

From the Hill

With Vaccine, Fall Could Approach Normalcy



BRIGHTER DAYS AHEAD:
Students on the Ag Quad
this spring semester

In early April, Cornell announced that students returning to the Ithaca, Geneva, and Cornell Tech campuses for the fall 2021 semester must be vaccinated against COVID-19—making it one of the first universities nationwide to require the shot. “Medical and religious exemptions will be accommodated,” President Martha Pollack and Provost Michael Kotlikoff said in a statement, “but the expectation will be that our campuses and classrooms will overwhelmingly consist of vaccinated individuals, greatly reducing the risk of infection for all.” As they explained, those who can’t access the vaccine prior to arriving on campus, or whose vaccination is not recognized by New York State, will be expected to receive it soon after arrival, a process that the University will facilitate. “Although we all appreciate that the COVID-19 pandemic is not over and that we must remain vigilant around public health measures to protect ourselves and our community,” they said, “there is reason to be hopeful as we plan for the future.”

Pollack and Kotlikoff also outlined a three-tiered plan for instruction this fall; which version is implemented will depend on the vaccination rate within the campus community. Officials are aiming for herd immunity, which would allow for in-person classes without regular online options. If the rate is above 50 percent but has not reached herd immunity as defined by public health officials, classes will still be held in person, but with enhanced safety measures including mask wearing, special seating, additional ventilation, and surveillance testing. And if the rate is below 50 percent—a situation that the University considers unlikely—“we will begin the semester in de-densified

classrooms, with a mix of instruction modes similar to the current semester, until critical thresholds have been met,” they said. “Once sufficient herd immunity is reached, we will fully institute in-person classroom instruction across all campuses.”

During spring 2021, the University’s efforts at containing the virus have been largely successful, with the alert level rising from green (“new normal”) to yellow (“low to moderate risk”) only twice, for roughly two weeks each. The largest disruption came in late March, when—in the midst of the second yellow alert—the MBA program temporarily went entirely virtual due to a COVID outbreak traced to gatherings for St. Patrick’s Day.

Tuition Sees Smallest Rise in Decades

The Board of Trustees has set tuition for 2021–22, with an increase of 2.9 percent over current rates—the smallest hike that the University’s endowed side has seen in more than half a century. Before financial aid, undergrads in the endowed colleges and out-of-staters in the statutory (or “contract”) colleges will pay \$60,286, while New York residents in the statutory schools—CALS, Human Ecology, and ILR—will pay \$40,382. In announcing the rates, the University noted that for the 2022 fiscal year, it will continue to meet the full financial needs of all undergrads, regardless of economic uncertainties caused by the pandemic. “We knew that this was potentially a crisis with a two- or three-year tail,” said Jonathan Burdick, vice provost for enrollment. “So we’re ready in the coming year to continue to meet need. And if more need is identified, we are committed to matching it.”



'Atkinson Hall' Will Rise on the Hill

A new multidisciplinary academic building is set to be built on Tower Road, housing research in such areas as sustainability, public health, cancer biology, immunology, and computational biology. Made possible through a \$30 million gift from David Atkinson '60 and Patricia Atkinson, the four-story, 90,000-square-foot structure (seen above in a rendering) will be located adjacent to Rice and Bruckner halls, overlooking Cornell Botanic Gardens. It will include space for the existing Cornell Atkinson Center for Sustainability (for which the Atkinsons provided a naming gift of \$80 million in 2010) as well as several new initiatives including a master of public health program and an immunology center. The building will be designed by Texas-based Lake Flato Architects, recently named the nation's top firm by *Architect* magazine.

'Touchdown confirmed.'

— NASA engineer **Swati Mohan '04**, announcing from mission control that the rover *Perseverance* had landed safely on the surface of Mars

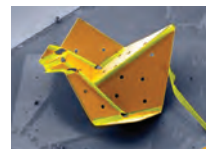


Wrestling Legend Headed to Olympics

Kyle Dake '13, a two-time world champion wrestler and Big Red phenom, has qualified for his first Olympic Games. In this spring's Olympic trials, the Ithaca-area native defeated a fellow world champion—2012 Olympic gold medalist Jordan Burroughs—in the men's freestyle seventy-four-kilogram finals to represent the U.S. in the postponed Tokyo games, to be held this summer. Dake (seen above after winning the 2018 World Championship in Budapest, Hungary) made Big Red history by winning titles each of his four years on the Hill—in four different weight classes. His Olympic appearance will mark the first by a former Cornell wrestler in nearly six decades.

