



Office of the President

NORTHERN ARIZONA UNIVERSITY

February 26, 2021

Dear Lumberjacks,

I wanted to take a moment to update you on the status of our vaccination program and encourage you to sign up for the vaccine as supplies become available.

Just last week, I received my second dose of the COVID-19 vaccine. I experienced minor symptoms over the ensuing 24-48 hours and am fully recovered. While I know that experiences among individuals can vary, I can say that whatever short-term discomfort you may have is hugely outweighed by the benefits of being vaccinated—the faster we can get our campus community vaccinated, the sooner we can get back to a greater sense of normalcy.

As we reached the sad and unfortunate milestone of 500,000 COVID-19 related deaths in the U.S., we continue to prioritize doing our part to get the pandemic under control. This means not letting our guard down in the ways we have been discussing since the start of the pandemic—social distancing, proper hygiene, and wearing masks. As more vaccine doses become readily available, please be persistent in your attempts to register for the vaccine.

To date, NAU has administered 3,200 first doses of the COVID-19 vaccine, which includes approximately 40 percent of our faculty and staff. We have also administered 800 second doses.

Gaining continued access to the vaccine remains a priority, and we appreciate our partnership with Coconino County and others in the community who are working diligently on this effort. While we will continue to focus on second doses next week, NAU has opened a **wait list** for those awaiting their first dose of the vaccination. The NAU community is encouraged to take advantage of the opportunity to sign up.

NAU continues to prioritize a culture of safety in other areas throughout our campus and learning environments.

Earlier this week, we shared that NAU, in partnership with the Flagstaff Police Department and the Coconino County Sheriff's Office, is offering "**Text to 9-1-1**" to our community.

Students, faculty, staff, and campus visitors will now be able to send text messages to 9-1-1. Any text you send to 9-1-1 from anywhere on the NAU campus in Flagstaff will be routed to the NAU Police Department dispatch center. This service has many benefits for the NAU community, including supporting our deaf and hearing-impaired community, helping anyone who is in danger and unable to make a phone call, and providing an alternative when phone reception is not available.

We are resolute in our goal to keep everyone informed about the spread of COVID-19. As of this afternoon, NAU is managing 55 COVID-19 cases among students on and off campus, down from last week. Updates can be found on **NAU's coronavirus page**.

I close with a heartfelt thanks for all you continue to do to remain vigilant about maintaining appropriate health and safety practices as we do all we can to help keep our community and our loved ones safe.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Rita", written in a cursive style.

Rita Hartung Cheng
President