MOMENTS

MISERICORDIA UNIVERSITY

FALL 2025



MISERICORDIA UNIVERSITY MAGAZINE

MISERICORDIA SPOTLIGHT
STAFF AND FACULTY



Michelle Conway

INSTRUCTOR OF ENTREPRENEURSHIP AND MANAGEMENT
MISERICORDIA UNIVERSITY, COLLEGE OF BUSINESS

WHAT DO YOU ENJOY MOST ABOUT WORKING AT MISERICORDIA?

The people. The Misericordia community is special. MU lives its core values. Every interaction reflects a genuine commitment to Mercy, Service, Justice, and Hospitality.

WHAT PROJECTS HAVE YOU BEEN MOST PROUD OF DURING YOUR TIME AT MISERICORDIA UNIVERSITY?

I am most proud of the launch of the entrepreneurship major and the growing entrepreneurial spirit across campus. I'm also proud of the management major being re-introduced as a stand-alone degree.

DO YOU HAVE ANY ADVICE THAT YOU WANT TO GIVE TO STUDENTS AS THEY TRANSITION TO PROFESSIONAL CAREERS?

Celebrate your superpowers! Be where your feet are. Never stop reading, learning and doing.



Elizabeth Pedro

IT TECHNICAL ADMINISTRATOR
MISERICORDIA UNIVERSITY

WHAT DO YOU ENJOY MOST ABOUT WORKING AT MISERICORDIA?

What I value most about my time at Misericordia University is the profound sense of community. The privilege of making a meaningful impact on countless lives, all within our campus's beautiful landscape and nurturing atmosphere, makes every day feel fulfilling.

WHAT PROJECTS HAVE YOU BEEN MOST PROUD OF DURING YOUR TIME AT MISERICORDIA UNIVERSITY?

The IT Student Helpdesk. Relay for Life. MU Sexual Assault Response Team (SART), Staff Council, and student success programs such as Promoting Awareness of the College Transition (PACT) and First Year Experience (FYE).

DO YOU HAVE ANY ADVICE THAT YOU WANT TO GIVE TO STUDENTS AS THEY TRANSITION TO PROFESSIONAL CAREERS?

Build meaningful connections. Learn, adapt, and step into challenges. Believe in your capacity to achieve great things.

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Daniel J. Myers, Ph. D., is a well-rounded individual. That is a key factor in his success as president of Misericordia University. Experts say being president takes a broad skill set with knowledge of business, academics, communication, leadership, and vision. Enhancing this skill set is his experience as a musician. He benefits from decades of exposure to the ways music performance enhances teamwork, precision thinking, and community engagement.

Since his first days on campus, Myers emphasized the benefits that re-establishing music performance could bring to individual students and campus culture.

"Music was part of my life from an early age. My family and church life was full of music, as far back as I can remember. At home, my parents would sing, my mother would play the organ, and we were always engaged in making music," says Myers. "Both of my parents were ministers, so we would sing and perform at church often."

In fourth grade, Myers began to play the trumpet. His father had one, so he had an excellent role model. Later he switched to the baritone, but progressively, during each succeeding school year, he performed in band and choir. A pivotal moment came in 1979 as his friend Rod Jennings, whose father was band director at a high school, introduced him to bass and guitar.

"I think my first song I played on bass was a song by KISS," chuckled Myers. The rock and roll bug took hold and by 1980, Jennings, his brother Jack, Myers, and Bryan Luce formed the band Quest during eighth grade in Pulaski, New York. Now reunited after decades, Quest is celebrating 45 years of classic rock music and is a fixture at events in Pulaski and on campus. Myers' experience shows that music can establish friendships that last a lifetime.

"I want you... to want ... music!"

PRESIDENT MYERS





With this background in mind, it is easy to see why Myers reinvigorated music at MU upon his arrival. The university hired renowned jazz musician Marco Marcinko, as director of Music Performance. While still growing, the music offerings are greatly expanded with several ensembles coming together. There is room for many more students. Plus, a music minor is under development so students can potentially earn an academic credential once the program is approved, which is expected in 2026.

"If you are a prospective or current student at Misericordia and play an instrument or sing, I very much think you will benefit from being part of our ongoing program," says Myers, who considered majoring in music in college and was accepted at several institutions. "While you learn critical thinking skills and the professional knowledge in your major, you can keep on performing music. Music will last your entire life.

You won't be known only as a health care professional, business person, teacher, or whatever your career says you are, you will have music to further fulfill you."

Myers encourages students to join the music program early in their first year on campus. "The teamwork involved with music builds important collaboration skills and creates a sense of engagement for new students," he adds. You might also get to perform with the president as he is known to join a variety of the ensembles during the year…it often requires practicing until the wee hours of the morning. Being good requires hard work!

For more information on the music program, visit misericordia.edu/music













A HISTORIC WELCOME:

Excitement filled the campus on August 21 as Misericordia University welcomed the second-largest incoming class in its 101-year history. A total of 489 new students arrived for Move-In Day, greeted by cheering faculty, staff, and student leaders who helped families carry boxes, answer questions, and ease the transition to campus life. That spirit of hospitality continued into Opening Convocation, the annual ceremony that formally marks the beginning of the academic year.

Convocation was held in the Wells Fargo Amphitheater, where the Misericordia community gathered to celebrate new beginnings. President Daniel J. Myers, Ph.D., welcomed the Class of 2029, encouraging them to embrace both the academic and personal opportunities ahead, noting the historic size of the class and its significance for the University's second century of growth.

The ceremony blended tradition with inspiration, highlighted by the remarks of featured speaker Asia Bijan Olieman '17, Esq. Olieman is a nationally recognized social justice activist and motivational speaker, serving as Senior Associate for Grassroots Expansion at the RESULTS Educational Fund. Her work empowers individuals who have faced poverty and hardship to become agents of change by sharing their lived experiences to influence policy and inspire others.

