

From: [Summers, Greg](#)
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Colleagues,

I'm writing today with a simple reminder to continue the good work you've been doing during the past year to stay safe, and to get vaccinated as soon as possible. I was fortunate to get my second shot last weekend. For the two days that followed, I had a fever, body aches, and chills. It was the sickest I've been in more than a year, which was a lovely reminder of just how effective face coverings, hand washing, and physical distancing have been. It was also the most grateful I've ever been to feel under the weather, because my symptoms were an indication that the vaccine was working! If it's ever appropriate to juxtapose the words scientific and miracle, these vaccines seem worthy of the label. My vaccination site was a large facility with more than a hundred people in various stages of queuing. Our collective mood is best described with two more words that are rarely combined: quiet jubilation.

It will be important in the next few months that we maintain our vigilance even as we gradually prepare for a return to in-person teaching and learning next fall. Chancellor Gibson, our Human Resources office, and UW System will all soon share milestones, guidelines, and policies to shape our return to campus. However, these hopeful steps will be tempered with caution in the near term. Many of you likely saw the [heartfelt warning](#) from Dr. Rochelle Walensky, the CDC Director, earlier this week. The virus is surging globally again, driven by variants that are more contagious, including among children in schools and younger adults. The same dynamic is now unfolding here in the United States despite impressive vaccination efforts. For a good description of the mixture of hope and concern that characterize this moment, I would again recommend the weekly podcast from Dr. Michael Osterholm of the [Center for Infectious Disease Research and Policy](#) at the University of Minnesota. See especially his most recent [episode](#).

We have genuine reason to hope that by June, we can all return to campus and to a more normal way of working and living. Until then, however, we need to continue to limit opportunities for the virus to spread just as we have been.

Thanks for all you're doing and have a terrific weekend.

Greg

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