April is a special time of year as we celebrate Autism Appreciation Month. We chose to embrace appreciation over acceptance because we don't merely accept our students; we genuinely appreciate them and all the fantastic ways they enrich our campus, diversity, and culture at Mercyhurst and worldwide. We are happy you are here! Join us for the Annual Walk for Autism on April 27 or outside the Grotto on April 29 for Autism Appreciation giveaways! Please continue working hard to utilize your resources and support to finish the semester strong. We're here to help; you got this! - Amanda Mulder
Student Spotlight

For this week’s student spotlight, we are featuring Cara Bonavita, a unique, one-of-a-kind student in our program. Cara is an incredible senior student in AIM with many accomplishments and academic honors. Most recently, she was one of six students selected to attend the Sign Tau Delta Honors Society English Honors Convention in St. Louis, Missouri, to read her incredible poem, “I Am Your Spaniel.” Cara is also president of the Society for Creative Anachronism Medieval and Renaissance Club, where she has planned and led the group on many off-campus adventures to the Pittsburgh Renaissance Club and Agincourt, Ohio State Renaissance Conference this year. Cara is a robust and resilient leader; she found a creative way to make an off-campus trip to Medieval Times in Toronto happen next week despite many scheduling difficulties. Cara has been accepted into the Special Education master’s program here at Mercyhurst, and we are delighted that the 'Hurst will be her home for a couple more years. Way to go, Cara! We are so proud of you!
"I Am Your Spaniel"
By Cara Bonavita

A beast is what they call me.
A mangey, rotten old thing
with canines falling from my gums
and musty paws weighted by blunt claws.
They say, "You love like a dog,"
I say, "I can love like no other."
I cling to the leash and the collar.
I lick the hand that feeds
and I nuzzle the fist that beats.
I can't help it if my heart
thinks for my brain.
I favor loyalty until it kills me.
I will let you pull the leash tighter
and as I raise my head higher,
I will look at you with the eyes of Argos,
dropping my ears and wagging
my tail as I revere you like
the god you never were.
I'll sleep at the foot of your bed
if it means I get to be with you.
I will give up every piece of myself
like something not worth loving back.

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**Important Dates**

- **Fall 2024 Registration** - *if you have not registered yet, please see your support coordinator.*
- Last Day to Withdraw from Spring Classes: April 19
- Spring Classes End: May 3
- Finals Week: May 6 - 9
- Graduation: May 11

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**Vocational Trip to JP Morgan Chase in Columbus, OH**

Eight students and three staff members enjoyed an amazing event at JP Morgan Chase last week. The company hosted a Student Symposium for Neurodivergent college students at their offices in Columbus, OH. Participants learned about the company,

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**Eclipse Viewing**

![Eclipse Viewing Image]
toured the beautiful offices, and gained insight into employment opportunities at this incredible organization. We think it is the start of a strong relationship and we look forward to hosting members of their team for events both virtually and on campus in the future! Great job to all the staff and students who participated!

(AISEV)

On Monday, April 8, 2024, at 3:16 p.m. Erie, PA we experienced the rare phenomena of being in the path of totality of a total solar eclipse. AIM students and staff enjoyed a fun day on campus with eclipse related activities and a sensory-friendly viewing spot.

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**Career Path Update**

**GRADUATION PRACTICE**

We are having an optional graduation ceremony practice on Monday, April 15. The van will depart from the Mercy 200 Apartments at 3:00 PM.

Please RSVP to Amanda at amulder@mercyhurst.edu if you plan to come! You will see where graduation will occur, and we will practice parts of the ceremony. Thank you!

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**Full Spectrum Fitness**

Full Spectrum Fitness is a new offering this semester. We had a few new students stop in to give it a try, along with our regulars who attend. The student athletes and majors that work with us are always welcoming and knowledgeable.

This program is personalized to each participant, and is all about building core strength just like the college athletes here at Mercyhurst. The students get to know one another, the coaches/interns and their own bodies as we meet Mondays and Wednesdays 11-12:30 in the MIC.

AIM students are always welcome, it is just one more area of our lives that we want to keep in great shape!

