

CAMPUS CONNECTIONS

EMPLOYEE NEWSLETTER

Issue 10

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Pictured: From Día de los Muertos celebrations to Market Days, this past month found residents and staff enjoying the final days of our beautiful fall season. To see more community highlights, continue reading and [click here](#) to visit Misericordia's Facebook page!

Campus Connections would like to thank everyone who cast their vote for the Annual Holiday Lunch/Dinner menu*, scheduled to take place on December 19. With 47% of votes, our traditional menu consisting of catfish, fried chicken, macaroni and cheese, sweet potatoes, collard greens, and green beans is the winner! This menu option beat out tamales and pasta. We thank everyone for participating, and we look forward to breaking bread together! (***Please note:** overnight staff will receive a traditional breakfast menu).

Also taking place at the Annual Holiday Lunch/Dinner is the announcement of our Service Award Winners. Please [click here](#) to share story that not only highlights our core mission and values but also captures the positive impact our exceptional staff has on the Misericordia community. Whether it's about a time of compassion, going above and beyond, demonstrating creativity and innovation, teamwork, overcoming challenges, or instilling hope in others, we want to hear how a specific colleague of yours put these actions into play this year through your point of view! Please complete the form below and have it filled no later than December 4.



ORGANIZATIONAL UPDATES

IN CASE YOU MISSED IT

Workforce Growth Project: Staff Experiences

- Once again we participated in a collaborative grant funded by the Coleman Foundation to find solutions to workforce challenges and improve the opportunities and culture of our organization. All staff were asked to complete their survey to help us collect information to know what aspects you find valuable so we can continue to work on what you think needs improving! We thank everyone who took the time to answer questions about their staff experiences at Misericordia and provide feedback. Please stay tuned to Campus Connections for the survey's findings.

Important Message from the Payroll Department

- The week of Thanksgiving will be a heavy processing time for ADP. To meet their payroll submission deadline, we must submit payroll the day before our normal processing day to ensure bank funds are available on pay date Friday, November 29, 2024. Because HR will be closed on Thursday and Friday during this week, live checks will be distributed on Wednesday, November 27th however funds are not available until Friday, November 29, 2024 (pay day). There will be a \$50.00 bank fee charge that will be deducted on your next payroll check if you cash or deposit before the pay date. [Click here](#) to read more.

Updated Dress Code

- We've updated our Dress Code to align more closely with the times. The updated Dress Code will be effective 12/1/24.
- [Click here](#) to read the modifications.

MANDATORY MASKING

From November 1 to February 1, masking is mandatory for all staff and volunteers in residential care areas or while working directly with residents (e.g., the bakery).

Surgical (not cloth) or N95s should be worn; N95 should be worn when working with residents who have tested positive for COVID.

For more details, [click here](#).

APPLICANT OBSERVATIONS

A friendly note from Social Service: You may begin to notice more new faces (applicants) are observing in your areas. These observations are opportunities for us to see if we can meet a person's needs for future placement at Misericordia, and that is why your feedback and notes are so important! To make things easier, every applicant observing will be in Awards. You will be able to see all of their information and keep notes all in one place.

Stay tuned to Campus Connections for additional details.



HIGHLIGHTS AND OPPORTUNITIES

CULTURAL AMBASSADORS APPLICATIONS OPEN

Misericordia has launched a community engagement and employee initiative called the Cultural Ambassadors program. The purpose of this program is to foster a culture of connection and community through fun, creative, and supportive workplace initiatives. Some of these initiatives will be around the spirit of camaraderie and team building, as well as recognition and appreciation events, such as the milestone anniversary celebrations and the annual holiday meal!

Members of the Cultural Ambassador program will amplify Misericordia's values; act as a resource by helping new staff with onboarding as well as supporting committed staff, and providing a support system for staff around work-related and personal losses and grief, as well as achievements. There will also be built-in opportunities to dedicate time to continuous learning and professional development.

Ideally, members should meet some of the following qualifications:

- At least 1 year of employment
- Actively involved or have completed FFS Tier 1 & 2 (or Professionalism)
- Leads by example by utilizing Misericordia Outlook email and Campus Connections

Additional qualifications and information about the program can be [found here](#).

