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Spring 5-1-2021

### Protecting The Nest: Contact Tracing And The COVID-19 Pandemic At Otterbein

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#### Recommended Citation

Meyers, Andrew, "Protecting The Nest: Contact Tracing And The COVID-19 Pandemic At Otterbein" (2021).  
*Masters Theses/Capstone Projects*. 84.  
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**OTTERBEIN**  
UNIVERSITY

# Protecting the Nest: Contact Tracing and the COVID-19 Pandemic at Otterbein University



## Otterbein University Contact Tracing Program

Focused on minimizing the spread of COVID-19 at Otterbein University.

Served under Danielle Kilboy - Head Athletic Trainer at Otterbein University and Director of the Contact Tracing Team.

Required cooperation among several different departments on campus including: Contact Tracing Team, Athletic Department, Student Life, Dining Services, Academic Faculty, etc.

Contact Tracing Team Mission: Provide the best college experience possible to Otterbein University students while keeping everyone on campus safe and healthy.

## Goals

- 1) Improve Project Management Skills
- 2) Learn how to effectively use new methods of communication
- 3) Progress as a self-motivated leader who can be trusted to carry out tasks independently on a regular basis
- 4) Be a knowledgeable resource for members of the Otterbein community who have concerns about COVID-19
- 5) Become an effective contact tracer in order to help slow the spread of COVID-19 on the Otterbein campus

## Experience

My experience started initially by completing the COVID-19 Contact Tracing course offered through Johns Hopkins, which immersed me into the world of contact tracing which I had been completely unfamiliar with before. In the beginning of the fall semester in August 2019, the Otterbein Contact Tracing Program consisted of just Danielle Kilboy and myself, and we initially handled all COVID-19 cases among students on the Otterbein campus. Although we had both gone through the training program, there were many situations throughout the semester that we could not possibly prepare for and we would have to continue learning as we navigated the school year. Our missions was simple yet challenging, keep the campus and everyone on it as safe as possible.

My role as a contact tracer began with a positive COVID-19 test on campus and a call from that student into the Otterbein COVID Support Line. Once that call was processed, I was tasked with getting in touch with the positive case and explaining to them the information I needed such as when their symptoms had started, who they had been in contact with (within 6 feet for 15 minutes or more), and which locations on campus they had spent time in. It was also my job to get in touch with all of the contacts who had been identified by the positive case. After all of that, we needed to establish a plan for each student to return home or find a space on campus where they would be able to isolate/quarantine safely.

There were many challenges that arose throughout the school year such as: man-power within the contact tracing team, limited quarantine/isolation dorm rooms on campus, communication among team members on online platforms, contact tracing members of the Otterbein community that I knew on a personal basis, and non-compliance with COVID-19/contact tracing guidelines.

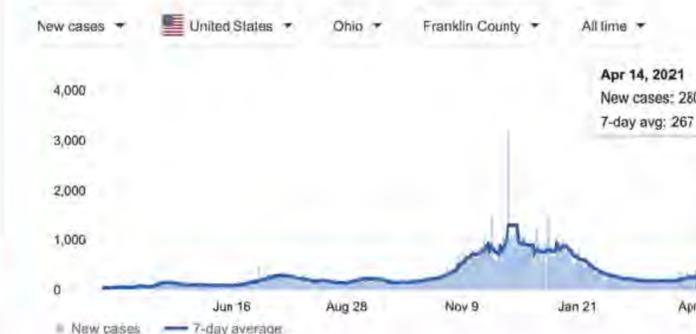
This experience was especially valuable for me in developing my communication skills and becoming more knowledgeable about the COVID-19 pandemic and all of the guidelines for how it can be best managed. I am most thankful for the people within the Otterbein community that I was able to form relationships with throughout this process and the positive impact that we were able to have on Otterbein University.

**SPRING 2021**  
**PROTECT THE NEST**



## Daily change

From The New York Times · Last updated: 13 hours ago



## Campus Outcomes

- 1) Otterbein was able to offer undergraduate and graduate students a hybrid-model class schedule during 2020-2021 academic year as opposed to 44% of US colleges and universities who relied on fully or primarily online instruction (Smalley, 2021)
- 2) In-person dining was available on the Otterbein campus for almost the entire school year
- 3) All Otterbein athletic teams were able to participate in OAC competition at during the 2020-2021 school year
- 4) Students at Otterbein were able to take part in extracurricular activities such as band, student government, greek life, and other clubs/organizations on campus
- 5) At no point during the 2020-2021 school year was Otterbein forced to shut down campus or quarantine all students on campus like several other universities in Ohio

## Future Considerations

Contact tracing is a skill that will continue to be needed in the years to come.

The lessons learned from working as a member of the contact tracing team will translate to all different aspects of my life and career moving forward.

This experience was never perfect and we are still learning as we go.

Recommended that future MSAH students try to find a practicum that can help make a positive and direct impact on the Otterbein community if possible.