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NEW PRESIDENT WANTS TO KNOW STUDENTS



14th President, Dr. Greg Miller. Photo Courtesy of Josh McManaway

— By Cassandra Leibengood

On Feb. 7, 2022, Provost Dr. Greg Miller was announced as the new president of Malone. When President Dr. David King announced his retirement in the fall 2021 semester, a lengthy selection process to find the next Malone president began. After a unanimous vote by the selection committee, Miller was chosen as the best candidate.

For many years, Miller has been an integral part of the Malone community and leadership as a professor of history and later as the provost. Early in his life, Miller felt a calling to minister and teach college students so that he could help direct them to great futures.

“Education was like the key to unlock so many things,” Miller said. “So I loved learning. I loved the transformational power of education. I love actually working with traditional age college students because it’s this pivotal time in a person’s life... Ministry is about caring for people in whatever way God calls you to care for people. I would express my ministry primarily in higher education.”

Miller and his wife, Darla, experienced the love and community that the people at Malone offer early on. Not surprisingly, they both have expressed that Malone is a special place with people and an environment that they love, so they chose to raise their family close to campus.

“[MILLER] HAS THE EXPERIENCE, THE KNOWLEDGE, THE SKILL AND THE POTENTIAL TO BE PRESIDENT ANYWHERE”

After years of researching and teaching, Miller became the provost in 2019. This change in position allowed him to have a larger role in taking care of the academics and athletic areas of Malone. Despite not being in the classroom as much, Miller was still able to interact with students, faculty and staff.

“[Being provost] enabled me to come to know and appreciate the work that so many of our colleagues do across campus,” Miller said.

Applying for the president position after the announcement of King’s retirement was the next step for Miller.

In the decision process of choosing the new president, Miller showed board members and president committee members that he had a lot of ideas on how to improve Malone as an institution and for the students. His imagination for higher education and his overwhelming love for the university made him one of the best and ultimately the final candidate for the position.

“One of things that I think is very interesting about him is that he has a very innovative look at how things can operate,” Rod Neuenschwander ‘99, chair of the board of trustees, said. “He’s creative. And he’s not afraid to execute upon that and try that. And that’s going to be a necessary skill... which will prove to be beneficial to Malone.”

“[Miller] has the experience, the knowledge, the skill and the potential to be president anywhere,” Bekah Stranger, senior integrated social studies and language arts double major and member of the presidential committee, said. “He chose Malone because he loves it.”

Neuenschwander and Stranger saw first hand in the presidential selection process how perfect Miller was for the position. His ideas for improving Malone for students and for the Northwest Ohio Community made him stand out as a candidate.

“[I] was looking for somebody who could be an effective CEO, depending on where we want to take the school, with a vision and [to] really re-engage with the church and the community in a big way,” Neuenschwander said. “Miller has proven to be somebody who has both the visionary and the ability to articulate that and execute that.”

“Something that made Dr. Miller stand out is that he is overwhelmingly qualified in every area that we need,” Stranger said. “He’s willing to make tough decisions in the moment for the greater good which is something I think we really need in a strong president.”

All of these attributes will serve Malone in many beneficial ways. Already, Miller has many goals and hopes to accomplish for the next few years and beyond. One of these goals is to be a Christian resource in Northeast Ohio as a university and community.

“I’m excited for Malone to be a hub for Christian culture and education in all of Northeastern Ohio,” Miller said. “[Where] people throughout the entire region come here for events... so we are able to serve the entire region as a resource in terms of Christian culture.”

For the future, Miller is looking into ways to make college more affordable for all students and lessen the financial burdens felt by many students at Malone.

MALONE SERVES SATURDAY

— By Mya Clark

Malone Serves Saturday is a service opportunity for students that takes place twice a month. Students meet at the Barn around 8 a.m. and do approximately four hours of service work. Any Malone student can come in order to give back to their community. These events are run by Michelle Alessandro and Tony Schnyders.

One of Malone Serves Saturday’s goals is to grow and involve as many students as possible. These Saturday service events not only give students opportunities for academic recognition, but also give them an experience in the serving community.

Malone Serves Saturday recently hosted a clothing drive for the men’s homeless shelter Refugee of Hope Ministries. On Saturday, Feb. 12, the ministry workers received many bags of new or thrifted clothes to give to the men who stayed there.

Malone Serves Saturday often partners with the North Canton Church of Christ, which gives food away to those in need twice a month. Together, the two outreach programs routinely provide 600-700 shopping carts full of food to hand out to people who are struggling financially.

Trent McCune, junior exercise science major, has participated in Malone Serves Saturday for three years. McCune was one of the first people to go through the leadership program that is offered alongside the ministry opportunity.

