

AIM Advance

1/16/2026

Message from the AIM Director

Welcome back, students!

We're excited to see you return for another amazing semester in the AIM Program. As you continue your academic journey, remember that this community is here to help you grow, achieve your goals, and make the most of your university experience.

Whether you're building on last semester's successes or starting fresh with new challenges, our support staff is ready to provide guidance, resources, and encouragement every step of the way.

Here's to a semester filled with progress, connection, and opportunity—welcome back!

- Laurie Baker
Director AIM & CREATE



Important Spring Semester Dates

- Jan. 14: First Day of Classes
- Jan. 19: MLK JR Day: No Regular Day Classes (Mini 3 and evening classes will still meet)
- Jan. 20: Last Day to Drop a Class
- Feb. 27: Last Day to Withdraw from a Class
- March 6: Mini-Semester 3 Ends
- March 7 - March 15: Spring Break
 - Students must contact Residence Life if they are staying on campus over the break. Your Student's RA will have more information as we get closer to spring break.
- March 6: Mini-Semester 4 Starts
- March 20: Mid-Semester Grades
- April 1 - 6: Easter Break
 - Classes that start after 3:00 pm will resume on Monday, April 6
- April 21: Advising Day--no classes are held
- April 23: Fall/Summer Registration for Seniors, Juniors, and Graduate students
- April 24: Fall/Summer Registration for Sophomores
- April 24: Last Day to Withdraw from the Spring and Mini 4 Semester
- April 27: Fall/Summer Registration for Freshmen
- May 8: End of Regular Classes
- May 11 - 14: Finals Week
- May 15: Graduation

Upcoming AIM Events

Save The Date: January 25 for Eileen Earnst!

On Sunday, Jan. 25, the AIM Program will host an improvisation night led by Eileen Earnst from Cincinnati, OH.

In this workshop, participants can expect to participate in improv games designed to build communication skill sets. In a fun and supportive environment, each person will have an opportunity to learn foundations of improv like: Yes And, You Already Have All You Need, Declarations, and Make Your Partner Look Good. These ideas strengthen emerging and established communication techniques and provide a space to grow more confident in both public speaking and one-on-one interactions.



AIM Student Survey

The AIM Program is conducting a survey for students. This survey asks about your experiences with staff and faculty at Mercyhurst University. Your responses are anonymous and will help improve accessibility, inclusion, and support for neurodivergent students.

The link to the survey was sent to you in an email, and your support coordinator can also provide the link.

Please complete the survey by January 30, 2026.

Snowtubing at the Peak!

Join Laurie and Allison at Peak-N-Peak on Thursday, Jan. 29, for an evening of snowtubing! Students who are interested should sign up by contacting Laurie Baker at lbaker@mercyhurst.edu.

Weekly AIM Events

This spring semester, the AIM program continues many of the events and activates that we offered during the fall semester, and we have added more for the spring semester! Check out what we are doing below!

AIM WEEKLY EVENTS

SUNDAY

- SUNDAY SOCIAL
 - 6 PM - 7 PM
 - STUDENT UNION GREAT ROOM
- BOOST
 - 6 PM - 9 PM
 - MERCY 300

WEDNESDAY

- FRESHMAN SEMINAR
 - 3 PM - 3:50 PM
 - OLD MAIN 210
- SOPHOMORE CAREER PATH
 - 3 PM - 3:50 PM
 - SULLIVAN 3
- JUNIOR CAREER PATH
 - 3 PM - 3:50 PM
 - SULLIVAN 2
- SENIOR/GRAD CAREER PATH
 - 3 PM - 3:50 PM
 - SULLIVAN 1
- BOOST
 - 6 PM - 9 PM
 - MERCY 300

MONDAY

- JR'S WRITING WORKSHOP
 - 3 PM - 4 PM
 - OLD MAIN 210
- COOKING
 - 4 PM - 6 PM
 - MERCY 100
- BOOST
 - 6 PM - 9 PM
 - MERCY 300

TUESDAY

- FULL SPECTRUM FITNESS
 - 10 AM - 11 AM
 - MIC
- LUNCH BUNCH
 - 11:30 AM - 1 PM
 - COMMUNITY DINING ROOM
- PICKLEBALL
 - 1 PM - 2 PM
 - REC CENTER BASKETBALL COURTS
- BOOST
 - 2 PM - 5 PM
 - MERCY 300
- JR'S WRITING WORKSHOP
 - 3 PM - 4 PM
 - OLD MAIN 210

