

Public Service



MELISSA MILLER

UNC Medical Center

Melissa Miller, Ph.D., serves as the Director of Medical Microbiology at the UNC Medical Center. Dr. Miller worked to develop rapid and accurate COVID-19 testing to help protect patients, physicians, staff, medical students, and nursing students. Her contributions to state and national COVID-19 response have been in advancing the identification and care of those who contract the highly infectious virus, as well as increasing awareness of steps people must take protect themselves and others.

While her UNC lab processed over 300,000 COVID tests by February 2021, Dr. Miller also made important national contributions. She voluntarily served on an advisory committee to Dr. Deborah Birx, former White House Coronavirus Response Coordinator, on supply chain shortages and distribution of testing resources. Additionally, she participated in the development and implementation of an online supply chain tool for labs to report shortages and feedback data to the federal government. This tool was developed because of meetings with Dr. Anthony Fauci and Dr. Frances Collins of the National Institutes of Health (NIH), Dr. Birx, and leaders from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

At the state level, Dr. Miller worked as an advisor to help develop an undergraduate and graduate student testing clinic at UNC-Chapel Hill, advised North Carolina legislators, RDU Federal Transportation Security Administration, and served on the Testing Surge Workgroup convened by the N.C. Department of Health and Human Services. She also participated in the American Society of Microbiology Hill Day to educate Congressional leaders on COVID-19 testing, funding, and clinical laboratory infrastructure needs.



All this was accomplished in addition to the complex tasks associated with her regular duties. The State of North Carolina and UNC-Chapel Hill are extremely fortunate and grateful to have such a passionate advocate for public health.