Interested in joining? [Click here](#) to apply!

SHARE YOUR EMPLOYEE TESTIMONIALS WITH OUR NEW HIRES

Do you want to share your experience with new hires? Staff Development is looking for Direct Care staff to come and speak with our new staff about your experience at Misericordia. We are looking for twenty minutes of your time.

If you are interested in signing up or want more information, please discuss with your supervisor and contact staff development at training@misericordia.com.

LET'S WORK TOGETHER TO SOLVE PROBLEMS

Northwestern University's Design Thinking & Communication (DTC) program invites you to join us in helping them engineer tangible solutions to any accessibility challenges that affect Misericordia's residents' independence and activities of daily life. Previously, staff submitted ideas to help the DTC program develop prototypes such as an [automatic dime sizer](#) to support residents in individually chopping food and [two-side shower ramps](#) for wheelchairs and walkers. [Click here](#) for more details. If you have ideas, please email them to Tiffany Johnson at tiffanyj@misericordia.com by December 2.



HIGHLIGHTS AND OPPORTUNITIES (CONT'D)

CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR FIT FOR SUCCESS: TIER 2 GRADUATES



Front row (L to R): Saul H (co-facilitator), Taina J, Zen M, Glori U, Hattie L; **Back row (L to R):** Casey S, Briana W, Alison S, Jason B, Kristina L (co-facilitator), Mary Ann G (co-facilitator)

Congratulations to the 19 staff from 11 different departments who recently completed Fit for Success Tier 2: Essential Skills for Teamwork!

We are so grateful for your efforts and willingness to continue your professional growth. We encourage you to share your skills learned in FFS with your teams.



Front row (L to R): Bridget G, Rolanda W, Thet Wai A, Shiloh C; **Back row (L to R):** Frankie S, Tanesha B, Shanell J, Teresa H, Guy T

Our residents are best served when strong teams are working together to provide them with the highest quality of care!

Applications are now available for **Fit for Success Tier 1: Self-Identity!** Applications will be due December 13 to HR and are available on ADP for all staff who have worked at Misericordia for 6 months or more and are in good standing!

For more details, please see the information on the right to know if Fit for Success is a good fit for you!

COULD FIT FOR SUCCESS BE A GOOD FIT FOR YOU?

You've been working at Mis for 5, 7, maybe 10 years? You are satisfied in your current role. You've been to many trainings over the years. You are a solid, reliable staff! Why should YOU consider applying to Fit for Success?

As you know, one of our current strategic pillars for Misericordia is to be an "Employer of Choice." Your growth and development matter to us. You bring experience and expertise to your position. Fit for Success is an opportunity to continue your own personal and professional growth – and to share your wisdom with colleagues from across the organization.

In Fit for Success, we focus on leadership skills such as communication, empathy, conflict management, and problem solving – all critical skills to help retain staff and continue the high quality of care that helps maintain Misericordia's standards of excellence.

Applications to Fit for Success Tier 1: Self-Identity are due December 13 to HR and are available on ADP or at HR Reception. Training will take place on Thursdays from 1-3PM beginning January 9, 2025. Open to all staff who have been here for 6 months or more and who are in good standing. It is our great desire to see you continue your career with Misericordia for the next 5, 7 even 10 years! Fit for Success will support you on your journey with us whether you've been here for 6 months or 10 years!



EMPLOYEE RESOURCES

WHAT TO EXPECT AFTER OPEN ENROLLMENT

All benefit election changes made during Open Enrollment will take effect on 1/1/2025. The first pay period that will reflect 2025 rates is the pay date of 1/10/2025. Please take a moment to review the [2025 Benefit Enrollment Guide](#), if you have not already done so. If no changes were made during Open Enrollment, your current elections will continue into 2025.



The O'Grady Catholic Health Trust's mission is to provide high-quality healthcare at an affordable cost to Catholic organizations consistent with the Ethical and Religious Directives as prescribed by the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops.

