

# AIM Advance

11/14/2025

## Important Dates

- Nov. 21: Last day to withdraw for Fall and Mini 2
- Nov. 26-30: Thanksgiving Break: No classes held
- Dec. 5: Fall classes end
- Dec. 7: Weekend classes end
- Dec. 8-11: Finals Week
- Jan. 14: Spring and Mini 3 begins
- Jan. 17: Weekend classes begin
- Jan. 19: MLK Day: 1.) Mini 3 and evening classes in attendance 2.) No regular full semester day classes
- Jan. 20: Student add/drop for Spring and Mini 3
- Jan. 21: Administrative add/drop for Spring and Mini 3

## Thanksgiving Break DINING HOURS OF OPERATION

### GROTTO COMMONS

OPEN Tuesday 11/25 from 7 am - 9 pm  
CLOSED Wednesday 11/26 - Saturday 11/29  
OPEN Sunday 11/30 from 4-8 pm for Board Swipes  
OPEN Monday 12/1 normal hours of operation

### 501 GRILLE

OPEN Tuesday 11/25 from 7 am - 9 pm  
CLOSED Wednesday 11/26 - Sunday 11/30  
OPEN Monday 12/1 normal hours of operation

### COFFEE BAR

OPEN Tuesday 11/25 from 7:30 am - 4 pm  
CLOSED Wednesday 11/26 - Sunday 11/30  
OPEN Monday 12/1 normal hours of operation

### ROOST EXPRESS

OPEN Tuesday 11/25 from 10 am - 3 pm  
CLOSED Wednesday 11/26 - Sunday 11/30  
OPEN Monday 12/1 normal hours of operation

### THE ROOST

CLOSED Monday 11/24 - Tuesday 12/2  
OPEN Wednesday 12/3 normal hours of operation

### ANCHOR EXPRESS

OPEN Tuesday 11/25 from 2 pm - 12 am  
CLOSED Wednesday 11/26 - Saturday 11/29  
OPEN Sunday 11/30 from 4 pm - 12 am  
OPEN Monday 12/1 normal hours of operation

Board swipes end at closing on 11/25. They begin on 11/30 at Grotto at 4 pm.

## Message from the Executive Director

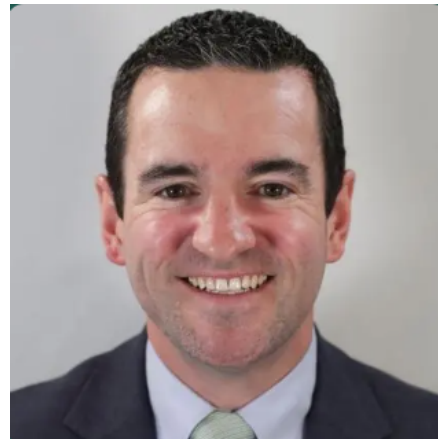
So many amazing things have been happening lately - a special shout out to the students and staff who represented AIM at the College Autism Summit last week - your hard work and professionalism truly shined.

Our NeuroLaunch students have also been doing an outstanding job this semester. Keep up the great momentum! You all should have received an email yesterday about signing up for projects in the spring - please do so!

Families, we appreciate your continued support. If you know a prospective student or family who may be interested in learning more about AIM, please feel free to share the link to our upcoming Information Session: <https://mhur.st/aim-info>

~ Ryan Palm '07

Executive Director of Brad McGarry Center for Neurodiversity





Our AIM students recently attended the 2025 College Autism Summit in Pittsburgh last week. This event, an inspiring gathering designed to empower neurodiverse students as they prepare for postsecondary life, brought together students, educators, and leaders of neurodiversity programs from across the U.S. It is intended to share information and support one another in creating

accessible, and inspirational programming. Our Executive Director, Ryan Palm, presented a session on our ground-breaking NeuroLaunch program. He shared his vision, his expertise and represented our AIM community with excellence.

