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Marlene Quaroni - Florida Catholic

## Vaccinations equal good 'STU-ardship'

### St. Thomas University hosts pop-up vaccine site for incoming students



Photographer: MARLENE QUARONI | FC

Nurse Isabel Ruiz vaccinates sports administration student John Whale Aug. 20, 2021, in the Goldbloom Convocation Hall of St. Thomas University. Miami-Dade County Public Health workers administered COVID-19 vaccinations to university students and staff during the pop-up event.

MIAMI GARDENS | Move-in day for new students entering [St. Thomas University](#)'s six dormitories gave both students and staff an opportunity to help themselves and others by getting vaccinated against COVID-19.

University administrators said getting vaccinated represents being good stewards, which is a theme at STU.

“We are STU-wards, we take responsibility for our actions and how our actions affect others,” said Jeremy Moreland, STU provost and Chief Academic Officer, pointing to the logo on his blue polo shirt. “Today, we are offering students and staff a convenient opportunity to get COVID vaccinations right here on campus. Although most have already gotten the shots, some were skeptical, scared or too busy.”



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Nurse Ana Camejo vaccinates law student Alfredo Ravinet Aug. 20, 2021, in the Goldbloom Convocation Hall of St. Thomas University. Miami-Dade County Public Health workers administered COVID-19 vaccinations to university students and staff during the pop-up event.

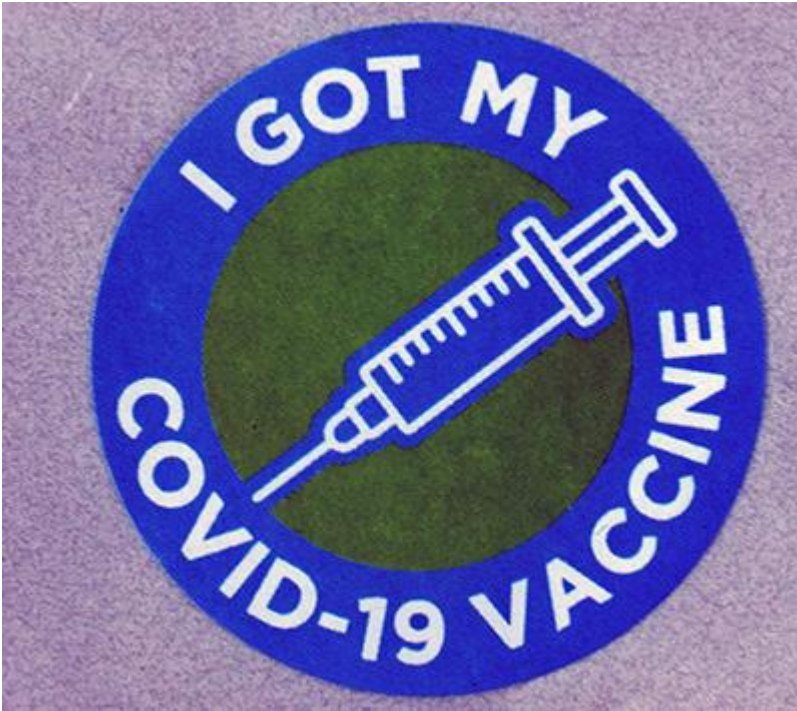
The university partnered with Miami-Dade County to host a pop-up vaccination site in the library’s Goldbloom Convocation Hall. Nurses from the Florida Department of Health administered the shots to staff and students who trickled in between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m. They could choose either the one-shot Johnson & Johnson or the two-shot Pfizer vaccine.

Law student Alfredo Ravinet, 21, one of those getting the shot, said he had delayed doing so because he was skeptical.

“Family members believed misinformation and mistrust they heard from various sources,” he said. “Such as, if you die because of the vaccine you are not covered by life insurance. The vaccinations are a plot which the government created to put a chip in the vaccinated. They see it as tyranny. They don’t want to hear about the science.”

In addition to being skeptical, Ravinet was very busy. He took classes in the 3 + 3 program which allows students to complete law school in 6 years instead of the traditional seven. Last year, he took classes online instead of in-person. He wore a mask when going to stores and he lived in a less populated area, Homestead, he said. Now that he's back on campus he decided to get the Pfizer shot.

"A friend of mine worked transporting patients to a local hospital in Hialeah where he saw the explosion of COVID," Ravinet said. "What he told me influenced me to get the shot. This vaccination event today is very convenient."



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These stickers were given to those who got vaccinated during St. Thomas University's pop-up event Aug. 20, 2021.

Deago Hawkins, 18, a criminal justice major from Orlando who received a football scholarship, is a defensive tackle on the Bobcat team. He said his coach told him he didn't want team members getting sick.

"I was worried about side effects, and I really don't like needles," Hawkins said. "I thought it was going to be a bigger needle. But it was just a small needle. It was a five-minute walk from my dormitory, and I didn't have to go to CVS or Walgreens."

John Whale, 26, from Little Silver, New Jersey, is pursuing a master's degree in sports administration. He had COVID last year. He said that he probably has antibodies but wanted to get the vaccine to make sure he would not get COVID and its awful symptoms again.

"It was terrible," he said. "I couldn't get out of bed. My mother, father and sister also had it. When I received an email about the vaccinations on campus, I decided to get the Johnson & Johnson shot."

Moreland said that the administration wanted to make the STU campus as safe as possible.

"We are following the [Archdiocese of Miami guidelines on COVID](#)," he said. "We are constantly monitoring the situation. Masks are required for the unvaccinated."

As examples of stewardship, he mentioned some of those who came to get vaccinated.

“Alfredo wanted to protect his professors,” he said. “Deago wanted to protect his teammates. The vaccine is an amazing tool that we have to fight COVID. God said that he helps those that help themselves.”

The nurses administered 27 vaccinations throughout the day. Another vaccination pop-up will take place in the same location Sept. 10, 2021, three weeks after the first Pfizer vaccination, when the second shot is required.



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Miami Dade Public Health workers pose for a photo during the Aug. 20, 2021, COVID-19 vaccination event held at St. Thomas University for students and faculty.