

Transcription for

THE KEY WITH INSIDE HIGHER ED

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THE KEY WITH INSIDE HIGHER ED

EP. 32: STUDENT WELLBEING DURING THE FALL TERM

MICHAEL SORRELL

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PAUL FAIN

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PAUL FAIN: This episode is sponsored by TimelyMD, a telehealth provider whose mission is to improve the well-being of college students by making virtual medical and mental health care accessible anytime, anywhere. With immediate medical care, scheduled and on-demand counseling, psychiatry and health coaching services, TimelyMD partners with institutions to empower students to thrive in all aspects of their lives. Learn more at [timely.md](https://www.timely.md).

Hello, welcome to The Key with IHE. I'm Paul Fain, the host of this podcast and a contributing editor at Inside Higher Ed. The fall term ended before Thanksgiving for many colleges across the country. We spoke with officials at two institutions, Paul Quinn College in Texas and the University of Notre Dame, to hear about this unprecedented term and how it affected the health and wellness of students. Michael Sorrell, Paul Quinn's president, talked about how the work college sought to stay connected with students during an online fall and to help them cope with anxiety. He also weighed on what college leaders really mean when they talk about students' best interests.

MICHAEL SORRELL: The best interest of the student is to be honest about the pandemic, right? And to say, we have no idea what we're dealing with, all right. We don't even know what this is going to do to you long term. But here's what we do know. We've built you all a bunch of really cool stuff that you weren't going to come here if we didn't have, so the debt service is owed on these things. If we don't have on campus, we can't pay for the shiny climbing walls and the lazy rivers that you guys wanted,

right? And we didn't have the self-discipline to tell you no.

PAUL FAIN: Christine Gebhardt, assistant vice president for student services at Notre Dame, talked about the University's COVID Response Team and how it expanded the reach of the University's counseling and health offerings. Like Sorrell, Gebhardt said it was all hands on deck at Notre Dame this fall.

CHRISTINE GEBHARDT: And so we quickly deployed people outside of the health and wellness unit and the COVID Response Unit to come in and provide support to the students. We had people in development and we had people in the library, and we had people in General Counsel, and we had all kinds of people who had skills, either working with students or logistical support or other things like that, that were able for us to really increase our reach to the students and to really solidify and adjust our responses.

PAUL FAIN: All right, let's get to the conversation.

Okay, I'm speaking with Michael Sorrell, president of Paul Quinn College. Michael, how are you?

MICHAEL SORRELL: I'm good, I'm good. How are you doing?

PAUL FAIN: I'm doing well. Thanks for joining me. So we're just on the tail-end of Thanksgiving and I gather that your term is over, but that was case for you even before this crazy 2020.

MICHAEL SORRELL: Yeah, absolutely. I mean, we, gosh, I don't know, it's been maybe 10 years just about that we have ended our first semesters at Thanksgiving. We discovered that there really wasn't any reason to bring people back. And the benefits of sending folks home far outweighed anything else. I mean, one, we gave our students a head start on securing jobs over the holidays.

Two, it didn't remind them of their economic circumstances. I mean, this is something people don't think about. We always romanticize what it's like to go home for Thanksgiving and then turn around and go home for Christmas. And that's great, if you can afford it. But if you're from a family that's maybe an

under-resourced family, a Pell Grant family, that's stressful, because you're thinking, I can't afford to bring my children home at Thanksgiving, and then two weeks later, three weeks later, bring them back home for Christmas. So you wind up having to make a choice. And more often than not, the choice is they spend Thanksgiving with people you aren't their family members. Now, it's wonderful to have some place to go. It's just not so wonderful to being going there if you don't have the ability and the resources to go home.

So we just said, what if we just cut the semester? What if started maybe a week early, or maybe we don't have a fall break, and we just get people home at Thanksgiving and send them home for two months and then bring them back to school. And everyone loves it. The people who love it most are the faculty members, all right, and it's allowed me every year to give my staff bonus time, right? So I tell them, if everyone is finished with their work early, we'll just close the school. And that's found time for you. It doesn't count against your vacation time. It's time you get to have with your family, which is good for everyone.

PAUL FAIN: Yeah, I would imagine even more valuable right now, given the need for all of us to try to stay sane. You know, really fascinating. One of those assumptions about how higher ed works, you back after Thanksgiving. It's developed for highly selective institutions and relatively wealthy students, just unquestioned assumptions. But it sound like, I know Paul Quinn is questioning lots of assumptions about how higher ed should work. Can you talk a little bit about some of the transformation you're overseeing at this point?

