Transcript Episode 14

Introduction:

You are listening to the UnDeniably Well podcast hosted by the University of Delaware's Employee Health & Wellbeing team. Keep listening to discover ways to be your best self each and every day.

Today on UnDeniably Well, we're going to talk about the topic of belongingness. What is it? Why is it important? How can it be cultivated and what are the action steps that both the individual and organization need to take in order to really create a sense of belongingness at UD, at other institutions, to really engage people on and have people feel like they're a part of something bigger than themselves.

Ryan Shuler:

Welcome to UnDeniably Well. My name is Ryan Shuler. I am your host and today I had the pleasure of speaking with Barrett Michalec. He is an Associate Professor and also the Director of the Center for Advancing Interprofessional Practice, Education and Research at Arizona State University. Barrett, I've known you for a very long time. I'm very excited to talk about this concept of belongingness today. Would you please sort of introduce yourself and let us know, you know, how your, how your work ties into this concept of belongingness?

Barret Michalec:

Sure, and thank you so much for having me. It's awesome to be back in some extent with the University of Delaware. So what I do at ASU is direct the center, CAIPER for short, Center for Advancing Interprofessional Practice, Education and Research. And one of the areas of research that we try to focus in is how can we make teams more connected? How can we make individuals more connected? How can we bring them together? Who, you know, how can we make better team members?

And so, whereas a lot of the focus in interprofessionalism and in the science of interprofessionalism, looks at the clinical aspects and the kind of environmental and contextual cues. What we try to do is focus on those fundamentals of understanding how to be a good team member. So empathy, humility, and belongingness and belongingness, which is really interesting about it is that it's, it's an individual kind of quality and aspect, but also a group and an organizational level, phenomenon. So it has a lot of different levels, multi-faceted and it's the science behind it is it's still pretty new.

So there's a ton of books in the business realm about kind of cultivating belongingness and in the realm of kind of diversity, equity, and inclusion there's been a lot of talk about cultivating belongingness. But when we think about teams, we really need to think about how can individuals, groups and organizations really work together to cultivate that sense of belongingness because what the research shows is that when you do that, you're going to have quote unquote better, more productive workers or team members. But also you can have team members who are more satisfied with their working environment, and they're actually going to have higher senses of well-being on a number of levels. So personal, social, all those levels. So belongingness is a, is a key ingredient to positive team functioning, whether it be within your typical work environments in the business realm, but also within healthcare. So that's what we do.

Ryan Shuler:

I love that because it almost seems like there's like an activated element to it. Whereas it's almost like taking the term of community and taking it one step further. So you could live in a community that you don't necessarily feel like you belong to, but that action of belongingness, like you said, you have to cultivate it. It doesn't just happen overnight. And like, I think here at UD, you know, the last two years, for the most part, a lot of us have been remote. We've been away, so that sense of belongingness to your team, to the university, like a lot of that has gone by the wayside. And I think for someone like myself, I was, you know, I did my undergrad here, grad here, so I spent six years fully immersed in this.

Like, I am a, a Blue Hen through and through, you know, last night we just wanted a ticket to the tournament for basketball. Like I was so excited about that, and that is sort of that sense of belongingness. Like, I, I really feel like I am a part of this institution, but I also realized there are so many people here who are lacking that. Whether it's because of a diversity issue or a cultural issue, or simply because you have a team that is not connected. So, I'm just sort of curious one, do you feel like you miss anything about UD, and I guess we should have started by saying that Barret used to work here at UD as well. And then two, what are some of the things that you're seeing that teams do to help cultivate this sense of belonging?

Barret Michalec:

Yeah, it's great, it's, there's a lot of different layers to what you're talking about. So let me, let me see if I can, tackle, one by one here. One, I miss UD terribly. I miss everyone that I got a chance to work with. And of course, miss the, you know, the friends of course I made there. I was there for about 12 years, 11 or 12 years. It was my first job out of college or out of grad school, I should say. And I worked in a number of different arenas within the college. So within the College of Arts and Sciences and the Social department, and then I was the Associate Dean of Interprofessional Education within the College of Health Sciences. And so I got to meet a number of people and had, you know, opportunities within a number of parts of the organization. There's a lot of places where I felt connected. So even as far as, you know, going to Brew Haha on Main Street, you know, every morning for coffee. Those connections that you make there or the meetings that you have there foster a sense of connectivity to places and spaces. So there's, again, we, we can kind of tease all of this out in terms of, of place and space and how we sense that.

