

The Friday Five



Take Five Minutes for College Updates

We're continuing to bring you College news and opportunities to interact with other staff members and teams. Previous communications can be found on the [staff resources page](#).

What's Happening

*Get program updates from teams and units
and news about on-campus developments*

In its ongoing efforts to help students connect with each other and contend with the social and academic challenges mounted by virtual education, the [Berick Center for Student Advising](#) (CSA) has enlisted and trained peer advisers. These empathetic, knowledgeable and skilled students are helping to keep our student communities together while they are physically distanced. First-In-Family Programs' (FiF) [Peer Advisers](#) help students who, like themselves, are the first in their families to attend

college. They are sophomores and juniors in the College and Engineering, and they represent a variety of majors, backgrounds and hometowns. They are available for one-on-one consultations as their peers determine their majors, build co-curricular lives and navigate Columbia and its resources.

Additionally, the [Peer Academic Skills Consultants](#), four upperclass students from Columbia College and Columbia Engineering, advise their fellow students on time management, learning strategies and working through blocks they may encounter in their studies. The consultants are available for individual appointments, and have also piloted and led “CSA Study with Me,” online group sessions that take place multiple times per week throughout the term. The aim of these one-hour sessions is to provide students with a setting that is both social and productive, for students to share their goals for the hour, work alongside one another and enjoy a quick but meaningful break.

The [Odyssey Mentoring Program](#) has supported students and young alumni throughout the pandemic by providing numerous opportunities for mentorship, connection and community. This fall, Odyssey facilitated 325 mentoring matches between current College students and alumni, and engaged more than 600 students and young alumni, helping them stay connected to the College community during this difficult season. Odyssey also hosted three Leadership Series’ that focused on career mentoring and six Diversity Roundtables that prioritized whole life mentoring and community building.

The [Alumni Representative Committee](#) (ARC) is a network of College and Engineering alumni volunteers who support Undergraduate Admissions by conducting interviews with applicants from around the world, building awareness of Columbia and supporting the continued success of Alma Mater. This year, all interviews are offered virtually via phone or video chat. With this shift, alumni are finding creative ways to leverage technology to have easy, fun and high-impact interactions with applicants in a 30-45 minute conversation.

Did you know?

2021 Benefits Open Enrollment ends Friday, November 20 at 11:59 p.m. To enroll, go [here](#) and log into CUBES with your UNI and password.

Fight pandemic fatigue! Here are some reminders about best [practices](#) to maintain your workspace.

Staff Celebrations and Highlights

Recognizing the College staff community

The Morningside Five! Get to know...



Marci Taub

Assistant Director, Undergraduate Career Development
Center for Career Education

I'm inspired by Columbia students because they are:

Curious, reflective and innovative.

Planes, trains and automobiles! I usually get to campus by:

Foot and subway, while savoring a decaf with almond milk and listening to Yo-Yo Ma.

What piece of advice would you give to Columbia College students right now?

Stay open to the unexpected possibilities for moving forward, and make a career counseling appointment for support and guidance!

What's the first job you ever had?

I was a bread-baker in a food cooperative during college. It was an overnight gig and the bread was gone within a few hours the next day.

When you need a boost, what do you do to motivate yourself?

I curate my favorite photographs of places that I'm grateful to have lived in or traveled to, because they represent times I stretched and grew from the experiences.



Nick Vargovic

Coordinator
Center for Career Education

Favorite spot on campus?

Sipping on a matcha tea from Nous and overlooking downtown Manhattan from the Amsterdam Avenue overpass — this is what dreams are made of.

If I wasn't ____, then I would be ____

If I wasn't working as an Operations Coordinator, then I'd Eat, Pray, Love my way

around the world (money aside!). I'll wear a mask! 🤧

What's the first job you ever had?

Lifeguard. It's the longest job I've held to date, 8 years on duty since I was 16. David Hasselhoff has nothing on me!

What's the best professional advice you ever received?

Say thank you. Thank you when you're wanted and thank you when you're not. Because the universe has something good in store for you.

When you need a boost, what do you do to motivate yourself?

Open the fridge and grab a square of the 70% dark chocolate bar — it's only considered numbing if you consume the entire bar (thanks Brené!).

Stay Connected

Learn new skills and exchange creative ideas

Zoom@Noon

Baldwin's Children: The Core Curriculum in Dangerous Times
Wednesday, November 18, 2020 12:00 p.m.

This discussion will focus on the figure of the child in two Core texts: Augustine's *Confessions*, which is read in Literature Humanities, and James Baldwin's "A Talk to Teachers," which is read in Contemporary Civilization. We will explore how questions addressed in the Core can inspire students to reflect on their lives and confront the problems of their world. Brief passages from these works will be read together; no prior knowledge of the texts is needed. Register [here](#).

Community Pop-ups

Get together with College staff for some virtual fun!

Lunchtime Trivia!
Tuesday, November 24
12:00 p.m.

Are you a pop culture expert? Do you know everything there is to know about geography? Is food your jam (see what we did there)? If so, you won't want to miss out on this chance to earn bragging rights as the College staff member with the most knowledge! If you have hosted trivia games in the past, please email [Nicole](#)

[Astarita](#) on the events team to inquire about hosting opportunities. Register [here](#).

Escape the Zoom: Columbia Edition

Interested in a team building or social event with your colleagues? Try the Columbia-specific virtual version of Escape the Room. The program was created for the New Student Orientation Program, but is a great opportunity to connect with colleagues over lunch or in a virtual happy hour. If interested, create your own group, date and time to play and email uslcommunityprograms@columbia.edu at least two business days in advance for access to your free link to play. Suggested group size is 4–10 people.

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