

Young People VS. The Vaccine

Gen Z & Millennials Hesitate to Get the Shot

By Douglas Molteni • Live Wire Staff Writer



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As vaccinations start ramping up, life is slowly starting to come back to normal. But studies are showing that some young people between the ages of 16-30 are choosing not to get vaccinated against Covid 19.

Covid is certainly not close to ending; more than 500,000 people have died in the United States alone and more keep dying every day. Since the vaccines became available late last year, more than 183 million people in the U.S. have at least gotten one dose. But some people just don't want to get it, and many of them are young.

A vaccine sentiment survey conducted earlier this month by Verywell Health, a trade organization, among 1,000 people of all ages, showed a slight uptick in vaccine acceptance in April over March. But vaccine rejection and hesitation remain high: In the most recent survey data, 43% of respondents said they won't get the vaccine or haven't decided if they will. Among those, nearly half, 47%, of those under 30 are rejectors, compared with just 17% of those over 50.

Why the hesitance among younger people? Some feel like they don't have to because



they are younger and believe the disease does not strike them as often as it does older people and, even if they did get Covid, they would get a mild, survivable case.

Jason Stulpin, 22, of East Hartford, said he doesn't want to get the vaccine because he doesn't trust it. He said he



Carmella Corey, 21, of Windsor, agreed.

"I believe it's important to get the vaccine for the people who cannot get the vaccine," Corey said, referring to people who have medical conditions, like an autoimmune disorder, that may prevent them from being vaccinated.



or people who believe that all vaccines, even those to prevent deadly childhood diseases like measles and polio, are harmful and unnecessary.

"Even though vaccines have relatively been proven safe," said Hall.

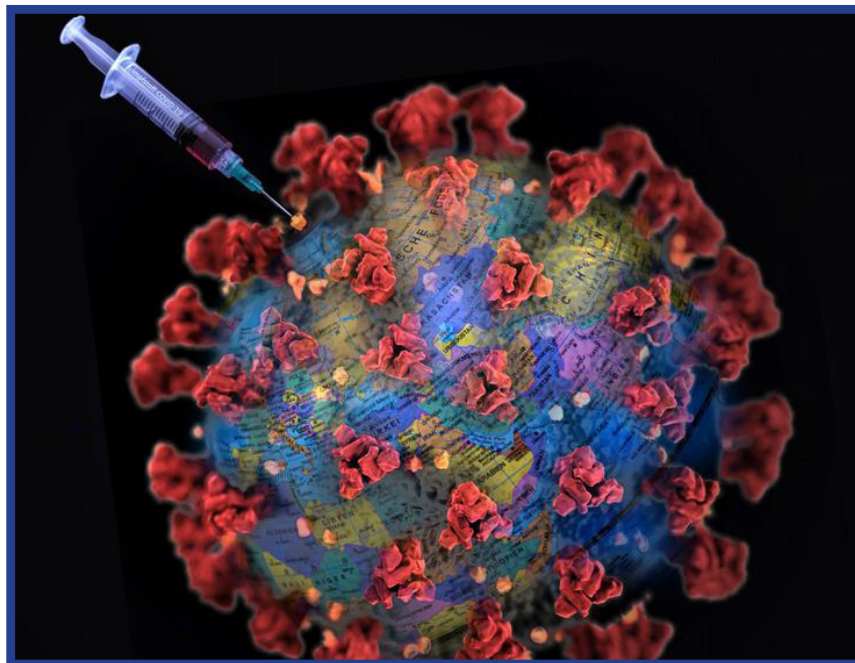
But Hall said that he plans to get the vaccine as soon as possible, and that having one should be a requirement for returning to campus in the fall.

"I believe that once the vaccine and appointments are readily available, without shortages or bottlenecks, that it then should be mandatory to take in order to be on college grounds," he said.

Requiring a vaccine for students to return to campus is a discussion college administrators are having all over the country. More than a dozen colleges and universities nationwide have announced that they will require students to be vaccinated for Covid-19 before they return to campus

for the fall semester, the CT Mirror reported in an article on April 13.