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With the spring semester winding down, two healthy relationship sessions remain. An array of topics has been covered with the sophomores who have attended.
weekly. Students have immersed themselves in the many different scenarios we provide each session. These scenarios cover topics such as having conversations with parents, friends, and partners, addressing conflict, etc. We recently discussed many real-life scenarios addressing roommate conflict and starting conversations with professors. Students went on an in-depth tour of the Rec center before Easter break. This mini field trip was provided as we had heard that some students would like to utilize what the center offers. However, many were uncomfortable as they did not know anyone or how to use the equipment. Our tour guide was very knowledgeable and kept the students engaged while also showing them how to use each piece of equipment in the center and helping ease any anxiety and/or nervousness they may have felt. He reminded us that we must remember that every person who goes to the gym had their first day in the gym at some point and never to give up and keep moving towards our goals.

In the last couple of sessions, we will continue to utilize real-life scenarios, allowing the students to put themselves in the situations and think about how they would feel in a certain situation and how they would approach it. The scenarios presented are real-life and video clips for us to depict fantasy versus reality. We will be looking ahead to summer and fall as well. They will be reminded where to go online to see what clubs and organizations the university offers and start thinking about their hobbies and interests. They will be encouraged to check the site throughout the summer and make notes if there are any clubs or organizations they may want to join when they return to campus in the fall. We will continue our conversations on communication and boundaries while focusing on co-workers, as some students may have summer jobs or are starting to think about job opportunities beyond college. We will also touch on applying for and interviewing for jobs and continuing to look at and discuss non-verbal communication.
We wish you all a wonderful summer and look forward to expanding on the current healthy relationships sessions in the fall.

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**Executive Director’s Note**

Another incredible AIM trip last week to JP Morgan Chase in Columbus – great job to our staff and students who represented Mercyhurst so well! We are very excited about growing our partnership with them in the coming years – stay tuned for more!

Special thanks to our friends at Parkhurst Dining – specifically Jackie and Tori at the Roost – who hosted our seniors for an Alcohol Awareness course at the Roost.

We are excited for a few more trips to wrap up the semester and then to start planning for the fall. Do you have ideas on what employers you might like to visit or connect with in a virtual presentation? Email Ryan or talk with your student support coordinator!

We have another virtual information session coming up at the end of this month – more details here – please share with friends and family who might be interested in learning more about AIM/CREATE!

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**Upcoming Campus Activities**

**Break the Thai: Thai Beef Salad or Vegan Spring Rolls?**
Join Chef Art on Wednesday, April 17, in the Grotto’s Community Dining Room from 4 to 5:30 p.m. for a cooking class! Learn to make Thai Beef Salad and Vegan Spring Rolls. Supplies will be provided. Sign up here.

**Support Women’s Basketball at Chipotle Fundraiser**
Dine at Chipotle (6611 Peach Street, Erie, PA 16509) on Thursday, April 18, from 5 to 9 p.m. to support the Women’s Basketball team. A portion of sales will benefit the Lakers. Contact Molly Glick at mglick@mercyhurst.edu with any questions.
Conference on Sustainability
The Community Engagement department is hosting a mini-conference entitled "Our Erie Environment: Spaces for Everyone" on Saturday, April 20, from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Responding to the academic theme of "Earth," the event will focus on the social, economic, and environmental pillars of sustainability in Erie. Open to faculty, staff, students, and community partners, this free conference is a perfect opportunity to experience the intersection of community engagement and sustainability in our city. The conference features keynote speaker Dr. Eric Pallant of Allegheny College, breakout sessions with faculty and Erie community members, lunch, and a Green Tour of campus. Community Engagement will also provide transportation to attendees wishing to join the National Water Dance activities on the Bayfront at 4 p.m. To register, click here. Contact Bethany Woods at bwoods@mercyhurst.edu with questions.

Celebrate Campus Pride Month
April is Campus Pride Month and Mercyhurst will host several events open to the campus community.

Saturday, April 13, 7 p.m., Drag Bingo. Join MAC/SAC in the green gym for a fun night of bingo hosted by a local drag queen.

Sunday, April 14, 4 p.m., Visibility Walk Poster Making. Join Lesbians of Mercyhurst in making posters for the LGBTQIA+ Visibility Walk in the Multicultural Lounge in the Student Union. All supplies are provided.

Monday, April 15, 7:30 p.m., LGBTQIA+ Visibility Walk. Meet at the Student Union Great Room to take part in the Mercyhurst University LGBTQIA+ Visibility Walk to hear about student experiences and learn about resources in Erie. Open to everyone including faculty and staff.

