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## The Grizzly, March 25, 2021

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## Fairytales on Campus

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Despite the past year of the lockdown being no fairytale, the cast of “Kissing the Witch” has brought fairytales to life with their latest production, which comes out March 25. They have worked tirelessly over the past few months to perform Emma Donoghue’s take on classic fairytales, such as “Beauty and the Beast”, and are “pumped,” as Elliot Cetinski ’24, assistant stage manager and props master, said, to have the show air Live on Main.

This performance will be the first live fully-costumed one Ursinus has put on since the pandemic hit last spring and the cast and crew could not be happier. As Olivia Cross ’24, the assistant customer, states, “I’ve worked in theatre for the past five years. To have the pandemic take that away -- I was thrilled to hear about an opportunity at Ursinus to do what I love.” Nothing has shaken

the Ursinus theatre department, which has been experimenting with everything this year in performances of all kinds, whether the radio plays of the autumn or “Poe on Poe” this semester.

When I attended one of the last rehearsals before the infamous “tech week,” I could feel the ex-

’24, Witch 2, told me that the play may be “definitely a different experience because of COVID” but they are still “excited because a lot of theatres aren’t doing anything.” It is an opportunity they are not taking for granted whatsoever. And after watching the first section of the show, neither am I.

For seniors like

“sad about it. Definitely, an exciting endeavor to do something so different than the other productions at Ursinus. No one was expecting this kind of experience to happen in college but interesting to see the progression from where I started at Ursinus College and ended,” She is “grateful to do any kind of

face is covered ... half of what you’re trying to emote, use for emotion.” But “it’s really good for focusing on body movements and voice and vocals.”

I do not think anyone can sum this all up better than Abby Behm ’24, the stage manager. “Honestly, the theatre has definitely had to adapt with COVID but that we can be in this space and still be producing art is one of the most important things for keeping theatre alive through a global pandemic. Just saying that is mindblowing. I know some people say technology makes things harder and that it’s killing theatre but honestly I think it’s the only thing keeping it alive (for Ursinus College theatre) and people safe.”



Image courtesy of Marie Skyes

citement buzzing in the air. When asked what she wished the audience to know before seeing the play, Julia Herrero ’21, who plays Rose, said, “it’s never what you expect (that seems spooky).” Later that rehearsal, Zara Tabackin ’23, Beast, and Emily Bradigan

Julia, this will be their final performance on Ursinus’ stage. For Donovan Erskine ’21, assistant stage manager, it “doesn’t feel like the last show” but “once we start showing it will feel kind of bittersweet.” Myla Haan ’21, Witch 1, feels the same way, saying that she feels

theatre my last year.”

Even so, with all plays, the productions come with problems, and this spring is no different. Ali Wolf ’23, Witch 3, says that it is “definitely an experience” to perform in a pandemic and it is “so much harder to do anything as an actor because half of your

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# Rumor Debunked: Upper Wismer will not be raising the price of a meal swipe!

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The verdict is in: Wismer has no plans to raise the cost of a meal swipe from the current price of eight dollars to twelve dollars.

Rumors circulating around campus have falsely claimed that Ursinus would be significantly increasing the cost of a meal. Students were upset: This move, if it were true, would empty dining accounts.

Gianna Speranza, who heard the rumor from a friend on the baseball team, said she felt relieved the rumor isn't true. Upon hearing the

rumor, she reports saying, "TWELVE DOLLARS!!! How am I gonna afford that?" Daniel Maloney said he heard the same rumor from his friend Max. "I am so relieved that it's not true. I was really worried I wouldn't have enough dining dollars to finish out the semester." The rumor also circulated through the Track and Field GroupMe, where it was met with anger and confusion. Many students complained that, as athletes, they already cannot afford to sustain their dietary needs.

When asked about the potential

impact of this rumored change, Maloney asserted that he would certainly be switching his dining plan for next year. Tyler Reilly and Speranza both said, if the rumor were true, they would not switch their meal plans to meal swipes, but would definitely start going to Lower Wismer instead of Upper Wismer. They also agreed that this change would cause some dietary issues as Lower Wismer is notorious for their chicken cheesesteaks and fries, while Upper Wismer is a better option for a balanced plate.