But on many campuses in Connecticut, the discussion is still evolving. Earlier this month, Wesleyan University in Middletown became the first Connecticut university to announce that students will be required to receive the Covid-19



believes that there is a whole lot of misinformation surrounding the vaccine and he has heard people have mixed physical reactions after getting it.

"Some handle it well and some have bad reactions to the vaccine," he said.

Others do plan to get vaccinated. Matt Burr, 23, of Middletown, said he plans to get the vaccine as soon as possible because "I believe in science."

Manchester Community College Student Government Association President Stefan Hall said he thinks there are two reasons many people are hesitant to be vaccinated. The first is how quickly the vaccines were developed.

"There is a lot of skepticism around it because of how new the vaccine is," he said.

The other reason is that some are staunch "anti-vaxxers,"

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Young People VS. Vaccine

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vaccine before returning to campus this fall. Students who don't have a religious or medical exemption will have to verify with the university that they are fully vaccinated, while faculty and staff are being encouraged to get the vaccine as soon as they can. Yale University in New Haven will also require vaccines for students.

MCC and the other colleges and universities in the Connecticut State Colleges and Universities systems are waiting to hear from its leaders on the topic. In a press conference on April 19, Connecticut Gov. Ned Lamont said he was not ready to impose a mandate.

"I think right now, a lot of our schools are saying, 'We're going to do this through encouragement.' ... We'll find out later in the year if that's enough, and we'll be able to make some determinations later," he said.

At issue is whether it's legal for them to mandate vaccines and if herd immunity can be achieved without requiring vaccination.

Stulpin disagreed with a mandate.

"I don't think it should be required, because I think that is encroaching on people's rights," he said.

But Hall argued that widespread vaccination is important to ensure the safety of everyone on campus, especially because of the mixed age range of people on campus, which includes the elderly, small children and everything in between.

"We're all here to better ourselves and our futures, so we may as well make it a safe environment as possible to ensure we have futures as bright as possible," he said.

MCC is #1!

We knew it to be true, but now there is official confirmation: MCC is the best college in the state.

Earlier this month, Manchester Community College was named Best Community College in Connecticut by Intelligent.com.

Intelligent's list of the Best Colleges in Connecticut was compiled as part of a national review assessing 150 universities and colleges and comparing 346 educational programs. MCC ranked number one among state community colleges based on its estimated costs, available programs and variety of course-offering modalities and accreditation.

Intelligent.com is a free, privately-supported website focused on providing unbiased, accurate, and fact-based information on a wide range of issues.

MCC Commencement Will be Virtual for Second Straight Year

By Michael Slusarczyk • Live Wire Staff Writer



The coronavirus has been present in the U.S. for over a year now. With that, people have been forced to adapt to the changing times. These changes have been felt in all corners of Manchester Community College, but one of the most challenging hurdles for the school is planning the annual commencement ceremony for graduating students.

This year's commencement ceremony, like last year's, will be a virtual affair, mostly. But this year there will be an opportunity for graduates to come to campus and engage in a little pomp and circumstance.

MCC CEO Dr. Nicole Esposito will greet graduates Wednesday, May 26, and Thursday, May 27, from 4 - 7 p.m. in a drive-through event to take pictures and personally congratulate them. Graduates can wear their caps and gowns and bring their degree covers with them. There will be professional photographers on-site taking both pictures and video. This in-person event is exclusively open only to graduating students, and masks will be required.

The photo op is a change from last year's event, which was all virtual and caps and gowns weren't given out. Umesh Vig, Director of Student Affairs Operations, said this event is safe but still celebratory.

"It's a huge achievement. We have students who come from such diverse backgrounds, and they work very hard; and they want to celebrate," he said. "But we also want to make sure they're safe at the same time. We're still offering for them to participate in some celebration on campus."

A virtual commencement ceremony is also planned for noon on Thursday, June 10, according to a bulletin released by Student Affairs Operations. It will feature a virtual panel of messages from prominent figures such as

Connecticut Gov. Ned Lamont and Esposito, as well as messages from faculty and staff throughout the school. The commencement speaker will be Dr. Carol Lynn Curchoe Burton, a 2000 MCC graduate who went on to obtain a master's degree and a doctorate in the physiology of reproduction.