But also, one of the things to think about with belongingness is that there's a kind of a two-way street. One is that you want to feel kind of valued you. So there's a part of feeling valued and connected and feeling like you belong to a place in that sense. Like you don't have to work to fit in, you feel as though what you bring to the table you fit in. In another sense, it's kind of having a, fit in, in the organizational values. So not only do you have, you know, this, this idea of, I feel valued, but also that the values of the organization in my own personal values, overlap to some extent. And then there's also the notion of the people I work with and the people that I connect with on a daily basis, I like those interactions. I feel connected to them in some way. Those layers of belongingness are what kind of foster that sense. So if you go into work and you don't necessarily like the people you're working with and you don't like those interactions, that's not going to help belongingness.

If you don't feel valued by your organization in terms of the work that you do, and kind of what you bring to the table, that's not going to help at all.

And, and then also in terms of, the ,that overlap between the values, if you feel that after kind of you take a job or you work with an organization and the rose-colored glasses come off and you're like, wait a second, this place, isn't what I thought it was in terms of the values it has. And they don't necessarily align with their own personal values, then you're not going to feel that kind of connectedness with that organization. So to some extent there is, again, a two-way street. It's an individual wanting to be a part of an organization wanting to kind of find that connectivity. And then also an organization having the opportunities to provide that sense of belonging through a sense of value and things like that.

So clearly you feel valued. Right? You feel maybe, you know, I'm assuming that folks, I felt very valued. I'll use my own personal story. I felt very valued at the university. I felt like the work that I was doing was, was thought of very highly, even though it was a predominantly focused in engineering. I felt that the work in the social sciences that I was doing and the work in the health sciences I was doing was, was thought of as positive, and so I was given opportunities to move up the leadership ladder, which was great. I also, again, made a lot of friendships there and I felt the values that the colleges I was a part of really did overlap with my own values. So I, I felt belonging in that sense. So yeah, there's a number of things I missed getting back to the original question, and there was a number of things that I think the university did quite well, in terms of providing me a sense of belonging. But again, it's an individual level, so others may not have felt that way. And I think right now, like you mentioned, a remarkable challenge, to kind of cultivate that sense of belonging.

And we really, I think organizational leadership has to do it. It has to do it, or else you're going to, you're seeing this great resignation, if through a number of, of parts of work in terms of healthcare, in terms of, and there's a huge resignation going through academia, people are just leaving, in droves and what we need to do now I think organizational leadership needs to think about infrastructure. What are we doing to not only attract people to our organization, but then also to retain them. And to keep them in a sense you know, we don't need everyone to walk around, like, you know, whistling, zippity-duda, and that kind of stuff, and singing kumbaya together. But we do need people to feel as though that they are a part of something bigger themselves.

So you brought up and I'm talking a lot, so I apologize and I'll stop you, but you brought up, you've run up the, you know, the men's basketball team punching their ticket. And I mean, that's, that's huge. So, so how do you utilize something like that to create a bigger feel and a bigger sense of community in a sense of place for individuals? And that's what I do.

Ryan Shuler:

So I think that it's really fabulous that you bring up this concept of it's sort of a two-way street of the individual and the organization. So I think speaking on the individual level. Part of that again, is this action oriented. I as an individual, need to put forth effort into the relationships that I'm hoping to cultivate. As a manager, I need to make sure I am giving my team space to develop relationships with one another, they need to be connected or they won't feel like they belong to this team, but then also like, I need to seek out those larger things. Like, you know, it's I take my kids to the sporting events. We go to football games, we go to basketball games. We go on Main Street. I have my Delaware gear. I am like fully vested in this community. And part of that is me seeking out all these opportunities to engage with UD and all of these various ways. But then to your point, it's also so crucial that leadership one provides these opportunities. So is it, are there barriers to have employees go to these types of events or is it easy for you to go with your family?

And then from a sort of a structural standpoint, like using our unit as an example, in Employee Health and Wellbeing. Over the last two years, especially since COVID it is like the value of our unit has gone up realizing that mental health is, is more of a crisis than ever. People are feeling stressed. People are feeling disconnected. People are just feeling lost in this whole concept of flexible and hybrid work. But we exist as a resource for that purpose. We exist structurally within the system to help teams, to help the individual kind of get all those other pieces out of the way so they can get back to that connection piece. I think so much of belongingness is really tied to mental health. If you don't feel like you belong in a community, you're going to be stressed all the time. You're going to hate your job. You're not going to want to put forth effort. Um, you're not going to feel challenged, you know, to do your best and, and all of that takes a toll on your mental health.