I asked Mike

Forstoffer, Director of Dining Services, if there was any change like this on the horizon. "There is no talk of the price being changed at this point," he stated. "Coming through the door, using dining dollars, Bear Bucks, credit cards, or cash, that rate has not changed." Forstoffer reported that he did not know how the rumor started, and that he had heard nothing of this prior to speaking with me.

This is good news for Ursinus students, who are already on a strict budget of 1,600 dining dollars per semester. At the

current meal-price of eight dollars, a student only gets approximately twelve meal swipes per week. If the price of a meal were to increase to twelve dollars we would be limited to a mere eight meals per week under the same budget.

An increase like this would cause much outrage and have a serious effect on people's diets, as people would be forced to eat at Lower much more frequently. The good news is that we are all safe from an increase like this and can go on with our current eating schedules.

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# Bonner Leaders Address Food Insecurity in Norristown

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The Bonner Foundation's Racial Justice Community Fund recently delivered a grant of \$5,000 to support work with the Centro de Cultura, Arte Trabajo y Educación (CCATE). The CCATE is a nonprofit organization that, according to the Ursinus website, "works to develop the talents and empower members of the Latinx community through culture, art, train-

ing, and education." This grant will allow Ursinus students to continue collaborating with this organization to address key issues such as food insecurities and their root problems.

The Ursinus website also reports, "Families that are food insecure lack access to a sufficient quantity of affordable, nutritious foods, a problem magnified by the COVID-19 pandemic because some parents lost their

jobs and children who were forced to learn remotely could no longer rely on school meals." Times as destructive as a pandemic require rapid changes. Ursinus is working to help alleviate issues that families are facing while speaking to their own values, as well as helping students answer the questions: How can we understand the world and what will I do?

Collaborating with Centro de Cul-

tura, Arte Trabajo y Educación (CCATE) helps students understand the world by learning about the roots of food insecurity. Learning is the first step in making change. "Bonner leaders working on the project—Jenni Berrios '22, Jadidsa Perez '21, and Maia Peele '23—are coordinating different aspects of the project," Ursinus says. These students are developing a community survey so that CCATE can bet-

ter understand needs and provide data to local officials about food insecurity in the Norristown area. Students learn to answer the question "what will I do?" by taking direct action to make a change and help the community.

For More information about CCATE and Bonner you can go to <https://www.ursinus.edu/live/news/5525-bonner-leaders-address-food-insecurity-in>.



Image courtesy of CCATE Facebook page

## The beginning of spring

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Break out the spring wardrobes, prepare for April showers to bloom May flowers, and relax more underneath the sun, because the 2021 spring season has now begun! After enduring a harsh, cold winter, we can finally settle into warmer weather and later sunsets. Even though we are still amidst the COVID-19 pandemic, socially distanced outdoor activities are still possible to engage in. For instance, a small gathering with friends (preferably four people max) for an outing, a game, or for groups that partake in hiking and walking, etc. Quarantining does not mean we should limit ourselves to only indoor activities.

Many of us Ursinus College students look forward to what the spring season entails as well. Several UC student-athletes have already begun their seasons, with other sports teams preparing for the next fall and winter seasons. In addition, UC seniors are looking forward to graduation day and its ceremony that can hopefully be outdoors if the weather permits. Class of 2021 senior portraits took place on the weekend of March 20-21 in the Bear's Den.

Springtime officially started on Saturday, March 20, but many of us received a preview of warm weather earlier in the week of March 8 (from March 9-12 the weather stayed relatively within the high 60s degrees). Some places on Ursinus' campus saw several students sitting outside on the lawns in chairs; others played a game of volleyball or football with their residence peers. Even the skateboarding culture is making a comeback

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**Springtime officially started on Saturday, March 20, but many of us received a preview of warm weather earlier in the week of March 8.**

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after a seasonal hiatus. It is almost as if a part of our lives has gone back to normal now that we are seeing more faces outside on campus.

