

During a major period of uncertainty, we asked you to share ways that you have managed normalcy in abnormal times. A number of you shared ways that you, personally, or your institutions have maintained a level of normalcy. Thank you for sharing these great stories of strength, compassion, passion, and commitment.

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Edmonds College  
Dr. Amit B. Singh  
President



Edmonds College has responded to the local health care industry's need for personal protective equipment by prototyping and manufacturing face shields to protect health care workers during COVID-19. The college partnered with Kaas Tailored – a Mukilteo-based manufacturer of upholstered aerospace and furniture goods – to produce PPE. At Washington Aerospace Training and Research (WATR) Center, which is managed by Edmonds College, a team produced more than 14,600 plastic face shields in a week. Kaas provided the plastic material, and the WATR Center team cut, cleaned, and delivered the shields. A face shield that is being developed in the college's The Facility Makerspace is currently undergoing informal field tests in the emergency department of Skagit Valley Hospital in Mount

Vernon, Wash. and St. Joseph Medical Center in Bellingham, Wash. The ED19 Durable Face Shield is intended for frontline health care workers, such as emergency medical technicians, nurses, and doctors. Edmonds College also donated about 8,000 face masks to Swedish Edmonds and 2,000 masks to Providence Regional Medical Center in early April. For more information about WATR Center, visit [washingtonaerospace.com](http://washingtonaerospace.com). For The Facility Makerspace, visit [edcc.edu/makerspace](http://edcc.edu/makerspace).

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Utah Valley University  
Linda Makin  
Vice President for Planning, Budget, and Human Resources  
ALO



Annually, UVU offers a select number of faculty and staff the opportunity to participate in the Utah Valley Senior Executive Leadership Forum (UVSELF) program designed to develop higher education leaders. Each May, we gather as President's Cabinet and UVSELF fellows to review the year and celebrate a graduation for the UVSELF fellows. Normally, that celebration includes a nice luncheon. This May, we gathered via MS Teams but were treated to a lunch of our choosing delivered to

our homes through UberEats. This virtual opportunity to both celebrate and dine together was a unique culmination to a very successful year of learning and growth.

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### George Fox CARES During COVID-19

George Fox University is one of twenty institutions participating in this year's the NWCCU Retention, Persistence, and Student Success Academy, which supports institutional efforts designed to transform student success initiatives. The institution worked with NWCCU staff and Academy faculty to develop a three-pronged approach to addressing student retention and the first-year experience, and the work was led on campus by a Student Success Strategy Team representing a cross-section of departments throughout the institution to leverage broad strategic efforts. As the reality of the COVID-19 pandemic settled in, George Fox realized that retention efforts would have to transform and quickly deployed resources from the CARES stimulus package as an important component to its strategy.

Because George Fox understood its student body was ethnically and economically diverse and that the impact of COVID-19 would be wide-ranging, the institution deployed an additional \$2 million to students and provided wrap-around care with attention given to its more vulnerable populations, such as first-generation students and students of color. The George Fox Student Success Strategy Team created a three-part strategy that gathered qualitative data, combined with existing quantitative data, that could help identify struggling students. Surveys were deployed to more fully understand each individual student's learning context, and a team of employees personally reached out to every student who did not respond to the survey.

In the end, because of its qualitative and quantitative measures, tailored support grants, and fully invested multidepartment team, the George Fox CARES campaign allowed the institution to:

- Connect with 1,150 students to measure the confidence level of students who planned on returning.
- Identify specific challenges and barriers related to COVID-19 that could be addressed by internal and external funds.
- Create a comprehensive system that allows the institution to provide targeted care for the institution's most vulnerable students.

George Fox's retention and student success commitment is that each student will "Be Known" if they enroll at the institution, and the NWCCU Retention, Persistence, and Student Success Academy has supported the institution's Student Success Strategy Team in rising to the challenge of that promise.

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Great Falls College Montana State University  
Jeri Pullum  
Special Projects Coordinator  
ALO



Great Falls College MSU operates an educational dental clinic to help students in the dental hygiene and dental assisting program perform dental techniques on actual patients. Normally, that space looks like a fairly typical dental office, with a patient waiting room and 18 operatories with dental chairs and equipment. The space was transformed into a surreal world of plastic designed to separate the spaces for better physical distancing. Prior to the pandemic, the operatories were separated from each other by a half wall. Although the patients couldn't see each other, when they were fully reclined one patient's head was only 7.5 feet from the patient in the next operatory. Although the college has always followed all the appropriate protocols, health information released during the pandemic informed the college that a six-foot plume of aerosol is released from a dental patient's mouth. As recommended by the city-county health department, the clinic has been set up as if it were a temporary hospital. As described by Barnwell, basically each operatory is encased in plastic, which is screwed into the ceiling at the top and taped to the floor with a doorway cut into the plastic that can be closed. Photo: Gwen Honeycutt, adjunct clinical instructor with the dental hygiene program at Great Falls College Montana State University, looks in on Mariah Jallings, a senior in the dental hygiene program, as she practices teeth cleaning procedures on a mouth model.

