

# CAMPUS CONNECTIONS

## EMPLOYEE NEWSLETTER

Issue 9

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### WHAT'S INSIDE

2

#### COMMUNITY SHOWCASE

MAZZOLIN CENTER AND MINIATURE GOLF COURSE NOW OPEN, UPCOMING EVENTS

3

#### HIGHLIGHTS & OPPORTUNITIES

NEW LEAD JOB COACHES, OCTOBER STATE OF THE STATE, DESIGNING SOLUTIONS

4-5

#### EMPLOYEE RESOURCES

MENTAL HEALTH MATTERS, MONTHLY INFECTION PREVENTION SERIES, EMAIL SAFETY TIPS, TECH SUPPORT, TUITION REIMBURSEMENT, PHI BOOSTERS, ICEBREAKERS

6

#### FOR YOUR CONSIDERATION

LOCAL BUSINESSES, NATIONAL HISPANIC HERITAGE MONTH

7-8

#### COMMUNITY OF BELIEVERS

SPECIAL SERIES

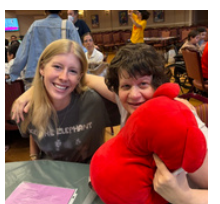
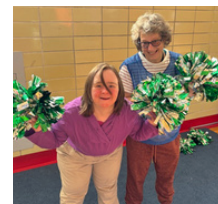
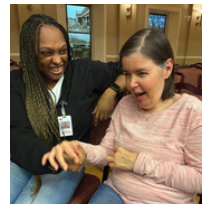
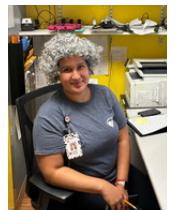
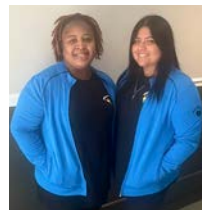
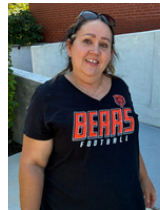
9-10

#### MONTHLY RECOGNITIONS

APPRECIATIONS, ANNIVERSARIES, WARM WELCOMES, RAFFLE WINNER, IN MEMORIAM

### MESSAGE FROM THE HEART

"To be truly happy is to make others happy. When you realize that and take advantage of the fact, everything is made perfect." — William Carlos Williams



**Pictured:** Misericordia staff participating in "Direct Care Appreciation Week" (Mis Gear Day, Crazy Socks Day, Crazy Hair Day, Sports Shirt Day, Twin Day); Various events for the month of September: Resident Appreciation Day, Family Fest Clean Up, Model T Car Show, Team Sports, Music Bingo, Heartbreakers.

## HAPPY RESIDENT APPRECIATION DAY!



**Pictured:** Morning Expo at McGee Park on 9/4: Fishing Game, Chair Yoga, and Trivia Games; and Dr. Mark and the Sutures.

On September 4<sup>th</sup>, Misericordia held its Annual Resident Appreciation Day to celebrate all of our amazing residents. This year, the Cultural Ambassadors collaborated with Day Services to host a morning expo at McGee Park exploring our five core values: Responsibility, Connection, Spirituality, Quality of Life, and Diversity and Inclusion. This was followed by a concert by Dr. Mark and The Sutures in the afternoon.



# COMMUNITY SHOWCASE

**NOW OPEN**

## MINIATURE GOLF COURSE AND THE MAZZOLIN FITNESS CENTER



**Pictured (L to R):** Misericordia's miniature golf course and the Mazzolin Fitness Center.

The Misericordia Golf Course is now open. Please work with your respective supervisor to sign up your residents for a round of golf! And if you or your residents open the red Misericordia umbrellas near the golf course, please make sure that they are closed when you leave. We do not want them impacted by unexpected weather.

The Mazzolin Center also opened on September 15. The Fitness team is working with residents and staff on newly established rules with respect to the equipment and preferred gym rules. We are very blessed to have such a wonderful fitness center and we want to make sure that we are being respectful of the space and what the team is trying to promote with regards to the health and well-being of our residents. And if staff are working on their own fitness journey, we are going to ask that you please respect the space and the rules.