R + D

To show how atomically thin materials can form themselves into 3D objects, two CU physicists have created the world's smallest self-folding origami bird (right), measuring just 60 microns wide.

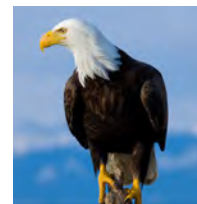


Female veterinarians earn less than their male counterparts, researchers in the Vet college have found—with an annual difference of around \$100,000 among the top quarter of salaries.



Isolation has profound effects on the brains of paper wasps (left). Researchers in neurobiology and behavior found that these social insects, who can recognize the faces of their peers, lose that ability when reared in solitude.

In a survey of more than 300 residents of Flint, Michigan, researchers from Cornell and the University of Michigan found that the city's water crisis is linked to widespread physical problems, including elevated lead levels and skin rashes, as well as mental health issues such as depression, anxiety, and PTSD.



Thanks in part to data from the Lab of Ornithology's eBird project, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service recently tallied 316,708 bald eagles (right) across the forty-eight contiguous states—quadruple the number noted in its previous survey a decade ago.

Ceremonies Planned for Class of '21

While this year's celebration of new graduates won't look like a typical Commencement, it will be held in person. In April, President Pollack announced that Schoellkopf Stadium will host the festivities for the Class of 2021 on Memorial Day Weekend—but to keep density low, a series of smaller ceremonies will be held instead of one large one, and only two guests per student will be allowed to attend. "We are considering a variety of formats, and final decisions will be informed by New York State guidance," she wrote, "but we will include elements of both our traditional stadium ceremony and new elements designed to highlight the very special nature of this year's event."

The ceremonies will honor undergrads and graduate and professional students in Ithaca-based programs who are completing degrees in May, or who did so in August or December 2020. Those who don't live locally will be offered accommodations in a residence hall free of charge. Family and friends can also view the ceremonies via livestream, and recordings will be made available afterward. Convocation, traditionally held the day prior to Commencement, will be fully virtual.

In her announcement, Pollack also detailed plans to honor the Class of 2020, which did not have a Commencement. They include a celebration on the Sunday of this year's Virtual Reunion; an in-person event for 2020 grads and their families in Ithaca during Homecoming 2021; and a "singular 5th Reunion" in 2025.



Ithaca Beer to Take CTB Spot

The corner restaurant space that serves as an informal gateway to Collegetown—long home to Collegetown Bagels (CTB)—will soon host another iconic local brand. Last summer, the building at the corner of College and Oak avenues that housed CTB and other businesses was demolished for redevelopment, and CTB relocated across the street. As of August, the new building (seen above in a rendering) is slated to host a second outpost of Ithaca Beer Company, offering a full-service restaurant as well as libations. It will continue the tradition of outdoor dining in the high-profile spot, with a smaller version of the popular beer garden and eatery at the company's headquarters off Route 13. Co-owned by Mari Rutz Mitchell '98, MS '03, Ithaca Beer has been in business for more than two decades, producing a variety of ales, lagers, and non-alcoholic sodas.

'We basically threw everything at the vaccine.'

— **Avery August**, professor of microbiology and immunology, describing the development process during a Q&A about the science of COVID-19 immunization

On Campus, Cannabis Is Off Limits

While New York State has legalized recreational marijuana for adults aged twenty-one and over, it will still not be permitted on the Hill. In April, University executive vice president and CFO Joanne DeStefano, MBA '98, issued a statement reminding the campus community that Cornell "is subject to federal laws that expressly prohibit the possession, use, or distribution of cannabis on University property or as part of University-sponsored events." Stated DeStefano: "The Drug-Free Schools and Communities Act and the Drug-Free Workplace Act both condition Cornell's receipt of all federal funding—including support for research and student financial aid—on the University's implementation of programs and policies to prohibit the use of any illegal drug."