MICHAEL SORRELL: Sure. Well, it's important to understand when I came in, it will be 14 years in March, we were broken and we were trying to find a way to survive. And when you're in that situation, it's really quite liberating, right, because you're unencumbered by your history of success, because we didn't have that history of success. So we started thinking about it, if we're going to create an institution for this era of higher education, this era of society, what would that look like? And how would we function if there were no sacred cows? And so everything had to stand on its own merits for now.

And so that produced, we became an urban work college, because it turns out students need... Well first of all over 75 percent of college students today are working more than 20 hours per week. So the idea that people weren't working, that's ridiculous. Everyone was working and they were working because they had to work, not because they were trying to fill up their resume. So why don't we help people with that?

We acknowledge that people are traumatized, they're traumatized by poverty, they're traumatized by the lives that they lead, and frankly, some of them are traumatized by the things they see on the internet. And so we said, well, if everyone's traumatized, how much undiagnosed mental illness is there out there? So why don't we just set a baseline. You come to Paul Quinn, as part of your orientation in the first semester of college, everyone gets a mental health exam, right? So that we can begin to understand what's ailing you and then treat you, not from a position of ridicule, not from a position of weakness, but from a position of acceptance.

We look at all of our majors and our academic partnerships. And, you know, let me say this. One of the things that we believe is that no problem is every permanently solved, that we don't stand around and pat ourselves on the back for who we think we are. You know, we're constantly evolving because society and our students are evolving. And that's just a small, small bit of the types of things that we have done here. But we're open to changing everything. All we ask is that it serve our students well.

PAUL FAIN: I didn't know that about the mental health exam at intake. We all know the disproportionate impact of the pandemic and the recession on Black, Latino, lower-income folks. I wondering in this very challenging remote semester if things that you've learned about your students mental health have helped you adjust and to serve them better in this time.

MICHAEL SORRELL: Absolutely. I mean, we, in a very odd way, we feel as if we were probably better prepared for this pandemic than 99 percent of the schools in the country--in part, because we already had our moment of truth 13, 14, years ago, when we were a year and a half from having to close our doors. And so we don't fear crises, right? We welcome the opportunities that these crises present us. Now, we don't want anyone to suffer. We don't want anyone to be sick. What we're saying is, if we're in this place, how about we make sure that we do the best we can for our institution and our students?

And let's be unapologetic about putting our students' needs first and loving our students. You know, I said something early on in the crisis. I said, you know the schools that are more in love with their students than their traditions are going to be fine. Because if you're more in love with your students, you adapt, right? And you don't adapt in the fake make people good about themselves kind of way. You adapt in the soul-searching, am I living up to the promise that I made my students and their families way, right?

And we have tried to do that, and we make plenty of mistakes. We make them out loud, right? And then we tell you made them and we tell you we're going to go fix them, and then we tell you how we fixed

them, and then we move on, right? And we're not married to this idea that we can't make mistakes. And that forgiving nature, we can forgive ourselves, so we can certainly forgive our students.

And it just, I tell you about that, it's made such a difference, because our students, we are genuinely excited to see them. You know, I've got a staff that is constantly calling the students, checking on them. You know, we hold town hall meetings where students chime in, with students whose phone numbers I have. I call to check on them. It's rarely a day goes by where I haven't spoken to students. Or, you know, my young alums, because they're trying to manage things. And I just think that we in higher education have to accept who our students are today, not who they were yesterday, not who they were 15 years ago, who they are today.

And here's something else people better understand. The majority of students in public education, K through 12, are coming from low-income and under-resourced families. So they're Pell Grant students. So the institutions that are customarily caring for Pell Grant students absolutely have a competitive advantage. 85 percent of my student body are Pell Grant students. So I understand how you love those students. I understand how you make sure they don't feel as if they are outliers. All right, I mean, if you've got 8 percent Pell Grant students, 10 percent Pell Grant students, come on, you can send them to school for free, but there's a cost that they are paying every day.

PAUL FAIN: Absolutely. It's really interesting, the argument that you made of making mistakes and being open with students. It took me to some of the interviews I've done with undergrads about how frustrated they get right now with the kind of toxic positivity. And the college leaders don't mean badly when they do this. They're an optimistic bunch, they're hopeful, they have to be to do these jobs. But students, it sounds like, want to be treated as adults and get it straight and know that this going to hard for the institution and them.

