

The AIM Advance

02/02/2024



MERCYHURST

UNIVERSITY

AUTISM INITIATIVE AT MERCYHURST



Weekly Offerings

monday

- Full Spectrum Fitness 11-12:30pm - MIC
- Career Path Freshman 3pm - Sullivan 1 (every other Monday)
- Career Path Juniors 3pm - Sullivan 2 (every other Monday)
- Cooking 4:30pm - Mercy 100

tuesday

- Pickleball 2:00pm - Rec Center

wednesday

- Full Spectrum Fitness 11-12:30pm - MIC
- PEERS 3:00pm - Sullivan 1-2
- Healthy Relationships class 3:00pm - Sullivan 2
- Career Path Seniors 3:00pm - Main 211

thursday

- Zumba 5:00pm - Rec Center

friday

- Drum Circle 3:00pm Prince of Peace Chapel

The Director's Corner

Welcome to February! It's the third week, and everyone is settling into another productive semester. We are proud of the great work and campus engagement we've seen so far. Keep up the great work, everyone!

We had our back-to-school meeting, where we reminded students of the tenets of our AIM Philosophy.

1. We empower YOU as YOU work toward success.
2. We want you to be here at Mercyhurst. You must want to be here too.
3. We will not provide the illusion of support, you must come to meetings.
4. We are not a 7/11. This means our staff is happy to assist you during scheduled meetings or Monday – Friday by appointment, but do not expect help after hours or on the weekend.

These powerful principles are the foundation for the quality service we provide in this wonderful program. Please contact us if you have any questions or concerns. Carpe Diem!

Amanda Mulder



Student Spotlight

Cecilia Harris

The AIM staff celebrates Cecilia Harris for our first student spotlight feature of 2024. Cecilia is a junior student at Mercyhurst and has had various impressive successes during her years here, from completing an internship with the Smithsonian National Air and Space Museum to accomplishing incredible tasks during her internship with the Mercyhurst Library Archives last semester. However, her most recent achievement was earning her driver's license over winter break – right before a family vacation to London! Cecilia shows that determination, passion, and hard work can pay off. Congratulations, we are proud of you!



Communicating Through The Fear

Silence, some know what this like; others don't and that's okay, too
It can feel questionable, overwhelming, invalidating, and painful to struggle in silence
Sometimes, there is fear
Fear that makes us so afraid
So afraid that we become fearful of even our most favorite
Places, friends, and memories
The favorite memories; it's hard to deny them although
At times, one feels as if that event never occurred at all
Because they're so afraid
Sometimes, we feel as if we are ruined
As a result of many years of invalidation and trauma
Sometimes, our best looks like
Screaming, crying, and just wanting revenge
Sometimes life gets difficult, and we burn out
I, myself have been through many struggles with my own mental health
Things will get better and here I am today doing much better and I'm thriving
I feel it's of high importance to go to counseling/therapy when one is struggling
It's healthy to talk about the difficult things that weigh us down
Struggling in silence is one of the worst things one can do for their mental health
It eventually will tear you apart
And it only makes the situation worse
What matters most is that we
Do our best to understand, validate, and take care of ourselves
And to communicate our
Needs, wants, thoughts, and feelings
When we are in crisis
Although the journey through a crisis is never pleasant
Communication is key to getting ourselves the help we need and deserve.

Written by Lauren Katz on 1/28/2024

Campus Happenings!



Upcoming Experimental Trip!

We are happy to announce an experiential trip for AIM students to the Seattle, Washington, area from May 13-18, 2024. This trip is open to all current AIM students. It will include a vocational and sightseeing day in Seattle, a visit to a lavender farm, hiking in Olympic National Park, and hiking in Crescent Lake Temperate Rainforest. It is a custom trip designed for our group and will include two professional hiking guides. The trip will cost \$3250 per person, including flights, hotels, meals, hiking guides, and transportation. Please contact Amanda Mulder or Ryan Palm to learn more about the trip.

Upcoming Social Trip!

Do you love gaming and want to learn more about what sports and games were played during the Renaissance? Are you interested in networking with students from a different college with an autism program? AIM and the Mercyhurst Society for Creative Anachronism Renaissance Club are taking a unique weekend educational and social trip to Ohio State for these two reasons. The trip will explore these two objectives with a short weekend trip to Columbus, Ohio. If you are interested, please contact Amanda at amulder@mercyhurst.edu to sign up by February 7th at noon!

