 academic year by the April 15 deadline, but refrain from submitting appeals until the full scope of the disruption can be assessed.

Updates from Dining

Meal pick-up for students remaining on campus now takes place in Roz's Cafe, and the experience is more shopping-as-you-go. In addition to the typical menu offerings, Roz's is stocked with additional offerings like pre-cooked rice and beans, packaged tofu, sandwiches,

hot coffee, hot soups, individual containers of milk, cream cheese, etc.— all available for students to come get what they need to cook or reheat at home.

Staff Departure

Matt Rizzo, Vice President for Institutional Advancement, will be moving on from Bennington at the end of the fiscal year. Matt has accepted a position at Dartmouth College as their Vice President for Presidential Initiatives and Principal Giving, a leadership team role that will allow Matt to be closer to his home in Middlebury. We wish Matt well and are sad to see him go, but know that he is leaving the College having accomplished much, with the campaign well underway and a strong team in place to continue our momentum and carry this important work forward. We will be working to determine interim leadership of the advancement program; more to come on this soon.

Call for FYF Workshops—Fall 2020

First-Year Forum is a 1 credit fall and spring term course that all first-year students are required to take. It is made up of two core components, including an hour long weekly workshop led by faculty, staff, or upper class students on campus. These workshops give students an opportunity to access campus support, meet faculty, staff, and more advanced students, and explore interests and try new things. If you have an idea for a FYF workshop that you would like to offer for the Fall 2020 term, please complete [this Google Form](#) by **Friday, April 17**. If you have questions or concerns you can email [Kate Child](#) to talk through the FYF workshop structure. We would love to hear from you and hear your ideas. Please note that space to offer FYF workshops is limited, especially in the spring term.

Retirement Planning-Virtual Counseling Sessions

The College is offering confidential, one-on-one virtual counseling sessions to assist all employees with retirement planning. TIAA, the College's retirement plan provider, is offering virtual individual counseling sessions on **Thursday, April 23**. A session can assist you with such questions as: Are my investments properly allocated? Am I on track to meet my retirement goals? How and from where do I draw retirement income? To register, [visit the website](#) and click "Meet at Work", or contact TIAA directly at 800-732-8353 (Monday-Friday, 8:00 am-8:00 pm). Please register by Monday, April 20. Please note that TIAA also offers a host of [online retirement-planning tools](#).

Nominations Open for Elizabeth Coleman Visionary Leadership Award

Nominations for the 2020 Elizabeth Coleman Visionary Leadership Award are open through **April 10**. Nominate a classmate, mentor, colleague, or Bennington College community member for this annual honor, established by the parents of a Bennington College graduate.

Spring 2020

Event Series

[Check out the series happening this term.](#)

April 8
Remote
12:00-1:00 PM

Vinyasa Flow Yoga (via Zoom)

FACULTY AND STAFF | All staff and faculty are invited to remotely attend a flow yoga class via Zoom with Tracey Forest. See Calendar Event for information. [More](#).

April 9
Tishman Lecture Hall
7:00–8:30 PM

CANCELED—Woodworth Lecture: A Smarter World Will Need Safer, Smarter Computing Platforms

CANCELED | This previously scheduled event has been canceled. [More](#).

April 10
Meyer Rec Barn
12:30-1:15 PM

CANCELED—BollyX—The Bollywood Workout

CANCELED | This previously scheduled event has been canceled. [More](#).

April 10
Dickinson 232
1:00-2:00 PM

CANCELED—The Cloud as a Hosting Infrastructure for IoT Intelligence

CANCELED | This previously scheduled event has been canceled. [More](#).

[Submit Bulletin announcement](#) (deadline: by end of day Thursdays)

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