

Office of the President
May 4, 2021

1. UK's COVID-19 Vaccination and Testing Efforts Expand Statewide

The COVID-19 vaccination clinic at UK's Kroger Field opened to the public in January and by February it had expanded to accommodate vaccinating nearly 450 Kentuckians an hour. Volunteers from various areas of the university have helped staff the clinic, including students and employees from the colleges of Medicine, Pharmacy, Dentistry, Health Sciences and Nursing working as immunizers and allowing the clinic to open on Saturday afternoons. Also, during February and March, UK partnered with the state and city of Lexington to offer mobile vaccine clinics to underserved areas. The Saturday clinics were held at Keeneland, First Baptist Church Bracktown, Shiloh Baptist Church and Charles Young Community Center. UK branched out even more in March, offering vaccines at Kentucky Dam Village and COVID-19 testing in Georgetown, Danville, Florence, and at the Bluegrass Community and Technical College campus in Lexington. Around half of UK's students had been vaccinated by March, including many in health care programs, and a push began to get the remainder vaccinated by the end of the semester. On March 30, UK announced it was helping vaccinate other college campuses. Free vaccination and testing sites were set up at Bellarmine, Berea College, Centre, Eastern Kentucky University, Georgetown College, Kentucky State University, Spalding, Sullivan and Western Kentucky University as well as at Keeneland and the Toyota Manufacturing campus in Georgetown. April 8, UK administered its 200,000th dose of vaccine.

2. UK Important Part of Johnson & Johnson COVID-19 Vaccine Trial

The University of Kentucky played a role in testing the Johnson & Johnson COVID-19 vaccine now being used to battle the pandemic. UK, in partnership with Baptist Health Lexington and Norton Healthcare in Louisville, participated as a site for the Janssen Pharmaceutical Companies of Johnson & Johnson's Phase 3 clinical research study, called the ENSEMBLE trial, to evaluate Janssen's investigational COVID-19 vaccine candidate. On January 29, UK helped release the results of the trial that was designed to evaluate the safety and efficacy of a single vaccine dose of the Janssen vaccine candidate versus placebo. Approximately 45,000 people participated worldwide. The combined UK, Baptist and Norton site was among the top enrolling sites in the world.

3. Wildcat Strong Program Promotes Ongoing Student COVID-19 Testing

As part of UK's efforts to battle the spread of COVID-19, the university required

all students who are physically on campus to be tested for the virus throughout the spring semester. To make that requirement more interesting and fun, each student was assigned to one of four testing teams, and each team was led by a coach in UK Athletics. The program, called Wildcat Strong, included teams led by UK women's basketball Coach Kyra Elzy; track and field Coach Lonnie Greene; women's softball Coach Rachel Lawson; and men's baseball Coach Nick Mingione. T-shirts and other incentives were given for testing compliance.

4. In-person UK Commencement Ceremonies Return

May 2021 graduates, as well as May, August and December 2020 graduates, were invited to participate in in-person Commencement ceremonies May 14-16 in Rupp Arena. Around 4,200 graduates registered to participate in 10 ceremonies over that three-day period. In the interest of health and safety, the ceremonies will be limited to 350-450 graduates per ceremony, and each graduate will be allowed a maximum of four guests. Other health protocols include mask requirements and physical distancing. The ceremonies will also be livestreamed for guests who cannot attend. Four ceremonies celebrating grads from the colleges of Education, Medicine, Fine Arts, Public Health, Social Work, Pharmacy, Nursing, Health Sciences, Design and Engineering will take place May 14; four ceremonies honoring grads from the College of Arts and Sciences and the Gatton College of Business and Economics will take place May 15; and two ceremonies recognizing grads from the College of Communication and Information; the Martin School of Public Policy and Administration; the Patterson School of Diplomacy and International Commerce; and the College of Agriculture, Food and Environment will take place May 16.

5. Return to Normal Operations in Fall 2021

On March 12, President Eli Capilouto announced to the UK community that plans were underway to return to normal operations in the Fall 2021 semester. He said the START (Screening, Testing and Tracing, to Accelerate Restart and Transition) team would guide the campus in a safe transition that would include a return to in-person classes at levels similar to Fall 2019; prioritizing getting remote employees back on campus under the guidance of a Return-to-Work Committee; and plans for a more robust residential experience.

