

## 2020-2021 Social Justice Intern:

# Evelyn Vandervoort | Loyola Wellness Center: COVID-19 Care & Contact Tracing

*Introduction* - Loyola's Social Justice Internship Grant Program is a 12-month, 250- 275 hour internship experience. Students are given the opportunity to engage in significant work at a variety of non-profit and community based organizations. Through a competitive application process, 13 students were selected to move through the internship experience as a cohort.

Loyola's Wellness Center provides high quality interdisciplinary medical and mental health services. The Wellness Center empowers the Loyola student population to make informed lifestyle choices that contribute to their success. Within the context of a Jesuit Catholic institution, students are encouraged to take responsibility for their personal well-being.

*My Role* - The COVID-19 Pandemic created a new mission for The Wellness Center. As a COVID-19 Care Intern I work closely with Loyola student and staff, Contact Tracers, and COVID-19 Care Coordinators. I was given the opportunity to become a COVID-19 Contact Tracer through *John Hopkins University* SAAIS Online Training. Contact Tracing helps slow the spread of COVID-19 by letting people know they may have been exposed to COVID-19 and should monitor their health for symptoms. Contact tracing then helps people who may have been exposed get tested for COVID-19. Another aspect of this role is to ask people to self-isolate if they have tested positive for COVID-19 or self-quarantine if they are a close contact with someone who has. Lastly, contact tracers insure



these individuals are safe and have the resources they need.

The Wellness Center is responsible for caring for students living on Loyola's campus who have tested positive for COVID-19. Another role in my internship was to complete check-in calls on these students in quarantine or isolation. The reason behind a check-in call is to answer any questions the student may have, guide them toward healthy practices, and ask them questions.

Check-In calls helped The Wellness Center learn:

- COVID-19 symptoms
- Symptom improvement/changes
- Ensure student is receiving meal deliveries
- Student's mental health
- Feedback for Loyola
- Student's needs for the remainder of their quarantine/isolation



The Wellness Center is also able to share the following information during check-in calls:

- Communicate quarantine/isolation end date
- Wellness Center appointment process for COVID-19 rapid testing
- Resources for quarantine/isolation
- Updates/new information on COVID-19 or Loyola's guidelines

*Projects* - I created a Quarantine/Isolation Resource Document for students impacted by COVID-19. The information included was meant to inform recipients in a more personal and relevant manner. These resources importantly provided help and encouraged safety during a very challenging time for many students. While completing

this project, I interviewed multiple students in regard to information or resources they would wish to have access to if they were in quarantine/isolation. After research and reflection, some of the resources included were;

- Caring for Mental Health
- How to Adopt a Gratitude Practice
- Avoiding Catastrophic Thinking
- How to Discover Character Strengths
- Helpful Podcasts/Apps
- Virtual Therapy Groups at the Wellness Center
- Contacts for Urgent Mental Health Concerns
- Virtual Group Fitness Classes/Yoga
- Food Resources

*Conclusion* – COVID-19 has created unprecedented conflict and changes. In the context of a college student, I was able to provide empathy and resources during a challenging time for many. Quarantine/Isolation challenges a person's ability to access food and resources, and often strains mental health. In an effort to increase access to these resources and ensure the safety of the Loyola community, the Wellness Center and my specific position make a difference. In this internship I have had the opportunity to foster critical thinking skills. As a graduating senior in Healthcare Administration, I gained practical skills and transferable knowledge working with medical records. The Wellness Center encouraged me to take responsibility and leadership on projects. Such independence helped me learn about the organization, the COVID-19 pandemic, and myself as a student at Loyola University Chicago.

### *Acknowledgements*

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