THURSDAY

- FULL SPECTRUM FITNESS
 - 10 AM - 11 AM
 - MIC
- TNT
 - 4 PM - 6 PM
 - VARIOUS LOCATIONS - CHECK TEAMS
- BOOST
 - 6 PM - 9 PM
 - MERCY 300

REMINDERS

ALL EVENTS, TIMES, AND LOCATIONS ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE - CHECK THE AIM STUDENTS' TEAMS PAGE FOR THE MOST UP-TO-DATE INFORMATION



PEERS Program

Each spring semester, the AIM program offers the PEERS for Young Adults program.

PEERS is an evidence-based program focusing on social skills development for neurodivergent young adults. The program provides 16 sessions, homework, and practice with the assistance of a social coach. The PEERS program uses cognitive-behavioral principles and includes topics like conversation skills, handling disagreements, using humor, and dating etiquette.

Ten students will be participating in this semester's PEERS program.

beginning NeuroLaunch projects this semester.

project closely aligned with their academic major or career goals. Through these experiences, students are building meaningful professional connections, deepening their knowledge of their chosen fields, and developing valuable, transferable skills that will support their future success.



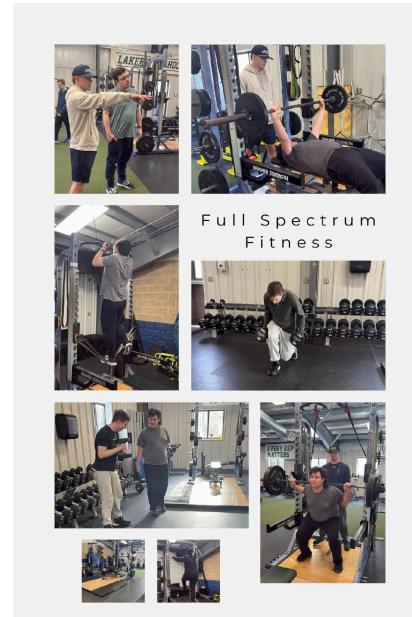
NeuroLaunch
MERCYHURST UNIVERSITY

Full Spectrum Fitness!

As we begin the 2026 Spring semester, students have the opportunity to ease stress and increase their personal well-being while engaging with a supportive fitness community by participating in Full Spectrum Fitness.

During FSF sessions, students participate in a variety of cardio, weightlifting, and resistance circuit workouts designed to build strength and stamina. Coach Kaeden Berger, an exercise science expert, creates exercises that match students' fitness levels and guides them to set personal fitness goals. Most importantly, students have fun while creating peer bonds!

The first session of FSF for the Spring semester is on Tuesday, January 20, from 10 AM to 11 AM, at the weight room in the Mercyhurst Ice Center (MIC) and will continue to be offered weekly each Tuesday and Thursday during the semester.



Pickleball Tuesdays in the Rec Center

Need a break from classes and studying? Come join us to play Pickleball!

Pickleball is back for the spring semester! Open to all students and no experience needed!

We'll see you there each Tuesday from 1 to 2 PM in the Rec Center Basketball Courts!



Cooking & Camaraderie

The ever-popular Cooking and Camaraderie program is back and in full swing this spring semester on Monday nights!

This semester, AIM staff members will select a fun foodie theme and bring it to life by cooking a series of themed dinners over several weeks. Students who attend all of that staff member's cooking nights earn a special reward—an invitation to enjoy a group meal at a local Erie restaurant.

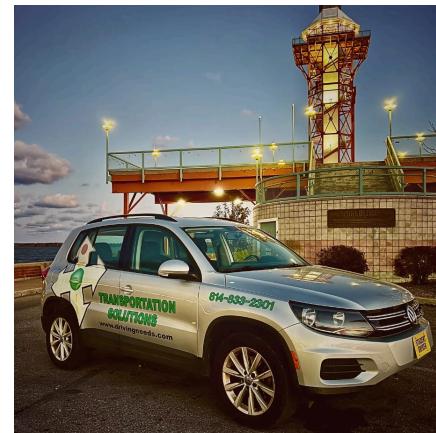
Laurie will be our first cook on January 26 from 4:00 pm to 6:00 pm!

Keep an eye out for announcements in the apartments to see who's cooking when and what's on the menu.