For January 1, 2025 only, New York Life is offering a one-time open enrollment for eligible employees the opportunity to enroll or increase the voluntary life coverage (for employee and legal spouse coverage) up to the guaranteed issue amount. Employees can elect up to \$200,000 and their legal spouse up to \$30,000 without submitting an Evidence of Insurability form (EOI). Any amount elected over the guaranteed issue will need to submit an EOI form and return the completed form to New York Life. [Click here](#) for the EOI form.

[Click here](#) to view the New York Life Welcome Guide to learn more about the New York Life benefits. Please contact hrbenefits@misericordia.com if you have any questions.

EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (EAP)





Please remember that Misericordia offers resources to you and everyone in your household (anyone residing in your home) with a network of trained professionals through our Employee Assistance Programs (EAP). EAP support is available 24/7, 365 days/year. If you or members of your household need some additional support or grievance counseling, please reach out to one of our two providers.

[Click here](#) to learn more.

BREAK THE ICE WITH THESE CONVERSATION STARTERS WITH CO-WORKERS



Courtesy of [Teamland.com](https://www.teamland.com)

-  Name three words that perfectly describe the holiday for you.
-  You're walking down the street, feeling great — what holiday song would be playing in the background?
-  Have you ever experienced a blizzard? What is your craziest snowstorm story?
-  What is your least favorite holiday side dish?

CAMPUS CONNECTIONS



COMMUNITY SHOWCASE

CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR PUMPKIN CHALLENGE WINNERS!

1



Hosted by Developmental Training, all staff and residential areas were invited to participate in our annual pumpkin challenge.

2



1

Special thanks to all 361 staff and residents who cast their vote! Please see our winners on the left and listed below:

1st place draw with 51 votes:

- La Calavera Catrina by Loni
- A Margarita by Jasmine M.

2nd place with 37 votes:

- Smores by Jasmine M.

3rd place with 33 votes:

- DT Farm by Jasmine V.

3



DIVERSITY & INCLUSION QUARTERLY GUIDE

[Click here](#) to find the October through December Diversity and Inclusion Quarterly guide that highlights special events, topics, and national observances recognized by staff and residents at Misericordia.

UPCOMING EVENTS AND ACTIVITIES

• MOTHER MCAULEY A CAPELLA CHOIR GROUP ON 12/02

- Mother McAuley A Capella Choir will be visiting us on December 2nd at 11am to sing Christmas Carols. The choir will travel through McAuley and Conway to spread Christmas cheer

• RIDGEVILLE BAND ON 12/03

- Coming on Tuesday, December 3rd
- from 7pm to 8pm
- At the Jean Marie Ryan Center
- Please arrive no later than 6:46pm

All staff are invited to the...

ANNUAL HOLIDAY MEAL EVENT

Location: Jean Marie Ryan Center

Date: Thursday, December 19th

Times: 6:00 am to 7:00 am
11:00 am to 12:00 pm
1:00 pm to 2:00 pm
5:30 pm to 6:30 pm

Food to be Served:

6:00 am - Traditional Breakfast

11:00 am, 1:00 pm, 5:30 pm - Traditional Menu

(Catfish, fried chicken, macaroni and cheese, sweet potatoes, collard greens, green beans with almonds)

Let us come together for an hour filled with celebration, connections, and warm wishes...



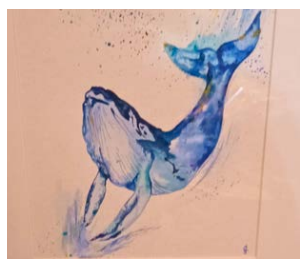


SPECIAL FEATURE

STAFF PERSONAL COLLECTION SHOWCASE

In our continued effort to recognize and celebrate the unique stories, interests, and attributes of our diverse workforce, we asked for submissions from staff to be featured in our special employee spotlight on Personal Collections.

Please see the submissions received below, and as always stay tuned to Campus Connections for more opportunities to share your passions with us!



Pictured: Pieces from Cyndi's "Orca Whales" Collection

CYNDI B'S ORCA WHALES COLLECTION

"Thirty-something years ago I was watching the movie Free Willy with the Polk home, and I absolutely fell in love with these beautiful majestic creatures. I have been collecting them for years, a few years ago I began adding all whales to my collection.

