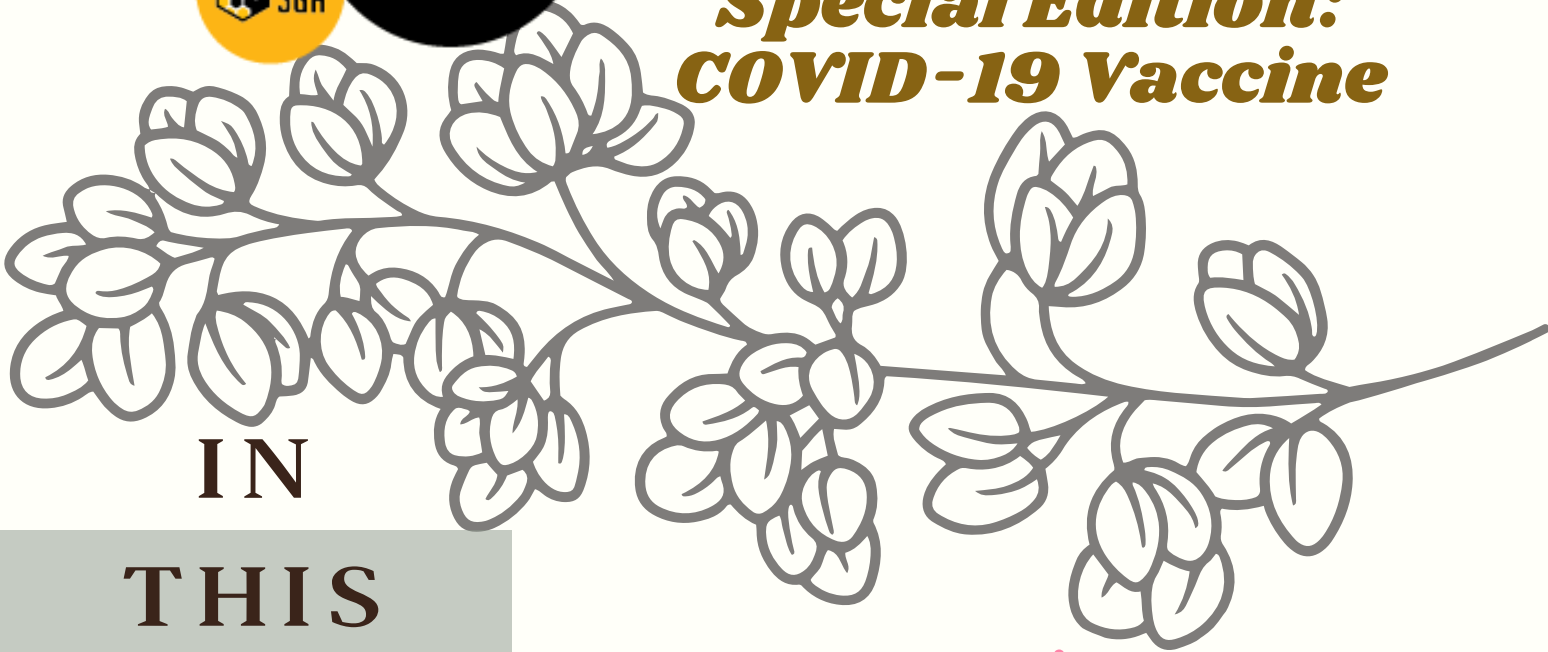




# SGA MONTHLY

## *Special Edition: COVID-19 Vaccine*



IN

## THIS ISSUE

### Tips & Tricks: Finding a Vaccine Appointment

(You might be eligible for the COVID-19 Vaccine and not know it!)

### March SGA Updates

### Retriever Reflections: The Students' Perspective

### Mental Health & Wellness: Debunking COVID- 19 Vaccine Myths

# march

## calling all green retrievers!

SGA will be partnering with RSA and the Office of Sustainability to bring a compost opt-in program for 50 residential students the last month of the semester! For students to participate, they have to fill out an interest form and agree to complete a short online training program. All 50 students will be provided with a compost bucket and compost liner bags which they can use to collect their food scraps in their dorm/apartment! The main compost drop-off bin will be located inside True-grits, in the vestibule in front of the COVID test drop-off (students do not need to eat at True Grits to access it)!