MICHAEL SORRELL: So I just want to push back a little bit. Are we sure that people don't mean harm, right? And what I mean by that is, it's a balancing act. And, you know, I'm a lawyer by training. And early on in my law school career I took a course that taught me about the notion of the best interests of someone, right? In this case, it was a family law course. It talked about best interests of a child. Let's just call it best interests of a student. Best interests of a student, best interests of the institution...

Now, the best interest of the student is be honest about the pandemic, right? And to say, we have no idea what we're dealing with, all right. We don't even know what this is going to do to you long term. But here's what we do know. We've built you all a bunch of really cool stuff that you weren't going to

come here if we didn't have, so the debt service is owed on these things. If we don't have you on campus, we can't pay for the shiny climbing walls and the lazy rivers that you guys wanted, right? And we didn't have the self-discipline to tell you no, okay? So we're going to have to bring you back to school because you've got to pay for this stuff. And we're going to keep you as safe as we can, but a lot of you are going to get sick. Now, come on, we know that was the truth, right? Like we know that was the truth. But the toxic positivity, which by the way, I had not heard that term, I love it, right? I love it.

PAUL FAIN: It's a good one.

MICHAEL SORRELL: Oh, it's fantastic. The toxic positivity was bred from a bottom line motivation, right? And, look, I don't begrudge people who honestly were trying to do right by the students and the institution. I question whether they were being honest with themselves, right? And maybe you thought you could make it work and some places are making it work, right? And I applaud them. I am impressed. I have so much respect for them. But, you know, I question the people who are having large outbreaks and not telling anybody, because that's happening. And that's why people are mad, right? That's why people are mad. I mean, they know you didn't tell them the truth. They know you still aren't telling them the truth.

PAUL FAIN: Totally. A lot of that going around. Well, you know, as somebody who is talking to you students often, can you talk a little bit about the anxiety that you're hearing and the ways that the college is trying to help students stay on track, realizing that resources aren't endless for your institution and many others. And I'm particularly interested, if you can get into it a bit, of about making them feel a little more confident about what comes after college.

MICHAEL SORRELL: Sure. Well, we have a philosophy here where we believe that our next must always be better than our now. All right, I mean, you come to college. The implicit promise of higher education is that this investment will produce an increased outcome, right, an improved outcome. So your now is here, your next is here. So your next must always be better than your now. So that's the promise.

Now, that promise was breaking down for some folks prior to COVID, right, when we saw students who said, now, wait a minute. I didn't get a return on my investment and I'm struggling to find a job now. You know, this isn't going to be popular I'm going to have to say, but we never asked the students how did you do in school, right? I mean, and again, I'm not asking this from the perspective of saying everybody who as A's has jobs, right? What I'm saying is that you were never told that you were going to have a \$100,000 a year job right away. You now, there is, you know, the reality of it is, the better your

grade-point average, the better your economic prospects immediately after graduation.

Now, I would imagine there's some regression going on as you get down the road, but I don't know how much. But I do believe, and I have seen the anecdotal evidence but I've not done a study on it, the better your grades, the better your chances for higher paying jobs. But we have people who are upset about that coming into it. So now you have to really communicate.

Part of the reason why we have the work college is because they thought it gave our students the best chance of being successful regardless of their academic performance. Because if you have an opportunity, we can help you get your foot in the door, then it's about your work ethic, it's about how you engage. Because we understand that every rose doesn't bloom on the first day of spring, okay, so we can't depend on the idea that every single student is going to be ready for an amazing opportunity because of their academic profile. Some folks just need a little help getting in the door. And once you get them in the door, you can't get them out, right? They're extraordinary. And some people who show well on paper stink it up. I mean, it's just... It balances out in many respects.

So, you now, we started the work program in a way to give people a competitive advantage that comes from, let's call it, poll position, all right? We get you there first. You're there, while everybody else is in school, you're interning for a year, so you're interning first and second semester. So you have a chance to really take root. Okay, that's important. So now in this era where the economy took a hit and people are really, really scared.

And one of the things that we don't know how to solve for, like just being perfectly honest with you, 90 percent, well, 85 percent of our students are on Pell Grant. And so they go home and their lives are a lot more challenging than they would be at school. That wears on them. Because what we done is we've lifted them out of the trauma of poverty. And we've given them a place that is safe and stable and going to be fine. In the midst of that, in the midst of teaching you how to exhale, we've plopped you right back into from whence you came, because we can't do anything about that, right? I mean, it's a global pandemic.