You can find more information about the event here:

<https://cmrs.osu.edu/events/popular-culture-and-deep-past-sports-and-pastimes->



2024 Internship Programs



BroadFutures serves young people who:

- Are between the ages of 18 and 26
- Have diagnosed learning disabilities and/or ADHD
- Have a high school diploma and are either headed to college, in college, or taking a break from academics
- Are highly motivated
- Are vaccinated against COVID-19

Program Details:

- **Initial Training:** 1 week of training. Curriculum incorporates workforce preparedness, professionalism and effective communication, and stress reduction tools. We incorporate the arts and wellness.
- **Paid Internships:**
 - 7 weeks of paid internships
 - 20 hours a week, Monday through Thursday
- **Friday Trainings:** Guided peer-to-peer reinforcement of initial training skills and discussion of areas of success/opportunities for growth. Game based learning, speakers & more!!!



PROGRAM DATES:
Winter: Jan. 29 - April 19
Application Deadline:
Nov. 15, 2023
Summer: June 10-Aug. 9
Application Deadline:
March 1st, 2024



COST:
Winter: \$7,820
Summer: \$6,325
*Full & Partial
Need-Based
Scholarships*



HOW TO SIGN UP:
Fill out application & reference release form on our website [here](#).

Apply now to our holistic training, mentoring, and paid internship program!

[f](#) [i](#) [t](#) [i](#) | www.broadfutures.org | (202) 521-4312 | info@broadfutures.org



Northwest Bank
Autism Society
MERCYHURST UNIVERSITY
Community Foundation of Luzerne County
MILLCREEK MALL COMPLEX
Lakeshore Community Services, Inc.
www.lakeshorecs.org

AUTISM ACCEPTANCE DAY

Special guest: **Kerry Magro** At. Mercyhurst University
April | 12th | 2024

Buy Tickets Now! <https://www.ticketleap.events/tickets/lakeshore-community-services/autism-acceptance-day>

AUTISM ACCEPTANCE DAY
ADMIT ONE
Only \$20.00
12 April 08:00 AM

MINCA UPCOMING EVENTS

FEBRUARY

2024

FEB
01

MNCA'S GENERAL MEETING

Student Union Great Room @ 6pm - Board games & Pizza

ENCANTO MOVIE NIGHT

Sullivan 3 @ 4pm - Disney Movie & Snacks Social

FEB
03

FEB
12

VALENTINE HEARTS & GRATITUDE

Sullivan 3 @ 6pm - Origami Hearts & Crafts

WANT MORE INFO OR HAVE IDEAS?
EMAIL MNCA'S SOCIAL OUTREACH
COORDINATORS AS WE PREPARE FOR
MORE GET-TOGETHERS THROUGHOUT THE
SEMESTER



@AFF_MERCYHURST



- MOLLY SULLIVAN:
MSULLI17@LAKERS.MERCYHURST.EDU
- JORDAN DICKINSON:
JDICK159@LAKERS.MERCYHURST.EDU

Full Spectrum Fitness

Last week, our AIM Team launched our newest offering for students – Full Spectrum Fitness. The AIM team has worked closely with Suzanne Sweeney, Director of Campus Health and Wellness, and Tyler Travis, Director of Strength and Conditioning, to create a program for the AIM students to improve their overall fitness. This is a Mercyhurst community collaboration across disciplines meant to benefit our students.

The Full Spectrum Fitness program is fully customized for each student, utilizing a mobile app and the expertise of Mercyhurst's Strength and Conditioning staff to build



awareness and create personalized fitness goals. Whether you are interested in strength, cardio, mobility, or a combination of these modalities, we strongly believe in the role of health and wellness for our students and staff. We are excited to bring this new opportunity to our students. We already have several students participating in the program; join us as soon as your schedule permits! FSF occurs in the Mercyhurst Ice Center (MIC) Conditioning gym Mondays and Wednesdays from 11 am to 12:30 pm.

Many thanks to Suzanne Sweeney for creating connections, guiding us, and supporting our goals, and to Tyler and his team for their expertise and willingness to work with our students.



Cooking and Camaraderie

Last week, a local chef joined us as we made chicken noodle soup. Abby is a certified Nutrition Coach who makes food for over 300+ individuals weekly and rotates through healthy meals. It was great to have a local expert work alongside us! This week, we made hot dogs, mac and cheese, and dirt cups for dessert!

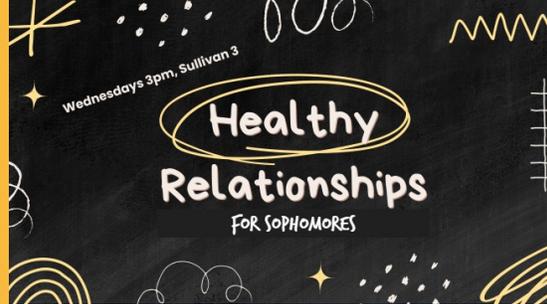


Healthy Relationships Class

Sophomores

Wednesdays 3-4:30 pm in Sullivan 3

We held the first session of the Healthy Relationships workshops for sophomores on Wednesday, January 24, 2024. This spring, we will be learning about aspects of healthy relationships relating to parents, friends, roommates, dating, etc.... and putting what we learn into practice. We will be taking a few on-campus field trips throughout the semester to practice communication and build confidence to initiate conversations and potential friendships.