Olieman's story is as powerful as the advocacy she leads



MISERICORDIA WELCOMES SECOND-LARGEST INCOMING CLASS AT CONVOCATION

today. Once a homeless teenage mother of two, she found strength and community at Misericordia through the Ruth Matthews Bourger Women with Children Program. While balancing motherhood with academics, she excelled, becoming a student leader and advocate for others. She graduated in 2017 with a degree in English and went on to earn her Juris Doctor from New York Law School, graduating with honors by the age of 27. Today, she mentors advocates nationwide, has delivered keynotes at national conferences, testified before members of Congress, and has been featured in national publications.

During Convocation, Olieman was honored with the Mother Mary Catherine McGann Achievement Award, recognizing her perseverance, leadership, and service. Her story offered the incoming class a vivid reminder of what is possible when determination meets opportunity.

As Misericordia celebrates the 25th anniversary of the Bourger Women with Children Program, Convocation highlighted the continuity between past and future. For the Class of 2029, the day was more than a ceremony—it was the first chapter in their own transformative journeys, inspired by role models like Olieman and strengthened by the enduring values of the Misericordia community.

A Wonderland of

Alice's Wonderland never looked as good as it did for the Misericordia University 34th Annual Alumni Tea…with a Wonderland Twist, held in Sandy and Marlene Insalaco Hall in April. The 46 spirited alumni and guests shared tea, finger sandwiches, and a stunning array of desserts.

The Alumni Relations team and **Joyce Leo**, catering manager for Metz Culinary Management, dreamed up the idea for the tea's Wonderland décor, and Metz chefs created the delectable treats.

"We had so much fun," says alumna **Jeanne Davenport Grymko '99**, an adjunct faculty member in psychology. Jeanne dressed as the Mad Hatter along with her best friend from kindergarten, **Lisa Moore**, who hand-made her Queen of Hearts costume, complete with a deck-of-cards collar. "The invitation said dressing up was optional, and we couldn't resist. The displays were so amazing, and the food was beyond measure. It was telling to see how many people were taking food table pictures."

In addition to the tea party, a guided candle-making workshop offered guests the chance to make and take their own candle in a vintage tea cup. **Jordan Mellon**, assistant director of Alumni Relations, and **Maureen Cech**, MA, MLS, university archivist and special collections librarian, designed the project to inspire creativity and camaraderie among the guests. They garnered plenty of rave reviews.

"The art projects at the alumni tea are always great. The tea cup candles were a treat. Best of all, I really loved seeing alumni from such a wide range of years come together – we were thrilled to mingle and enjoy the food, company, and art," says Grymko.

The Alumni Office provided copies of Misericordia's oral history book, "In My Words: The Oral History Project," which inspired plenty of reminiscing and recollecting of campus memories throughout the years.

Next year's Alumni Tea is tentatively scheduled for May 2, 2026. For the latest on all upcoming alumni activities, go to misericordia.edu/alumni and click on events, or follow the university by searching "misericordiau" on Facebook, Instagram, and TikTok. Please call Jordan Mellon at (570) 674-6361 for more information.

Memories



Queen of Hearts Lisa Moore, left, a guest of Mad Hatter Jeanne Davenport Grymko '99, an adjunct faculty member in psychology, right, enjoyed the Wonderland tea's festive atmosphere.



Misericordia's founding order, the Sisters of Mercy, were well represented by Sisters Miriam Frances Stadulis RSM '62 and Kathleen Smith RSM '69, who happily joined in the fun.



Classmates Stephanie Slivinski Lyman '10 and Richelle Wesley Steele '10 master the art of making a candle in a vintage tea cup during the 34th Annual Alumni Tea with a Wonderland Twist.

MISERICORDIA'S BLACK MALE INITIATIVE



STUDENTS ATTEND NATIONAL CONFERENCE ON RACE & ETHNICITY

Last spring, members of Misericordia University's Black Male Initiative (BMI) program traveled to New York City to attend the National Conference on Race and Ethnicity in Higher Education (NCORE). The conference is a leading national forum for students, faculty, and administrators to discuss diversity, equity, and inclusion in higher education.

Launched in September 2024, the BMI program aims to improve the experiences of African American men at a predominantly white university. Through weekly meetings, students focus on engagement, allyship, leadership, and creating an intentional space for growth. Their mission statement, "**EDUCATING OURSELVES TO EMPOWER OUR COMMUNITIES**," reflects the program's dedication to aligning personal values with the broader goals of the university. The launch of BMI was made possible by generous grant funding through the Mercy Foundation, led by Sister Marie Parker, RSM, chair of the Foundation's Board of Directors. The grant was secured as a result of a collaboration among Amy Lahart, vice president for Mission Integration and Student Life; Kas Williams, associate vice president for Mission Integration and Institutional Diversity; and Mary Beth Allen, foundation relations manager.

For participants, the NCORE trip was a meaningful experience. Owen McDermott, a junior chemistry major and BMI member, said, "The biggest thing I learned from the conference was to accept myself and not be afraid of sharing who I am. The conference really opened my eyes to the experiences and similarities we all share regardless of our race and ethnicity."





The trip provided meaningful growth for the students and demonstrated how the BMI program advances the broader mission of Misericordia University. By participating in NCORE, students represented the university on a national stage and gained firsthand experience of how their engagement and leadership reflect the values of the campus community.

MISERICORDIA ESPORTS

TEAM SUCCEEDS NATIONALLY



Ever since video games entered our recreation culture, many parents of Gen X, Millennials, and Gen Z children warned their kids that playing video games is a mindless, unproductive, and introverted activity. Head Coach **Nick Mack** and **his Esports team are proving mom and dad wrong**… at least on this issue.

Esports at the collegiate level is a team of student gamers from one university competing against a team of gamers from another university. Usually, it involves playing a cooperative video game where multiple students from each team can play at one time, rather than games that are one student vs one student.