6. UK HealthCare, King's Daughters Announced Significant Partnership

King's Daughters Health System (KDHS) and UK HealthCare announced on Jan. 29 in Ashland their intent to enter into a significant partnership that will create new opportunities for both organizations to better serve patients throughout Kentucky, southern Ohio and West Virginia. A new governing group will be formed for the proposed joint venture with equal representation of both UK and KDHS. David Jones, current chair of King's Daughters Board of Directors, will serve as chair of the new board. Kristie Whitlatch will continue in her role as president and chief executive officer of King's Daughters.

7. UK HealthCare Named One of America's Best Large Employers

UK HealthCare has been ranked No. 34 on Forbes magazine's list of 500 of America's Best Large Employers. It ranks seventh out of the 25 employers in the Healthcare and Social industry and is the leading health care employer in Kentucky. In collaboration with the market research firm Statista, Forbes selected America's Best Employers by surveying more than 50,000 U.S. employees working for companies employing at least 1,000 people in their U.S. operations. This is UK HealthCare's first appearance on the list.

8. Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Projects Underway

Three of 17 major projects that are part of UK's Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) Implementation Plan were announced in February. Project 12 involves creating a DEI master plan to complement the institution's overall master plan completed in 2020 by internationally recognized planning firm Sasaki. UK will again use Sasaki to engage stakeholders from around the university to create a more inclusive, equitable and barrier-free environment. Project 13 will focus on creating a DEI Public Art Fund to incorporate diverse and inclusive public art on campus. Project 13 will assign the role of "curator" for UK's public art and establish a standing DEI Public Art Committee to provide input and support necessary for a successful university-wide public art initiative. Meanwhile, UK has already fulfilled Project 14 by hiring its first supplier diversity manager — Marilyn Clark, a highly regarded expert in the local community. Her role is important to long-term efforts to bolster and strengthen UK's ties to minority-owned businesses and vendors.

9. Department of English Faculty Member Appointed 2021-22 Kentucky Poet Laureate

Crystal Wilkinson, multiple award-winning novelist and associate professor of English in the College of Arts and Sciences, was appointed 2021-22 Kentucky Poet Laureate by Gov. Andy Beshear. The online induction ceremony was held April 23 as part of the Kentucky Writers' Day celebration. Wilkinson is the first Black woman to be appointed as the state's poet laureate. Born in Hamilton, Ohio, Wilkinson's family moved to Kentucky when she was six weeks old. Growing up in Casey County, she cultivated a love of literature and reading from an early age. Wilkinson is the award-winning author of "The Birds of Opulence," "Water Street," and "Blackberries, Blackberries." "The Birds of Opulence" won the 2016 Ernest J. Gaines Prize for Literary Excellence and has been selected by Kentucky Humanities for its Kentucky Reads statewide book discussion program. Wilkinson's next book, "Perfect Black," will be released in August.

10. UK Team Contributed to Landmark Experiment Showing Evidence of New Physics

A team of faculty and students from the University of Kentucky Department of

Physics and Astronomy, supported by the National Science Foundation, has contributed to a major experiment at the U.S. Department of Energy's Fermi National Accelerator Laboratory (Fermilab) near Batavia, Illinois. The landmark results, announced April 7, are changing how physicists understand the subatomic world. Fermilab's three-year Muon g-2 experiment revealed that fundamental particles, called muons, behave in a way not predicted by the Standard Model of particle physics. The researchers think this behavior could be caused by the existence of undiscovered particles and forces in nature. The UK team was involved in two simulation efforts run on state-of-the-art high-performance computing centers at Fermilab, the National Energy Research Scientific Computing Center and the Lipscomb Supercomputer Cluster at UK. UK's principal investigators are Renee Fatemi, Tim Gorringer and Brad Plaster of the Department of Physics and Astronomy. The team includes a diverse group of postdocs, graduate students and an undergraduate student.