During the Summit, our students engaged in dynamic workshops covering topics such as "The Benefit of Animal-Assisted Programs in Educational Settings", "Why Neurodivergent Candidates Do Not Network - and How Can We Change It", and "The Art of Disclosure at Work". They also had the opportunity to network with peers from across the country, share their experiences, and build a renewed sense of belonging in the college community.

We are proud of our AIM students for embracing this experience with enthusiasm, asking insightful questions, and reflecting on how these sessions will shape their next steps. The insights they gained on self-advocacy, time management, and personal wellness will help them continue to grow, succeed, and navigate college life with confidence.

## NeuroLaunch

Yesterday students and families received a link to apply for a project for the spring semester. We have 17 students currently completing projects and are excited to continue this initiative. Current projects include partners such as: Mercyhurst Athletics, Hagen History Center, Mercyhurst Library, and more!

Students interested in pursuing a NeuroLaunch internship for the spring semester are encouraged to contact Allison Metzcar at [ametzcar@mercyhurst.edu](mailto:ametzcar@mercyhurst.edu).



## Weekly AIM Events

### Full Spectrum Fitness!

While most people know that exercise is crucial for health and has an impact on mental wellbeing, it's important to find a program you enjoy. A fun exercise program keeps you motivated and increases the desire to commit and follow through. It can also increase positive relationships and have fun while they exercise. They get to know their coach, their peers, and create bonds through shared experiences.



"I enjoy going to Full Spectrum Fitness. It gives me a place to work out. Students can find someplace fun to get some exercise," says student Erik Delmonaco. Nick Amendola, who has been going to FSF for two years, along with his best friend, has really enjoyed the program this year. He said he has a lot of confidence in the coach, Kaeden Berger. When asked about the program, Nick commented, "Kaeden is a great coach! He is always there when you need help." Relationships are growing on both sides as Coach Kaeden commented, "I have a great time with the students. We all have fun, and it is very beneficial for the body and mind."

Come join us!!

When: Tuesdays & Thursdays 10-11 a.m.

Where: The MIC (Mercy Ice Center)

## Pickleball Tuesdays in the Rec Center

Students have been having a great time at our weekly pickleball meet-ups, combining friendly competition with plenty of laughs. Whether you're a seasoned player or picking up a paddle for the first time, you can enjoy the fun, fast-paced games and a chance to unwind with friends.

These weekly sessions are a great way to stay active, meet new people, and join one of the fastest growing sports around. It's all about good energy, teamwork, and having fun on the court!



## Cooking & Camaraderie

Cooking continues to be a highlight each week for students! Last week, students enjoyed creating and sharing taco salad, and this week's menu featured panko-encrusted chicken strips paired with creamy mashed potatoes and a sweet strawberry fluff dessert. The kitchen was filled with laughter, teamwork, and great conversation as students cooked together and enjoyed a delicious homemade meal. Be sure to join us next Monday at 4:30 p.m.!

## 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 Study Hall**

BOOST hours will be the same each week (changes will be shared in the AIM Students Teams Page – changes could be caused by classes being canceled, BOOST monitors being unavailable, etc.). The BOOST study lounge in Mercy 300 is always available for students to study – even outside of scheduled BOOST hours!

- Sundays from 6 PM – 9 PM
- Mondays from 6 PM – 9 PM
- Tuesdays from 2 PM – 5 PM
- Wednesdays from 6 PM – 9 PM
- Thursdays from 6 PM – 9 PM

## **What's Up Wednesday**

Each week AIM sponsors What's Up Wednesday - a relaxed time to unwind, socialize, and enjoy fun activities together. From puzzles and games to visits from therapy bunnies and creative Lego building, there's always something new to spark laughter and connection.

These gatherings are the perfect midweek pick-me-up, giving students a chance to take a break, meet new friends, and recharge while having fun!

Wednesdays from 4:30 - 6:30 in Mercy 100.