While other colleges like the University of Connecticut are holding small, in person ceremonies, there are still many health risks involved in carrying out an in-person gathering. Connecticut's current reopening plan would only allow a maximum of 100 people indoors, and outdoor gatherings would be limited to a select number of people in order to still comply with state guidelines.

Laura Gorecki, vice president of MCC's Student Government Association, is graduating and said she agreed with the choice to hold another virtual ceremony because the logistics of trying to hold an in-person commencement would be tough.

"This would cause MCC to turn families away," she said, "and as this is a hard thing to do, we have opted to have a virtual graduation where everyone in the family of the graduating students would be able to watch the event."

Although the nature of this commencement will be far from traditional, graduating MCC students will still be able to obtain caps and gowns from the Follet Bookstore @ MCC. Caps and gowns will be available starting Tuesday, May 4, through Tuesday, May 25. The bookstore will be open on Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. Graduates will also be able to drive up and pick-up caps and gowns at the Bus Loop on Ramey Drive near the Bicentennial Band Shell from 2 - 5 p.m. on Wednesday, May 19, and from noon to 3 p.m. on Saturday, May 22. Esposito and other members of the faculty and staff will be handing out regalia those days.

For more information about commencement visit www.manchestercc.edu/current-students/commencement/. Graduates opting to meet with Esposito for the cap and gown Drive Through Event and photo opportunity are required to RSVP to Vig at UVig@manchestercc.edu by Friday, April 30.

Area Restaurants Surviving, Though Not Yet Thriving, as 2nd Summer of Covid Approaches

By Andrew Melia • *Live Wire* Staff Writer

Restaurants and their owners are about to face another challenging summer with social distancing requirements, outdoor seating and strained budgets and staff.

Although Gov. Ned Lamont last month lifted restrictions for restaurants and allowed them to go back to 100% capacity, the rule requiring six feet of distance between tables is still in effect. So even though the quick rate of Covid 19 vaccinations means the country is emerging from the pandemic slowly, for restaurants the end is not near.

“We can’t go back to normal anytime soon,” said Helmar Wolf, co-owner of the Mill on the River restaurant in South Windsor.

In the past year, the capacity at the restaurant has decreased, causing rippling decreases in staffing levels and income, said Wolf.

“There are huge expenses to run a restaurant, which include

taxes, rent, and paying your employees,” he said. “And if you can’t make enough money to do these things, then you won’t be able to run a business.”

Many eateries have come to rely on take-out to make up for some of the

helped replace some of the money lost when the seating capacity of the bistro went from 87 to about 46 last spring.

“Before then, we didn’t really do a lot of takeout,” he said, “but

we’ve created a good takeout business and curbside pickup and things like that, and we’ve had a lot more sales from that than I have seen before.

Hopefully, if that stays consistent with where it’s at with the numbers, and we get the people at home it will be a good thing and we can keep that going to increase in business.”

Like it did last summer,



Photo courtesy of Forbes.com

the Bistro may be able to do outdoor seating for the summer. Earlier this month the governor extended outdoor seating rules through the summer and those rules may eventually become permanent. So may some other practices.

“For COVID...our customers are required to wear masks when they come in until they sit, all staff is required to wear masks, we have hand sanitizer for signing checks and handling pens or touching computers screens, and any of that stuff,” said Wolf, adding that he and his staff just have to be creative.

But if another pandemic were to arise, “...we wouldn’t survive,” Wolf said.



losses from indoor dining. Luke Greika, of Bistro on Main in Manchester, said curbside and takeout



Photo courtesy of ABC.com

Come to See the Yard Goats, But Please Bring Your Mask

By J.P. Bonilla • *Live Wire* Staff Writer

Hartford Yard Goats fans will be able to yell “play ball” this summer when Dunkin Donuts Park opens May 13.

