



Alumni Spotlight

Kelly McGinnis Beck '98



Kelly McGinnis Beck '98 is celebrating her second term as National President for Alpha Sigma Alpha (ΑΣΑ) sorority, which was the organization that helped her find her home during her time at Millersville. Originally from Boyertown, Pennsylvania, Beck came to Millersville to study business administration and found herself feeling homesick during her first semester living on campus. Eventually, she learned that many of her friends were members of ΑΣΑ. This inspired her to join, which offered Beck two things: the social connections she was searching for and unexpected leadership experience. “I missed my family, I missed my [high school] friends, and the sorority brought in that family component for me. I hardly ever went home after I joined,” she laughs.

Beck's MU chapter advisor for ΑΣΑ, Paula Foreman, inspired a level of dedication in her that is likely to credit for her position in the sorority today. “She really was a role model in terms of what lifetime membership means and that you join a sorority and it's not just the four years that you're in college, but it's for life.” Foreman has remained active on

campus, in the sorority, and in students' lives. Beck greatly enjoyed her experience at Millersville, and was also able to bring her skills to other Alpha Sigma Alpha chapters across the country. She went on to join Alpha Sigma Alpha's board and has served for 12 years. “Now here I sit as National President, which is not anything I would have thought of while at Millersville.”

The nation's response to COVID, Beck says, exemplifies the need for individuals to learn new soft skills, which people can learn in organizations. Organizations allow students to move away from theory and into practical decision-making. “The ability to learn and adapt is a key skillset” and it begins with joining an organization.

Beck advocates, “if you're going to be a part of a service organization or club, *be* a part of it, *be* involved. You don't have to hold a leadership position to be a leader.” Joining a team offers an opportunity to gradually contribute and to develop transferrable skills for the future. “I would encourage everybody: don't be afraid to take that chance. Yes, you might stumble and fall; there's learning there. But what if you don't and you didn't take the chance, you would never know where else you would go.”

In addition to presiding over Alpha Sigma Alpha, a volunteer position, Kelly is also CEO for PolyCore Therapeutics, a biopharmaceutical company that develops treatments for neurodegenerative disorders.