Simra Mariam '21, the editor-in-chief (EIC) for "The Grizzly" newspaper at Ursinus, looks forward to the springtime helping her reconnect to her hobbies. "Spring always brings with it a sense of renewal. With the weather becoming warmer, I'm looking forward to spending more time outdoors with a good book and cup of tea, reconnecting with nature and



Courtesy of Shelsea Deravil

decreasing my screen time," she said.

Besides the weather, spring also calls for annual holidays and celebrations. Undoubtedly, we will not be able to observe them in the traditional ways we have had with COVID-19 still

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*"I'm looking forward to spending more time outdoors with a good book and cup of tea, reconnecting with nature and decreasing my screen time."*

-Simra Mariam  
2021

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active. However, 2020 showed us how to be creative when the coronavirus first broke out. In 2021, we can be just as creative again. Many of us look forward to,

possibly virtually, celebrating Passover (March 27-April 4), Palm Sunday (March 28), Easter (April 4), Earth Day (April 22), Ramadan (April 12-May 12), Cinco de Mayo (May 5), Mother's Day (May 9), Memorial Day (May 31), Juneteenth (June 19), and Father's Day (June 20).

Right now is the time to feel blessed for life and enjoy each given moment. There is just something about the sun radiating its shine on us that alleviates any overt anxiety and pressures we face. Let us hope for many brighter and sunny days with spring 2021 present.

WANT TO BE FEATURED IN OUR "DESK DRAWER OF THE WEEK" SECTION? HOW MESSY, CLEAN, OR ORGANIZED IS IT? TAKE A PICTURE OF YOUR DESK SEND YOUR PICTURE, NAME, AND YEAR TO [GRIZZLY@URSINUS.EDU](mailto:GRIZZLY@URSINUS.EDU) PICTURES ARE DUE EVERY THURSDAY!!!



@URSINUSGRIZZLY

# Fulfill Food Bank run by Guadagno '80, fights COVID-19 hunger

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Have you ever been so hungry you could not focus? A little nine-year-old girl in Monmouth County, New Jersey (NJ) knows your pain. The elementary-aged student was called out by her teacher on Zoom because she was not concentrating on the day's lesson. She burst out in tears in front of her class and bravely admitted the unthinkable.

She was hungry. The third grader explained that her single mother, a waitress, had lost her job due to the COVID-19 pandemic and was unable to feed her and her two siblings.

Kim Guadagno, '80--former Lt. Governor of NJ and CEO of Fulfill Food Bank in Monmouth County-- came to the child's aid after the school's social worker reached out. According to Guadagno's interview with CNN reporter Poppy Harlow, the family had

*The third grader explained that her single mother, a waitress, had lost her job due to the COVID-19 pandemic and was unable to feed her and her two siblings.*

been without food and services for weeks or even months. "She just couldn't take it anymore," Guadagno stated.

Food insecurity is a common trend these days, partly due to the economic crisis brought on by the pandemic. According to the data on the "Fulfill" website, there's been a 64% increase in childhood hunger and 92% increase in overall hunger because of COVID-19.

The child's family was given boxes of food (for four people) that would

*According to the data on the "Fulfill" website, there's been a 64% increase in childhood hunger and 92% increase in overall hunger because of COVID-19.*



Courtesy of Layla Halterman

last for four days. The food bank now consistently gives food to the family.

Hunger and food insecurity are nothing new in our country, and with COVID-19 currently in the picture, they are more salient. Guadagno even explained that the girl is one of 400,000 children in New Jersey who are food-insecure. This goes to show that

issues similar to hunger, that have been intensified by the pandemic, will still play a large part in our lives moving forward post-COVID-19.

Here at Ursinus, the food at Wismer Center (e.g. Upper Wismer) may not always be to our liking, but at least we receive our daily nutrition and are still able to focus in class. It is a blessing to be able to

replenish whenever we want. Times like these should make us more compassionate for others' wellbeing.

A huge thanks to Guadagno and her team at Fulfill Food Bank for helping so many famished families in NJ.