Minor League Baseball had to cancel its 2020 season, due to the impact that the Covid-19 pandemic had in the world. However, the majority of the leagues in the MiLB are planning on playing this year, with protocols in place.

Jeff Dooley, who is the head of broadcasting and media relations for the Yard Goats, said the organization wants to make sure that the public, the stadium staff and its players will be safe.

“Some of the guidelines that we have arranged are pod seating for up to six people and fans must always wear their mask, although they will be allowed to take their masks off if they are eating or drinking,” he said.

The Yard Goats feel really confident that their fans will comply with the protocols, said Dooley. Rules will also impact how attendees pay for food, drink and mer-

chandise.

“We will also be going cashless, in an attempt to keep everyone safe and only credit cards and gift cards will be accepted,” he said. “It is a very exciting time, since it will be the first time that Yard Goats baseball has happened since 2019.”

Despite protocols, fans are eager to be able to see live baseball in the park again. Christian Maldonado, who has gone to many Yard Goats games in the past, is one of them.

“I am very excited and comfortable to go into a Yard Goats game,” he said. “I feel that with those protocols, it is a lot safer to be able to go into a game and if I have to wear a mask for the whole game to watch baseball, then it is absolutely worth it.”

Game tickets go on sale April 26. For more information about the team and its 2021 schedule or to purchase tickets visit <https://www.milb.com/hartford>.



Some MCC Clubs Limp Along Online, But Look Forward to the Fall

By Skylar Gaulteau • *Live Wire* Staff Writer

Manchester Community College has had an amazing reputation for its clubs. Each year students

joined a roster of existing clubs or created their own and continued their participation until graduation.

But club participation has suffered during the sweeping pandemic.

From the Gaming Club to the Drama Club, the Student Government Association and the Live Wire student newspaper, clubs that used to be able to be interactive and meet

on campus regularly have instead suffered a raincheck caused by Covid-19.

Some clubs have been successful using other resources like Zoom to keep their group meetings going, but it isn't the same as meeting and interacting in person.

ICE radio, the college's student run Internet radio station, is one of the few that has been able to keep going.

“What's changed is the ability to just interact with each other face to face. When that's gone, boy you miss it,” said Albert Kim, who teaches communication and advises ICE radio. “More of our meetings and interviews are taking place through Zoom.”

But far fewer students have participated than in prior years, said Kim.

“We used to have anywhere between 10 and 15, sometimes 20 people when we were able to meet in person,” he said. “Online there are about 5 to 10 that meet every

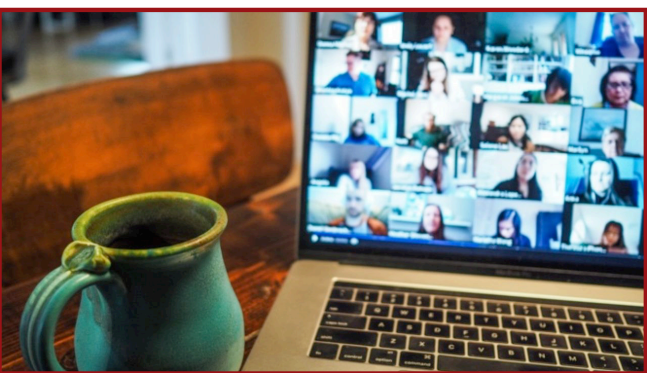
week.”

Although there are bumps in the road for MCC clubs, there are some positives to meeting virtually, said T.J. Barber, director of Student Activities and SGA advisor.

“The only silver lining to this is that you don't have to walk across campus, you don't have to drive to campus, you can be on your couch, turn on your phone and you're in the meeting,” said Barber of twice monthly SGA meetings, which are held online via Microsoft Teams.

Will the clubs be able to meet and coexist in person again during the fall semester, when more classes are planned for on campus and the cafeteria, library and other campus activities are expected to return?

“I hope so,” said Stephania Davis, professor of Communication and advisor of the Live Wire. “Meeting online just doesn't allow for the interaction that being on campus and soaking up the campus environment does for clubs.”