## **MNCA**

The Mercyhurst Neurodiverse Community Alliance (MNCA) student club participated in Mercyhurst's Unity Week by providing information and hands on experiences explaining different disabilities. The students set up booths on ADHD, Dyslexia, Anxiety, and Autism where they provided information and simulations. They also had a booth providing fidget toys and slime where participants could make and take their own fidget toys. The students did an excellent job explaining neurodiversity! Participation in such campus-wide events enhances inclusivity and de-stigmatizes neurodivergent students.





# AIM SUNDAY SOCIAL



BOARD GAMES WILL BE PROVIDED, BUT FEEL FREE TO  
BRING YOUR OWN!

HOSTED BY AIM AND WELCOME TO ALL STUDENTS AND  
FRIENDS

EVERY SUNDAY

6 PM – 7 PM

LOCATION: STUDENT UNION GREAT  
ROOM



## 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.

**Freshman:** The current focus of the Healthy Relationships course is on friendships and making "good friends". Students are working with residence life advisors and participating in group activities to identify qualities of good friendships.

**Sophomore:** Our sophomore students have been actively engaged in developing essential workplace etiquette skills. Recent focus areas include professional communication, building healthy workplace relationships, and navigating professional boundaries.

Looking ahead, students will participate in upcoming career workshop days designed to help them:

- Refine their résumés and cover letters
- Begin the process of applying for internships
- Gain confidence in presenting themselves professionally

These activities are part of our ongoing commitment to prepare students for meaningful career experiences and future success.

**Junior:** Our Junior Career Path classes have been busy exploring key topics to prepare for life after college. Recently, students participated in sessions on Professional Etiquette: Professional Clothing, where they discussed how to dress for success and make a strong first impression.

**Seniors and Graduate Students:** It is the time in the year where our seniors and graduate students should be working to apply to jobs and internships. We will begin spending most of our time together in a workshop style - students will use this time each week to search and apply to opportunities with the assistance of AIM staff in the room.

This week in Career Path, sophomores through graduate students were invited to a "Choose Your Own Adventure Day". This was organized so that students had three options of sessions to attend. These options included Accommodations for Interviews presented by Allison Metzcar, Personal Finance 101 presented by Michele Garvey, and Graduate School Overview presented by Colleen Hordych.

Wednesdays from 3 pm - 3:50 pm

Freshman Seminar: Old Main 210

Sophomore Career Path: Sullivan 3

Junior Career Path: Sullivan 2

Seniors and Graduate Students Career Path: Sullivan 1

### **Internship & Job Search Support**

Students interested in securing a summer internship or full-time position and seeking assistance in identifying opportunities within their field and preferred geographic area are invited to complete this form: **[AIM Internship/Full-Time Job Search Support Form](#)**.

By submitting this form, students will receive individualized support from Allison and June, who will research and share job and internship openings that align with each student's interests and goals.

## AIM CAREER POINTS

<b>WHAT?</b>	Points that you can redeem for professional necessities
<b>HOW?</b>	<p>Earn points by attending AIM Vocational opportunities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Weekly Interview Question = 5 points</li><li>• Career Path = 10 points</li><li>• Meeting with Allison or Ryan = 20 points<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>◦ Can assist with resume, interview preparation, mock interviews, LinkedIn, cover letters, etc.</li></ul></li><li>• Day Trips = 50 points</li><li>• Week-Long Trips = 200 points</li><li>• Completing tasks in Prentus = 25 points</li></ul> <p>Additional opportunities will be posted throughout the year along with how many points you will gain for participating</p>
<b>REDEEM</b>	<p>100 points = \$10</p> <p>You can redeem your points for items that benefit you professionally. Email the Amazon link to Allison and Ryan along with a brief description of how this would benefit your career development</p> <p>Examples: portfolio, blazer, tie, sketchbook, notebook, etc.</p>
<b>PRENTUS</b>	<p>Start earning points today by setting up your Prentus account. See/email Allison Metzcar or Ryan Palm for more information.</p>
<b>QUESTIONS:</b>	<p>ALLISON METZCAR - <a href="mailto:AMETZCAR@MERCYHURST.EDU">AMETZCAR@MERCYHURST.EDU</a> RYAN PALM - <a href="mailto:RPALM@MERCYHURST.EDU">RPALM@MERCYHURST.EDU</a></p>

### AIM Career Points

This year, we launched a new initiative called "Interview Question of the Week" designed to help students practice and refine their interview skills. Each week, students are encouraged to reflect on a common interview question and consider how they might respond. Students who submit their practice responses via email will earn 5 Career Points each week. To support them, both Allison Metzcar and their Student Support Coordinator are available to provide feedback and guidance on crafting strong answers.