## DESK DRAWER OF THE WEEK



This week's desk drawer comes from Shelsea Deravil '21. The items seen inside her drawer consist mostly of index cards and school supplies. "My desk is usually organized," Deravil said. "But when I'm lazy or preoccupied, my materials will be all over the place."

SEND YOUR PICTURE, NAME, AND YEAR TO GRIZZLY@URSINUS.EDU

PICTURES ARE DUE EVERY THURSDAY!!!

## Break Days: Useful Alternative or Useless Excuse for a Spring Break?

Faith Denner  
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Spring break is a pivotal experience for the college student. Not only does it provide a break from the stress of academics, but it also gives students an opportunity to have fun. The coronavirus pandemic has turned the college experience on its head, causing many changes that have sparked controversy among college students. One of these is the introduction of break days, which are days off spread out across a semester to replace an actual spring break, thus mitigating the risk of students going home and returning to campus with the coronavirus.

Ursinus College is implementing break days, and has had two already. Break days are

intended for students to completely take the day off from schoolwork and have the chance to relax. Professors are encouraged to allow this break and not assign work on these days so it can really be a relaxing day for students.

This is the statement Ursinus College gave to the students when explaining the break days: “We’ve heard from many students how this unusual learning environment has contributed to growing amounts of stress and anxiety... That is why we’ve decided to cancel our weeklong spring break and replace it with a ‘distributed model’ that offers five separate ‘break days’ that occur every other week from February 18 through April 13.”

The question is, have

these break days helped to alleviate the stress and anxiety students are facing in these times?

After seeing mixed opinions in my peer group and social media, I wanted to investigate this by talking to students directly. I spoke to two Ursinus students about their break day experiences, and their answers were very telling. The first question I asked both students was whether or not they were using their break days as Ursinus intended. A senior athlete living on campus answered, “Definitely not. I use my break days to catch up on my work.” Another student working and living at home mirrored this statement.

Both students agreed that while the break days are nice, they do

not replace an actual spring break. The first told me, “The length of spring break forces you to actually pause and take a break, whereas a break day serves as a quick catch-up day in the middle of the week.” The other student came up with a suggestion for break days to be either on Mondays or Fridays in order to serve as a miniature break, a nice three-day weekend.

Since break days also rely on the staff honoring the wishes of Ursinus by not giving out work on those days, I asked the students whether their professors did this. Both answered no and told me in no uncertain terms that while they were given a day off of class, there was still schoolwork given out on those days.

Overall, the students shared their dissatisfaction with break days. While the concept seems nice, it is unrealistic to expect college students to not have any schoolwork to do given the volume of work they have in total. With a few more break days to come, time will tell whether or not break days become better received among students, or whether they continue to be considered a flop.

## A Disappointed Senior Class

Claire Vance  
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We are now past the mid-way point of the spring 2021 semester, which means our seniors are halfway done with their last semester of college. Some are leaving frustrated. “This was supposed to be the best year of my life but I cannot help but describe this experience as horrible,” says senior Emma Kramer. The class of 2020 is taking away the spotlight from the 2021 senior class, these seniors say. “We already have lost three semesters due to the pandem-

ic, and the school is putting us in the 2020 shadow that lost a half of a semester of college” says Kramer. Many of these emotions are being driven by the fact that the previous senior class is having a graduation ceremony on the same weekend as this year’s graduating class. “The least we could possibly get is our own weekend, we have not had anything else this year” says senior Carli Heimann.

Many are upset that they will never know their senior Halloween party, or ugly sweater party at the Trappe.

Students know that the school cannot hold typical senior traditions due to COVID-19 guidelines, but wish more could be done to fill the void of these traditions they are missing out on. Heimann stated: “I understand the school has their own difficulties but it is hard when it feels like we are not even being met halfway.”

Despite these frustrations, seniors are still trying to find the silver lining in this difficult situation. Kramer says, “Being optimistic is the only way through this and since we are not

getting support from administration it is nice to know we have each other.” Getting creative and being optimistic are common ways that our seniors have navigated this difficult time. Creating new friendships and strengthening bonds within family units were some of the good things to come out of campus restrictions.