Wednesday, April 24, 4 p.m., Lavender Ceremony. Attend the first-ever Lavender Cord Ceremony in honor of graduating LGBTQIA+ seniors and allies in the Student Union Great Room. There will be light refreshments and speeches by Tyler Titus and Mercyhurst community members. Non-seniors, faculty, and staff are welcome.

Literary Festival Events

Songs of the Earth, Thursday, April 18, 7 p.m., Luke's Landing
Enjoy an evening of songs focused on this year's academic theme: the earth. Featuring performances by Mercyhurst faculty, students, alumni, and friends, along with featured guest Jim Tometsko and his band, the event highlights work by contemporary and classic artists, including Joni Mitchell, Blue Rodeo, Carole King, Imagine Dragons, and more. This music honors our connection to the natural world in all its splendor and fragile beauty, reminding us of our shared responsibility to care for the earth.

Lumen Unveiling and Student Awards, Thursday, April 25, 7:30 p.m., Taylor Little Theatre
The Literary Festival concludes with the presentation of the P. Barry McAndrew awards for excellence in student writing and the unveiling of Lumen, the student-produced, award-winning multimedia magazine of the creative arts at Mercyhurst. Students are invited to share their works during an open mic session.

Sister Maura Smith Earth Day Lecture Series Welcomes Rachael Shenylo
The Sister Maura Smith Earth Day Lecture Series returns on Wednesday, April 17, at 7 p.m. in the Walker Recital Hall. Rachael Shenylo, will deliver her talk: "Climate Cause and Effect: The Disproportionate Effects of Climate Change Across the World." A passionate environmentalist who sacrificed a comfortable life to study climate change where the needs are greatest, Rachael will discuss her observations of climate vulnerability in the rural highlands of Guatemala and her work to combat carbon emissions. Hosted by the Office of Sustainability and the Office for Mission, this event is free and open to the public.
Monday, April 29, 5 p.m., Dedication Ceremony. Join us in the Multicultural Lounge to dedicate an LGBTQIA+ bookcase in honor of the late Dr. Heidi Hosey-McGurk.

**Motivation is what gets you started.**
**Habit is what keeps you going.**

― Jim Ryun

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**23rd Annual Walk for Autism**

Join us for the 23rd Annual Walk for Autism! This empowering two-mile walk aims to raise awareness about Autism while funding crucial programming and activities for individuals with Autism in our community. All proceeds, a full 100%, remain here in our local area.

Join Mercyhurst AIM for the 23rd Annual WALK FOR AUTISM APRIL 27, 2024

Please join the Mercyhurst team by clicking on the link below.

https://autismsocietynwpa.app.neoncrm.com/AIMatMercyhurst

Team Captain Michele Garvey mgarvey@mercyhurst.edu
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Details</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3rd-10th</td>
<td>Artwork Showcase</td>
<td>Visit the hallway outside of Grotto Commons and look at artwork created by members of the LGBTQIA+ community!</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tuesday</td>
<td>Queer Conversations</td>
<td>Come to the community dining hall to take part in a student-led conversation on a topic surrounding the LGBTQIA+ community!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9th @ 5pm</td>
<td>Drag Bingo</td>
<td>Join MAC/SAC in the green gym for a fun night of bingo hosted by a local drag queen!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Saturday</td>
<td>Visibility Walk Poster Making</td>
<td>Come make posters for the visibility walk in the Multicultural Lounge in the Student Union!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13th @ 7pm</td>
<td>Visibility Walk</td>
<td>Meet at the Student Union Great Room to take part in an LGBTQIA+ visibility walk around campus!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sunday</td>
<td>Lavender Ceremony</td>
<td>Attend the first ever Lavender cord ceremony for LGBTQIA+ seniors and allies at the Student Union Great Room!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14th @ 4pm</td>
<td>Dedication Ceremony</td>
<td>Join us in the Multicultural Lounge for a dedication ceremony in honor of Dr. Heidi Hosey-McGurk.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monday</td>
<td></td>
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<td>15th @ 7:30pm</td>
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<td>Wednesday</td>
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<td>24th @ 4pm</td>
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<tr>
<td>Monday</td>
<td>Dedication Ceremony</td>
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<tr>
<td>29th @ 5pm</td>
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Sponsored by Multicultural Student Services
Proudly Presents the Sister Maura Smith Earth Day Lecture Series

“Climate Cause and Effect: The Disproportionate Effects of Climate Change Across the World”

Presented by: Rachael Shenyo

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 17 | 7 P.M. WALKER RECITAL HALL
Free and open to the public.