So I think that, you know, just sort of pulling it back into the wellbeing space. There's so many reasons why this resonates with me because it really, this is something that's hugely effecting and when you talk about the great resignation, and again, you talk about new employees or teams who have been disconnected for two years, all of those connection points have gone by the wayside. Unless you have very activated team members and managers who are really trying to keep it all together. But I think unfortunately that's not happening everywhere. So I'm curious from your perspective, do you have any sort of like tips or tricks that people can sort of use, thinking about the team front? Like, how do we stay connected sort of in this new way of working so we can kind of cultivate that sense of belonging?

Barret Michalec:

Yes. So you bring up a really good point in terms of, so, the research and the data is completely consistent with what you're saying in terms of well-being measures and sense of belonging. So those who have a higher sense of belonging or more kind of an encompassing sense of belonging, you know, not only are they more productive and they're less likely to leave wherever they're working or wherever they're studying, but also they have heightened sense of satisfaction with their work and they are more engaged with various aspects and they are, reporting higher sense of social and emotional wellbeing, like you said. So, it's all right there. In terms of how do you help to cultivate this, especially during this time. You know, a lot of times, this will fall on to leadership to make a kind of a purposeful and intentional decisions, and movements, to cultivate belongingness to say like, look, we need to do this.

So from my own personal experience, when I came to ASU, I came right in the height of the pandemic, right in July of 2020. And there's nobody, you know, nobody's on campus. Nobody's around and to be fair, leadership, had bigger fish to fry. You know, they had more heightened concerns than to really worry about whether or not I was getting onboarded or other new employees were getting onboarded. And there's a kind of a, I think a gap, in this hiring structure in terms of those two years, and how those people might feel. I think a great study would really be any university, any organization that kind of cohort, those two years of cohorts, where are they and what are they doing and how do they feel in terms of a new hire? Do they feel like they belong?

I think, what could happen in terms of leadership and what needs to happen is that leadership needs to kind of act more, like a fullback than rather a quarterback or a running back. And what I mean by that is that they need to take hits and make space for faculty and for employees to do their thing. They kind of have to do that humble leadership in saying, I'm here for a bigger picture and I want to make sure that people have opportunities. I need to make those opportunities and create those opportunities for them. That's my job as a leader, I'm not going to make space for myself anymore, I'm not going to try to score

the touchdown. I'm going to help others score that touchdown. I think that shows not only valuing your employees, and your team members, but then also you're cultivating, their opportunities and their productivity as well. So I think that's one big one.

I think that leadership in general needs to take interest in their team members, not just for their productivity. So I think it's important to help heighten that productivity. But research has shown that when you take an interest in your team members and a, like in a personal side you start to really showcase that necessity of you're more than just your role here at work. You're a person and I value that person, not just, what they do not just the check boxes that they're doing. I think that they're the acknowledgement of, of success and being open to feedback from leadership is incredibly valuable. It shows that we're all part of something bigger, that you belong here, because your voice matters that also helps cultivate psychological safety amongst team members, which is another sense of belonging. If you feel you have a voice, practicing the encourage vulnerability. The idea of it being okay to say, like this sucks and I got, I'm having a hard time and I would like some help. I think that's also okay and I think for leaders to be able to say, you know, we're struggling right now, we're not doing the best job we could in terms of helping our employees out or being a part of, wellness initiatives, and we want to do a better job, what can we do?

That type of vulnerability and openness again, creates that sense of we value your input, you're important. Also gratitude is being thankful for people trying to their do job. And I'm not saying just like a generic email to your team saying, thanks I know this has been hard thank you so much. No, like actually a heartfelt opportunity of saying y'all are kicking ass and we would just really like, to, you know, extend an opportunity to really just say that somehow in a much larger way. I think these are types of ways in which we can cultivate belongingness. Now as an organizational and a contextual way, I think it's important to think at architecture. I think it's important to think about structure of how things are laid out, for a business or college or whatever. And I think it's important to understand that certain things people are drawn to.

So mascots are a great example within the college field. When you come to a college, a lot of times we don't think about colleges as businesses, even though they are. We think of a more as these entities in which we, you know, want to rally around something. You know, whether it's the blue hen, whether it's the Sparky the sun devil, there's something that we were like, oh man, like, yeah, let's go. You know, and it's heightens that sense of what sociologists like to call it collective effervescence. It's a fellow feeling that we all get when we're doing the same thing maybe it's watching a game, maybe it's doing the fight song maybe it's something else. But we get this fellow feeling and we get, we need to start cultivating that more within I think college. And I think we need to start getting not away from the business model, but I think within college is really starting to understand, hey, this is a special place. Let's cultivate that specialness through what we have.