## UPCOMING EVENTS

### • MERCY DAY, SEPTEMBER 24



This day marks the anniversary of the opening of the first "House of Mercy" in 1827 in Dublin, Ireland. Catherine McAuley, founder of the Sisters of Mercy, devoted her life to the poor, sick and uneducated and on this day, we continue her legacy of being caring and compassionate to those in need in the name of Mercy.



Thank you to our Misericordia Bakery Team for preparing "Mercy Day" brownie treats for all staff on campus! We appreciate all your efforts!

### • SPANISH MASS, OCTOBER 5

- Father Jack would like to invite staff to join us for a Mass said fully in Spanish. We will start at 11 a.m. Mass will be in the chapel. Please join us if you can. [Click here](#) for more details.
- RSVP directly to Anne Maddock at [annem@misericordia.com](mailto:annem@misericordia.com). Stay tuned for more details.

### • SIBS HALLOWEEN BASH, OCTOBER 26

- We're gearing up for this year's Halloween Party for residents and their siblings!

Check Campus Connections Weekly Updates and Mis Biz for ongoing resident and staff events happening throughout the month, and visit the [Misericordia Facebook](#) page for recaps.



# HIGHLIGHTS AND OPPORTUNITIES



**Pictured (top L-R):** Veronica Torres (McAuley), Esmeralda Chavez (Rosemary Connelly), Adrienne Green (McGowan), Lakeelah Clark (CILA), Linda Alexander (CILA), Jared Glaaser (Mercy Glen), Ninive Newman (Village), Noah Styer (CILA); **(bottom L-R):** Ashley Freeman (Rosemary Connelly), Eh Kler (CILA), Ricky Martel (CILA), Joaquin Serna (Village), Marion McDaniels (Mercy Glen)

Congratulations to the staff who completed the Lead Job Coach training earlier this month. Lead Job Coaches are instrumental in providing guidance and coaching to new staff during their training period and throughout their first year of employment. They will work closely with their support team to ensure new staff are receiving the best guidance, coaching, and support to be successful.

## STATE OF THE STATE

OCTOBER 15



Misericordia will host another State of the State on Wednesday, October 15. State of the State is an ongoing, bi-annual initiative for employees. With presenters across various roles throughout the organization, the State of the State address aims to help increase transparency, inform staff of growth and empowerment opportunities, and connect everyone to our mission and values.

## DESIGNING SOLUTIONS



Misericordia will partner with a local university's engineering students for another quarter to help them design adaptive equipment prototypes to meet our residents' needs. Congratulations to project partners Alaina Cody (Speech Therapy) and Jeremy Wyatt (Day Services Instructor), whose design proposals will be the students' focus this fall. Stay tuned for updates on their designs.

## CAMPUS CONNECTIONS



# EMPLOYEE RESOURCES

## MENTAL HEALTH MATTERS: LIVING WITH LOSS

*Mental Health Matters is a new edition to Campus Connections that will be featured once every quarter. In this segment, the counseling team provides information on various mental wellness topics that are applicable and relevant for the daily care of Misericordia residents. For any specific requests regarding future Mental Health Matters topics, please reach out to [campusconnections@misericordia.com](mailto:campusconnections@misericordia.com).*

Loss is a part of life that everyone will experience, including people with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (IDD). It often goes hand in hand with grief. What is the difference?

Loss is the experience of losing something or someone significant, while grief is the emotional, physical, and mental response to the loss.

Experiencing loss is a common experience, yet the individual's processing and response to that loss is unique to them. Here are examples of some of the ways our residents may experience loss:

- Staff leaving
- Housemates moving out
- Life transitions
- Cognitive and physical decline
- Ending a relationship
- Death of a loved one
- Change in employment opportunity
- Changes in environment

Reactions to loss and feelings of grief can have many different presentations. This may look like a change in behavioral, emotional, and physical patterns. Some responses are very noticeable while others are harder to tell. It is important to know that an individual with IDD may have a prolonged or delayed response to grief and loss.

What can we do as Misericordia staff and family members to help support residents through loss?