Chauvin Should Spend the Rest of His Life Locked Up

By Jahshua Hardy-Everett • Live Wire Staff Writer

If you have not been following the news, let me tell you that former Minneapolis police officer Derek Chauvin was found guilty of killing an unarmed George Floyd last May. The trial began March 30 and the jury didn't even deliberate for 24 hours before finding

justice on him.

May 25, 2020 was a day that will change the lives of many African Americans forever. Chauvin detained Floyd by laying his knee down on Floyd's neck. For nine minutes and 29 seconds, Chauvin held this position over Floyd. All the while, Floyd was helplessly shouting "I can't breathe!" If that is not a signal to get off him and assess the situation differently, I do not know what is. Eventually, Floyd became unresponsive. I will never forget the shocking video footage of Floyd screaming and begging for his life while being pinned



Photo courtesy of CBS.com

him guilty on all three charges of murder on April 20.

Chauvin has had a history with violence while on the police force and it is about time someone brought down the hammer of

under Chauvin's knee.

His death along with those of other African Americans killed by police, including Breonna Taylor and, recently, Daunte Wright, have sparked the "Black Lives Matter" movement, a movement aimed at ending

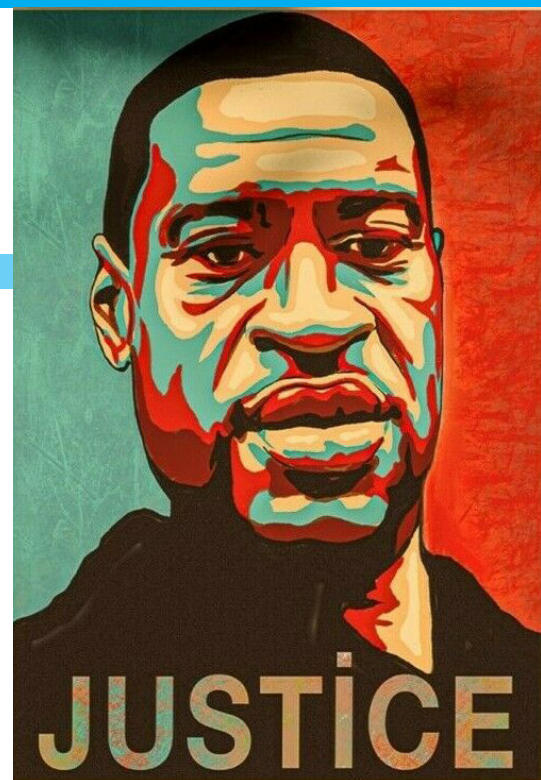


Photo courtesy of Pinterest.com

police brutality and racism, and to hold police accountable for their actions. It is a movement I stand tall and proud to be a part of. Being an African American man myself, I fear for the day that I get pulled over by a cop and he or she escalates the interaction to a degree that will end my life.

The killing of Floyd was set in motion when Floyd allegedly used a counterfeit \$20 bill to purchase cigarettes at a grocery store and the clerk called the police. Just \$20!

If you want my opinion on all of this, the verdict on Chauvin was correct! He killed an unarmed man with excessive use of force. During the trial, medical experts testified that Floyd died from a lack of oxygen. Not from his heart condition, or drug use or any other outside variable, but the fact that a 200 plus pound man was cutting off Floyd's supply of oxygen.

Next comes the penalty phase of the trial, where Chauvin's defense attorney will do everything he can to make sure that Chauvin gets the minimum sentence. He could get anywhere from 15 to 75 years in prison.

But I feel he should atone for his crime and be locked up for a long, long time.

My sentence: life without parole. That's, after all, what George Floyd got.



Photo courtesy of Fortune.com

Our Best Shot:

Why we should all be getting vaccinated

By Marie Sirois • Live Wire Staff Writer

If you have ever eaten fast food, let a dog kiss you on the mouth or used expired makeup, you are not allowed to worry about what's in the Covid-19 vaccines.