Attached is a small sampling of my collection, and whale paintings that friends have made for me." - Cindy B. (Staff Development Office Coordinator)

• CHECK OUT PREVIOUS SUBMISSIONS



Melissa B's Vintage Apple Collection

"My first experience with the Apple 2 computer was in elementary school in the early 90s. I had learned how to type and played educational games during our 3rd grade scheduled... ([click here to read more](#))



Dominique R's Art Collection

"I love art, it's my first love. It's an expression of different periods of time and emotions. There are so many interpretations of each piece and each one can be... ([click here to read more](#))



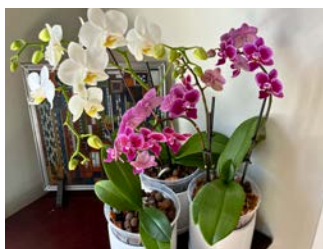
Wendy G's Small Box Collection

"I enjoy beauty in the form of small unique boxes. I like finding them at thrift stores and rummage sales. I'm not looking for more, but sometimes I see... ([click here to read more](#))



Frankie S's Electric Guitar Collection

"I have been a musician for 21 years. My first instrument was a guitar when I was 8 years old. While I no longer own my very first or second guitars, I have this collection of guitars each with their own story and purpose. The second guitar from... ([click here to read more](#))



Jen K's Orchid Collection

"My mother kept several common grocery store hybrid orchids while I was growing up. I was given one as a gift and I began learning more about the different species and varieties. My love of orchids grew... ([click here to read more](#))



FOR YOUR CONSIDERATION

LOCAL BUSINESSES FROM AROUND THE GLOBE

NATIONAL VETERANS ART MUSEUM

4041 N Milwaukee Ave 2F Chicago, IL 60641

[details here](#)

UNCOMMON CLOSET

3328 W North Ave Chicago, IL 60647

[details here](#)

JUSTICE OF THE PIES

8655 S Blackstone Ave, Chicago, IL 60619

[details here](#)

MUSIC AND STORIES WITH THE MUSIC PLAYHOUSE OF CHICAGO

[Click here](#) for more details on how you can participate in a special program in honor of International Day of Persons with Disabilities

Send us a tip! If you have recommendations for any local minority and women-owned businesses that Misericordia should know about it, [click here](#) and tell us about their goods and services. We may highlight your suggestion in future issues of Campus Connections!

LET'S CREATE A HOLIDAY PLAYLIST



Pictured: Cover art for Gayla Peevey's "I Want a Hippopotamus for Christmas" submitted by Lark Lux (DT Holbrook)

In the spirit of connection and the holidays, we invite everyone to help us curate a playlist for the annual Holiday Staff Breakfast/Lunch/Dinner by submitting your favorite holiday songs!

Whether it's a [Christmas classic](#) or a song that takes you back to a holiday childhood memory, Campus Connections invites you to [click here](#) to share them with us.

For your submission to be accepted, please follow the guidelines below:

- You may include songs from any genre, songs in any language, or songs with no words/lyrics.
- Only clean/radio-edited versions of the songs will be accepted.

Please note: Due to the interest of time, we may not be able to include all submissions.

Order your HOLIDAY HAM

Sign-Up Deadline:

End of Business Day on Friday,
December 13th

Pick-Up Date (ONE DAY ONLY):

Wednesday, December 18th

PLEASE NOTE: If you cannot pick up your ham on 12/18, make arrangements for someone to pick it up for you. This is the ONLY distribution day.