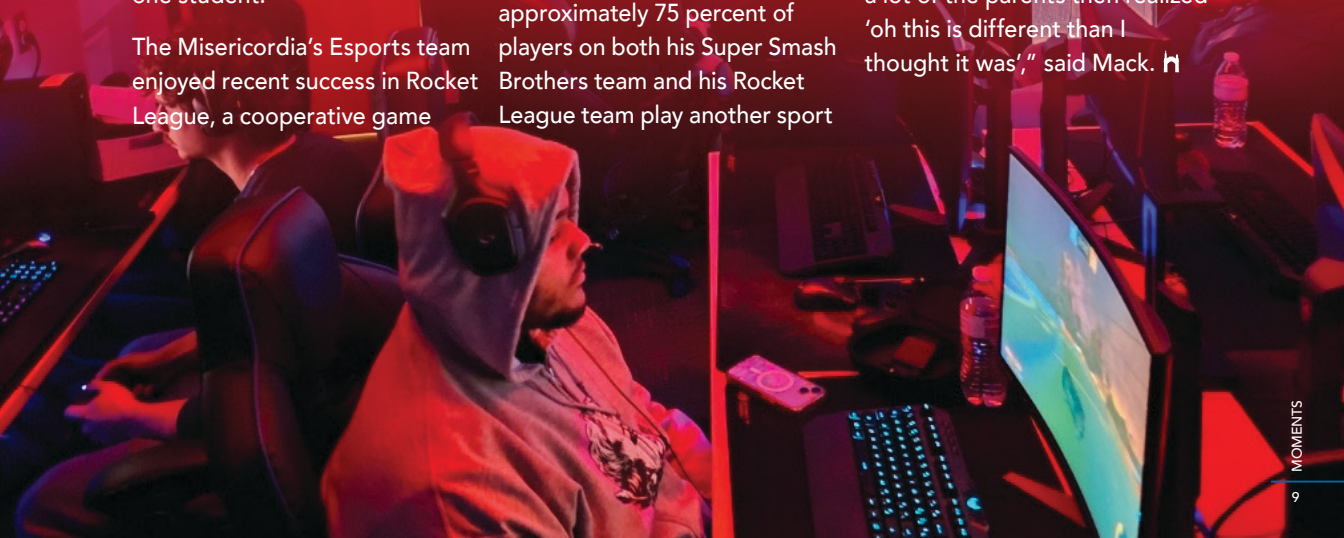
The Misericordia's Esports team enjoyed recent success in Rocket League, a cooperative game that is essentially virtual soccer in an indoor arena with racing cars instead of humans. The Cougar gamers lost in the conference final in both the fall and spring seasons; however, as runner up, they still earned an invitation to a national tournament featuring the top eight teams in Division 8 of the National Esports Collegiate Conference. The Cougar gamers finished an impressive third out of 80 teams nationally in their division.



The Rocket League roster included **Kareem Jefferson '26**, **Brady Carmody '25**, and **Chris Dindino '25**. The Rocket League team also has two back up players, **Anthony Cardona '26** and **Zack Ansbach '26.** Mack, who also serves as an admissions counselor at Misericordia, estimates approximately 75 percent of players on both his Super Smash Brothers team and his Rocket League team play another sport at Misericordia.

Mack believes that Esports at the collegiate level can provide many of the same life lessons and benefits that come with more traditional sports, and he hopes that parents and prospective team members see it beyond the stigma that surrounds it.

"It is good relationship building. Esports is one of those interesting sports where I also have some players who come in and have no team experience. I love putting a lot of my dual sports athletes with them as well. We are teaching teamwork, teaching accountability, because in the same way, we are still one of Misericordia's 31 sanctioned sports. As coach, I'm making sure that students are doing everything they need to do to be successful and better people; a lot of the parents then realized 'oh this is different than I thought it was'," said Mack.





1

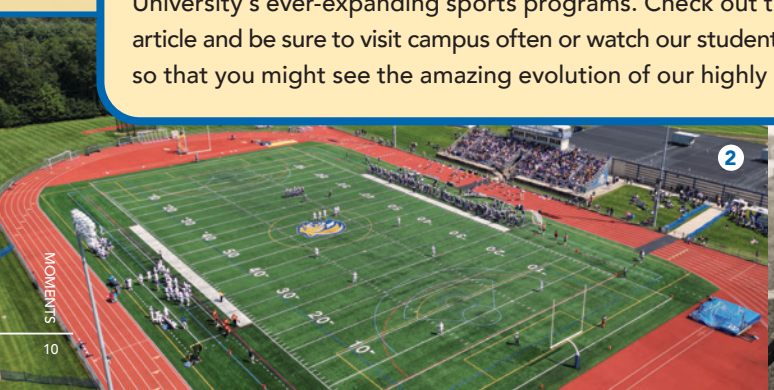
A CENTURY *In Motion*

Since opening its doors in 1924, Misericordia University has embraced physical education and recreation as a vital part of student life. The then college's location was intentionally chosen to inspire both spiritual reflection and physical well-being, offering students countless opportunities to grow, move, and thrive beyond the classroom.

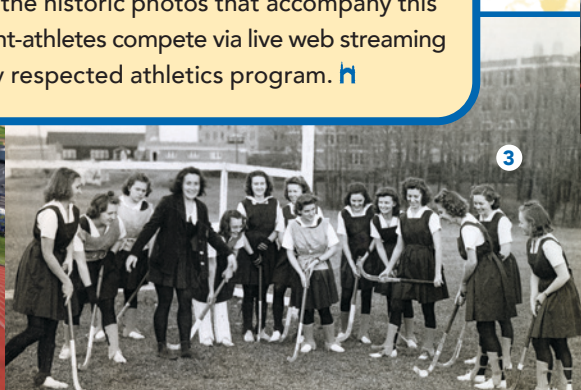
Students could only participate in intramural sports until the mid-to-late 1930s, when Misericordia began competing against other local schools, such as Marywood College (now Marywood University), and attending statewide conferences, particularly in field hockey. Students could participate in individual sports, such as archery, bowling, and table tennis, or team sports, including basketball and field hockey.