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Tacoma Community College  
Analea L. Brauburger  
Dean of Organizational Learning & Effectiveness  
TCC Accreditation Liaison Officer (ALO)  
IRB Chair



We created the first chapter of Food is Free in University Place. The FiF project is big in Tacoma and we added our small town to the list. Two twelve by four raised beds growing fresh veggies for our community.

University of Idaho  
Cher Hendricks  
Vice Provost for Academic Initiatives  
ALO

When the COVID lockdown started, I was worried about so many things: our kids, my mother-in-law, my brother who lost his wife of 41 years in January, my niece who is an ICU nurse in New Orleans and was right in the middle of a hotspot outbreak. But I was worried about us, too. What would happen if one of us got sick? Would the other even be allowed to visit? To make decisions? I was aware of how many ICU beds and ventilators are in our small-town hospital. I didn't like our odds if one of us got really ill. Those early days, particularly with all the stories coming out of Italy, were so frightening. Fred and I decided we would get a marriage license and then start planning a wedding. Maybe we could get the kids to come to Idaho after COVID settled down but before we moved on.

Turns out it was pretty difficult to get a marriage license. The courthouse was closed, and week after week we called only to find out we still couldn't enter the building. Near the end of April, Fred called again and was told the Latah County courthouse would remain closed, at least through the middle of May. They suggested he call around the state to find an open courthouse. We were fortunate that Fred had success on his first call to Benewah County, about an hour and a half north of us. The courthouse was closed, but we could make an appointment to enter the building to get a marriage license. We decided we'd go the next day, Tuesday April 28<sup>th</sup>. On a whim, I asked Fred to call back to see if a judge would be available to marry us. They said the judge didn't come in on Tuesdays, but they'd call and ask him. He agreed to marry us the next day. Turns out he is an alum of University of Idaho, where we both work. His son is a graduate, too, and his youngest son is a student here.



We arrived at our appointed time on April 28<sup>th</sup>, got our marriage license, went upstairs to the courthouse, and were married. Our kids and friends were able to watch live on Facebook. It wasn't what we'd planned or hoped for, but it turned out to be a really special day for us. After the ceremony, we drove up to Heyburn State Park and hiked our favorite trail on an absolutely beautiful spring day. We called friends in Moscow to let them know we'd gotten married and we ended our day in their driveway, socially distancing at our pop-up, last minute reception.



We will plan a family get together when life gets back to normal, whenever that is. That, too, will be a special day for us. But I will always remember that in the midst of a pandemic, wearing masks with foggy glasses, Fred and I "officially" committed to spend the rest of our lives together, and that instead of COVID diminishing our day, in some ways it made it even more special.



People who didn't even know us were rooting for us (courthouse staff and the judge, a local restaurant that gave us a bottle of champagne when we picked up our reception pizzas). Our family and friends followed our progress thanks to technology and specifically Facebook. My brother sent us a Spotify link to the song "Going to the Chapel," and we played it as we were pulling into the courthouse. We even fooled our friends by taking a picture in front of our honeymoon spot, a "family nudist resort" in a remote Idaho location. That part wasn't true, of course, but it certainly got everyone's attention.



COVID has been an incredible disruption in so many ways. Thinking about the toll on families, the loss of life especially for our most vulnerable can be overwhelming. It's hard not to think about job losses, the economy, and the future of higher education in this uncertain time. But we've gained things, too—more time with our family, more time to be still and simply think, more time to enjoy a hike in the mountains or a sunset in the backyard. No one seems too busy to get together at the end of the day, safely of course, in someone's back yard or driveway for a short visit or even a pop-up, last minute wedding reception. It's easy to feel a sense of gratitude for things we've been taking for granted for too long. I am grateful to my community, my colleagues and friends here in Idaho as well as friends and family far away who found a way to celebrate our COVID wedding with us. It's a day that was filled with love, hope, and gratitude—the three things we all need now more than ever.