11. Rally, Other Events Held in Support of Asian, Asian American Community

In a strong show of support for the Asian community, hundreds of people attended a rally on campus March 24 to denounce the mass killing of Asian Americans in Atlanta as well as the overall discrimination against Asians and Asian Americans in the U.S. Participants, many carrying signs and all supporting a call for change, heard from several speakers including Professor Haoying Sun, of the Department of Marketing and Supply Chain Management; Professor Keiko Tanaka of the Department of Community and Leadership Development and co-chair of the UK Asian and Asian American Affinity Group; UK Provost David Blackwell; Associate Provost for Internationalization Sue Roberts and several other faculty, students and administrators from the university. Two other events were held April 6. "Asian Hate and COVID-19: A Year of Two Pandemics," featured a panel of UK faculty, staff and students discussing how to support the Asian American and Pacific Islander communities in the midst of the current crisis, and Stacy Lee, author and professor at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, where she is also a faculty affiliate in Asian American studies presented an address on Asian American racialization and stereotypes in education.

12. Experimental Treatment Shows Promise in Treating Traumatic Brain Injury

The UK departments of Emergency Medicine, Neurosurgery and Anesthesiology are part of a national research study to determine if high-dose oxygen given under pressure (hyperbaric oxygen) will improve recovery following severe traumatic brain injuries (TBI). TBIs contribute to a substantial number of deaths, permanent disability and lasting neurological deficits. Caused by a bump, blow or jolt to the head that disrupts the normal function of the brain, TBIs require immediate intervention. Currently, there are no FDA-approved treatments for TBI. In pre-clinical studies of patients with TBI, hyperbaric oxygen treatment was shown to increase oxygen delivery to the injured brain, preventing further cell death. While it is experimental, Dr. Kevin Hatton, chief of the Division of Anesthesiology Critical Care Medicine at UK HealthCare, said the therapy shows significant promise.

13. UK, Norton Expand Heart Failure, Transplant Services in Kentucky

On March 31, UK HealthCare and Norton Heart & Vascular Institute announced a collaboration to expand advanced heart failure ventricular assist device (VAD) placement and heart transplant services to Kentuckians. Heart disease is the leading cause of death in Kentucky, which has one of the highest rates of heart disease in the country. Norton Heart & Vascular Institute will join with UK Gill Heart & Vascular Institute through Gill's Affiliate Network to expand care to heart failure patients. The UK Gill Heart & Vascular Institute works with 18 affiliate network hospitals across the Commonwealth to enhance access to high-quality cardiovascular care.

14. Markey Program Develops Cancer Education Curriculum for Appalachian Schools

After conducting a study to assess the need for cancer education materials in Appalachian Kentucky, members of the University of Kentucky Markey Cancer Center's Appalachian Career Training in Oncology (ACTION) program worked with faculty from the UK College of Education to create a three-part cancer education curriculum for middle and high school teachers in the region. Kentucky is home to the highest rates of cancer incidence and mortality in the country, and that problem is further concentrated in the Appalachian region of the state. Funded by a grant from the National Cancer Institute, ACTION is a two-year program designed to prepare undergraduate and high school students for cancer-focused careers and is open to students who hail from one of the 54 Appalachian Kentucky counties. The program also educates students on ways to make a difference in their own communities through outreach and engagement.

15. DanceBlue 2021 Took on New Look

DanceBlue, UK's annual fundraising dance marathon that benefits the DanceBlue Kentucky Children's Hospital Hematology/Oncology Clinic, went virtual for the first time Saturday, April 10, due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Normally 24 hours long, this year's DanceBlue was held online from 11 a.m. to 8 p.m. and was livestreamed from the DanceBlue website and Facebook. The event still included special line dances, interviews, videos, family speakers and the always exciting fundraising total reveal, which was \$1,011,115.49.

16. Philanthropy's Third Annual 'One Day for UK' Held April 21

The University of Kentucky celebrated its third university-wide giving day, "One Day for UK," Wednesday, April 21, when donors around the world were encouraged to give to the college, unit or cause they care most about at UK. The 24 hours of giving supports the university's comprehensive campaign, "Kentucky Can: The 21st Century Campaign," which increases opportunities for student success, funds innovative research, improves health care, strengthens the alumni network and enhances athletic programs. The total amount raised is \$2,578,775 and counting.

