



Mass testing on campus proves success, mass text message does not

AVAERIE FITZGERALD
Managing Editor

1,077 students, staff and faculty found themselves subject to a mass-testing on Jan. 19, revealing that less than 2% of individuals brought COVID-19 to campus (for a total of 25 positive cases).

Ashland University's COVID-19 Dashboard as of Feb. 2, showed zero new positive cases this week, with 11 active positive cases. Twenty eight students were recorded to be in quarantine as well.

Those who participated in the testing day were welcomed into upper convo by an Ashland County Health Department official, who handed each individual two papers—one to fill out and hand to the nurse, and the other with details on how to find results of the test.

As everyone gathered the courage to get the tools used for swabbing, some were greeted by Ashland University's COVID Response Coordinator, Elise Riggle.

"In terms of what AU did and could control, everything went better than imagined," Riggle said. "The volunteers were amazing—specifically the student volunteers from the Rec Center. [Director of Recreational Services] Janel Molnar's staff helped, without them it would not have gone as well."

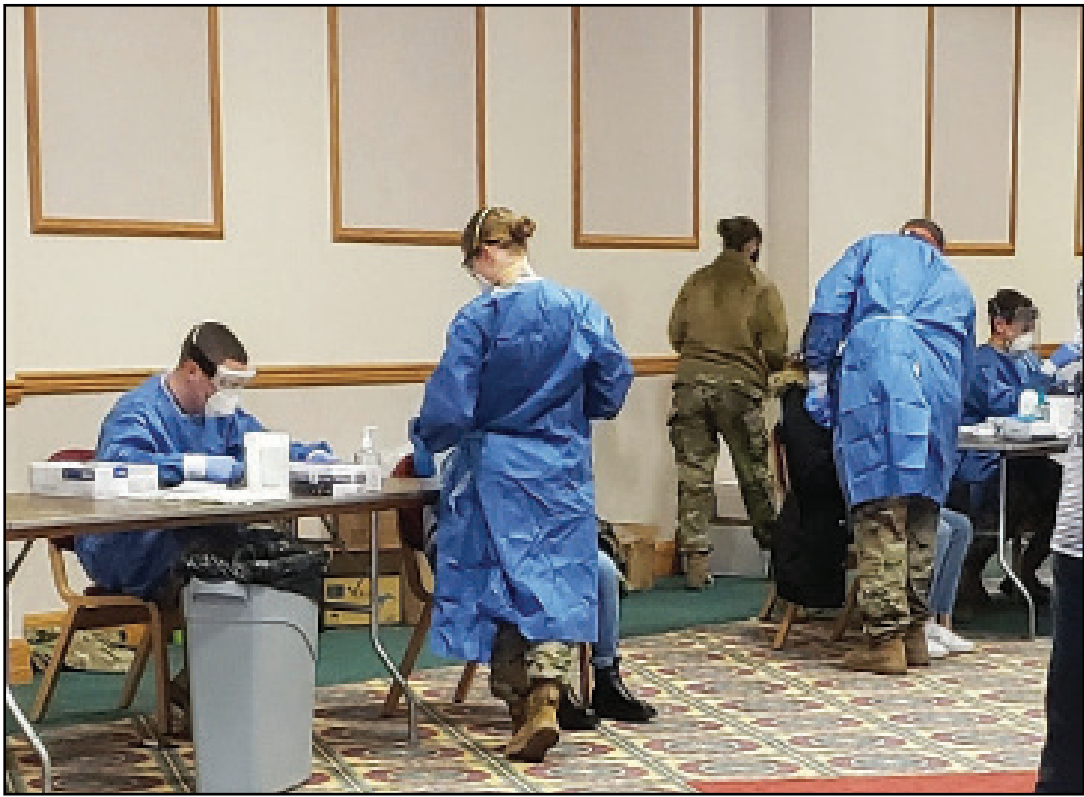
In the six hour testing window on Jan. 19, 1,077 students were able to show up.

One of the only complaints among the students was the length of the line. Traffic picked up in certain hours, resulting in a longer wait than the 20-minute window given to students in an email the previous week.

Some of the Ohio National Guard members who were meant to perform the tests were called back for inauguration purposes, limiting the testing stations available to students from six to four.

"We were still social-distancing and taking precautions, but at certain times in the day the line got longer. That was through no fault of anybody," Riggle said.

Faculty, staff and many student athletes were pulled in to test ear-



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Ohio National Guard administers the PCR test to AU students in Upper Convo on Jan. 19.

lier on Jan. 13, as well as anyone who was not able to make the testing day on the 19. In total, Riggle reported that 287 people were tested on that day.

Student athletes are exempt from testing if they are in active competition due to the frequent testing already being conducted on them. Those who are fully vaccinated or doing virtual learning are also exempt.

250 students reported a recent positive case and could not test.

"The idea of mass testing was to try to figure out, not only who the positive cases were, but to figure out how much our campus was going to be impacted by positive COVID cases," Riggle said.

The mass testing results were accessible to students through the Mako Lab's website (which could be found on the sheet of paper each student received the day of testing).

On the Thursday morning following the testing, students began to receive their results. Many logged on to view the lab's official results; other students were misled by a text sent out by Resident Life, which read "Reporting Positive Test Results" as the subject line.

The rest of the text further explained what to do if the students received positive results, listing the Health Center's phone number and email as further guidance.

This text resulted in hundreds of students calling in to the Health Center, reporting positive cases or trying to get approved for quarantine from being exposed to friends who they thought had a positive case.