ZUMBA

LET IT MOVE YOU™

Amanda Mulder

Zumba Dance Fitness Class
REC Center
5:00 - 6:00 PM
Thursdays starting January 25, 2024!

My Zumba classes are the hottest mixes to lighten your feet and spirit. Please join me for various salsa, merengue, pop, Afro-punk, hip-hop, belly dance-inspired routines, and more! No experience is necessary; this class is taught as a progressive workout for all! Join the party! You won't regret it!

For class details Contact your licensed Zumba® Instructor.
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ZUMBA.COM

**Pickleball is on Tuesdays in the REC at
2:00 PM!**

TUESDAYS

PICKLEBALL OPEN CLASS



Drum Circle

TUNE INTO HEALING: GROUP MUSIC THERAPY SESSIONS

FRIDAYS • 3:00PM-3:50PM • PRINCE OF PEACE CHAPEL



**EVERYONE IS WELCOME,
NO EXPERIENCE REQUIRED.**

* PRINCE OF PEACE CHAPEL IS LOCATED ON THE SECOND FLOOR OF THE STUDENT UNION

EMAIL BECKY AT RFERGU94@LAKERS.MERCYHURST.EDU FOR MORE INFORMATION

Erie Metropolitan Transportation POSTPONED

The EMTA bus training adventure has been postponed. We will let you know as soon as it has been rescheduled. At that time, the AIM program will team with the Erie Metropolitan Transit Authority to offer training on accessing and using the local buses. All MU students receive a free bus pass throughout the year. The Travel Training Program is a FREE service for those who want to learn how to travel independently using the fixed route (the E) or paratransit service (LIFT). For the fixed route service (the e), learn how to read route maps and schedules, different bus fare options, how to transfer, and about EMTA's transit tracking options. Learn about the policies and procedures for the paratransit service (LIFT). More info to come!



Transportation Solutions

AIM students can participate in driver's training through our community partnership with Transportation Solutions. This program is supported through AIM funding at no charge to students. The driving program entails getting a two-part assessment through



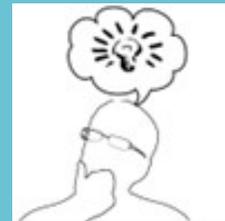
Transportation Solutions to determine potential drivers' abilities and therapeutic needs. Each eligible student then has a personalized driving plan created for the student. Students must obtain their permit in their home state after the initial assessments before driving lessons begin. In recent weeks, we have scheduled assessments and driver's lesson times. An added service we are partnering to offer is for licensed drivers. If you have your license but have yet to have the driving time to feel comfortable with your license, we can help! We are working with Transportation Solutions and OVR to offer this new service to our licensed students.

Driving can be vital to independence, so we are incredibly thankful for this opportunity. If you are interested in participating in the program, please get in touch with Tacie at tthomas@mercyhurst.edu. An application must be completed before acceptance into this innovative program.

Growth Mindset

Metacognition and the Power of YET.

Completing college is a long-term goal. With grit and determination, you will complete this long-term goal one semester at a time. As you tackle Spring 2024, remember to use the power of YET. By using the growth mindset of Metacognition, you can and will do anything.



Metacognition is thinking about thinking. It is the ability to reflect on your thoughts and think about them. It helps us adjust to challenges and changes. It can help us turn frustration into success. Being metacognitive helps us go from a fixed mindset of "I cannot do this" to a growth mindset of "I cannot do this YET." The next time you feel like the challenge is something you cannot do, stop, think about it, and tell yourself, "I cannot do this... YET."

Executive Functioning

What is organization?

Organization is setting up a system to keep your coursework materials neat and orderly. It is essential because it helps you find your materials quicker and makes you feel neat and organized. It also enables you to complete important assignments and ensures timely deadlines. This way, you are not playing catch-up on projects or falling behind, and no one enjoys the stress of being behind.



Avoid that stress with these organization Tips:

- Set up a system to keep all your material neat and orderly.
- Once you find what works for you, stick with it to stay organized.
- Have an organized place to study so all your supplies are where you need them.
- Using a planner to assist in keeping deadlines and consulting Blackboard.

Start Spring 2024 organized and give yourself less stress so you can tackle all your responsibilities.

Something to think about...

"I am working so many things out right now, and I don't know how long it will take, but please rest assured that it is important for me to do this."

We all go through tough stuff at various times. It is impossible for anyone to really know what someone else's path looks like, but that doesn't mean we can't have compassion. A phrase that can help keep this in mind is "You are exactly where you are meant to be..." to learn this lesson, to grow, to cry, to change, to struggle, to feel joy. Allow yourself to be present for whatever it is you are going through. Experience it, share it if it helps, and trust that you will get through it. You deserve that belief in yourself and your experience.



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