17. Lyman T. Johnson Award Winners Announced

The University of Kentucky Alumni Association Lyman T. Johnson African American Alumni Group, in partnership with the UK Office for Institutional Diversity, hosted the 30th annual Lyman T. Johnson Torch Bearer and Torch of Excellence awards via Facebook Live February 1. The program honors and celebrates African American students and alumni from each college who epitomize the ideals of Lyman T. Johnson. The award winners are: Jahqethea Johnson and Tiffany Monroe of the College of Agriculture, Food and Environment; Jacob Barnes, Trinity Houston, Pasama Cole-Kweli, Jillean McCommons, Jordan Ashlee McCray, Kayla Woodson, Eunique Gaither, Aretina Hamilton and Ursula Mullins of the College of Arts and Sciences; Ariel Brent and Erica Miles of the Gatton College of Business and Economics; Akhira Umar and DeBraun Thomas of the College of Communication and Information; Udechukwu Iheduru and Linda Larkin-Scott of the College of Dentistry; Heather Cowherd and Felicia C. Smith of the College of Education; K'Lynn King and Tracy Drain of the College of Engineering; Moniece La'Shay Mosely and Key'Mon Murrah of the College of Fine Arts; Isaiah Jones and Brandon Reeves of the College of Health Sciences; Maya S. Marshall and Steven S. Reed of the J. David Rosenberg College of Law; Danielle Duncan and Delanor Manson of the College of Nursing; Anisa Moore and William Ifechor of the College of Pharmacy; Kayla Dougherty and Sydney S. Taylor of the College of Public Health; Shawndaya Thrasher and Shaniek Tose of the College of Social Work; Kevely Dumay and Jeana Dunlap of The Graduate School; Khari Gardner and Tracy Drain of the Lewis Honors College.

18. ACT, SAT Optional for Admission to UK for Next 3 Years

On March 10, UK announced that the test-optional policy for students applying to the university is being extended for the next three years. That means that students applying for admission to UK for the 2022-23, 2023-24 and 2024-25 school years will not be required to submit an ACT or SAT score. Last summer, the university approved a one-year test-optional admissions process for the admission cycle for the 2021-22 academic year due to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. Taking into consideration that prospective students are still experiencing issues with access to ACT/SAT testing as well as access to college-going support from high school staff due to remote learning in high schools during the pandemic, the UK Office of Enrollment Management requested to extend the test-optional process for three more years. University Senate approved the request, and Enrollment Management will continue to provide analysis of how students who are enrolled without a standardized test score perform at the college level.

19. Rifle Team Won 2021 NCAA Championship

After not getting a chance to put the finishing touches on its impressive 2020 season, the University of Kentucky rifle team claimed its unfinished business on March 13 as it won the 2021 NCAA Rifle National Championship. This is the third national title

for head coach Harry Mullins and the Kentucky program. Sophomore Mary Tucker finished with a gold medal and junior Will Shaner earned a silver medal in the air rifle individual championship. Tucker became the sixth shooter in history to earn both the air rifle and smallbore gold at the NCAA Championships.

20. Kentucky Women's Swimming and Diving Won 1st SEC Championship

For the first time in school history, the No. 3 UK women's swimming and diving team won the Southeastern Conference Women's Swimming and Diving Championships on February 1. The Wildcats broke five school records and produced 12 podium finishes throughout the meet, collecting 1,124 points for their highest score in program history. Thirteen swimmers earned a combined 14 personal records during the finals, while 39 personal records were set throughout the meet.

21. Faculty and Staff Achievements

Mitch Barnhart (Athletics) was appointed to a three-year term on the College Football Playoff Selection Committee.

Robert Baumann (Pediatric Neurology) received the Brumback Lifetime Achievement Award from the Child Neurology Society after nearly a half-century of work at the University of Kentucky.

Dibakar Bhattacharyya (College of Engineering) was named winner of the 2021 SEC Faculty Achievement Award.

Tracy Campbell (College of Arts and Sciences) won the New-York Historical Society's Barbara and David Zalaznick Book Prize for "The Year of Peril: America in 1942."

Patricia A. Cooper (College of Arts and Sciences) was inducted into the UK College of Arts and Sciences Hall of Fame as part of its 2020 class of inductees (ceremony delayed due to COVID-19 pandemic).

Ron Eller (College of Arts and Sciences) was inducted into the UK College of Arts and Sciences Hall of Fame as part of its 2020 class of inductees (ceremony delayed due to COVID-19 pandemic).

Gary Ferland (College of Arts and Sciences) was named a fellow by the American Astronomical Society for his innovative and significant contributions to astronomy.