Groundbreaking climate scientist Rachael Shenyo will discuss why the problem of climate change must be solved not just by environmentalists, but by all of us. Grounded in her experiences in rural Guatemala, Rachael discusses her 9 observed indicators of climate vulnerability and how the communities who are contributing the least amount of carbon are often the ones most affected by the climate crisis.

Sponsored by the Office of Sustainability and the Office for Mission
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DATE</th>
<th>EVENT</th>
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<th>TIME</th>
<th>LOCATION</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>APRIL 15</td>
<td>PLANTS AND POTTERY</td>
<td>Join the Sustainability Club to make pottery with plant impressions using repurposed clay!</td>
<td>6 pm</td>
<td>Ceramics Lab</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>APRIL 16</td>
<td>PROTEST SIGN MAKING</td>
<td>Join the Citizen’s Climate Lobby to make cardboard protest signs for use in eco rallies!</td>
<td>7 pm</td>
<td>Hirt 214</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>APRIL 17</td>
<td>SISTER MAURA SMITH EARTH DAY LECTURE</td>
<td>Rachael Shenyos</td>
<td>7 pm</td>
<td>Walker Recital Hall</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>APRIL 18</td>
<td>SPEED PLARN</td>
<td>Join Morgan in a special competitive plarn event where we’ll see who can turn bags into plastic yarn the fastest!</td>
<td>6 PM</td>
<td>Multicultural Lounge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>APRIL 19</td>
<td>MOVIE NIGHT “This Changes Everything”</td>
<td>Join the Green Team to watch an inspirational climate documentary, one which will empower positive change!</td>
<td>5 PM</td>
<td>Zurn 114</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>APRIL 20</td>
<td>SUSTAINABILITY MINI CONFERENCE</td>
<td></td>
<td>9 AM</td>
<td>Mercy Heritage Room</td>
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<tr>
<td>APRIL 22</td>
<td>WATER DANCE</td>
<td></td>
<td>4 PM</td>
<td>Maritime Museum</td>
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<tr>
<td>APRIL 22</td>
<td>EARTH DAY FAIR</td>
<td>The Green Team hosts Earth Day fun, with trivia, scavenger hunts, prizes, and a game of kickball!</td>
<td>4 PM</td>
<td>Green Rec. Gym</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
HOW TO STUDY EFFECTIVELY

COME TO BOOST
Sunday: 5pm-7:30 – Hirt M213
Monday: 3pm-5:30 – Hirt M213
Wed: 5:30-8:00 pm – Zurn 207
Thurdays 3:00 –5:30pm- Hirt U305

We have BOOST monitors Jordan and Soren to help you with the following:
- Study strategies and note-taking
- Reading for comprehension
- Organizing ideas for writing assignments
- Prioritizing and study planning for the weekends

REMEMBER YOUR GOALS
On the journey of studying, there will be a time when you get bored or feel lazy. Always remember your goals and what you want to achieve.

MAKE A STUDY SCHEDULE
The first thing you can try is to make a study schedule. Decide a perfect time and study at the same time every day. It will practice your brain as well.
GET MOTIVATED AT THE STUDY STUDIO

CAE 311
4:00PM - 8:00PM

WEDNESDAYS & THURSDAYS

• COLLABORATE WITH PEERS
• LEARN MORE STUDY SKILLS
• STUDY INDEPENDENTLY
• EARN ANCHOR POINTS

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PICKLEBALL Open Class

TUESDAY
2 PM

@ THE REC CENTER
Trying to find something to do on campus?

Go to: mercyhurst.presence.io
Login with your Mercyhurst credentials
Download "Modern Campus Presence" on the App Store

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 berg@pa.lakers.mercyhurst.edu for more information
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 ticket to Ignite your body and spirit. Please join me for a mix of Salsa, Merengue, Pop, R&B, Hip-Hop, Belly Dance inspired routines, and more! All fitness levels are welcome. The class is taught as a progressive workout with fun jumps and dance moves. You won't regret it!

For more info: Contact your nearest Zumba Fitness

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ZUMBA.COM

CO-SPONSORED BY CAMPUS MINISTRY
AND THE COUNSELING CENTER

THE ANCHOR GROUP
TOGETHER THROUGH THE STORM

A student support group for those navigating grief and loss of a loved one.

Contact Marlissa mbailey@mercyhurst.edu to get involved