The campus's plentiful acreage allowed for a variety of outdoor sports and activities before construction of formal facilities, including field hockey, archery, and even "wiskit," a women's sport invented in the 1950s that combined elements of baseball, lacrosse, and tennis. Men's sports teams were introduced when the college became fully co-educational in the 1979-1980 academic year, with basketball being the first men's varsity sport, and baseball following soon after.

In the last 100 years, Misericordia's athletic facilities transformed dramatically to support the University's ever-expanding sports programs. Check out the historic photos that accompany this article and be sure to visit campus often or watch our student-athletes compete via live web streaming so that you might see the amazing evolution of our highly respected athletics program.



2



3

ATHLETIC FACILITIES TIMELINE

1927	St. Joseph's Cottage
Late 1930s	First tennis courts installed
Late 1940s	Outdoor basketball hoops
1952	The Gymnasium (Walsh Hall)
1980	The Gymnasium dedicated as McGinty Gym
1980	Renovation for softball field
1986	Renovation of multi-purpose sports fields to include the first baseball diamond
1991	Dr. and Mrs. Robert S. Anderson Field
1993	Dr. Robert S. Anderson Athletic Complex (includes Jack and Dorothy Mangelsdorf Field)
2003	Expanded tennis complex completed
2012	Mary Ellen "Mac" McGeehan Field
2012	John and Mary Metz Fieldhouse
2013	Tambur Baseball Field
2024	Brassington Athletic Dome

100 Years OF ATHLETICS AT MISERICORDIA


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8



9


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11



12

1. Unidentified Highlanders baseball game, circa 1985
2. Football against Alfred State College, September 2, 2023
3. Field hockey team, Fall 1939
4. Archery with field hockey goals in the background, 1933
5. John and Mary Metz Field House dedication, September 29, 2012
6. Students play volleyball in St. Joseph's Cottage, circa 1930s-1940s
7. Students playing "wiskit," circa 1952
8. Unidentified men's basketball game in McGinty Gym, 1982
9. MAC Freedom Championship Women's Soccer game versus DeSales University, November 2, 2022
10. Exterior shot of Brassington Athletic Dome, 2024
11. Chukinas Studios. "Dorothy Monahan '56 recovers ball during game against Marywood College," February 24, 1954
12. Men's basketball game against Widener University, November 17, 2021

MISERICORDIA DPT STUDENTS IMPRESS AT NATIONAL SENIOR GAMES



Six Misericordia University (MU) Doctoral Physical Therapy (DPT) students embarked on a service-learning trip to the National Senior Games over the summer, which provided a needed service to older athletes and allowed the students to apply the knowledge they have spent years acquiring in the classroom. **Morgan Haefele '25**, **Alyssa Bondi '25**, **Brianna Burd '25**, **Nicole Paranich '25**, **Kaitlin Redling '25**, and **Tiffany Toth '25** are scheduled to graduate with their doctorate in physical therapy in December.

The National Senior Games is an athletic competition that is held every two years for adult athletes 50 years of age or older. The event featured 26 sports in everything from pickleball to basketball. It took place in Des Moines, Iowa, from July 24 to August 4. According to the National Senior Games Association's Facebook page, it had 12,407 total registered athletes this year.

Under the direction of **Laurie Brogan**, PT, DPT, associate professor of Physical Therapy at Misericordia, the DPT students worked with the athletes through the Sustained Athlete Fitness Exam, which is a fitness test supported by the National Senior Games Association that grades older athletes on four areas of fitness: cardiovascular, muscular, flexibility, and balance. **Audrey Campbell**, PT, DPT, adjunct professor of Physical Therapy at Misericordia, also assisted Brogan and the students. Misericordia's Office of Service Learning funded a portion of the trip.

The students received glowing reviews from both their service-learning instructors and the event organizers, all of whom were impressed by the doctoral students' preparation, hard work, and passion.

"They brought their own personalities and a tremendous work ethic. I mean, they worked all day. The first day, we had trouble finding break time, and I was worried, like 'do you need a break?' and they were like 'no, no, I am good.' They worked hard. Really, a tremendous work ethic, and [they] impressed the people," Brogan said.

Becca Jordre, PT, DPT, associate professor of Physical Therapy at the University of South Dakota, created a screening for older athletes in 2009 for the South Dakota Senior Games. Jordre's screening for the South Dakota Games grew into SAFE and eventually became adopted by the NSGA at the national level. Jordre is another person who







was thoroughly impressed by the MU students.

"They came prepared…there are a lot of people that show up, and they're recalibrating when they get there. It is really nice when we have individuals who come and know what to expect," said Jordre.

Jordre was also impressed by the versatility and poise of the MU students.

"They were so proficient. We could put them anywhere. We could handle massive crowds and challenging individuals because they had been there enough days. The preparation that Laurie gave them got them further than our normal volunteer," said Jordre.

Jordre also echoed Brogan's sentiments of the students' tireless worth ethic.

"THEY WERE NOT GETTING ENOUGH BREAKS. THEY WORKED SO HARD. I MEAN I DO THIS WORK AS MY LIFE'S WORK, AND TO HAVE SOMEONE COME IN AND SAY, 'I DON'T NEED A BREAK.' I STOPPED AND SAID, 'YOU GUYS HAVE A SNACK, GO GET SOME WATER,' AND THEY WERE LIKE 'ARE YOU SURE?' AND I WAS LIKE 'YES!'"

Becca Jordre, PT, DPT.

Both Brogan and Jordre believe that this experience will help the MU students become better clinicians when they graduate.

"What I am really convinced that happens now is that it changes how they see older adults, and that's my goal. That they don't see older adults as another, but they see them as a later version of [themselves]. If you feel that, you are going to treat that person with more respect…If they can launch their career with the idea that older adults have this huge potential, then they are not going to under treat," said Jordre.

More information can be found about the National Senior Games and SAFE on the NSGA's website, www.NSGA.com.







Misericordia Student *with Leukemia* WINS Local Business Competition



A Misericordia University (MU) student and his friend recently tied for first place in the "wild Card" division of a local competition designed to help create opportunities for aspiring entrepreneurs in the technology industry.