- Create opportunities for residents to maintain old connections and build new ones.
- Normalize speaking about the loss and make yourself available to have these conversations.
- Let the residents express and feel their emotions – even the difficult ones! Encourage participation in a meaningful activity such as attending a service, joining in for a social activity, or finding a creative outlet to self-express in a positive way.
- Try to avoid making assumptions about someone else's well-being. We often can't tell just by looking at them!

*Stay tuned for more ways to support the mental health of our residents and staff in the monthly editions of Campus Connections.*

## PREVENTION PROTOCOL MONTHLY INFECTION PREVENTION SERIES Flu Vs Stomach Flu

Although commonly called the "Stomach Flu", norovirus is not related to influenza. Influenza affects the respiratory system while Norovirus affects the stomach and intestines.

	Flu	Norovirus
<b>Symptoms</b>	Sudden Fever, Cough, Sore Throat, Headache, Body Aches and muscle pain, Fatigue, Congestion or runny nose	Nausea, Vomiting, Diarrhea, Stomach cramps and pain, Loss of appetite, Mild Fever, Body Aches and headache
<b>Vaccine Available?</b>	Annual Vaccine	No
<b>How it spreads</b>	Inhalation of droplets made when infected people cough, sneeze, or talk	Fecal - Oral Route: when infected fecal matter comes in contact with hands, food, or water
<b>How to Disinfect</b>	Soap and Water or Hand sanitizer, Standard Disinfectant for surfaces	Soap and Water, Bleach for surfaces (hand sanitizer and standard disinfectant NOT Effective)

General practices to stay healthy: wash your hands, wear a mask if you are sick or around others who are sick, and get vaccinated if available. Follow up with your doctor and get tested when appropriate. Do not come to work when sick.

Contact us at: [infectionprevention@misericordia.com](mailto:infectionprevention@misericordia.com)

[CLICK HERE TO ENLARGE](#)

## EMAIL SAFETY: 8 TIPS TO AVOID PHISHING SCAMS



Every day, more than 3 billion phishing emails are sent out worldwide. These emails are tactics used by scammers to trick you into giving up sensitive information about you or your company.

[Click here](#) to find eight tips on how to avoid email phishing scams.



# EMPLOYEE RESOURCES (CONT'D)

## TUITION REIMBURSEMENT PROCESS UPDATES & REMINDERS

The process for submitting tuition reimbursement forms has been updated, as outlined below. Full-time and part-time employees are eligible to apply for tuition reimbursement and/or participate in the student loan repayment assistance program.

### Tuition Reimbursement Highlights:

- Annual maximum: \$2,000 per calendar year.
- Eligible for academic coursework resulting in a grade of C or better.
- Applies only after all grants, scholarships, or financial aid have been applied for.
- Employees must have at least six months of employment before the course start date.
- Employees must remain in full-time or part-time status throughout the process in order to remain eligible.
- Employees must be in good standing to be eligible for approval and must remain in good standing throughout the duration of the course(s) to be eligible for reimbursement.

### Important Process Change:

- Effective immediately, all tuition reimbursement forms must first be submitted to Michelle Odisho, Benefits Manager in HR. HR will then forward approved forms to the business office.
- Please send original signed forms (no copies) to HR. Original forms can be dropped off to HR Reception or left in the HR Benefits/Payroll mail lock box in the main building mail room.

### Student Loan Repayment Assistance:

- Up to \$150/month, not exceeding \$1,800/year
- Administered through our third-party benefit Administrator, Peanut Butter.
- Employees must maintain an active full-time or part-time status to continue participation.
- Eligible employees will receive an invitation via email to participate.
- If an employee chooses not to sign up or the program is not applicable, no further action needs to be taken by the employee.

## COMMIT TO YOUR OWN LEARNING AND GROWTH JOIN US AT A PHI BOOSTER THIS FALL

We've all been to webinars and trainings that perhaps have not been that helpful to our day to day tasks. In our PHI Boosters, we strive to make the trainings relevant and pertinent to the work of leaders like you at Misericordia. Give yourself 90 minutes this fall to invest in your learning and growth.

These small, "round table" type discussions provide an opportunity to bring your real life challenges and seek guidance and support from your peers. Each session focuses on different PHI skills that were introduced in either the full day PHI training or your Direct Care class training.