[Click Here to Order](#)





MONTHLY RECOGNITIONS

WELCOME NEW STAFF



Abdirahman, Abdinasir (Marian Center); **Bamgbade, Oluleke** (McAuley); **Cotton, Tasha** (Quinlan); **Driver, Nicholas** (Village); **Duong, Angela** (DT); **Forman, Braeden** (HR); **Froehlich, Cooper** (CILA); **Gatewood, Taija** (CILA); **Grimes, Helen** (Quinlan); **Jolly, Shakara** (Marian Center); **Knutsen, Runa** (CILA); **Kocer, Rhian** (DT); **Lugo, Ani** (DT); **Lux, Lark** (DT); **Masalu, Anacletus** (DT); **Reilly, Faith** (Village); **Thiel, Jeffrey** (Aux Seasonal); **Alvarez Para, Kelly Johanna** (Aux Seasonal); **Arellano, Magali** (Aux Seasonal); **Azad, Rabeya** (Aux Seasonal); **Carroll, Adam** (Aux Seasonal); **Deptula, April** (Aux Seasonal); **Ford, Jameila** (Aux Seasonal); **Gee, Samantha** (Aux Seasonal); **Gutierrez, Destiny** (Aux Seasonal); **Johnson, Carlie** (Aux Seasonal); **Jones, Sephera** (Aux Seasonal); **LaDisa, Mary** (Aux Seasonal); **Lau Aspurez, Ligia** (Aux Seasonal); **Letchinger, Ellen** (Aux Seasonal); **Levy, Jennifer** (Aux Seasonal); **Lubango, Safina** (Aux Seasonal); **McGee-Fair, Tyjuan** (Aux Seasonal); **Moshin, Nilufa** (Aux Seasonal); **Otani, Yukari** (Aux Seasonal); **Patel, Aahuti** (Aux Seasonal); **Picart, Richard** (Aux Seasonal); **Romero, Evelyn** (Aux Seasonal); **Salazar, Alejandro** (Aux Seasonal); **Soto, Dayana** (Aux Seasonal); **Tapia, Jessica** (Aux Seasonal); **Zinke, Amanda** (Aux Seasonal); **Aberin, Christian Jay** (Main Nursing); **Casady, Megan** (Shannon Apts.); **Cordero Santiago, Carlos** (RCH); **Duelfer, Ryan** (CDS); **Fletcher, Kierre** (Quinlan); **Gerulskyte, Jurgita** (Main Nursing); **Gonzalez, Guido** (Village); **Kamen, Sophia** (CDS); **Perry, Zaria** (CILA); **Rivera, Susy** (Quinlan Director); **Thomas, Latisha** (Quinlan)

NOVEMBER ANNIVERSARIES

- 51 Gail Wojciechowski
- 45 Manisha Patel
- 33 Cyndi Baldwin
- 32 Carol McCoy
- 31 Tina Stendardo
- 30 Rose Renko
- 28 Kathlyn Hobbs, Esther Paredes
- 27 Lorraine Cobbs
- 26 Tracy Thomas, Angela Bass
- 25 Barbara Gurga, Jordan Atkins
- 23 Heather Andresen
- 22 Patricia Savieo, Kathleen Beck
- 21 Michelle Braswell, Joe Veselka, Sarah Wainright
- 20 Jorge Perez Ruiz
- 19 Fatima Feliciano
- 18 Rick Chapman
- 17 Mary Ann Zielke-Allen
- 16 Matthew Epstein, Beth Muckler, Sherill Hiser, Frances Cooper, Bobbie Vongonh
- 15 Latoya Foster
- 14 Christian Davis, Laquita Jackson, Rosemarie Kriho
- 13 Fionn Boler, Conchita Drain, Angel Granados, Paul Schwartz
- 12 Cynthia Gonzalez, Stephanie Bieschke, Lashaun Blocker
- 11 Deise Antunez, Wednesday Walls, Brian Johnson
- 10 Kenneth Coburn, Leah McDonald
- 9 Juan Medina, Lucinda Skinner, Kujuan Byrd, Valerie Patton
- 8 Lakia Hill, Jae Shin, Consuelo Teresi, Joshua Turner
- 7 Alexandra Whigham
- 6 Lanicka Smith, Michael Howlett, Emmanuel Moses
- 5 Jacquelyn Toigo, Juan Mendoza, Edwina Watkins, Jesse Adams
- 4 Christopher Duke, Francine Johnson, Natalie Mateja, Mickey Bonilla, Guadalupe Batres
- 3 DeMorris Harris, Areanna Allen, Eh Kler, Vincent Mosley, Jennifer Kirk, Valerie Olivo
- 2 William Clucas, Sergio Cornejo Vega, Laurencia Haynes, Yolande Adango, Mareeba Hameed, Takeema Harris, Michael Kompere, Imani Safi-Ramadhan, Khadijah Simmons
- 1 Priscilla Alvarez, Magali Arellano, Hannah McKercher, David Uribe, Carolyn Hanlan, Centuria Hartfield, Jakeria Clay, Jordan Graham, Judith Ayi, Lina Catano Bedova, Ligia Lau Aspurez, Katie Lewis, Zahra Benkhalifa, Julia Brown, Nicholas Cruz, Jared Glaaser, Cristina Hernandez, Vedia Johnson, Bahati Kimondo, James LaPlante, Elizabeth Meister, Esmerelda Ortiz-Gonzalez, Jenna Vangalis