It seems that, ever since the pandemic began its rampage last year, the world has been awaiting its end, or at least a preventative measure that doesn't involve always wearing a mask. As luck would have it, we got three. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention have authorized and recommended the Pfizer-BioNTech, Johnson & Johnson, and Moderna vaccines for the prevention of Covid-19. The Johnson vaccine is on pause for now, but it will likely be available again in a few weeks.

Despite some doubts, these vaccines have promising implications.

"All currently authorized and recommended Covid-19 vaccines are safe, are effective, and

reduce your risk of severe illness," according to a statement on the CDC website.

While no one vaccine is recommended over another, it is strongly encouraged that everyone who can get a vaccine does so as soon as possible. There are some who are put off by the lack of information available on the long-term effects of Covid-19 inoculations. There are some put off by vaccines in general. However, I do not believe there is any reason to distrust a vaccine recommended by the CDC.

Clinical trials for any vaccine must first show that they are safe as well as effective before they can be authorized, including Covid-19 vaccines, according to the CDC. Despite an inability to monitor the long-term effects of these vaccines, they could not be recommended by the agency if



Photo courtesy of Reuters.com

they were not safe and effective at preventing illness.

Just look at the numbers. The Pfizer vaccine was found to be the most effective at 95%, and the Moderna was close behind with 94.1% during its clinical trials of thousands of patients over the span of several months.

It is also highly important that everyone gets vaccinated as soon as possible.

"People are not considered fully vaccinated until two weeks after their second dose of the Pfizer or Moderna ...vaccines, or two weeks after a single-dose of Johnson & Johnson's Janssen COVID-19 vaccine," according to the CDC.

So it is imperative to make the choice to get vaccinated now if

we are to return to some kind of normal this year.

It is equally important that every person, not just a few, receive an inoculation. Some experts predict 70 to 80% of people in the U.S. need to be vaccinated before the country can achieve herd immunity, which is resistance to the spread of a disease within a population based on immunity in a high number of individuals. This should be the goal for all of us.

Therefore, if you've eaten a sandwich purchased from a gas station, touched your face after handling money or just didn't enjoy a year of quarantine and "unprecedented times," I strongly suggest you get your COVID-19 vaccine.



By Andrew Mella • Live Wire Staff Writer

Last summer, the majority of us did not get to do much of anything due to the Covid-19 lockdown and restrictions. Lots of attractions were either limited in capacity or closed altogether. However, I hope this summer is going to be different. Since many people have already gotten the vaccine or are planning to get it, restrictions should be lifted even further relatively soon.

This summer, I hope to visit some amusement parks nearby, since my family and I did not get to do that last year. My brother and I love riding rollercoasters and various other types of rides. Particularly, I would love to go to Lake Compounce in

once.

Another thing that I hope to do this summer is go to a baseball game. In the summers of 2017 and 2018, my parents, my brother and I were fortunate enough to see our favorite baseball team, the Boston Red Sox, play. Tickets to see a game at their home stadium, Boston's Fenway Park, are very expensive even for just one person. In 2018, the average ticket price was \$68 per person. So, we plan on seeing them in an away game for a cheaper price like we did in the summer of 2018. In particular, my family has been thinking about going down to Camden Yards

My Plans For Summer?

Rollercoasters, Baseball & Travel

Bristol, Six Flags New England in Massachusetts, and maybe Hershey Park in Pennsylvania. In addition, one amusement park that I have never visited but would like to is Six Flags New Jersey, mainly to try this very popular roller coaster known as "Kingda Ka". If we get to an amusement park this year, I hope to try one of the slingshot rides, even if it's just

in Baltimore to see them play against the Orioles. We've been talking about this for a few years now, and hopefully this is the year that we get to do it.

The third thing that I would like to do this summer is go out west again. In 2016, my family and I visited Las Vegas, the Grand Canyon, the Four Corners, Arches National Park, and a few other attractions. Although I wouldn't mind visiting those places again, I would like to see a little bit more. One place we have been thinking about visiting is Yellowstone National Park in Wyoming. I did a presentation on the park's Supervolcano for a class before, and I want to see it in person.