“IF YOU ARE INTERESTED IN SERVING THE COMMUNITY, THIS IS A GREAT PLACE TO START”

“[Malone Serves Saturday] is an easy way to serve others and it is a humbling experience,” McCune said. Malone Serves Saturday is a selfless act of service that anyone from any background can participate in.

Coming up on Mar. 19, Malone Serves Saturday, the program will partner with Lighthouse Ministries of Canton to complete a painting project in downtown Canton.

Another upcoming event on Mar. 26 is a collaboration with Hammer and Nails, Inc., a nonprofit organization in Canton. Students and volunteers will be building a wheelchair ramp for a homeowner in need.

Malone Serves Saturday will host clean-up events on Apr. 9 in partnership with Stark Parks and on Apr. 23 at Beech Creek Botanical Garden and Nature Preserve in Alliance.

Nichelle Mosley, sophomore music major, has been a part of Malone Serves Saturday since she started attending Malone. She is currently in the Serving Leadership Group offered through a scholarship called Visio.

“Serve Saturday helps you see people in the community that are struggling,” Mosley said. “God shows that people need help and need love.”

Volunteers participating in Malone Serves Saturday recently visited a center for immigrants and helped the staff clean the facilities or provide labor work as needed. They dug their hands through gutters, cleaned up trash and provided meals for those who live there.

“[Malone Serves Saturday is] an eye-opening experience that everyone should try at least once,” Mosley said.

“As the body of Christ we were built to serve a community,” Mosley said. Malone Serves Saturday is all about giving back to the community as Malone students.

SNOW, ICE AND ZOOM



Physical Plant Works on Clearing the JC Parking Lot of Snow. Photo by Trent McCune

By Tyler Kirker

Prior to the nearly two-year-long COVID-19 pandemic, a snow day meant being able to skip school or work due to the whim of the weather. Nowadays, with remote work and learning as normalized as in-person activities, snow days instead mean that college classes still happen, albeit virtually.

What did the winters of childhood look like? For many, it meant sitting in front of their phones praying for a call from the school and watching the weather reports all evening, hoping for a snow day. Some even believed that flushing ice cubes down the toilet would do the trick!

“When my brother and I were in elementary school ... we would play in the snow, [doing things like] having snowball fights and making snowmen,” Eddie Johnson, sophomore social work major, said. “The snow gets less and less fun as you get older [though], so later on, snow days just become great days to relax and sleep in.”

In March 2020, when COVID-19 forced the United States into a nationwide lockdown, it was originally thought that the event would merely extend university students’ spring break by two to four weeks. What happened instead, however, ended up changing the accessibility of school forever. Some students already anticipated online schooling to act as a long-term alternative to in-person classes.

“I saw the benefits for people who could manage their time well and were motivated,” Juliea Dworning, sophomore biology major, said. “Plus, remote learning had already been around [before the pandemic].”

The ongoing use of online learning platforms in the event of weather-related emergencies has proven controversial. Students at Malone have mixed feelings about adapting to online studies on random winter days. In addition, several students voice a preference for in-person classes.

“Just because we can go online doesn’t mean we should — especially with [things like] labs,” Dworning said. “As a STEM major, it’s hard to do those virtually, so they just become stressful busy work that doesn’t help me learn.”

“[However, Zoom] is just a technology platform. We’re choosing to implement it,” Dworning said.

“If a ‘post-COVID snow day’ is just a day of online instruction due to snow, then we cannot call them true snow days,” Johnson said.

Malone’s faculty can see a clear difference due to the implementation of Zoom “snow days” as well.

“I think remote learning can be a wonderful option to connect with students on snow days and continue to cover material or stay on schedule,” Lana Sugarman, adjunct professor of communication arts and director-in-residence of theatre, said. “That being said, I do love a cozy snow day that allows for rest and catch-up for both students and teachers.”

Despite seeing the benefits, the student body and faculty alike are struggling with the idea of never having a “true snow day” again.

“There is no substitute for face-to-face interaction,” Johnson said. “God gave us the gift of community, and we are even told in scripture to not neglect assembling.”

“I need the accountability to pay better attention [in class],” Dworning said.

“Because so much of what I teach is theatre or speech-related, I almost always prefer in-person learning,” Sugarman said. “My teaching style is also very dynamic and translates more effectively in a live classroom. The energy between [the teachers and students] is exciting and unique.”

New President, Continued

“I want to put the best thinking that we have, some of the best minds to [figure out] how we can make a Malone education affordable for people,” Miller said. “Because college is expensive and we want to minimize the amount of debt that students graduate from college with and maximize their experience.”

Miller also wants to lean into creating spaces for students and faculty to discuss hard and controversial topics. For many years, Malone has engaged in these topics in various capacities, but Miller wants to encourage all students from many walks of life, Christian or not, to have conversations about life in constructive ways.

