



MORRISON BRUCE CENTER JAMES MADISON UNIVERSITY

Director's Note

As we near the conclusion of 2020 and begin to see the path towards the end to the SARS-CoV-2 pandemic, I find myself reflecting on the curveball that has been the past year. For me, as for most (all?) of you, this year has been both personally and professionally challenging. While I am saddened by the immense losses experienced by so many this year, I wanted to share some high notes from the MBC as well.



This year pushed the MBC staff in completely new ways, at the same time that all of us were also navigating these same learning curves in the other areas of our professional lives, as well as new routines and restrictions in our personal lives. This Fall semester was unlike any other, but I am overwhelmed by a sense of pride in and gratitude for our students who adapted and allowed us to hold a similar number of programs as a typical fall semester – even though it wasn't safe to even be in the same space together. On the next page, I've shared some of the specific ways in which our students responded to the call to serve and help women and girls achieve their goals of health and wellness.

Additionally, I feel strongly that the MBC was also able to achieve the other part of our mission – training and developing future leaders. As a team, we worked together to innovate and engage, despite circumstances none of us would have ever chosen. We worked through multiple setbacks and iterations of our programs together. These students are now better prepared to go into their future careers and lives and face the inevitable unknowns that will arise.

Looking forward to the spring – we have a wonderful staff assembled to serve the MBC's mission. We have programs dedicated to preschoolers, families with elementary-aged children, college-aged women, adult women, and older women. We have engaging virtual programming, along with plans to have in-person, outdoor, distanced activities as the weather warms up (assuming it is safe to do so at that time). The students we have brought on for the spring semester have all expressed that they are excited to have the opportunity to serve their communities and we look forward to seeing what we're all able to produce together this spring.

Families in Motion: Our students created an innovative and engaging social media-based wellness challenge for families this fall. Families were invited to complete activities together and work to complete a “Bingo” on their monthly card to earn prizes. Over 30 families registered for this program. Our students not only created activities for each spot on these bingo cards each month, but also multiple videos each month outlining concepts of wellness, such as intellectual, emotional, and physical wellness. You can read more in our feature article.



EmpowHER: This series of programs seeks to help women become more comfortable using weight lifting equipment and techniques. This fall, our staff put together two synchronous, virtual programs, along with a social media take-over. It's hard to explain how much extra work a high-quality virtual program is versus a standard in-person program. For each of these programs, our staff worked to (safely) video each exercise, edited these videos to include banners with words to explain the exercise, handouts for the participants to have on hand during the program, and significant materials for promotion.

Women's Health and Wellness: Another way we adapted this fall was to convert our normal 1-day conference for women into a 3-part, virtual series themed around immunity. We invited experts on how immunity is impacted by stress, exercise, and nutrition to share their expertise with us. We received incredibly positive feedback about both the content and format of this series. We plan to keep producing similar series moving forward!