Transportation Solutions

Ready to take the wheel?

AIM is teaming up with Transportation Solutions so you can drive toward independence! With Transportation Solutions, you'll build confidence, master the road, and unlock freedom. Expert guidance, personalized lessons, and real results - let's get you moving! Gain the skills, knowledge, and confidence you need behind the wheel.



Contact your Support Coordinator to find out more!

BOOST Is Back Baby!

One of the most popular activities offered by the program is our BOOST Study Hall. AIM Students are joined by mentors who assist them in studying for tests and quizzes, writing papers, and creating study aids.

BOOST takes place in the Mercy 300 Lounge on these times and days during the spring semester:

Sundays--6 PM to 9 PM with Taryn Baker
Mondays--6 PM to 9 PM with Delfina Magro
Tuesdays--2 PM to 5 PM with Taylor Napolitan
Wednesdays--6 PM to 9 PM with Delfina Magro
Thursdays--6 PM to 9 PM with Taryn Baker

The BOOST schedule begins on Monday, Jan. 19.

What's Up Wednesday? Nawh--It's Now Thursday Night Takeover!

That's right! This spring semester, What's Up Wednesday is now on Thursdays! Same time; same great fun! Since it's now on Thursdays, it has a new name: Thursday Night Takeover!

In addition to a new name, there are new activities planned:

- experiential trips on and off campus
- creative programming: art, music, skills for life, and social projects that foster collaboration, emotional regulation, and independence
- community connections: Pop-up labs and partnerships with MU departments like Residence Life, Sustainability, Wellness, Campus Ministry, and the Counseling Center

Thursday Night Takeover provides AIM students enriching, well-being activities that support sensory needs and emotional regulation. When students feel balanced and safe, they are ready to learn and grow. Our designated sensory spaces address all primary senses--sight, hearing, smell, touch, vestibular, and proprioceptive--helping students decompress, self-regulate, and thrive.

The first off campus trip is on Jan. 29 to Peak-N-Peak, our local ski area, for an evening of snowtubing! Students who are interested should sign up by contacting Laurie Baker at lbaker@mercyhurst.edu.

Career Insights

Career Path

AIM's Career Path Classes are designed to help individuals identify, plan, and navigate their educational and professional journeys. These classes typically cover various aspects of career development, providing guidance and resources to help participants make informed decisions about their career choices and progression.

Career Path kicks off on January 21!

Check out this section in each edition of the newsletter to see what we've been up to!

Adventure! AIM Trips!

During the first week of Winter Break, nine AIM students took part in an exciting vocational exploration trip, spending half the week in Columbus, Ohio and the other half in Cleveland,



Ohio. This immersive experience gave students the opportunity to explore a wide range of career paths, connect with professionals in their fields of interest, and build confidence as they prepare for life after graduation.

One highlight of the trip was a visit to JPMorganChase, where students met with staff to learn about the company's support for neurodivergent employees, available workplace accommodations, and career pathways in technology and related fields. Additional vocational meetings were tailored to students' individual majors and career goals, taking place in one-on-one or small-group settings.

Throughout the week, students visited an impressive variety of organizations and institutions, including the Columbus Symphony, Ohio State University (Marketing and Graphic Design), Columbus Metropolitan Library, Nationwide, Fidelity, Park Place Technologies, The Music Settlement, Jeff Monreal Funeral Home, Welcome House, Inc., Cleveland State University Library, and Lorain County Public Health. Several students also had the special opportunity to connect with Mercyhurst alumni currently working in their fields, gaining valuable insight and inspiration from those who have walked a similar path.

Each meeting offered students a closer look at day-to-day work life, practical advice for navigating graduation and job search, and plenty of time to ask thoughtful questions. During downtime, students continued their professional development by updating résumés, refining LinkedIn profiles, writing thank-you notes to hosts, and applying for jobs and internships.

While the week was packed with learning, there was also plenty of time for fun and new experiences. Students enjoyed a variety of cuisines, including Asian American, Italian, New Mexican, and Indian food, went bowling one evening and spent an afternoon exploring Ohio City on a guided food tour.

Overall, the trip was a meaningful blend of career exploration, skill building, and community-building experiences. Students returned with new connections, clearer goals, and lasting memories.

If you are interested in participating in a future vocational trip, please reach out to your Student Support Coordinator or contact Allison Metzcar for more information about opportunities available this spring.

Winter Break Trip Pics!





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