Tanya Harper (Singletary Center for the Arts) received the Wally Russell Professional Mentoring Award, presented by the United States Institute for Theatre Technology in partnership with the Wally Russell Foundation.

Nathaniel Stapleton (College of Arts and Sciences) was named a 2021 Sloan Research Fellow by the Alfred P. Sloan Foundation. The award honors early-career researchers.

Julian Vasquez Heilig (College of Education) is one of 32 senior-level higher education professionals across the U.S. selected for the 2021 Millennium Leadership Initiative.

Gretchen Wells (Gill Heart and Vascular Institute) assumed the office of president of the Kentucky Chapter of the American College of Cardiology.

Keith B. Wilson (College of Education) was selected by the American Mental Health Counselors Association as a fellow in Clinical Mental Health Counseling Education and Research. He was also awarded the National Association of Multicultural Rehabilitation Concerns Fellow Credential that honors those who contribute to multicultural concerns in rehabilitation professions.

George C. Wright (History B.A.; Sociology M.A.) of Lexington, Kentucky, was inducted into the UK College of Arts and Sciences Hall of Fame as part of its 2020 class of inductees (ceremony delayed due to COVID-19 pandemic). Wright is also the 2021 recipient of the Duke University Graduate School's Distinguished Alumni Award (History Ph.D.).

Sherali Zeadally (College of Communication and Information) won the Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers (IEEE) Region 3 Outstanding Engineer Award. Region 3 encompasses over 24,000 IEEE members across nine states in the southeastern United States and Jamaica.

22. Student Achievements

Michael Clubb (Marketing; Kentucky Kernel) of Knoxville, Tennessee, was named Kentucky's sports photographer of the year and runner-up student photographer of the year at the annual Kentucky News Photographer Association meeting in February 2021.

Taylor Crumrine (Theatre) of Westerville, Ohio, was one of six student playwrights whose play was chosen for the Region 4 Kennedy Center/American College Theater Ten Minute Play Festival.

Kelly Daniel (Law) of Boston, Massachusetts, will serve as the first Black editor-in-chief of the Rosenberg College of Law's Kentucky Law Journal for the 2021-22 academic year.

Shantale Davis (Law) of Erie, Pennsylvania, and her teammate placed first in the 2021 Law Student Diversity Virtual Case Competition.

Maya Elias (Mathematics, Business Communication) of Lexington, Kentucky, will serve as Student Government Association vice president in 2021-22.

Michael Hawse (Political Science) of Lexington, Kentucky, will serve as Student Government Association president in 2021-22.

Chase Lane (Kinesiology) of Tallahassee, Florida, was named the 2020-21 Southeastern Conference Men's Swimming and Diving Scholar-Athlete of the Year, which recognizes one male in the sport of men's swimming and diving for his accomplishments in the classroom and in the water.

Ashlei McPherson (Law) of Lexington, Kentucky, and her teammate placed first in the 2021 Law Student Diversity Virtual Case Competition.

Matthew Morse (Chemical Engineering, Lewis Honors College) of Glen Carbon, Illinois, was one of six student playwrights whose play was chosen for the Region 4 Kennedy Center/American College Theater Ten Minute Play Festival.

23. Alumni Achievements

Key'mon W. Murrah (Arts Administration) of Louisville, Kentucky, received

the first-place prize of \$10,000 in the Houston Grand Opera's 33rd annual Concert of Arias competition.

Quita Papka Michel, (Political Science) of Lexington, Kentucky, was inducted into the UK College of Arts and Sciences Hall of Fame as part of its 2020 class of inductees (ceremony delayed due to COVID-19 pandemic).

Alex Otte, (Journalism) of Lexington, Kentucky, became the youngest president ever appointed for the national organization Mothers Against Drunk Driving in January 2021 at age 24.

Winn Fleming Williams (Sociology, Political Science) of Greenville, South Carolina, was inducted into the UK College of Arts and Sciences Hall of Fame as part of its 2020 class of inductees (ceremony delayed due to COVID-19 pandemic).

Bing Zhang (Statistics M.S., Ph.D.; Computer Science M.S.) of Orlando, Florida, was inducted into the UK College of Arts and Sciences Hall of Fame as part of its 2020 class of inductees (ceremony delayed due to COVID-19 pandemic).