



Office of the President

NORTHERN ARIZONA UNIVERSITY

January 29, 2021

Dear Lumberjacks,

There's nothing like a major snowstorm to challenge our flexibility and adaptability during the first week of in-person classes. Thank you for your patience as we moved to virtual instruction on Monday and Tuesday in the wake of three feet of snow falling on our mountain campus.

Access to our hybrid learning format, NAUFlex, meant many of us did not have to venture out during the storm. Please join me in acknowledging and thanking the many members of our NAU community who provide essential services and came to campus every day to help ensure our safety and address the needs of our students.

We will receive another allotment of vaccine for our NAU community next week. The registration portal at CHS is not open yet, but we look forward to notifying you of a new registration opportunity before the end of the day. We continue to have exceptional participation for the COVID-19 vaccine. I am proud that, as of this week, NAU has given the first vaccine dose to more than 1,100 active NAU employees in Coconino County in the 1A and 1B populations. We will continue to do our part to assist in Coconino County's vaccination efforts and encourage you to review the [NAU Vaccine website](#) for answers to your questions.



I am excited to share that NAU was one of only three institutions to receive a \$50,000 national innovation award from **NASPA** for our virtual support services for students. Even before the pandemic, many of our divisions and teams were committed to implementing solutions to keep students highly engaged. As we all shifted into a virtual mode, our faculty and staff have found even more ways to engage our students. I am so pleased to see these efforts recognized and am looking forward to continuing to innovate.

I close today with a reminder that we still need to continue doing everything we can to help mitigate the spread of this virus and that getting vaccinated does not alleviate our responsibility to remain vigilant. That means participating in mitigation testing, masking up, physically distancing, avoiding large gatherings, and practicing good hygiene. With this in mind, please be on the lookout for the delivery of this semester's NAU masks, which are being distributed to students. We will distribute to faculty and staff next week as we all refresh out efforts and supplies to mitigate the spread of the virus in our community.

This brings me to the latest update on our COVID-19 mitigation efforts. As of this afternoon, NAU is managing 70 cases among students on and off campus, up slightly from last week. Updates can be found on **NAU's coronavirus page**.

My thanks again to withstanding the winter storms and ensuring we are off to a great start to the 2021 spring semester. Stay safe, enjoy the winter wonderland that is Flagstaff in the snow, and let's continue to work to keep our Lumberjack community strong in what continues to be challenging times.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Rita", with a stylized flourish at the end.

Rita Hartung Cheng
President