All in all, I hope that my family and I get the chance to do all the things that we did not get to do last summer. As soon as travel restrictions are lifted, we will be able to go wherever we wish and hopefully not have to worry. I truly look forward to visiting new places, trying new things, and just having fun.

The Highs and Lows of Covid-era Late-Night Shows

By Moira Donohue-O'Sullivan • Live Wire Staff Writer

They say that laughter is the best medicine, and while it's no vaccine, it's the only thing Americans could really turn to during the past year of the Covid-19 pandemic. At the same time that we were hearing harsh updates on the virus, we could wash them down with a punchline or two. But it wasn't easy to get to a point where late-night talk shows could be in production, and over the past 12 months they have gone through many different formats. From Zoom interviews in their apartments to skeleton crews back in the studio, some models have been more successful than others.

The biggest impact has been the lack of a live audience. Though many are back filming in their studios like Jimmy Fallon and Seth Myers, they have only a few essential crew members and their house bands on set with them to provide feedback on their material. In the past, whether or not a joke landed depended on the energy of the audience. Laughter on set fuels the hosts and their guests and not many viewers notice laughter's impact until it's gone.

Even when hosts upgrade from video interviews to in-person guests, the energy is completely different. It feels like you're watching them record a podcast more than entertain on a stage. While I hoped the intimacy of these audience-less interviews would come through, it still feels

cold and, well... distanced. On a recent episode of "Late Night with Seth Myers," Myers welcomed actor Kevin Bacon to the stage, exclaiming "A human! A real human!" Bacon's entrance was matched with applause from two lonely crew members and felt far from triumphant.

"The Tonight Show with Jimmy Fallon" and "Late Night with Seth Myers" have gone back to filming as similarly as possible to their previous format. Though guests may still video-call in, they have tried to mimic their usual glitzy format, wearing full suits and performing in a large (empty) studio. "The Late Show with Stephen Colbert" decided to find a middle-ground between Colbert's filming at home style and his studio, opting for a replica of his New York city office on the floor below the famous Ed Sullivan Theater, where the show used to be taped, before lockdowns. It feels more professional than his home set-up but still close to how the rest of us are experiencing things.

The show that has mastered residential production, in my opinion, is "The Daily Show with Trevor Noah," which has been renamed for the past year as "The Daily Social Distancing Show." A year in and Noah is still shooting from his New York City



Jimmy Fallon Zoom show with Sting. Photo courtesy of Variety.com

apartment, with video interviews and recorded segments from his correspondents. Noah has spent a year hosting in an array of hoodies with stubble on his chin and an expanding afro, working from home like the rest of us. What makes his show more successful than the others is that his comedy is not dependent on a live audience. His humor has always been smart, direct, and genuine, which is how his apartment performance feels as well.

Fallon notoriously laughs constantly during his interviews, to the point of it feeling put on at times, and without the adoring crowds to feed this energy he falls a bit flat. Noah doesn't need that energy to land a joke, and because of his mellow, relatable disposition he can also tackle more serious topics, like the Black Lives Matter movement and other social issues that would feel too heavy for Fallon's banter. He can be straightforward direct to the camera and follow it with a few well-placed jokes. The show's ratings did not drop during the pandemic, and editing of the show is now quicker, leaving no awkward lulls for non-existent laughter.

Another high point is how the Daily Show correspondents have put together their own video segments. On an April 5 episode, Desi Lydic did a story about the high number of women who left the work force this past year. Instead of making on-the-nose jokes about childcare being the

chief reason, she showed her Zoom interviews with female experts being interrupted by crying children. We saw in real time how difficult it is for women to get work done and also be the primary caregivers for their families. It was subtle but hilarious and showed the issue in context rather than explaining it as an abstract idea. This is how Zoom segments should be: using the format to its advantage.

Less successful but worth some respect is James Corden's attempt at filling his studio audience with socially distanced crew members, with whom he makes funny conversation before starting his monologue. "The Late Late Show's" crew gives a strong effort to laugh louder than is natural, but it feels strange and uncomfortable for everyone involved. The gesture toward showing Corden's relationships with his team is appreciated but doesn't make up for the grim new format. We miss Carpool Karaoke!