“Although we will never be able to get this year back,” says Kramer, “it would be more encouraging to feel like we are being backed by the school and not in a constant shadow of the

class of 2020.” While the seniors on campus are grateful to be going to in-person classes and living on campus, they feel it does not make up for what has been lost, and many are asking for these losses to be acknowledged in these last few months.



**Spring Sport** cont. from pg. 8

our student-athletes the opportunity to return to competition.”

The schedules have been set and every Saturday, hopefully with beautiful weather, teams will be prepared to give it their all for this unique season. Unfortunately, the scheduled games cannot have spectators. For the safety of our athletes, coaches and proposed continuation of the season, this seems like the best solution to keep the risk of COVID cases low. The Centennial Conference may consider revisiting that rule for the exception of senior day, but only time will tell how that plays out.

*“Health and safety remains paramount to our Conference, while we are pleased our Presidents Council has endorsed the spring sports plan, we will proceed with cautious optimism in providing competition opportunities to our membership.”*

—Portia Hoeg,  
Executive Director of Centennial Conference

As a result of the absence of spectators, the Centennial Conference has been attempting to find a new way to stream all games efficiently and with good quality. Parents and students who must watch from their dorm rooms, will really appreciate this being treated as a priority, since much of the Ursinus culture on the

weekends is supporting and celebrating our amazing athletes.

*“I am grateful to our many constituents across the conference who have put in countless hours and worked tirelessly over the past several months to help devise a plan that will hopefully allow our student-athletes the opportunity to return to competition.”*

—Portia Hoeg,  
Executive Director of Centennial Conference

To enable the 2021 spring season, Ursinus has upped the number of COVID tests that student-athletes are required to take, in hopes of keeping COVID cases and quarantine numbers low. Student-athletes will be tested Mondays, Thursdays and Fridays. Ursinus has put a large sum of money towards testing, and hopefully schools and teams stay safe so the conference can make it through this quick season.

The spring student-athlete community is incredibly thankful for opportunity to make this spring season happen. Fingers crossed everything goes smoothly and we finish out the spring semester strong. Go Bears!

**ACHA** cont. from pg. 8

would love to get to at least 33% in order to be statistically significant but would love to hit 50%. There are tons of incentives that we feel students would want and so we are hoping that we can increase participation greatly over the next 12 days. Survey closes on March 31,” states Bean.

*“The main goal of the survey is to assess the campus culture around health and wellness to inform our services and programming efforts. The survey asks questions regarding all kinds of health behaviors, attitudes and experiences including mental health, nutrition, sexual health, exercise, sleep, substance abuse, sexual assault, and more!”*

—Katie Bean,  
Director of Prevention and Advocacy

In addition to informing the College, Bean hopes individual students who take the survey will benefit as well. “I hope through taking the ACHA Health Survey students take time to reflect on their own health and recognize the importance of holistic health in their own lives.” She concludes, “I hope they know that the College cares deeply about the health and wellbeing of all students and this is why we are putting so much time and energy into this project.”

*“I hope through taking the ACHA Health Survey students take time to reflect on their own health and recognize the importance of holistic health in their own lives.”*

—Katie Bean,  
Director of Prevention and Advocacy

Keep your eyes peeled for more emails from Katie Bean about the ACHA giving updates on dates and deadlines, and do not hesitate to take part in a process that could help improve your college experience.

## ACHA Health Survey Returns

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The ACHA (American College Health Association) Health Survey is open until March 31st, and is being used to help Ursinus College understand what students need in terms of their health. Being able to understand student health needs can be a very difficult task, but Ursinus has made it a priority. So what exactly are the main goals that the school hopes to achieve by offering this survey to students?