And now, now we stress that. Now the students are... Our surveys show 90 percent of students are working 40 hours a week or trying to work 40 hours a week. 51 percent of the students are primary caregivers for kids, right? Not necessarily their kids but someone in their familial unit's children... So you're working 40 hours a week, you're going to school full time. And for us, they've been doing it since March, in effect, right? Because we sent them home in March. We sort of start the beginning of the

school year in the summer, right, so we have a full-fledged summer school. And now we're into this, so you are two and a half semesters into this hard life. And they are discouraged.

And, you know, we're still being honest. We're like, it's going to be really hard to bring you back in the spring. We don't have a vaccine. I mean, I told that students at the beginning. We cannot bring you back. We don't have testing, reliable testing, and a vaccine, because you're going to get sick. And now we're trying to modify. We're going to do a beta test with a bubble around some of our athletes, because we can keep them here. With a regular students, we can't. And so we're in Texas, which is, you know, I mean, the lack of leadership on this issue here has been astounding, right? I mean, so we're dealing with these things that, it's a hot spot. You are in jeopardy and the things that you like to do as a student place you in even greater harm. And it's scary. And the students are scared, they're tired, they're anxious, they're fragile. Our counselors are working overtime to try and help the students find peace, but it's hard. It's really hard.

PAUL FAIN: Yes, big challenges for your students and for your institution I know. We'll leave it here. Thanks so much are talking with me, and, you know, getting to the end of the challenging years, in 14 years of a journey, the model is one I know a lot folks around the country are really curious about for good reason, so I appreciate you talking about it.

MICHAEL SORRELL: No, no, thank you for the opportunity. Thank you for caring about the wellbeing of the students. Not enough people are asking these questions.

PAUL FAIN: Yeah, I hear you. It feels like it's starting to get more attention now, though, and the mental health piece in particular. So let's keep in touch. And hey, I hope you get some time off, as well as our colleagues.

MICHAEL SORRELL: [UNCLEAR] You're welcome. [LAUGH]

[MUSIC]

PAUL FAIN: If you're looking to go even more in depth in IHE's news coverage, check out our special reports. These deep-dives feature rich data and reporting, as well as thoughtful, substantive analysis you can trust. Visit insidehighered.com/special-reports, to view the topics we've covered and to purchase

the report that best supports your area of work or study.

So I am speaking with Dr. Christine Gebhardt. How are you?

CHRISTINE GEBHARDT: I'm good, thank you.

PAUL FAIN: So here we are, the end of a very unusual semester. Can you talk a little bit, I know this is big question, of the work that you did this fall with students on the mental and other health issues? What were some of the most common ones you saw and how did the University respond?

CHRISTINE GEBHARDT: Yeah, so thanks, Paul. It was a very challenging semester. It was one that offered a lot of opportunity to learn with our students. We started out the semester by steaming up what I would call the COVID-19 Response Unit. This is a health and wellness unit made up an interdisciplinary team and which I and other leaders within the campus were on the steering committee. It was, had multiple components. First, basic education. How do we teach students about health and wellness during a COVID-19 semester? The second was testing, which is an incredibly important part of the toolkit of keeping students safe and healthy. The third part was quarantine and isolation support, providing students not only with particular housing, but meals, care, daily health check-ins, mental health support. And then a release team that helps students know how to care for themselves after they were released. And then, most importantly, really trying to expand our services beyond University Health Services and the University Counseling Center. Really trying to use expanded hours, virtual resources, telehealth resources, as well as different strategies of addressing the students' ongoing needs throughout the semester.

PAUL FAIN: So that's obviously a lot, with Notre Dame relatively well resourced. But I'm guessing still a challenge for your staff to do all of that. How did you cope with that? I mean, we're able to tap outside folks? And when did you come up with the plan? I mean, how fast were you able to pull all of that together?

CHRISTINE GEBHARDT: Yeah, well, so we planned all summer long as to how we were going to work with the students and care for them. The best laid plans, though, within two weeks we had a major uptick in our cases. In fact, you know, we really had to rethink because we didn't anticipate the volume so quickly. We knew that there were going to be multiple outbreaks, but we didn't anticipate when those outbreaks were going to happen as early as they did.

So it was within the first two weeks of school and we are very fortunate at Notre Dame, not only in access to resources, but people. And so we quickly deployed people outside of the Health and Wellness Unit and the COVID Response Unit to come in and provide support to the students. We had people in development, and we had people in the library, and we had people in general counsel. And we had all kinds of people who had skills, either working with students, or logistical support or other things like that they we were able for us to really increase our reach to the students and to really solidify and adjust our responses.