Giving Day Tops \$10 Million

The seventh annual Giving Day—a twenty-four-hour fundraiser held in mid-March—raised a record-breaking \$10,040,921 to support Cornell students, programs, and research. More than 14,400 donors contributed, representing all fifty states plus Puerto Rico and Washington, D.C., as well as nearly eighty countries. The Athletics and Physical Education Annual Fund topped the leaderboard, with more than \$3.3 million from upwards of 5,000 donors.

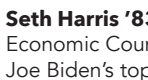
Give My Regards to . . . These Cornellians in the news



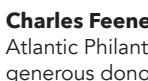
Composer **Roberto Sierra**, the Old Dominion Foundation Professor in the Humanities, and **J. Meejin Yoon, BArch '95** (left), dean of the College of Architecture, Art, and Planning, elected to the American Academy of Arts and Letters.



Alexander Chung '21, Anjan Mani '23, and Felipe Santamaria '23, who saved the life of a man who fell into Cayuga Lake's forty-degree water in March.



Seth Harris '83 (right), named to the National Economic Council, where he will serve as President Joe Biden's top labor adviser.



Charles Feeney '56, founding chairman of the Atlantic Philanthropies and the University's most generous donor, the inaugural recipient of its Charles F. Feeney '56 Lifetime Achievement Award for Entrepreneurship and Humanity, created "to honor successful entrepreneurs who have dedicated their lives to giving back."



Andrew Karolyi (left), named dean of the College of Business. He had been the acting dean since Kevin Hallock stepped down in March; he will now serve out Hallock's term, which ends June 30, 2024.





FUN WITH FRIENDS: The University offered a host of outdoor activities—from sports to games to arts and crafts—during March Wellness Days. The event was an alternative to Spring Break, which was not part of the campus calendar this year due to the need to discourage travel during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Welcoming the Class of 2025

In the midst of what Shawn Felton, Cornell's executive director of undergraduate admissions, calls "a year like no other" for college recruitment, the University admitted 5,836 students to the Class of 2025. They hail from forty-nine U.S. states (all but Wyoming) as well as Washington, D.C., Puerto Rico, the U.S. Virgin Islands, and Guam; based on citizenship, they represent 113 countries. About 34 percent self-identify as underrepresented minorities and 59 percent as students of color. With campus closed to visitors due to the pandemic, recruitment has been all virtual; those admitted received an invitation to join CUontheHill, an online hub where they can chat with current students, alumni, faculty, and staff.

Did You Know . . .



That a student foodie has more than two million followers on TikTok? Jeremy Scheck '22 (left), a double major in Spanish and Italian in the College of Arts & Sciences, creates wildly popular cooking lessons on the micro video platform. The videos—showcasing a wide variety of cuisines—are an offshoot of his food blog, scheckeats.com, which he started when he was a sophomore in high school.

TO COIN A PHRASE



The family of the late Neil Krieger '62 has launched a campaign to get "orbisculate"—a word he invented as a freshman—into the dictionary. What does it mean?

- a) Studying so long that you can't see straight
- b) Accidentally squeezing citrus juice into your eye
- c) Sharing a romantic kiss under a full moon
- d) Obsessively saving foil by rolling it into a ball

ANSWER: B

Dorms Honor Alums, Cayuga Nation



The names of three of the five dorms in the North Campus Residential Initiative were announced this spring. Two will honor alumni: Nobel Prize-winning scientist Barbara McClintock 1923, PhD 1927 (far left), and Chinese scholar and diplomat Hu Shih 1914 (above right). The third will be called Ganędagō: (pronounced Gah-NEN-dah-go)—the ancestral name for the land on which Cornell is built, in the language of the indigenous Cayuga Nation. The names of the other two dorms were unveiled last fall; they'll each honor late alumnae, Supreme Court Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg '54 and novelist Toni Morrison, MA '55.

PHOTOS: WELLNESS (3), LINDSAY FRANCE/UREL; SCHECK, TIKTOK; WORD, BUSINESS WIRE; MCCLINTOCK, NATIONAL LIBRARY OF MEDICINE; SHIH, CORNELL RARE AND MANUSCRIPT COLLECTIONS