TecBRIDGE is a Northeast Pennsylvania non-profit that brings both public and private entities together to inspire innovation in the region. One of their most popular programs is their business plan competition designed to help adult entrepreneurs, high school, and college students develop their business plans and present them to a panel of judges. The award ceremony was held on May 1.

Inspired by his lifelong bout with Leukemia and with the support of MU faculty, **Hunter Wesolowski '25**, a senior Business Administration major at Misericordia, started **Hunting Positivity LLC** with his friend **Nate Herman**, a senior aerospace engineering major at Penn State University. The duo became quick friends after meeting while volunteering at a summer camp funded by the Tim Tebow Foundation in 2024.

The business idea was based on a social media page that Wesolowski created years prior, but it was also inspired by the kids the two worked with at the summer camp. After seeing how many of these kids had so much negativity surrounding their lives, the two felt the need to create a positive movement that had the potential to create change.

To understand where Hunting Positivity is going, it is important to understand where Wesolowski has been. At 19 months old, Wesolowski was diagnosed with Chronic Myeloid Leukemia, or CML, a type of Leukemia that is most commonly found in men in their 50s. CML is a cancer of the white blood cells, and Wesolowski's diagnosis at 19 months is extremely rare.

Doctors told Wesolowski's parents that his chance of survival was slim, with one doctor even saying he probably would not live to learn his ABCs. Wesolowski's parents refused to accept that fate, and after years of searching around

the country they finally found the right treatment at Children's Hospital in Philadelphia.

Today, Wesolowski does not technically have cancer. However, he still deals with pain and other symptoms associated with CML. Since his white blood cells are still elevated, he is not technically considered to be in remission either.

Wesolowski and Herman are developing an app similar to TikTok, but it will only feature uplifting and motivational content. The duo is using artificial intelligence to ensure that any shared content adheres to the app's standards.

Wesolowski and Herman see it as more of a movement than a business.

"The world is more digitally connected than ever, but emotionally and mentally, we have never been more disconnected. Negativity floods our screens, and social media is addictive, often leading people down darker paths of comparison and self-doubt. That's why Hunting Positivity is more than a brand. It is a lifestyle movement," Wesolowski said.

Wesolowski's experience at Misericordia has been instrumental in developing Hunting Positivity LLC. It was Michele Conway, instructor of Entrepreneurship and Management, who recommended the duo enter the TecBRIDGE competition and another similar program called Techcelerator.

"Once at Misericordia, everything began to grow more rapidly thanks to the incredible support of faculty like Michelle Conway and Paul Nardone. Michelle's entrepreneurship class challenged us to think and act like real-world founders. She connected us with opportunities that gave us structure, exposure and community backing," Wesoloski said.

Doing well in the TecBRIDGE competition has helped Wesoloski and Herman fund the development of their app, but that is just the beginning.

"Our long-term vision includes school programs for middle and high schoolers, seminars, community service initiatives, and eventually opening a physical location, a hub for like-minded individuals seeking purpose, wellness, and positivity," said Wesoloski.



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Learn More



FORMER COUGAR RETURNS AS HEAD COACH

MISERICORDIA UNIVERSITY GRADUATE and former football player Stephen Cushing '18 assumed the role of head football coach earlier this year, marking an exciting return to his alma mater.

Cushing graduated in 2018, having played safety and linebacker in the Cougar football program.

"It is an incredible opportunity to come back to Misericordia to be the head football coach. I am thankful to the university for giving me the opportunity, and I am excited to continue the family tradition that began when I was a player. I believe I have a unique opportunity because I understand what it was like to be a student-athlete here at Misericordia," Cushing said.

Cushing may be young for a head coach, but his resume speaks for itself. Cushing's college coaching journey started at Wilkes University, where he served as a defensive and recruiting assistant for two years. He moved on to SUNY Cortland in 2021 as the linebacker's coach.

In 2022, he was promoted to defensive coordinator, and in 2023, his defense helped propel SUNY Cortland to a Division III National Championship. Cushing's early success as a college coach likely stems from his long-time interest in becoming a coach, dating back to his high school experiences.

"I was lucky to have great high school coaches who encouraged me to pursue coaching. I went into college knowing I wanted to become a football coach after graduation. I was able to take lessons I learned from my high school and college coaches to enter into the coaching field," Cushing said.

Consistent with his championship pedigree, Cushing develops his players as well-rounded student-athletes.

"Our vision is to develop our players both on and off the field. We want to help them succeed through college and set them up for success in life. On the field, we aim to improve every week and be known for our competitive nature," Cushing said.

MISERICORDIA FOOTBALL

NEW MISERICORDIA CAMPUS STORE UNIVERSITY BRINGS COUGAR PRIDE HOME



This fall, the Misericordia University Campus Store officially returned to university management under the direction of Cougar Prints, the in-house print and design department, marking a significant shift in how spirit wear, textbooks, and campus essentials are delivered to the campus community.

The decision to bring the store in-house followed years of growth and success by Cougar Prints, which had already established a strong presence on campus through apparel sales, pop-up shops, and branded merchandise. "This was not just a business decision—it was a community one," said Jim Sabulski, director of Printing and Mailing Services. "From designers creating one-of-a-kind pieces, to decorators bringing those ideas to life, to store staff making sure it all reaches our community, every step is powered by people who truly understand what it means to wear the blue and gold."

The transition was nearly a year in the making, with weekly planning meetings, student and faculty input, and experimental sales events laying the groundwork. A key step was hiring Jennifer Martin, formerly of the Misericordia Post Office, as the new Campus Store Manager. Her familiarity with campus operations and commitment to service made her the ideal choice to lead the store's new chapter.

"Bringing the campus store back under university management is a tremendous opportunity to create a space that truly reflects the Misericordia community," said Martin. "Our team has been working hard to offer better prices, more variety, and custom-designed products that celebrate who we are as a campus."

The store is still located in the Banks Student Life Center. With plans for seasonal gear, student-designed merchandise, and an online store launching soon, the new Campus Store promises to be a vibrant hub of Cougar spirit for years to come.



