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Issue 024 | February 12, 2021



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*

As part of the new **Test Lion Test** compliance campaign, we have created an incentive program to promote positive reinforcement. We are already seeing very high levels of compliance this term and will continue to reinforce messaging and

measures in order to maintain this encouraging response rate. Starting this week, students who complete their twice-weekly testing will be entered into a lottery for prizes; we'll also be creating "Take Good Care" packages for students who need to isolate or quarantine.

Flush Lion Flush: If you missed last week's webinar, check out this [video recording](#) to learn how Columbia is testing residence hall wastewater as one component of the Covid-19 monitoring plan.

Spring 2021 Covid-Related Emergency Grant: College and Engineering undergraduates enrolled in the spring term who have experienced challenges finding paid work to support their necessary expenses were eligible to apply for a one-time emergency grant. This unique grant opportunity was funded by the CARES Act Higher Education Emergency Relief Funds, for aided students who are eligible for U.S. federal financial aid programs. Other students who receive financial aid were able to apply for a similar emergency grant funded by Columbia College and Columbia Engineering. The final review of applications and notification of awards was completed this week.

Room Selection 2021: On-campus housing selection for the 2021-22 academic year starts this Monday, February 15. The Columbia Housing website provides helpful information and tools to help guide students through the process; students may also be directed to additional tools like these [video resources](#) (that include How Room Selection Works, Picking as a Group and Room Selection for Sophomores) as well as virtual information sessions for [rising seniors](#), [rising juniors](#) or [rising sophomores](#).

Did you know?

Any unused funds in your 2020 Healthcare and/or Dependent Care flexible spending account (FSA) will automatically roll over into 2021. Additionally, the Dependent Care FSA eligibility age has increased temporarily from 13 to 14 for 2020 funds, for use in 2021. These changes are included in the December Covid-19 Stimulus Bill, which allows employers flexibility in the administration of 2020 and 2021 FSAs. In the coming weeks you will have the opportunity to adjust your 2021 FSA contributions during a special enrollment window. More information will be coming soon; for any questions, please contact the Benefits Service Center at 212-851-7000 or email hrbenefits@columbia.edu.

Staff Celebrations and Highlights

Recognizing the College staff community

Please continue to share professional or personal accomplishments or milestones about yourself, a colleague, or a College team/unit for inclusion in future Friday Fives. Submit a shoutout or something you want to celebrate via this [form](#).

The Morningside Five! Get to know...



Eric Shea

**Senior Director, Alumni Relations
Columbia College Alumni Relations and
Development**

What has been a defining Columbia moment for you?

When I led the Alumni Parade of Classes at Class Day in 2016 (see photo!). It was such a special moment for the graduates and the alumni were so happy to be there. It was a privilege to be part of this tradition.

What work are you most proud of in your current role?

My team is putting a lot of effort into events and programs that celebrate and promote diversity. I'm proud of my team for their commitment and I'm proud of Columbia for making this a priority.

What's the best piece of professional advice you ever received?

Organization is the key to success!

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

It will all work out — I promise!

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

I listen to gospel music!

David Slotnick

**Director, Research & Technology
Center for Career Education**

Favorite lunch spot/order on/near campus:

Milano Market, with their salad as dense and heavy as a small meteor, cannot be beat!



If I wasn't doing (insert job) then I would definitely be (insert dream job here).

If I weren't the Director of Research and Technology at CCE, I'd be a globe-travelling, highly-demanded tasting judge of lobster-roll-making contests.

What's the first job/worst job you ever had?

The first/worst job I ever had was in pizza delivery. Tasty, but unpleasant and short-lived.

What is the last book you read that you would recommend to others?

Norse Mythology by Neil Gaiman. One of the best storytellers in the game, Gaiman applies his signature style to a modern interpretation of these ancient tales. Good stuff!

Before I was at Columbia I was:

Wearing NYU Purple (Hex: #57068c), working in an IT role at the School of Professional Studies.

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