To learn more, [click here](#) for details and talk to your area's supervisor about joining.

## BREAK THE ICE WITH THESE CONVERSATION STARTERS WITH CO-WORKERS



Courtesy of [TeamBuilding.com](https://www.teambuilding.com)



What is your favorite Fall activity?



Do you celebrate any holidays during Autumn?



Of the four seasons, which would you prefer to experience year-round?



# FOR YOUR CONSIDERATION

## LOCAL BUSINESSES FROM AROUND THE GLOBE

*Courtesy of ChooseChicago*

### PILSEN ARTS & COMMUNITY HOUSE

1637 W. 18th St. Chicago, IL 60608  
[details here](#)

### OSITO'S TAP

2553 S. Ridgeway Ave. Chicago, IL 60623  
[details here](#)

### SEMILLAS CHICAGO

1848 S Blue Island Ave. Chicago, IL 60608  
[details here](#)

### PASEO BORICUA TOUR COMPANY

Chicago's Northwest Side; Division St. Area  
[details here](#)

### DULCELANDIA

3253 W. 26th St, Chicago, IL 60623  
[details here](#)

Chicago is a city renowned for its rich cultural diversity, and there's no better time to experience this than during **National Hispanic Heritage Month**. [Click here](#) to check out and explore some Hispanic heritage festivals and events that make this one of the most exciting months of the year in the city.

Chicago prides itself on being an inclusive and welcoming place. [Click here](#) to explore **accessibility information and resources** all over the city from iconic attractions, establishments, and beyond.

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!

## RECOGNIZING LATINX WITH DISABILITIES IN HONOR OF HISPANIC HERITAGE MONTH

*Courtesy of the National Rehabilitation Information Center Spotlight*



**Cristina Sanz**, the first Latinx with a disability to win an Emmy Award. You may recognize Ms. Sanz from her work in the A&E docu-series Born this Way.



**Gina Rodriguez**, star of Jane the Virgin, uses social media to discuss her anxiety and her struggle with body acceptance regarding her Hashimoto's disease.



**Salma Hayek Jiménez**, actress and producer, uses her voice to share her story of learning and living with dyslexia. The first film that her production company,



**Selena Gómez**, pop singer and actress, uses her platform to share her story and raise awareness about lupus. She has used her experiences with the media and her disability as inspiration for a recent album.



**Jeison Aristizábal**, a nonprofit founder with cerebral palsy, grew up in one of the most impoverished areas in Cali, Colombia. The nonprofit organization that he founded and runs helps to provide educational and medical support for kids who live in the same conditions that he grew up in.



**Victor Pineda, PhD**, is the youngest government delegate with disabilities to have participated in the drafting of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. He continues to work as a disability scholar and advocate.

## CAMPUS CONNECTIONS



# COMMUNITY OF BELIEVERS

## SPIRITUALITY

*from Linda B (mother of a Misericordia resident)*

This is the final installment in a series of articles that explore the core values of the Misericordia Community of Believers. This article explores the core value: Spirituality.

A summary of this core value follows: We value our mission entrusted to us by God. We are passionate about the care of our residents, hoping to enrich their lives as witnesses to what loving people can accomplish when they work together for the good. We are grateful for those who support our mission with their hearts and generosity.

The idea of spirituality extends far beyond religion. We respect the faith traditions of all members of the Misericordia community and feel committed to caring for those who call Misericordia their home. We understand that each person has a special gift,

**Residents ...** Many of the activities on campus embrace the idea of spirituality. Prayer group, meditation, and yoga are popular group activities. On Saturday afternoons, many gather at Mass to celebrate their faith, their religion, and each other. This event draws not only the residents—Catholic and non-Catholic alike, but also families and friends and neighbors. On Fridays, Shabbat services are offered. On Sundays, televised Mass is a popular activity.

The chapel in the Jean Marie Ryan Center offers daily mass and Holy Week services for residents. When a resident's life on earth is over, funeral services are often held on campus with many residents attending and sometimes participating in the service.