The question this week is "What are your strengths?" Email Allison at [ametzcar@mercyhurst.edu](mailto:ametzcar@mercyhurst.edu).

## Upcoming University Events

### Community Engagement November Newsletter

We are ambassadors of service! Students, faculty, and staff are welcome to partner with Community Engagement in serving our Erie community through different service events.

- Follow our instagram [@hurstresponders](https://www.instagram.com/hurstresponders)
- [Fall Volunteer Opportunities](#)
- [November Newsletter](#)

If you have any questions, contact Suzy Banister at [sbanister@mercyhurst.edu](mailto:sbanister@mercyhurst.edu).

### Unity Week Events

Unity Week is this week! Multicultural Student Services is teaming up with multiple clubs and departments on campus to bring you an array of opportunities and events to find community on campus and show your support for our diverse campus. Events are open to everyone! The full schedule is below:

- Friday, Nov. 14
- 6-8 p.m. in the Waterford Room: Potluck with BSU
- 7:30-9:30 p.m. in the Student Union Great Room: Pride Bingo with MSGPB
- Saturday, Nov. 15
- 7-9 p.m. in the REC Green Gym: Laker Line Dancing with MSGPB

### ACE Collecting Canned Vegetables

The Academic Community Engagement (ACE) department is collecting 100 cans of vegetables for a local food pantry and community partner to assist with their Thanksgiving meal distribution to Erie-area families. Donations can be dropped off at the Student Union, room 103, until Thursday, November 20. Contact Bethany Woods at [bwoods@mercyhurst.edu](mailto:bwoods@mercyhurst.edu) for more information.

**Polar Plunge**

The Mercyhurst Council for Exceptional Children is proud to announce the Polar Plunge fundraiser, held on Saturday, Nov. 22! Head to Beach 7 at Presque Isle State Park at 10:30 a.m. to help raise money for the PA Special Olympics. The donation minimum is \$10. The deadline to [register](#) is Friday, Nov. 14. If you have any questions, contact MacKenzie Heasley at [mheasl78@lakers.mercyhurst.edu](mailto:mheasl78@lakers.mercyhurst.edu). We hope to see you there!

**Christmas Gala and Concert Choir**

Join us on Sunday, Dec. 7, for the Christmas Gala and Concert Choir! There will be lessons and carols, directed by Dr. Christopher Petit, from 3 to 4 p.m. in Christ the King Chapel. Donations will be accepted at the chapel door.

**Holiday Concert**

Join us on Sunday, Dec. 7, for a Holiday Concert, courtesy of the Wind Ensemble and the Mercyhurst Civic Orchestra! Directed by Dr. Scott Meier and Dr. Gary Viebranz, this concert will be held at 4:30 p.m. in the Mary D'Angelo Performing Arts Center. It is ticketed; tickets are available [here](#).

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# Campus Ministry Weekly Groups



Catholic Impact  
Thursdays 5:30pm

Wednesday Night Fellowship  
Wednesdays 5:30pm



Sip & Stitch  
Tuesdays 12:30pm

Commuter Fellowship  
Mondays 11:30am



Student Athlete Fellowship  
Tuesdays 7pm

Sunday Mass  
7:30pm





# MERCYHURST

## UNIVERSITY

### **AUTISM INITIATIVE AT MERCYHURST**

Phone: (814) 824-2000

Address: 501 East 38th Street

Erie, Pennsylvania 16546

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