In an emailed statement from the Health Center, the representative said, "The Student Health Center did not separate those calls out from other calls received that day. The calls that we did get from that text we tried to alleviate the confusion and assist individuals in how to get their actual test results. It was brought to our attention that the students were given a paper at mass testing on how to view their results."

This caused a retraction to go out, informing students to only report positive cases that come from the Mako Lab.

"There is now going to be a vetting policy for texts, because that was a real learning experience. It was like waking up to fire,"

Riggle said.

Eventually, this issue was smoothed over and students all received their results, reporting them to the Ashland County Health Department and the AU Health Center for next steps.

"The fact that we have just a handful of people who are maintaining this, all things considered, is impressive. I think AU is doing an amazing job of staying afloat," Riggle said. "Ohio State [University] and other places have a lot of punitive actions for not showing up to testing, but we haven't had to do that because everyone has been so gracious about showing up. People care more here, and that speaks to what being an Eagle is."

Recently, Vice President for Student Affairs Dr. Robert Pool and Riggle, who work in tandem, helped introduce surveillance testing to the AU campus.

This idea of surveillance testing was proposed by Ohio Governor Mike DeWine. He encouraged universities to pull 3% of students each week for random testing.

Read the rest on AU-Live.com

AU remembers Dr. Mark Hamilton

KATIE HARRIGAN
Reporter

Ashland University mourns the loss of Dr. Mark Hamilton, Associate Professor of Philosophy in his 39th year of teaching, who passed away on Dec. 27 at age 67.

The campus community reflects on his life as an educator, colleague and friend who left a lasting impact on many.

"Dr. Hamilton was a man who just seemed to be at peace with the world... if you were to talk to him and find out all the things that happened prior to this period in his life, you could tell he was so thankful to be alive," Chair of the Department of Philosophy Dr. Louis Mancha said.

Mancha conveyed that Hamilton had a gift for connecting with students of all different backgrounds and interests. He knew how to establish trust with those he taught and share his love for the discipline.

"Hamilton wasn't just teaching because he loved it," Mancha said. "He really believed the work he did in the classroom was a mission and opportunity to reach others."

Mancha said the AU Philosophy curriculum is heavily shaped upon Hamilton's work and his contributions to the department have helped define AU as an educational institution founded upon Christian ideals.

"Professor Hamilton was a very friendly and amiable colleague," Professor of Philosophy Dr. William Vaughan said. "He valued personal relationships and never allowed philosophical differences to interfere with cordiality in department matters. He really was the ethical model for collegiality in higher education."

Vaughan expressed that Hamilton was very popular among students. In lectures, he was personable, engaging and made complex subjects more understandable through his story-telling style of teaching.

"He loved students and rarely said 'no' to any request. He was not in it for awards, and probably would have politely turned down any such recognition," Vaughan said.

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Eagles' Nest makes the change to Crimson Cup coffee

GRACIE WILSON
AU-Live Managing Editor

Over the last few weeks, students have likely noticed a change when they open their Grubhub app to order from the Eagles Nest. Ashland University's dining services team has decided to bid adieu to Starbucks coffee and make the change to an Ohio-owned brand, Crimson Cup.

While the change seems sudden to students, this is something that has been in the works since Fall of 2019, Fred Geib, Director of Dining Services at AU, explained.

"There's the retail Starbucks, like you have out at [interstate] 71, then there's 'we proudly serve Starbucks,' which is what we had," Geib said.

According to Geib, Nestle bought out the "we proudly serve Starbucks" portion of the company, so the product orders were being handled through a new provider.

This change in provider soon became what pushed AU to change providers for their Eagles Nest Café options.

"We were having issues," Geib said. "Fall of 2019, products were running out. It was a service nightmare from Nestle, and they didn't care."

Over time, problems continued to arise as products were delayed or lost. After approaching Nestle about the lost items, dining services were told to order them again, Geib said.

The products didn't begin showing up until Spring 2020.

"One of the deliveries came the week prior to shutdown [for] spring break," he said. "We're not talking a couple hundred dollars' worth of product; we're talking about \$15-thousand worth of product."

In light of the shipping issues and the arrival of products much later than anticipated, dining services reached out to Nestle to remedy



GRACIE WILSON

Crimson Cup is the newest addition to Eagles' Nest.

the problem.

"We contacted Nestle and said, 'we want credit back for all this product because it's going to expire.' [They] would not do it, [they said] it's contaminated," Geib said.

Though the boxes were shipped and none of the product was touched by employees or used due to the Spring shutdown of campus for COVID-19, the products were not taken back.

"At that point, I said that any vendor that did not respond to our request for refunds or taking product back, were going to be gone at some point," Geib said.

Since the Starbucks chain is widely recognized and favored, Eagles Nest knew that the changes would bring a lot of reaction from the students.

"We knew we were going to catch some flak for getting rid of Starbucks," Geib said. "If you're a diehard Starbucks fan, you're a diehard Starbucks fan."

While the change may have come as a surprise to students, Geib feels that switching to Crimson Cup was the best move and will not change much of what happens at Eagles Nest.

"Some of the flavor profiles might [have] a little variation but they have everything that Starbucks has, it's just a different name," he said. "You can't call something a Frappuccino because they've trademarked that name."

The change to Crimson Cup also gave AU the chance to make a change to more local sources for the services they provide their students.

"[Crimson Cup is a] reputable company...they're local, they're in Ohio, they roast in Columbus—they're great partners," Geib said.

The change in coffee suppliers is also a chance for students to get creative with their coffee choices.

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