MISERICORDIA.EDU/CAMPUSSTORE

A Misericordia Legacy

AT DANVILLE STATE HOSPITAL

When **Molly Hearity '13** arrived at Danville State Hospital for her level II fieldwork as a student, she did not expect the placement to chart the course of her career. That experience became her first job after graduation, and today she chairs Danville's Occupational Therapy Department. "Day-to-day is never the same here," Hearity said. "What drew me in was the collaborative nature of the work, and Misericordia prepared me well for that. We were taught to look at the whole person and to value mental health. That foundation still shapes how I practice."

Danville State Hospital, a long-term psychiatric facility, is located one mile northeast of Danville, Pennsylvania. The staff there are a part of the service continuum for individuals who have severe mental illness and substance abuse issues.

Hearity leads a department with a strong Misericordia University presence: **Christina Saxton-Wetzel '10**, **Jessica Yost '13**, A**shley Dinko-Stallone '13**, **Andrea Todd-Ficks '14**, and **Austin Hargraves '21**. Several of her colleagues have returned to Misericordia to pursue post-professional degrees, maintaining an active relationship between the program and the hospital. "A lot of our staff here are students who came through the program," Hearity said. "We continue to take Misericordia students every year, and it is rewarding to see those same students return. It shows the strength of the program and the values we share." She added that new graduates benefit from entering a workplace where mentors understand their background and training, which makes the transition into practice smoother and more supportive.

That relationship goes back decades. Associate professor **Dawn Evans, ODT, OTR/L, '88** was placed at Danville for a level I fieldwork in 1987, accepted a job there after graduation, and later joined Misericordia as part-time faculty. "I loved Danville State Hospital," Evans said. "The work was challenging and meaningful, and the department felt like a giant family. It is the only job where I ever cried when I left." As a faculty member, Evans made sure her students could experience the same setting. Danville has remained one of the few psychiatric facilities in the region that consistently accepts Misericordia students for both level I and II placements.

"We were taught to look at the whole person and to value mental health.

Students there have the opportunity to follow the OT process from assessment through treatment to discharge, something Evans believes is essential. Danville will also soon host its first Misericordia doctoral student, S**arah Brienza '27**, a sign that the connection between the two institutions is not only strong but also expanding and deepening.

Both Hearity and Evans point to shared values as the reason the partnership endures. Hearity emphasized person-first, holistic care and collaboration, while Evans described Danville as "a fine-tuned machine."

From Evans's first placement in 1987 to Hearity's leadership today, the connection between Misericordia and Danville continues to shape careers in occupational therapy, offering a new generation of occupational therapists.



Left to Right:
Dawn Evans, OTD, OTR/L, '88, '12
Austin Hargraves, MS, OTR/L, '21
Jessica Yost, MS, OTR/L, '13
Andrea Ficks, MS, OTR/L, '14
Ashley Stallone, MS, OTR/L, '13
Christina Wetzel, OTD, OTR/L, '10
Molly Hearity, MS, OTR/L, '13

Molly Hearity is Chief Occupational Therapist; Christina Saxton-Wetzel is Occupational Therapy Supervisor
All the others are Licensed Occupational Therapy Staff

That foundation still shapes how I practice."

- Molly Hearity, MS, OTR/L, '13



STRENGTHENING *the Mercy Tradition*

Through Advancement

In July 2025, Misericordia University welcomed Todd Anthony Sloan as its new Vice President of University Advancement (VPUA)—a strategic appointment that marks a renewal of purpose. A native of Northeastern Pennsylvania (NEPA), Sloan brings a wealth of expertise accumulated over three decades in fundraising, alumni engagement, and institutional communications.

"Thanks to the dedication of our faculty and staff, we enjoy significant positive momentum," remarked President Daniel J. Myers, Ph.D., reflecting on the institution's accelerating trajectory and the deep pool of candidates for the VPUA role. "We are glad that Todd has joined our team at this exciting time in our university's progress."

> The enduring values of the Sisters of Mercy — ***mercy, service, justice and hospitality*** — could not be more relevant than in our present day.

Sloan's career journey spans prominent institutions. At Penn State University, he held leadership roles in alumni relations and development across multiple schools. He later served as an assistant vice president at American University in Washington, D.C., and as vice president of Development and Alumni Relations at Quinnipiac University in Connecticut. Most recently, he was vice president for Client Partnerships with The Angeletti Group, where he guided national nonprofit fundraising and campaign strategies.

Rooted in the region—with past roles at Keystone College, MMI Preparatory School, and United Way of the Wyoming Valley—Sloan's arrival at Misericordia coincides with a meaningful homecoming to Northeastern Pennsylvania. Sloan's primary goal early in his tenure is to elevate its donor engagement and build upon its "Mercy Thrives" strategic plan.

Sloan's story reminds us that leadership is often enriched by familiarity and that the brightest futures can emerge from the communities we know best.

"I am excited and humbled to join President Dan Myers and the Misericordia University family," Sloan said. "The enduring values of the Sisters of Mercy — Mercy, Service, Justice and Hospitality — could not be more relevant than in our present day. I am truly blessed to join this university community, where these values are lived through the mission, and it is truly a 'community realized.'"

Sonography Service



In March 2025,

Misericordia University's Diagnostic Medical Sonography program lived its values in action when faculty member Karen Klimas, MS, RT, RDMS, led a team of senior students on a five-day medical mission to Santiago, Dominican Republic. Through the Institute for Latin American Concern (ILAC), the group joined over 80 healthcare professionals in delivering care to underserved communities. Together, they performed roughly 100 ultrasound exams in abdominal, renal, pelvic, vascular, and echocardiography screenings.

This marked Karen's fourth time participating in the ILAC outreach. Reflecting on her motivations, she shared, "I love to volunteer my time and skills to help the people of the Dominican Republic. It also gives my students the opportunity to do the same to promote the charisms of Misericordia University, which are Mercy, Service, Justice, and Hospitality."