And as a result of that really great influx of people, we're able to reenvision things, were able to reenvision things, we're able to respond more quickly, so that when we got our other upticks throughout the semester, particularly around the middle of the semester when our students were tired and they weren't sleeping as much as they would. And they got COVID fatigue, as so their safety measures weren't as strong. And then towards finals and cold season, and as students were moving indoors. And so the things that we utilized to kind of help mitigate safety had to be rethought. And so a lot of great people participated well beyond what we assumed was going to be a health and wellness initiative and actually became a Notre Dame all-campus initiative.

PAUL FAIN: You know, higher ed, always an adventure. You work in the General Counsel's office and now you're working on student health and wellness. So I was part of the early coverage of Notre Dame's spike and you all were definitely in the maelstrom, we call could tell. Did that change things for you, just the attention that you all got? I'm assuming students and families were aware of that. And I can imagine that made for an even more stressful period for you.

CHRISTINE GEBHARDT: You know, families, at first everybody was scared, right, because things were happening quickly. But people really rallied. The students were amazing. When we told them, we're taking a hiatus for classes for two weeks. They didn't necessarily want to, but they knew it was important. And they were incredible. They doubled down. They really helped each other. The faculty were incredible in shifting from, we started out with 85 percent of our classes in person. And that was something that we were able to continue after the hiatus, but we all went virtual. And faculty rallied, staff rallied, OIT rallied, the students rallied, and for two weeks, we hunkered down. We changed our engagements, we changed our programming, we changed who students were fed. We changed our cleaning protocols. And so we were able to quickly come out of it.

And from the lessons learned, we were able to change how we programmed. So, for example, we created what we called the Library lawn in the North Quad, excuse me, South Quad lawn. We did more

adventures outside. We made sure our students had opportunities to connect in different venues that were not normally how we would program or how we could engage with them. We utilized outdoor athletic spaces to provide movies and to provide encounters where they could let off steam. We opened up areas for studying that were never used for studying. We had outdoor fire pits. So we really had to work with risk management to say like, how do you do this and how do we do it in a way that ultimately is safe for the students, but also gave them opportunities that we never thought about doing before?

We also really took advantage of people who really weren't concerned about our students and utilized them to make those phone calls, to do those check-ins, because what we learned is when we went virtual or with students in classes and using social distancing, our normal net of people like having eyes on students weren't as frequent. And so what was happening is our nets to catch students early on in distress were not in place the same way. And so we had to rethink how is it that we're going to catch students early on when they're distressed so that they don't evolve into crisis. And then if they do evolve into crisis, how do we catch them very quickly?

Quarantine isolation proved to be a really interesting balance between keeping students safe, but also attending to their mental health, because I say often we asked a lot of our students this semester. We asked them to virtual, we asked them to socially distance. We asked them to be masked. We asked them to start out where only roommates could be in a room to then sections, and then hall, and then our hope was for interhall interaction, which we never got to. But our hope for the spring is that we will. And our students adapted beautifully.

You know, there were behavioral challenges, but we asked the most of we asked the students is when they had to go into quarantine and isolation, because they're naturally social creatures. College is an experience where you connect with people. And when we saw that students were going into quarantine and isolation, that created an elevated sense of anxiety. It increased worry about being able to remain engaged with classes, as well as how to, you know, you're alone in a room for a number of days. How do you being to connect that is safe but also real and authentic? And that was really, that took students time to figure that out and for us to figure out how do they not just engage with people who are health experts but actually pastoral as well as social, and can encourage them to still remain connected with their residence halls through Zoom or virtual programs.

PAUL FAIN: You know, as a lay person from afar, remembering the beginning of the semester, I certainly felt skeptical that you all and everyone could pull it off to the degree that you have. I mean, did you exceed your expectations on all of this when you look back at the end of the semester?

CHRISTINE GEBHARDT: Yeah, I mean, I do think we exceeded our expectations in many ways. I mean. And I think where we exceeded our expectations is when we felt short, or when we were challenged. You know, as tired as everybody was, nobody wanted to give up, because everybody believes what we were doing was important, that knowing that from our spring where our students were like, it was learning but it wasn't the learning I wanted. And faculty saying like, yes, I can do online but I know that my students aren't grasping. And so it was always this balance of, are we crazy? Shall we go online? Versus we know that there's a value of in-person education and how can you do it well, and how can do it safely, and how can you do it that it's even effective? And those are three very different things. And really trying to balance all of those was a great feat.

