

# Michael Wesbecher Interview

Director of Communications and Events in the Office of the Vice Chancellor for Health Affairs, University of Illinois Chicago

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## **SPEAKERS**

Michael Wesbecher

### **Michael Wesbecher 00:02**

[This recording was taken standing in the underground tunnel system at the University of Chicago's College of Pharmacy] Do you want my name as well? Okay, Hi, my name is Michael Wesbecher. I'm the Director of Communications and Events in the UIC [University of Illinois Chicago] Office of the Vice Chancellor for Health Affairs. Currently we are standing in the campus tunnel system in the lower level of the College of Pharmacy building, which is connected to the University of Illinois Hospital and Clinics or UI Health. We are currently standing in the position where a lot of people stepped through as they were receiving some of the earliest doses of the COVID-19 vaccine. As a lot of vaccine was starting to get distributed around the Chicago land area, UI Health worked very closely with the Chicago Department of Public Health to receive daily vaccine distributions. Some of the first folks that were receiving those vaccines were a lot of our health care workers and students and folks that are typically caring for people in the healthcare enterprise, they would typically come down to the lower level here where we're standing. And they would queue up in you know, socially distant manners, so that they could check-in for their appointment- [pause for background noise to subside] And so that they could enter into the queue, which was moving, you know, dozens if not hundreds of people throughout the early days of vaccine distribution. Both College of Nursing and College of Pharmacy students were both involved in that distribution efforts, we had a large amount over, I would say, dozens, if not a couple 100 of volunteers from the College of Nursing, who were participating in this distribution effort as well. A lot of our students were in these classrooms that we see here at the different stations that were giving out, vaccines very early on. And then of course boosters eventually as well too. People would have their vaccine, we had to have the space where we could have a lot of people queue up and be monitored for you know, the typical 15 minutes after any vaccine dose was happening. We had the ability to do that being here in the College of Pharmacy because we have some large auditorium and classroom spaces that accommodated for social distancing and gathering a lot of people together all at once. So those were some tricks that we were trying to make sure we were accounted for in our logistical planning.

### **Michael Wesbecher 02:45**

[We moved to a nearby class auditorium connected to the tunnels.] [...Auditoriums] that was available for people during vaccine distribution where people would come here again, you can tell there's lots of space in this auditorium. For people to come. They have to wait for 15 minutes, there would usually be

a couple, kind of proctors. Usually nursing student proctors that we're here in case there anything needed; and faculty members again, because you had to make sure that we're not just creating space for people to land, we're creating space for people to kind of be evaluated should anybody have any adverse effects. So that was, again, kind of the accommodation. We had faculty and students here just to account for any additional needs or effects that happen from the vaccine.