For her students, stepping into this international setting offered an immersive, hands-on learning experience. They weren't just practicing sonography—they were developing compassion, resilience, and adaptability. As Karen put it, "They can scan outside of their comfort zone… any little thing when volunteering at this level is helpful and appreciated."

This mission exemplifies how Misericordia's curriculum extends far beyond traditional training—it's about forming professionals grounded in both skill and service. As Karen plans future trips and invites more participants, these journeys continue to shape confident, compassionate sonographers ready to make a meaningful difference.



Beyond the Classroom

CAREER EXPLORATION, ATHLETICS, AND ARTS HIGHLIGHT MISERICORDIA'S

Summer









Each summer,

Misericordia University (MU) opens its doors to local youth through a variety of summer camps designed to educate, inspire, and build community. These programs offer young students opportunities to develop new skills, explore interests, and experience campus life while connecting with Misericordia's commitment to fostering growth beyond the traditional classroom. While many colleges quiet down after commencement, Misericordia University stayed active this summer. A wide range of camps brought students to campus for hands-on learning, creative exploration, and athletic experiences in a welcoming, college-level environment.

Misericordia's Career Exploration Camps, held June 22–25, gave high school students a chance to discover potential career paths. These short-term, faculty-led experiences provided practical insight into a variety of professional fields. Health-focused options included camps in occupational therapy, physical therapy, and speech-language pathology, each tailored for rising seniors. Students participated in lab activities and simulations while learning about careers in patient care. The teacher education camp introduced participants to early childhood, special education, and middle-level teaching. Students engaged with interactive technology and gained a sense of classroom dynamics. In the literature camp, Misericordia English faculty guided students through an exploration of storytelling, pop culture, and media. The entrepreneurship camp emphasized leadership, problem-solving, and business etiquette through team projects and workshops.

From June through early August, Misericordia also offered a full slate of youth sports camps led by university coaches and staff. Open to a wide range of ages and experience levels, these sessions helped build both athletic skills and confidence. This year's lineup included basketball, football, lacrosse, field hockey,

Camps



cheerleading, and a co-ed soccer success camp. Participants trained on the same fields and courts used by Misericordia's NCAA Division III teams.

The university also hosted two standout arts programs: Summer Performing Arts Training Academy (PATA) and the Pennsylvania Jazz Ensemble (PA Jazz). Summer PATA, run by the PATAsphere team, provided professional-level training in acting, singing, and dancing. Campers rehearsed and performed an original musical written by the Performing Arts Training Academy. The 2025 program ran from June 23 to July 6 and offered both day camp and sleep-away options for performers aged six and up. The PA Jazz Ensemble brought high school musicians together for combo rehearsals, private lessons, and workshops with professional jazz artists, culminating in a live performance.

When speaking of the camps, MU President Daniel J. Myers, Ph.D. said, "Summer might seem like a quiet time on most college campuses, but not at Misericordia. We keep things buzzing with an awesome lineup of summer camps for students of all interests. From basketball and field hockey to performing arts and career exploration, there is something for everyone. Whether students are getting creative in the theater, breaking a sweat on the field, or exploring future career paths, our camps offer a fun, hands-on way to build skills, make new friends, and feel right at home on campus."



Misericordia Student Places Third in Nation at FBLA Conference



Misericordia University sophomore Kaitlyn Marley, a dual chemistry/pre-med and business administration major, placed third in the nation in both the Finance Case Competition and the Entrepreneurship Pitch Competition at the 2024 Future Business Leaders of America (FBLA) National Leadership Conference, held May 30 to June 2 in Dallas, Texas.

Marley, of Mountain Top, Pennsylvania, has been involved with FBLA since high school. Wanting to continue competing at the college level, she founded Misericordia's FBLA chapter during her first year on campus.

"I learned about Future Business Leaders of America in my freshman year of high school," Marley said. "Coming to Misericordia, I knew that I wanted to continue competing in FBLA and did not want this journey to end in high school. During my first semester of freshman year, I met with Dean Jim Pierson and started Misericordia's Future Business Leaders of America chapter."

This spring, Marley competed at the Pennsylvania State Leadership Conference, where she placed second in Entrepreneurship Pitch and third in Finance Case, advancing her to nationals in Dallas. There, she went on to earn two third place finishes against the nation's top student competitors in both the Finance Case Competition and the Entrepreneurship Pitch Competition.

"I was extremely surprised and excited to find out that I placed third in the nation for both events!" Marley said. "It was an honor to represent Misericordia University at this conference. Overall, it was an enriching experience."

Her advisor, Michelle Conway, MBA, instructor of entrepreneurship and management at Misericordia University's College of Business, praised her accomplishments.

"Kaitlyn founded the FBLA chapter at Misericordia to create meaningful, hands-on professional opportunities, not just for herself, but for fellow students," Conway said. "She is a go-getter, a self-starter, and an exceptional student leader."

Next year, Marley will serve as president of Misericordia's FBLA chapter for the third consecutive year and encourages students of all majors to join.







NEW MAJORS OPPORTUNITIES

While many universities across the country are downsizing or closing, Misericordia University is growing — expanding its academic offerings and creating more opportunities for students to thrive. Beginning this year, the University introduces Public Health and Sociology bachelor's degrees, along with a revamped Exercise Science bachelor's program launching this fall as well. Looking ahead, Marketing and Management will debut as stand-alone bachelor's degree majors in Fall 2026, further broadening Misericordia's commitment to preparing students with a broad range of interests for successful, meaningful careers. The new programs listed are being offered initially in the full-time, traditional model.

PUBLIC HEALTH

Empowers students to plan, manage, and evaluate health services across public and private sectors, with courses in epidemiology, policy, and ethics.

SOCIOLOGY

Deepens understanding of social life, structures, and human behavior through a strong foundation in research and applied learning.

EXERCISE SCIENCE

The redesigned program offers a dynamic blend of classroom learning, hands-on labs, and internships, complete with updated facilities and alignment with national certifications.