Again, we learned a lot. For example, we didn't have breaks. In order to get the students in early and get them out before Thanksgiving, we took away fall break. Well, now we know that for our students mental health, we can't do that. So in spring semester, we have built in restoration days. We did a restoration week during fall break, an opportunity for students to think about, okay, how I am going to recruit, or what normally would be my fall break to get through the second semester? And the students were great, and they were like, yeah, this is really wonderful, but you got to give us time to do the restoration. So, you know, thinking about how do we do restoration from the very beginning, like how do we go in the semester with restoration in mind. And that's something that faculty, staff, and students have to collaborate on.

I think the other thing we learned is really assess the needs ongoing. So our McDonald Center for Student Wellbeing did surveys over the summer and twice during the semester to figure out what's going on with the students. Where are they? What do they need? What are their concerns? And then we met frequently or regularly with the students to say, and faculty and staff, to say, like, okay, how can we change our quarantine and isolation? How could we change our academic requirements? How can we change finals so that students are, you know, you can't say less stressed, because COVID created stress, but to really mitigate that level, the extra level that we knew our students were undergoing.

PAUL FAIN: Yeah, it's really interesting and it totally makes sense to me that among all this, taking a break might get lost. And, you know, we think about the increasing body of research showing students' anxiety and uncertainty is paramount. You know, obviously, their health is as well. But, you know, when you look at, you've mentioned a little bit about this spring, and how different it might be. What are some of the University's plans to keep tabs on students, keep in touch in terms of mental health and academic counseling, that might be different than the fall?

CHRISTINE GEBHARDT: Yeah, well, I think it's a whole picture, right? So one thing that we talked about is

we're going to do more robust testing, right? So we can keep ahead of those upticks, that we can actually by staying on top of it and increasing our surveillance testing, we're going to adapt to the cold weather, because that's a huge concern. Like we were lucky here in Indiana. We had no snow before our students actually left us. Well, there's no way in February you're going to miss Indiana snow. So we're going to adapt our cold weather programming, and like I said, giving them minibreaks, and providing targeted programming, again, in a more proactive as well as responsive, like, looking at the rhythm differently, knowing how the rhythm is going to shift.

The work itself doesn't change. The care of students doesn't change. It's the how that's changing, and who's doing it. And like I said, it's more a cross-campus. Faculty are engaging in thinking about restoration and health and wellness, and promoting that, which is really amazing, because we know students really respond to when their faculty both talk about it, but also model it. So we've really been intentional, not just looking at the health and wellness of the students but also the faculty and staff, because it's faculty and staff that undergird the learning and are there for their students. So I think one thing that we've learned really, really well, and we're going to pay more attention to is how do we provide those resources for our faculty and staff as well.

Utilizing the fact the Gen Z really like technology and are really comfortable with online formats. So utilizing programs such as Calm or Headspace or mindfulness programs so that students can engage with that whenever they want. Engaging telehealth platforms, not just for physical health, but also for mental health. So we not only have our Counseling Center and our Health Center online with telehealth, but we also have a third party vendor, TimelyMD, that we constructed or created a platform called Fighting Irish Care. Again, it has a health and wellness coaching component. It has counseling. It has Talk Now. It has also if a student is at 3 o'clock in the night is anxious, has somebody that they can access and talk to 24-7.

You know, we are restructuring how we do move-in so that they start in safe, and how they move out so that they leave us safely. We did a massive exit testing and well as entrance testing, and we feel really good about that we know our students came in and we had a good sense of what their health and wellness was, and they left us with a good sense of, you know, okay, yes, you can always pick it up traveling, but we knew that they left our campus knowing that they were negative, or if they had tested positive, that they were going to remain here until they were safe to return home. That has a huge impact on our students, because I can't tell you how many people were anxious while they were doing their exams also feeling like, am I going to be safe to go home? Am I going to keep my family safe? And our students were really concerned about that. And by providing a very robust testing protocol, we were able to provide that assurance, that, yes, if you go home, you will be safe and your family will be safe, and that you can enjoy these 10 weeks with them. And then when you come back to us, we'll have another robust testing entrance and a scaled move-in so that, again, when we all come back, you can

know when you engage with your friends that you and your friends are going to be safe.

PAUL FAIN: Well, Christine, thank you so much for taking time to walk us through this very unusual fall. And speaking of restoration, I hope you get a little time off to recover over the holidays as well.

CHRISTINE GEBHARDT: Okay, thank you so much.

[MUSIC]

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That's it for this episode. Thanks very much for listening. I'll be back next week, going to talking about online education and partnerships with Andrew Clark, the CEO of Zovio. Hope you'll join me.