Beyond the realm of religion, the residents exude spirituality through their sheer joy, their positive attitudes, their welcoming personalities. Indeed, walking through campus, one can sense the existence of a profound sense of peace, faith, and great happiness.



**Staff ...** The staff at Misericordia are a very special group of people who see the work of God in every person and who celebrate each individual as a unique gift. Residents are the recipients of their loving care and are treated with dignity and respect. The staff show compassion and kindness to residents and their families. Staff are a crucial part of helping each resident to reach his or her full potential.

**Pictured:** Misericordia's Dedication Day for the new homes, fitness center, and miniature golf course on 9/13.

It is evident that those who care for our children have a vested interest and look upon their duties as more than just their daily job. The staff are a model of patience, and it is truly a pleasure for parents and guardians to see staff enjoy our family members as much as we do.

**Families ...** Families demonstrate spirituality in their commitment to Misericordia and the population that it serves. We recognize and value the enrichment that our family members bring to our lives, and we spread that message to others outside of the Misericordia family.

We honor and respect the diverse beliefs of all members of the Misericordia community, while providing consistent faith traditions for our individual family members.

We recognize the potential of all residents and help to promote new opportunities. We promote the spirit and culture of Misericordia and champion the causes of persons with disabilities. The positive attitude and optimism that we share with others about Misericordia serve to honor and grow the organization.

## CAMPUS CONNECTIONS



## COMMUNITY OF BELIEVERS (CONT'D)



**Pictured:** Misericordia resident Barry B. partaking in Jewish Holy Day with his QIDP, Nancy G.

As families, we treat staff with dignity and respect and show our appreciation for all that they do. We recognize God's presence in those who care for our family members.

**Organization ...** As a Catholic organization, Misericordia is committed to upholding Catholic traditions and values. The organization also models the charitable services promoted by the Sisters of Mercy, of whom our dear Sr. Rosemary is a member. The organization respects and supports the diverse traditions of all Misericordia members, whether staff, residents, or family. The administration values and honors the work of staff and constantly seeks ways to reward and renew those who care for the residents. All across campus, one can see how every member of Misericordia is treated with a love that reflects God's compassionate spirit.

While many factors influence the availability of services, it is reassuring to know that those who make decisions about the lives of our family members are guided by a deep commitment to the care of God's most vulnerable children. How fortunate we are to be a part of the Misericordia family!



## SUPPORT MISERICORDIA'S HEARTRACERS TEAM IN THE 2025 CHICAGO MARATHON



**Pictured:** Members of Chicago's Heartracers at last year's Chicago Marathon.

On Sunday, October 12, nearly 90 charity runners will represent Misericordia at the 2025 Bank of America Chicago Marathon. From first-time runners to seasoned marathoners, these committed Misericordia supporters have gone the extra mile to support our children and adults. Every year, runners raise between \$1,700 and \$2,100 each, and every year Misericordia receives more donations than ever. They'll be on the course in their Misericordia Heartracers t-shirts, in case you'd like to cheer them on. If you'd like to support Misericordia's Marathon team, [click here](#) to find out how. Scroll down to "Designate Your Gift" and choose "Bank of America Chicago Marathon Heartracers Team."

Best of luck to our Heartracers and all those running in this year's Marathon!

## CAMPUS CONNECTIONS



# MONTHLY RECOGNITIONS

## DIRECT CARE AND SUPPORT STAFF APPRECIATION WEEK

September follows another round of monthly appreciation for various roles on campus. This month, we had a week-long celebration to appreciate the hard work of the follow roles:

- Behavior Support Professionals (BSP)
- Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA)
- Direct Support Professionals (DSP)
- Staff Support Professionals (SSP)
- Therapy Aides

We thank all our celebrating staff for all they do to support our residents!

**Check out these moments captured from our special daily photobooth throughout the week:**



To see the full collection of photos, go to M: drive > "2025 Staff Photos" > "Photobooth - Direct Care Week 2025" on a Misericordia computer.

