



# Office of the President

NORTHERN ARIZONA UNIVERSITY

October 23, 2020

Dear Lumberjacks,

The end of fall is in the air, with freezing temperatures and even the possibility of a bit of snow in the weather forecast for next week. While we may regret the passing of a beautiful time of the year, at the same time we anticipate with excitement an events calendar that includes traditional celebrations, underscoring what it means to be a Lumberjack and how much we value and support our students.

In a typical fall, Homecoming would bring alumni back to NAU and Flagstaff to join students, faculty, and staff to reconnect and share our pride with the entire Lumberjack community. However, this is not a typical time, and we have to protect our community while COVID-19 remains a risk factor. So, to keep the tradition alive, we will be celebrating virtually this year. While we will not be welcoming people back in person, the good news is that this provides an opportunity to expand our reach and show the world and future generations of Lumberjacks why NAU is such a special place. From November 2-7, all members of our community, from those in Flagstaff and throughout the world, can be involved in many virtual events, from participating in the Homecoming Parade—where individuals and businesses are encouraged to create shoebox floats and submit their own video to be shared by fellow Lumberjacks—to trivia night—an opportunity for the whole family to put their knowledge to the test and compete against fellow Lumberjacks for an array of prizes. For a list of all the fun, go to [nau.edu/homecoming](http://nau.edu/homecoming).

Next week, we will continue our virtual celebrations with our Gold Axe, Distinguished Seniors, and President's Prize winners, who embody the Lumberjack spirit of academic achievement and distinguished service to NAU. And, in just a few short weeks, we will host the W.A. Franke College of Business' 45th Annual Economic Outlook Conference. This virtual event will take place on Thursday, November 12, and will feature keynote speaker Glenn Hamer, President and CEO of the Arizona Chamber of Commerce and Industry. Breakout sessions will include discussions of the United States-Mexico-Canada Agreement, tribal leadership, economic recovery, and a student-focused careers panel. Learn more and register at the [conference website](#).

These are just a few highlights of the many virtual events that are taking place over the next few weeks. I encourage you to check out a full list at the [NAU Events Calendar](#).

The coming winter also reminds us of the need for continued vigilance in regard to COVID-19. The NAU community has contributed to the prevention and risk mitigation efforts since returning to campus, and it is critical that we finish this semester strong. As of this afternoon, NAU is managing 51 cases among students on- and off-campus, a continued reduction from last week. Weekly updates can be found at [nau.edu/coronavirus](http://nau.edu/coronavirus).

This is yet another reminder that we need to double down on everything we have been doing to help maintain safety. That means participating in mitigation testing, masking up, physically distancing, avoiding large gatherings, and practicing good hygiene. And if you haven't gotten your flu shot, I encourage you to do so. Campus Health Services has a number of [flu shot clinics scheduled in the coming weeks](#).

I look forward to seeing you at many of our upcoming virtual events. Stay safe, stay warm, and enjoy the brisk introduction to the winter season.

Sincerely,

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

Rita Hartung Cheng  
President