CAMPUS CONNECTIONS



MONTHLY RECOGNITIONS

BLOSSOM LIKE A SUNFLOWER: FINDING LIGHT IN EVERY MOMENT



Pictured: Saul H, staff trainer and Fit for Success co-facilitator, standing beside a sunflower he and staff from the program planted last spring.

From Saul H: At the end of **Fit For Success Tier 2** last spring, one of the teams shared sunflower seeds with everyone in attendance at their final presentation. They did this to remind us of the opportunity we have to grow. I took it as a personal challenge to see if I could care for a plant. This was at the beginning of spring. Now, as I write this in the fall, that tiny seedling has grown into full-fledged, healthy sunflowers.

But this wasn't a quick and easy process. It required careful planning, patience, and hard work. Initially, I thought I could plant the seedling, leave it outside, and just wait for it to bloom. I was so wrong. Growth isn't passive; it requires active engagement and persistence. Over time, I caught myself getting frustrated when the plant grew, but no flower appeared. I had to remind myself: the process is ongoing, and results take time.

My routine involved daily watering, removing weeds, and ensuring the sunflower had enough space to thrive. Some days, doubts crept in: How long will this take? Will it even bloom? Will I give up before it does? But I kept reminding myself that growth is about commitment and positivity. The flowers would bloom when they were ready, and I had to keep doing my part.

There were stressful days when tending to the sunflower was the last thing on my mind. But I persisted. In caring for the plant, I realized I was growing too. The process taught me that growth, both personal and professional, doesn't happen overnight. It's the daily effort, even in the face of doubt, that makes all the difference.

In summary, never give up. Change doesn't happen in a day. There will be doubts, but stay committed to your goals and give your best. Know that your work is meaningful, and someone is counting on you. Growth takes patience and routine. So take your time, enjoy the process, and, like the sunflower, you too will blossom.

A special thank you to **Jon Larson, Annette Farmer, Paul Peterson, and Tashauna Austin** for this meaningful experience. **I hope this story gets you excited for Fit For Success, starting with Tier 1 in the new year.** Come join us for some great conversations and continue your own journey of growth!

THE 2024 CILAS TALENT SHOW



Pictured: CILA Residents performing for "CILAs Got Talent"

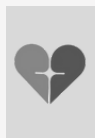
The CILA Talent Show took place on 11/17 at the Jean Marie Ryan Center. Since its debut in 2012, it has only gotten better and better each year with this one being the largest to date. It was a team effort to put it all together but special shoutouts go to Rocco D. (AM DSP) and Ricky M. (PM DSP). They worked extremely hard from planning the music and the lineup to getting the stage ready for show time. Residents and staff from CILAs look forward to next year!

IN MEMORIAM

Our deepest condolences go to the loved ones of:



[Maria R](#)
(1998 - 2024)



[Fatimah G](#)

Please click their underlined names to view their online memorial pages, if available.
"Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted." Matthew 5:4

Stay tuned for weekly Campus Connections updates sent via email. You can also find previous issues of Campus Connections in ADP and [here](#) on our website. If you have any questions or feedback for us, send your messages [here!](#) Be sure to include your name, work area, and an email we can use to contact you!