*For more information, feel free to reach out to SGA Senator Menna Nasser ([mnasser1@umbc.edu](mailto:mnasser1@umbc.edu)) or Office of Sustainability's Environmental Sustainability Coordinator Kayla Hickman ([khickman@umbc.edu](mailto:khickman@umbc.edu))!*

# TIPS & TRICKS

## finding a vaccine appointment

BY MILAN SULIBHAVI

### Eligibility\*

If you are unsure whether or not you may actually fall under one of these categories, we suggest looking up the category on the CDC's website.

We are currently in phase 2B which includes the following individuals:

- All licensed, registered and certified health care providers
- Front line hospital staff
- Nursing home residents and staff
- Individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities
- Assisted living, independent living, behavioral health and developmentally disabled group homes, and other congregate facilities
- Law enforcement and firefighters, EMS
- Education staff, including K-12 teachers, support staff and daycare providers
- Correctional health care staff and officers
- Public safety workers not covered in Phase 1A
- Health care workers not covered in Phase 1A, including but not limited to lab services, public health, vaccine manufacturing and other health care professions
- Front line judiciary staff
- Continuity of government
- Food/agriculture production, critical manufacturing, U.S. Postal Service, public mass transit, grocery store employees
- Veterinarians and support staff
- Clergy and other essential support for houses of worship
- Adults age 60 and older
- Individuals who are currently hospitalized AND diagnosed with the following criteria:
  - Cancer patients who are currently in active treatment
  - End stage renal disease patients requiring hemodialysis
  - Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD), especially those who are
  - oxygen-dependent or are steroid dependent
  - Solid organ transplant recipients
  - Sickle cell disease patients
  - Diabetic patients (Type 1 and Type 2)
- Individuals ages 16+ with underlying medical conditions that increase the risk for severe COVID-19 illness
- Individuals ages 16+ with disabilities who are receiving SSI or SSDI benefits
- Individuals participating in Maryland Medicaid EID
- Maryland Medicaid REM recipients
- Individuals receiving TDAP benefits
- Individuals receiving long term services and supports through Maryland's Medicaid waiver and state plan services

\*Eligibility list taken directly from Maryland COVIDLink website, as well as CVS & Safeway's Vaccine Information Pages

### Finding a Vaccine Appointment

Below is a list of student-collected tips on how to find an appointment if you or a loved one is still looking.

- *If you are currently living on campus, you are ELIGIBLE for your vaccine, as it falls beneath the category of "congregate living facility."*
- *You or a loved one can't find an appointment? Use a ZIP Code for Southern Maryland; due to the more prominent anti-vaccination climate in these areas, more appointments are available.*
- *Instead of only looking at mass-vaccination sites, smaller stores such as CVS, Safeway, Walgreens, and Rite Aid provide sometimes easier ways to find and book online appointments.*
- *New appointments usually open up at midnight of each day, or on Mondays for every week. Checking for appointments early in the morning increases chances of finding an open slot.*
- *You may be eligible for a vaccination without knowing it; if you think you may fall under an eligible category, looking that category up on the CDC's website provides an in-depth list as to who counts.*
  - *Keep checking eligibility changes in Maryland as we continue through the phases.*

# MARCH SGA UPDATES

what have we been up to?

## SENATE

- Collaborating with i3b to work on diversity, equity, & inclusion
- Worked on increasing awareness of menstrual products initiative & availability
- Redesigning UMBC Transit App
- Preparing for a Health Fair in April
- Composting buckets will be available this Fall

## FINANCE BOARD

- We will be returning to semester budgets for Fall 2021. The due date is April 2nd for your applications. You must be treasurer trained in order to access the application
- A Virtual Event Survey has been created to gauge the help student clubs and orgs may need when planning and executing an event for UMBC undergraduate students

## TOP FOUR

- Worked with a group of SGA students & Provost Philip Rous to prevent erasure of Free Hour
- Held a mental health initiatives workshop
- Developing a student leadership scholarship!

## DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNICATIONS

- Finalizing the election initiatives, as elections season is very close
- Working on a video to highlight all of SGA's accomplishments this year

## DEPARTMENT OF EXECUTIVE INITIATIVES

- Working with pre-professional advisors to provide support to pre-professional students
- Planning Commuter Week
- Possibility of expanding free software available to students
- Working on Peer Mentoring Initiatives

## DEPARTMENT OF EXTENDED CONNECTIONS

- Working on establishing alumni connections for student mentorship & continued collaborative work
- Developing UMBC Community & Arbutus introductions for freshmen who haven't been exposed to the atmosphere
- Working on projects to make student outreach & connection easier
- Collaborating with Arbutus businesses to incentivize students to take advantage of it as a college town

# ***Retriever Reflections***

HOW DO YOU FEEL ABOUT THE COVID-19 VACCINATION IN  
COMPARISON TO YOUR COMMUNITY?

**"Strongly in favor"**

**"I'm honestly just as desperate as everyone else is to get  
it."**

**"I think it started off as not very tailored towards the  
typical white picket-fenced, profiting communities of  
Maryland. Our Governor stated that Baltimore, with  
predominantly black and indigent residents, received "a  
lot more than it's entitled to" as a response to the scarce  
number of vaccines Baltimore had received. Although,  
more and more vaccines are being distributed and are  
now free, distributions need to be held accountable to  
standards of equity among different parts of Maryland."**

**"I love the vaccine and my community likes the vaccine"**

**"I think the Covid vaccinations are going pretty well in  
my community (Montgomery County)."**

# MENTAL HEALTH & WELLNESS

## debunking covid-19 vaccine myths

BY MAHEERA CHAUDHRY

Myth: If I have already been affected with the COVID-19, I do not need the vaccine.

**Fact: Currently, there is no research on how long or even if natural immunity lasts, so getting the vaccine can help protect you from reinfection.**

Myth: The vaccine was made in a hurry so it is not safe and can not be trusted.

**Fact: There were no steps skipped while making the vaccine and all phases were successfully passed. The vaccine effectiveness on all three vaccines, Pfizer (95%), Moderna (94.1%), and Johnson&Johnson (86%), are very high. This means that once infected with the COVID-19 virus, severe life-threatening symptoms are not likely. There are several reasons for the fast-paced vaccine production, but one of them is that the vaccines were created with a technique that has been in development for a long time.**

Myth: There are very severe symptoms from the vaccine.

**Fact: The symptoms produced after the vaccine signals that your immune system is responding to the vaccine. Regardless, the symptoms tend to be mild and last for a few days after vaccination.**

Myth: The technology used to make the vaccine is very new and has not been used before.

**Fact: The mRNA technique has been in development for about 2 decades and the purpose is to respond quickly to viruses.**

Myth: When we get the vaccine, we are being injected with the COVID-19 virus

**Fact: The two-dose vaccines do not contain the COVID-19 virus, but rather instructions for a protein found on the SARS-CoV-2 coronavirus. This protein is produced by the body so that it can recognize the protein and fight the virus in the future. The Johnson & Johnson vaccine works like a traditional vaccine by introducing a harmless virus (adenovirus) to the body and trains the immune system.**

Myth: I don't have to wear a mask or follow other safety guidelines once I have the vaccine.

**Fact: Although you are protected from severe life threatening symptoms from COVID-19, you may still be a carrier. Further research is underway, but transmitting the virus can put other people at risk of serious complications from exposure to COVID-19.**

Myth: If I take the vaccine, it will change my DNA.

**Fact: The two-dose vaccines are made from mRNA, which does not interact with the DNA at all. Soon after its use, the mRNA is degraded. Although the Johnson & Johnson vaccine uses a different approach, the DNA is not altered in any way.**

Myth: Now that we have the new COVID-19 vaccine, it should be very easy to make vaccines for other diseases.

**Fact: The different viruses that cause the diseases are extremely different from the COVID-19 virus. They also have fast mutation rates, so developing a vaccine that lasts long can be difficult.**

Myth: The vaccine contains a microchip and was developed for the sole purpose of controlling and tracking the population.

**Fact: The vaccine simply contains instructions for the body to produce a protein to help protect you from future COVID-19 infections. There is no vaccine microchip in the vaccine.**