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To: [ProvostNotes](#)
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Good morning, and Happy Valentine's Day!

I hope everyone enjoyed the sunny weekend, capped off with Super Bowl Sunday. I'll admit it: "2022 Tracy" cared nothing about the teams playing, but "early 2000s" Tracy loved the half time show.

Just a few announcements and reminders this morning:

Student Speaker for Commencement: Know a student who would be an inspiring speaker at Commencement? You know you do! Please encourage a graduating student to apply. [This website](#) gives all the details and links to the student speaker application.

OTC Night at MSU: Come join us at JQH Arena tomorrow night (2/15) for Missouri State Bears men's basketball against the Indiana State Sycamores. It's OTC night, so all employees and students get half-price tickets. If you don't have your OTC ID, simply tell them at the box office that you're an employee and would like half-price tickets.

Classroom Open House: February 23-March 4 we are encouraging instructors to open their doors to other faculty so we can watch/share/support each other and our teaching practices. Several of your colleagues have already signed up to host and attend, but the more the merrier! Information and sign-ups are available [here](#).

OTC Cares: Appropriate for Valentine's Day...Dr. Tiffany Brunner, director of OTC's Middle College, recently received a "love letter" of sorts from the mother of a former Middle College student, who is now pursuing a Cybersecurity degree at the University of Tampa:

When I received the notice about my son being on the Dean's List at the University of Tampa, I felt that I had to reach out to the staff at OTC Middle College, to share this information with them and you. My son is a graduate of your program and that has everything to do with his successes now. When he started the program, he hated school, was frustrated all the time, had low self-esteem, and lacked purpose. He was miserable in high school and wanted to drop out to get his GED. My husband had attended a luncheon several years ago, where someone explained what Middle College was & how it worked. He remembered that meeting, reached out to your staff, and we were able to get my son on board with it.

It changed him! He thrived! He loved the responsibility of being treated "like an adult" - to get to class, to turn assignments in, to handle the ins and outs of college life. He loved having teachers that were passionate & interested. He felt like he was learning & doing - not just given busy work. They invested in him & he felt it. The staff was constantly checking in with him, and all the students, to make sure they had everything they needed to succeed - from school supplies to breakfast to a friendly smile and word of encouragement. He made friends and found his self-confidence that had been missing since he had to give up the sports he

loved (due to an injury).

So thank you and thank you to all of OTC Middle College for what you are doing! Your program IS making a difference and I'm so thankful that it was available for Ben. If you ever have people that are on the fence about the program, I would be more than happy to talk to them!

As I read this, I wondered where this young man would be today had it not been for the Middle College. And what if OTC didn't exist at all? I have no doubt that similar stories play out hundreds of times each year across the OTC system. How fortunate we are to do such meaningful work with a purpose. We are changing families, our communities, and our world every single day.

Have a great week!

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