

Take a look at the journey to becoming a cannabis influencer on Instagram on page 14.

Read how DePaul students are affected by gender is this special issue



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‘I’m optimistic’

Two years on, the battle against Covid-19 continues

BY JACKSON HEALY
Nation & World Editor

A whole lot can happen in two years. On March 11, 2020 — just over two months after the U.S.’s first confirmed case of Covid-19 — the World Health Organization officially declared Covid-19 a pandemic, solidifying the notion that SARS-CoV-2 would soon ravage nearly every corner of the earth.

733 days, 457 million cases and over 6 million deaths later, Covid-19 has radically reshaped the world and continues to inflict unprecedented damage as government and public health experts continue attempts to mitigate its mass casualties.

Despite Covid-19’s rapid rise, public health scientists across the globe have cooperated since the pandemic’s impetus to strengthen one another’s efforts against the disease.

“It’s honestly incredible when we think about the fact that every time there’s a new variant, we know there’s a new variant because someone’s sequencing it,” said Paige Larkin, director of molecular microbiology at NorthShore University HealthSystem. “New collaborations have formed.

New communications have formed as a result of this pandemic. We’ve never really had such a worldwide effort to stay informed about pathogens, and that’s really a beautiful thing.”

The U.S. government’s initial response was not nearly as cohesive. As Covid-19 cases spread into every state, the federal government took a particularly hands-off approach regarding public safety measures, forcing state governments to determine and enforce their own protocols.

“There was a time in the beginning where states were bidding against each other for masks and for medical PPE from manufacturers because the federal government wasn’t really distributing what they had and wasn’t going to buy or coordinate,” said Craig Klugman, Vincent de Paul professor of health sciences at DePaul. “So the states were sort of on their own negotiating these things.”

Furthermore, what medical equipment the federal government did have saved in the Strategic National Stockpile was neither sufficient in quantity nor quality to meet the pandemic’s scope and severity, and logistical failings ensured

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Pi Day has always been a slice of life

BY AMBER STOUTENBOROUGH
Arts & Life Editor

One of the most important holidays and annual celebrations of the mathematical constant π is today. March 14, also known as Pi Day, is a classic American holiday created by Larry Shaw in 1988 and was recognized as an official holiday on March 12, 2009. For Chicago, celebrating Pi Day means supporting local businesses to search for the best pie in the 312 zip code.

One of Chicago’s most popular bakeries, Sweet Mandy B’s, is known for the best sweet treats in Lincoln Park. You can spot the bakery a mile away with its bold yellow exterior and big windows opening up to the teal walls and pastel designs inside. Founded in 2009, they have expanded the business to two separate locations to share the joy with other communities.

“I love that we are such a staple in our community, people have been coming here for years telling us they get their cakes here every year,” said Jenna Collins, a Sweet Mandy B’s employee. “We have a lot of regulars which is amazing to get to know them and personalize their orders.”

Sweet Mandy B’s Streeter-ville location will be selling pie slices for \$3.14 today as well.

While Sweet Mandy B’s continues the Easter classic baker theme, artistic style is not lost on newer pie makers.

For Sarita Hernandez, their pie project called Sarita’s Pleasure Pie shop is inspired by sex positivity in the queer community.

“The pie shop started as a side project with my friends since I would be the one to bake the ‘birthday’ pies dedicated to the

day they came out as a birthday,” Hernandez said. “I want my pies to center around pleasure through food and make pastries that my friends could eat.”

Hernandez’s pies are all vegan and made personally by themselves. What began as a sweet treat for friends became a community favorite in McKinley Park during the pandemic.

“I started selling my pies to people during the pandemic to make some extra money and ended up really enjoying the support and love that I got from my own community,” Hernandez said. “I made themed pies based on stay-at-home orders, like long-distance hug pie, or very lonely lemonade pie.”

Hernandez wants to accommodate everyone’s financial situations so the focus is more on enjoying the pie than the

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