Ryan Shuler:

Well, and it's, it's funny that you say that. So, my husband went to Penn State. Now I will share my grandfather was a football coach at Rutgers. My whole life I have been told we do not like Penn state because they take all the good New Jersey recruits. Grew up very anti Penn State. Now my husband and all his friends, you know, they're all Penn State alum. We live in Pennsylvania, you know, I've come around behind my grandfather's back, but that is a great example. Whereas the Nittany Lion and you have 50,000 kids on campus times however many years that Penn state has been in existence. And if

you say We Are to any other Nittany Lion, it's instant feeling, instant nostalgia, instant pride. And that is exactly to your point. That is that sense of belonging. Is that one, two-word phrase brings it back. That we're in a community. We were in the same place. We did the same things. We loved the same, alma mater. And I think that's a great point that you bring up. And I think maybe that's why I feel such a heavier sense of belonging to UD because I had all that as student, whereas most employees probably don't have that same experience, you know, going to the game as an adult is very different than when you're there with all your friends and, you know, it's like a big tailgate party,

But I think that's a great point that you bring up is sort of having something to rally around and what does that look like? And that kind of comes back to purpose too. Like, what is your purpose for being on this campus? Whether it's the students or because, you know, you love campus, whatever it may be, but that sense of purpose can really tie into that belonging too. And I also wanted to bring up before I forget there was a Forbes study that was done, I think it was Forbes, recently that shared a statistic as high as 70% of people turned down potential job offers because they like their colleagues.

Like their colleagues are the make or break for them. and it could be even when they, you know, calculate it for this job could have more money. People are having a hard time leaving when they're like, yeah, but I have a really great support network and I really love my colleagues and we know about each other's lives and kids and families and struggles and celebrate together. And that now in this situation where you're talking about great resignation like that is a huge factor is how can we cultivate this? So people don't want to leave. People love UD. People love Arizona State. People love whatever company you work for. And that you're surrounded by good people who make it hard for you to leave. And that's like as a manager, that's what you want. I want people who are engaged. I want people who love their colleagues, who are supporting their team, you're so much more likely to do better work. You're so much more likely to report higher feelings of wellbeing, less stress when you're surrounded by people that you feel like you fit in with. And I do just want to highlight too I know you brought this up earlier. Belongingness has also become a very hot topic in the equity and inclusion space. They're sort of using this as a new, you know, letter in their acronym that it's diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging, because it's not just a check box.

Like yes, we have other cultures represented. Yes, we have other races represented. It's, they're represented and they're part of it. They're contributing. They are valued. They belong to this community and that really gets at the sense of diversity. Now you really have diversity of ideas and work because they really feel that they belong as part of this community. So I don't want to fully speak on my diversity piece cause that's not my field of expertise, but just to highlight that this is sort of up and coming and all of these different, you know, cross sectors of work.

Barret Michalec:

For sure. I mean, and that's again, like where, what you're, you're totally spot on. The, a lot of the work on belongingness, especially in the early stages has been in the diversity, equity and inclusion. And how do we cultivate that amongst those who have felt that they don't, that they have not been provided the operative to belong because of institutional racism, institutional sexism, and you know, those kinds of barriers that are put in place to get to that place and then what goes on. And so there's a number of other opportunities that, that, that specific area of research looks to do to cultivate that sense of belongingness. One of the things that's really important is I think organizations need to, to remember, especially in the issues related to diversity, is is that, the goal is not to trying to have someone fit in to

what already exists in the place, but to shift organizational structure and practices and policies so that we open more, the fit becomes bigger.

We're creating opportunities for those to feel as though they belong, because we've created that kind of a broader sense of fit and what belongs here is that if that makes sense. Because a lot of times what we focus on is, oh, well, if we just, you know, start earlier and, and bring pipeline programs and bring people in earlier, they'll see what they're supposed to be like in this sense. But no, that's not what should be happening. We should be actually opening the gates much larger opening the structures much larger and creating policies that then also say that no, no, no everyone is open here. This is, you can find a fit here.