As we prepare to leave the pandemic behind, I wonder how smooth the transition back to production as usual will be. Will audiences feel as comfortable in a group of strangers as they once did? Or will they be so excited to be back in person that they have more energy than ever before? Will the showrunners bring anything they've learned this past year into future shows or will they all be ready to forget it ever happened?

In any case, one thing is certain: we can't take laughter for granted.



Late Night with Seth Meyers. Photo courtesy of LA times.com

Farewell to the Evening of Fine Foods and Friends

By Moira Donohue-O'Sullivan & Skyar Gaulteau • Live Wire Staff Writers

For 27 years, the annual fundraising event Evening of Fine Food and Friends, formerly known as the Evening of Fine Wines, brought hundreds of people to Manchester Community College's campus in late April to raise money for student scholarships. And it did, in the millions.

Attendees, who included local celebrities like Geno Auriemma and a "Top Chef" contestant, enjoyed food prepared by the Culinary Arts students, heard music from the music program's Jazz Ensemble and Chorus and bid on donated items brought together and presented by dozens of the MCC faculty and staff.

But the last one – April 26, 2019 – was the last one. The Manchester Community College Foundation, which funded much of the event and distributed the proceeds, announced last month it was retiring the event.

"The Manchester Community College Foundation and the office of Institutional Advancement will be looking at an effective strategy that makes sense for the needs of the college while being manageable in terms of the size and availability of resources to implement," wrote Mike Jordan-Reilly, director of MCC Public Relations, in an email. He promised more details later this year.

The annual event was a lot of work, with a lot of value, especially for those in Culinary Arts, but worth it, said Ricardo Aragon, who teaches Food Preparation and worked with students to plan the menu each year.

"It was me giving my students the

responsibility as well, as managers, to run certain sections of the event. It's very rarely that colleges or



A student chef poses next to the giant cupcake stand with a variety of flavored cupcakes served for dessert in 2014. The college was celebrating its 50th birthday that year.

our department, every single class is involved, so I will be missing that, us coming together as a community, my department with the whole entire college working for a great cause."

Aragon said he and his students tried to be creative with each year's offerings.

"One of the coolest things we did...was to construct a huge cupcake stand to feature our 50th celebration of campus," he said of the 2014 event. "Another one..."



Attendees use their cell phones to place bids on items in the Silent Auction in 2019.



The MCC Chorale, directed by music professor Carolina Flores, with her back to the camera, greeted guests as they arrived at the 2019 event.

we did sort of like a groovy Jell-O mold. It was like the 70's with the tie dye stuff, and it was kind of cool because it's something that is almost like a taboo... like it's a Jell-O mold, who's gonna eat that! But it was infused with wine and liquor... so that was fun as well."

Students with ICE Radio, the college's student radio station were also involved, from doing "red carpet" interviews as attendees arrived to playing music during the live auction and at the end of the night for dancing.

"The red carpet interviews right in front of the book store were always fun! We'd find dignitaries, and VIP's and employees of the college, other community supporters who would always return for that event every year," said Kim, adding that the interviews gave his students great experience at a live event."

For Aragon and Kim, the end of the event marks the end of an era.

"Am I going to miss it? Yes and no, but just like a young faculty person I feel that sometimes change is great," Aragon said.

Kim said he was optimistic about the future.

"Last year and this year has really been a wash," he said. "I'm just so enthused to try and get the campus reopened to the public so we can have some semblance of public gatherings and celebrations and better fundraising efforts here on our campus."

Aragon said he already has some ideas.

"Whether it's a dinner, or it's another reception, trying to get involved with my students and other faculty and colleagues, I'm excited to bring donors and invited guests to campus to see new ideas that we're coming up with," he said. "I'm excited to work with the foundation again to create a new event with our local community. So, I am looking forward."



Faculty members Jeanine DeRusha, left, and Maura O'Connor, right, celebrate with MCC CEO Tanya Millner, center, at the 2019 event.