“Dr. Miller is very committed to what I think is foundational to Malone and he shares this belief that Malone is a place where people of all types can come together and have a healthy dialogue about everything and anything,” Stranger said. “We don’t need to come from the same place and we don’t even need to come to the same solution. But we’re willing to have those hard conversations while also remaining unapologetically and committedly Christian.”

“I feel like we’ll be able to be more open and also be a closer community,” Nichelle Mosley, sophomore music major, said. “It seems like he wants to bring everybody together or just have more conversations and build us up together as a family.”

Miller and his wife are excited to get to know many of the students on campus. They told students at the Student Senate meeting on Feb. 16 that they want to invite students over to their home to meet and learn more about the different communities on campus.

“We’re going to be present with our students,” Miller said. “It would be my goal that no one could graduate from Malone without at least one time having an invitation to our house in a group small enough that we can get to know them and have a real, legitimate conversation with them.”

And so far, students are excited about getting to know the new president in the coming months.

“After the meeting, I felt like he was very much genuine,” Mosley said. “That was just who he was...Darla’s seems like someone who wants to pour into us and be a woman figure we can look up to.”

“I’m very excited for the student body to get to know him [and] for people to get to know his face so when they see him around they know that this is the president,” Stranger said.

The occurrence of a large change like a new president can bring uncertainty, but Miller has shown that he will bring genuine, good change to Malone. Students can be certain that the new president wants to know them and help make Malone their home.

Regardless of the change in how snow days at Malone occur, when snow comes down, the service and grounds division of the Malone Physical Plant comes out. The employees and student workers of this division work tirelessly to ensure that the campus grounds are cleared for student and faculty use, whether in-person classes are canceled or not.

“[On a weekday], we would work early on the academic buildings first so [they] can get ready for classes to be attended,” Russell Thorn, head of service and grounds, said. “Then we would get to work on clearing the roadways and sidewalks.”

The service and grounds division ensures that students have the safest experience during their time at Malone in a multitude of ways. This includes speaking to Dr. Greg Miller, Malone’s current provost, whenever the conditions look questionable for traversing campus. It is ultimately because of them that on some snowy days students are able to attend class in-person.

“I give [Miller] my opinion of what we’re able to get done,” Thorn said. “[Once] I called him and told him that the campus was completely covered with ice, but we were getting enough salt and ice-melt down that it would be safe to travel [on campus].”

“[Other times I know] we just couldn’t keep up with the snow as it accumulated,” Thorn said. “So it was better to have classes remote and not have to deal with all the traffic with commuters coming on campus and students having to go from one class to another.”

Thorn and the service and grounds division do an immense amount of work for the students and faculty so that going remote due to snowfall can be avoided if it is possible, even with how much it has snowed in Canton in the past two months.

“This has been one of our heaviest snow and ice seasons in many, many years,” Thorn said. “I’ve been here 41 years ... and this compares to some of the storms we had back in the ‘80s. Back then, we had three times as many student workers, and the same five full-time guys [working here today].”

So while students and faculty struggle with losing old-fashioned snow days to using revolutionary online learning, the service and grounds division is working hard to help keep the snow from putting students behind screens.

If you have a request for the service and grounds division to help fulfill a groundskeeping need on campus, be sure to call the physical plant at (330) 471-8258.

Spring is just around the corner, meaning the weather will be warming up and the ground will turn green again. In the meantime, enjoy the snow and stay safe when walking or driving through ice!

Malone Serves, Continued

“Loving your neighbor” is a huge part of being disciples of Jesus. Jesus showed up for his neighbor whether they were poor or rich, and as a serving community that is what Malone Serves Saturday does. They show up for anyone who needs help and loves them no matter who they are.

“If you are interested in serving the community, this is a great place to start,” McCune said. “You won’t regret it.”

Most college students don’t want to wake up early or spend their Saturdays working, but taking four hours to serve the community will open many doors and certainly will not be a waste of time.

“If you are in a class or sport that has a serving requirement, come and join the group,” Tony Schnyders, one of the staff members that help lead Serve Saturday, said.

If you have any questions about Malone Serves Saturday, email Schnyders at aschnyders@malone.edu or Michelle Alessandro at malessandro@malone.edu.



Malone Students Volunteering at North Canton Church of Christ. Photo Courtesy of Tony Schnyders

STAFF

Editor in Chief: Tori Rodgers

Copy Editor: Willow Mantooth

Media Editor: Graham Kondak

Print Design and Layout: Azuré Curtis

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Staff Writers: Mya Clark, Esther Elliot, Tyler Kirker, Rigel Le Claire, Cassandra Leibengood and Ariana Manos

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