Ryan Shuler:

Yeah. And I I'm just thinking too. I, I heard something recently, another podcast they were talking about underrepresented groups in healthcare. And this sort of topic came up that, okay yes let's say that you have a pipeline program for black students coming into the healthcare field. But again, their perspective is that they don't belong. So you're not, you're not getting the full capacity of the students. And then, because they're not coming into the field, then they're underrepresented in the field and, and you hear about you know, all of these struggles and cultural differences because there's a white doctor, I've read something recently about an Indian patient and they just, even something as simple as not understanding the cultural differences in the food they eat became sort of a gap in care. So if, if they don't feel, if you're at these pipeline programs, you know, if the students you're trying to attract or, or the interns or, you know, young entry-level positions, you're trying to attract don't see themselves as belonging in that organization. You're totally missing the mark with all of this

Barret Michalec:

Exactly. So, yeah. And not to kind of like poopoo on all pipeline programs cause they, I think they have the best intentions in mind, but what you do oftentimes with that, as you're saying here, take this, you know, travel through this pipeline to become more like us. When in reality the us needs to change. And so that's the, you gotta really start focusing on that. I think to create that sense of belonging, again, because it's something you brought up earlier that I do want to talk about is, uh, this value of relationships. So if they're not others that you find that you connect with or can have those high valued and high kind of potency relationships, then you're not going to feel valued on even that, over even the feeling like you belong on that very minimal level, because belongingness, the sense of belonging is really stems from the, overarching kind of need to belong.

I mean, and that's in Maslow's hierarchy. I mean, we all have an individual sense individual need to belong and what that stems from is interactions. We've got to have friendly, consistent, effectively pleasant interactions with people on a consistent basis, consistent and stable basis. So that's why, you know, you've talked about that Forbes article and that's why people are leaving. It's like, no, no, no, no. I'm cool here. Like, I feel good here, and that's essential. Now how you do that in the new environment of, you know, kind of flexible work schedules, which I'm a hundred percent behind, but then kind of where we might be losing some of that stable, consistent interactions that are essential to our kind of need to belong, which heightens our sense of belonging. But how do we then how do we actually cultivate those connections or allow individuals to continue that connectivity? And I think for new faculty, new staff, new students in this environment, that's going to be the challenge and why, I think

we're seeing a real big push now to kind of this back to normal, you know, cool. I'm putting bunny ears for those who can't see, on the, this, this back to normal approach because people know that's going on.

Ryan Shuler:

I think that this can seem heavy and can seem daunting, but there are so many simple things that you can do. So for example, our staff meetings, you know, we dedicate an hour to talk business every other week, but we open up 15 minutes early, either in person or on zoom, wherever you are, just so people can chat. Just so you can say, how was your weekend? What's going on, what's going on with your kids? And that allows, even if it's 15 minutes, some person-to-person human-centered work being done that it's not always just let me just run through my agenda and then we separate. That here's really that, and that's intentional, this intentional act of allowing people to connect.

So for those listening, who are managers, that's, again, something easy that you can do. For those who are listening, who are not managers, bring it up at your next staff meeting, you know, hey, what can we do to sort of pull back this connection piece? Because it's so crucial to, to everything that we do. And I think, you know, for someone like me. I am a people person. I want to be in person. I want to meet with you in person. So this flexible work has had benefits for me, but I really miss being with people. I feel like that's where these genuine connections happen, these sorts of organic in-passing connections. So I think even if it's, you know, you go out to happy hour together, or you meet on the green for a lunch once a month or once a semester, so you can have this. So it can feel like a real friendship and not like a forced to zoom friendship all the time.

Barret Michalec:

Yeah, you're totally spot on. So the kind of encouraging those types of safe interactions still as we kind of find our way still in the pandemic, and kind of the safe, outdoor when possible interactions, encouraging those amongst your staff and faculty. The zoom approach of like, you know, opening early, I think is great as well, and having time to not talk about work again, kind of not just making it about productivity. So one of the things that I always thinking about, I wanted to kind of take it back a little bit to what can be done as we returned back to in-person, is to think about architecture, to think about structure. And I remember, you know, when I right right about the time when I, right before I left, star campus had opened and, you know, the design of the place was really to get folks to interact, to kind of mingle ideas. And although some of the floors became of the tower became a little siloed in terms of discipline.