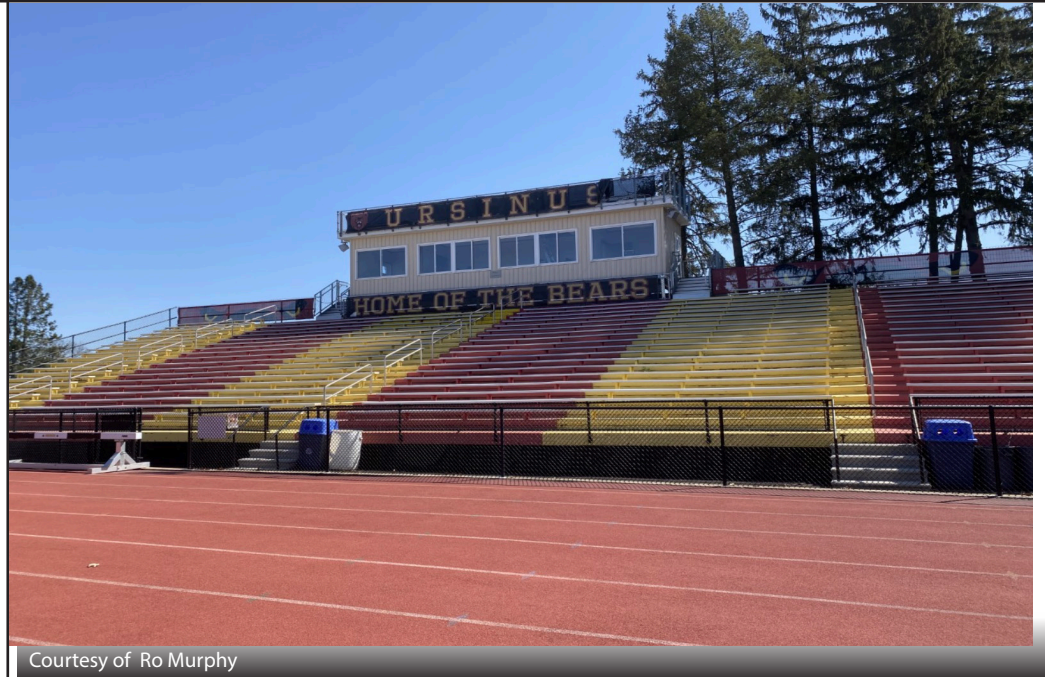
Director of Prevention and Advocacy Katie Bean is the brains behind this operation. She explains, “The main goal of the survey is to assess the campus culture around health and wellness to inform our services and programming efforts. The survey asks questions regarding all kinds of health behaviors, attitudes and experiences including mental health, nutrition, sexual health, exercise, sleep, substance use, sexual assault, and

more!” Additionally, “The College will utilize the results to understand the needs of the campus community.”

In explaining why and how the survey was made in the first place, Bean cites a grand award from the Pennsylvania Liquor Control Board that was intended to assess alcohol use on campus. Even though one of the main focal points of the survey is alcohol, it covers many other topics as well. In addition to the grant, Bean says, “The College implemented this survey on campus in Spring 2018 and had just [an] 11% response rate. We are aiming for a higher response rate this time so we can truly use the data.” Bean hopes that more students will partake this time to improve the school’s culture as a whole.

How is it going so far? “As of today, we have had 237 students complete the survey - this is just 16% of campus - we

See **ACHA** on pg. 7



Courtesy of Ro Murphy

## Update on Spring Sports

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Ursinus athletics were set to be underway for spring competition, and our athletic Bears could not have been happier. However, due to a spike in COVID cases, the school made the decision to cancel the first games of the spring season, which were set to take place this past weekend. This does mean that the next several weeks of games and matches will not be filled with excitement, commitment, and

dedication from all of our spring sport athletes. In fact, just the opposite. The decision to cancel all first games will only push each team harder, and make them more excited to get back to their sports. The seniors especially are grateful to have one last time out on their playing fields with their teammates.

Certain colleges in the Centennial Conference have chosen to opt out of playing this spring, but Ursinus chose to participate in a season. Centennial Conference Executive Director Portia Hoeg came out with

an official statement that said: “Health and safety remains paramount to our Conference, while we are pleased our Presidents Council has endorsed the spring sports plan, we will proceed with cautious optimism in providing competition opportunities to our membership. I am grateful to our many constituents across the conference who have put in countless hours and worked tirelessly over the past several months to help devise a plan that will hopefully allow

See **Spring Sport** on pg. 7

## Thinking of You!



Photo by Ursinus Athletics



Photo by Ursinus Athletics