MARKETING

Will prepare students to craft strategies, build brands, and engage audiences across today's ever-changing business landscape.

MANAGEMENT

Will focus on leadership, innovation, and organizational strategy, equipping graduates to guide teams and shape the workplaces of tomorrow.

"While many institutions are scaling back, Misericordia is leaning forward — expanding programs that meet today's needs and empower our students to lead in a growing spectrum of professions," said Daniel J. Myers, Ph.D., president of Misericordia University.

By adding these new programs and enhancing existing ones, Misericordia continues to invest in its students and their futures. The University's forward-thinking approach ensures graduates are prepared to meet today's challenges, embrace new opportunities, and make a meaningful impact in their chosen fields. For more information on any of our new programs, please visit misericordia.edu.



MAKING MEMORIES

Misericordia University offers over 300 scholarships that provide more than $1.6 million in student support every academic year. Students who receive these awards are indebted to the benefactors whose philanthropy makes the scholarships possible. This support is often crucial for students to complete their education, obtain a degree, and make their mark on the world.

However, there is a connection that often develops between donor and student that is a great example of the Misericordia "community realized" relationships. Friendships and mentoring relationships form and endure for a long time.

This past year, Misericordia launched its new Scholarship Engagement Program, which allows scholarship donors and student recipients to meet and get to know one another. Instead of a once-a-year scholarship brunch as in the past, the University Advancement team hosted individual gatherings to bring the two groups together.

More than 40 scholarship benefactors took advantage of the expanded opportunity for a more personalized meeting with their students, either on campus or via Zoom. The list included benefactors from as far away as Arkansas, who were able to participate.

"In the 13 years that I have attended the scholarship brunch, I did not have as nearly as much time to get to know my scholarship recipients as I did at this year's face-to-face meeting with recipient Maria Villano '27 on campus," said Peter Fenedick, benefactor of the Wilma Paculavich Fenedick Scholarship for Women with Children. "It was a terrific meeting, and I was thrilled to get to hear about her endeavors and experiences as a student in the Women with Children program." The informal get-together included Eileen Gallagher, benefactor of the Mary Elizabeth "Mollie" Gallagher Scholarship, and her scholarship's 2024-25 recipient, Chloe Vinnacombe '28.

Among those who participated in the program via a Zoom call was Misericordia University Trustee Ruth A. Connolly, Ed.D., the benefactor of the Helen O'Donoghue Connolly Scholarship. "A University Advancement staff person hosted each of the meetings, and having them on the call

"Misericordia is not just a classroom, it is a universe, where the charisms carry on with people forever."

- Dr. Ruth A. Connolly, Ed. D.

Photo Captions – Top: Scholarship recipient Maria Villano '27 and benefactor Peter Fenedick, shown from left, met during an informal get-together that included benefactor Eileen Gallagher and scholarship recipient Chloe Vinnacombe '28.

Scholarship Benefactors and Recipients

Share Stories on the Impact of Philanthropy



helped with introductions," said Dr. Connolly. "When I attended a brunch, it was harder to carry on a personal conversation with the students with so many people around. Our Zoom call provided an opportunity for us to engage in a genuine conversation and for the students to share their personal stories. Both Riley Danielewicz '25 and Victoria Pellew '26 spoke glowingly about Misericordia. Each had a new found love of MU, whereas I have a far more deep-seated love of the university. It was good for them to see the mission through my eyes, and learn that Misericordia is not just a classroom, it is a universe, where the charisms carry on with people forever."



Vice President of University Advancement Todd Sloan is excited to see such enthusiasm for the new meeting process. "I am thrilled that our scholarship benefactors are taking advantage of the opportunity to meet with their scholarship recipients. It is such a heartwarming benefit of philanthropy to see first-hand the impact you have on a student's life. The students learn from the meetings what inspires donors to give, and often say they plan to 'pay-it-forward' when they can. We hope more of our scholarship donors and students will take part this year," says Sloan.

Scholarship benefactors interested in meeting with their student recipients are invited to contact Marianne Puhalla, Manager of Donor Communications and Relationships, at (570) 674-8201 or mpuhalla@misericordia.edu.

Bottom: Scholarship benefactor Alan Snelson welcomed the opportunity to meet Danilky Amador Tejeda '25, the 2024-25 recipient of the Donna Ayers Snelson Memorial Scholarship. The award is named after Alan's late wife Donna, who served the university from 1977 to 2013 as both an associate professor of nursing, and director of the Center for Nursing History.

Homecoming Reunion 2025

Thank you to all who attended this year's Homecoming Reunion! Our campus came alive with everyone reconnecting, sharing in stories and laughter, and creating new memories together. We hope it was as special for you as it was for us, and we look forward to seeing you again soon!







EVENTS TO ATTEND:

LAST CALL: CLASS OF 2025

(Formerly known as Cheers to Alumni!)
Thursday, November 20, 2025
6:00 PM – 8:00 PM
Archie's, Misericordia University

LAST Volunteers CALL

Join us for a lounge-style game night to celebrate our fall 2025 graduating seniors! By volunteering, you'll get to challenge our soon-to-be alumni in trivia, cornhole, and more. Enjoy delicious bar bites and drinks, and show these future Cougars what it truly means to be Alumni Forever.

To register as a VOLUNTEER, please visit
www.misericordia.edu/lastcallvolunteers

Save the Date!
Homecoming Reunion 2026
September 18-19, 2026

MISERICORDIA UNIVERSITY

MILE TOUR

Many happy miles shared last year,







more miles to be shared this year!

The beginning of every new year presents us with the opportunity to bring our MU spirit on the road. All of the years spent traveling throughout the north, south, east, and west have shown us just how powerful our MU community is far and wide. We are currently planning next year's travels and are bringing a regional alumni event to a town near you! Watch our social media channels and the university events webpage for announcements about the upcoming year's destinations and dates.

Let's stay connected:

Alumni & Friends LinkedIn:

Alumni Facebook:

Alumni Instagram:

Alumni Website & Calendar:

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