There is something I'm in a different building now. And I will say there is something I'm trying to actually to move my office to a building that's very much like the tower. Because what happens in my particular building now I open my door and I face a wall and then I have to go all the way around that wall to find other offices. And each office is on one side of the wall, so it's not like I opened and there's, there's other doors to interact with. I opened it and there's a wall and, I have to work hard to see others. As we start to come back to work the other building that I, I want to move my office to has that open concept of kind of a bullpen feel plus also a few officers on the side. So when you open your door, you are immediately surrounded by others. And again, we want to have those positive connections, but even the sense of having others to talk to, I mean just, when we take away, this relates to the productivity thing when you have that open time in zoom. That little sidebar comments, the connectivity, I remember I used to come up and talk to you and Beth and others, you know, just taking a walk around

and that, little sense of just that connectivity and having a one-on-one with someone for like five, 10 minutes.

Yeah. Maybe I could have been doing work downstairs, but that connectivity I just made just heightened my sense of connection to the place. Like, I want to go, you know, I want to be here. I enjoy being here. So I want to enjoy the people I'm talking to. And just taking those laps and taking those ideas. I think that leaders, especially in those who are in management, as they think about people coming back need to be very cognizant of this isn't just about work. This is about something much, much more. We want to cultivate a sense of belonging through a sense of place. So I really. I want people to, who are listening to take that to heart that it's, we really have to work on that.

Ryan Shuler:

Yeah. And I think that the, even the way that you phrase that is again, I keep bringing it back to, it requires effort on all parties. So it's not like I just come in and sit at my office and I just feel this great sense of belonging to your point. I have to get up. I have to make these connections. I have to go to these things. So, you know, for employees who are listening. What are the you know, caucuses you can be a part of? What are the groups across campus that you can be engaged with? Can you attend sporting events? Can you take the same fitness class every week where you get to meet the same people?

There are so many options for connection on campus, but we as individuals kind of have to take that step to get there. It's not always just going to fall in our lap, so it may require a little workup upfront. And I think we do that, I will say my team does that very well here in Employee Health and Wellbeing, where we sort of become a hub. People come to us, not really knowing what they're looking for, but through conversation, through getting to know them, we can kind of point them to the resources that will help them sort of in this way. So, just for sake of time, because that was a really, really fast 30 minutes, we could probably talk belonging for a very long time. We end every, every episode by asking our guests, this question is what do you do to, to feel undeniably well?

Barret Michalec:

I have found myself, so, you know, as I said, bits and pieces kind of coming here to ASU and in the timeframe in which I came here and the structure of which this college and university works. I have tried hard. I'm trying to cultivate, that sense of belonging, uh, and that's been a real challenge, and it's actually, I can find it impacting my work in terms of, of what my, not only my level of productivity, but then also my, my desire to do good work, which is problematic, but I'm hoping as, as things kind of shift, it'll get better.

But in terms of feeling undeniably well, what I've done is going to check in with myself to figure out what are things I can fix? What are things that I actually have control over? Like moving my office. you know, I want to be in a more open environment. So, I kind of acknowledged the issues that I am having the things that are negatively impacting me and I tried to work with the things that I can change. And then also, you know, I get up every morning at four o'clock, five o'clock. I just do this back at UD too. And then, I go work out and I, you know, work out with a, with a group of people now that we're able to do so, and then I come home and I try to turn work off when work is off. And so coming home, the phone goes down, the focus is on, you know, my wife and my kid and in what we're doing there and

then, that's that for the next few hours. So really acknowledging what stressing and trying to shift those stressors, finding kind of connectivity with others through working out and that kind of stuff. And then also really putting work in its place. Cause I think one of the hardest things to do now in, during this time has been that barrier between like personal and professional life and I think we need to put that barrier back.

Ryan Shuler:

Yeah. And, and I will, you know, I've known Barrett for a long time, so I will vouch for him that that's not a lie. That's not a crack of, you know what, he does get up and work out. He does love his family. You have a great sense of balance with a lot of this. So, which is just a testament that if you do it consistently, that a lot of these other things fall into place. So thank you very much for being a part of this today. It is always lovely to chat with you. Enjoy your sunny weather out in Arizona while it's 38 degrees here today.

Barret Michalec:

It's like 70 something here today. So, as you can see that, I mean, can't really see, but there's just a bright sun behind me. It is always a pleasure to talk to you. And thanks for this opportunity. It was nice to feel somewhat connected back with UD. I'll be back at UD in May for graduation, in-person so I will be stopping by all of my homes to say hello, so I hope to see you.

Ryan Shuler:

Wonderful. We'll see you then.

Outro:

Thank you for listening to the UnDeniably Well podcast. For all things, wellbeing at UD, visit our website, udel.edu/wellbeing. There you can access our on-demand library, subscribe to our newsletter and see what's coming up to help you on your wellbeing journey. Until next time, be well.