## SEPTEMBER ANNIVERSARIES

- 40 Leticia Annoreno, Dorothy Stewart-Gray
- 38 Carol Hawley
- 35 Rhonda Ellis
- 33 Geana Connelly, Tracy Prather, Jill Sparacio
- 29 Rocco Devincenzo
- 28 Sylvia Tracy
- 26 Janie Jeffries
- 25 Robin Jackson
- 23 Valerie Freil, Rachel Munoz
- 22 Jacob Green
- 21 Nicole Humphrey
- 20 Miraflor Oaing, Terence Williams
- 19 Cilenen Fair, Bathsheba Evans
- 18 Rosa Solis Garcia
- 16 Rachel Michels
- 15 Jose Hernandez, Mary Ann Goode, Mae Echaveria, Catherine Handschuh
- 14 Paula Anderson, Jennifer Schertz
- 13 Edwin Karr, Colleen Meehan, Johanna Granobles, Nathan Nordine
- 11 Dante Hays, Demia Dominguez, Nicolette Walker
- 10 Leisa Hancock, Erin Luboff, Dwane Boyd
- 9 Oluchi Ike
- 8 Carolyn Coleman, Felecia Jamison
- 7 Valerie Gonder, Julie Adams, Zaria Mack, Isela Rojas, Charles Walsh
- 6 Jayson Punzalan, Brandon Whiting, Samantha Richter, Dominique Neylon
- 5 Dejanire Akpa, Hermalita Doss, Joel La Luz, AnneMarie Mills, Juanita Scott, Terrell Ward, Leticia Delgado Gomez, Mallika Kachchakaduage
- 4 Jennifer Guieb, Olasupo Abiola, Kenneth Gasch, Itzel Ramos, Max Weiner, Tanner Barr, Maria Walter
- 3 Delilah DeJesus, Jennifer Orocio, Derrick Allen, Eduardo Escobedo, Unshell Felder, Sharein Noble, Jason Reis
- 2 Adwoa Bawuah, Jodiann Nelson Samuels, Jessica Shenault, Gurpreet Uppal, Lorrie Wilkins, Clark Eggerton, John Harrington, Samonya Love, Guadalupe Rangel, Jasmine Velasquez
- 1 Anna Svolos, Beatrice Young, Marcus Aguinaga, Stephanie Brown, Kenia Flores, Alexandru Georgescu, Veronica Torres, Latasha Williamson, Hayes Kennedy, Brecilda Rodriguez, James Buckner Jr., Saheed Kehinde, Michelle Odisho, Penny Carter, Nicole Citragno, Maria Connaire, Brianna Denny, LeKara Fletcher, Sommer Hawkins, Devion Ingram, Mcloyd Iwueke, Paul Merley, Kaley Rios, Mohammed Salam, Jessica Vong, Britney Wiggins



# MONTHLY RECOGNITIONS

## WELCOME NEW RESIDENT

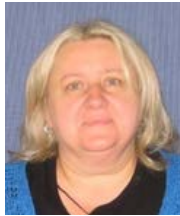
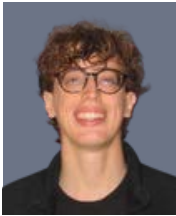


**Max**

*Residence: CILA*

- Loves to use his 3D printer
- Loves to ride his e-bike

## WELCOME NEW STAFF



**Devey, Elisabeth** (Greenhouse Inn); **Matlock, Jerraye** (Security); **McGrath, Michelle** (Nursing Services); **Almada, Santiago** (Resource Recreation); **Bowman, Sam** (H&F Cafe); **Estillo, Ma Elena** (Rosemary Park); **Szmigielski, Daria** (Rosemary Park); **Vaca, Maricruz** (Rosemary Park)

## IT PAYS TO READ CAMPUS CONNECTIONS



**Pictured (L to R):** "In It Together," by Dulce, a Misericordia resident and participant in Herbstritt Studio; and winner of the piece, Monica R of the Behavior Department.

With nearly submissions, **Campus Connections** would like to congratulate **Monica Ryan**, the winner of the art piece "In It Together," by Dulce, a Misericordia resident and participant in Herbstritt Studio. Stay tuned to Campus Connections to find out about opportunities to participate in more raffles.

## IN MEMORIAM

Our deepest condolences go to the loved ones of:



**Luke L**  
(2003 - 2025)

Please click their underlined name to view their online memorial page, 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!