

# CAMPUS CONNECTIONS

## EMPLOYEE NEWSLETTER

Issue 2

Vol 5

### FEBRUARY 2025

#### WHAT'S INSIDE

2-3

##### COMMUNITY SHOWCASE

A HEARTFELT STORY, UPCOMING EVENTS AND ACTIVITIES, DENTAL CLINIC CELEBRATES 10 YEARS, LET'S SOLVE PROBLEMS TOGETHER

4

##### HIGHLIGHTS & OPPORTUNITIES

DAY SERVICES INSTITUTE DAY, QUARTERLY PROMOTIONS, INTRODUCING NEW JOB COACHES

5

##### FOR YOUR CONSIDERATION

LOCAL BUSINESSES, BLACK DISABILITY ACTIVISTS AND ADVOCATES, QUARTERLY D&I RESOURCES GUIDE

6

##### EMPLOYEE RESOURCES

KNOWLEDGE OWL RAFFLE, THE FUNDAMENTAL REFRESH SERIES, ICE BREAKERS

7-8

##### MONTHLY RECOGNITIONS

WARM WELCOMES, ANNIVERSARIES, DEPARTMENT APPRECIATION, IN MEMORIAM

#### MESSAGE FROM THE HEART



*"The greatness of a community is most accurately measured by the compassionate actions of its members" - Coretta Scott King*



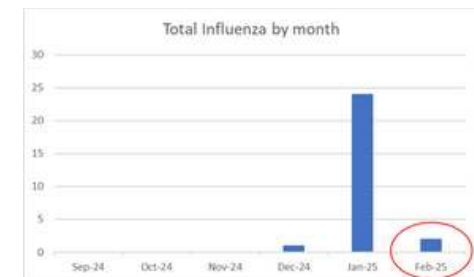
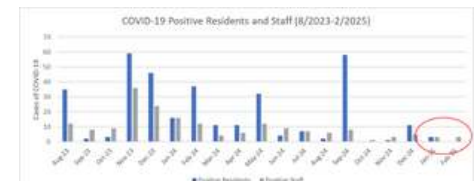
**Pictured:** Parent volunteer, Anne, and residents, Abby and Jessica, speaking at the Department Appreciation Lunch event held on February 6th; Residents and staff participating in Black History Month and Valentine's Day.

Dear Misericordia Staff, Families and Guardians,

We want to thank everyone for participating in our masking efforts to keep our residents and staff safe this past Flu/COVID season.

Based on the current rates of low activity of Flu and COVID on our campus, we will END our mandatory masking requirement effective March 1, 2025.

Please know that the decision to proactively mask is always supported if staff so choose.



**Pictured:** Bar graphs of resident and staff COVID-19 and influenza cases month by month. Zoom in or [click here](#) to enlarge the images.



# COMMUNITY SHOWCASE

## A HEARTFELT STORY

AS SHARED IN MIZ BIZ



**Pictured:** Tyler S (CILA Resident) and his late father. This article was written by Merrily S, Tyler's mother.

Like most Misericordia parents, I have a deep appreciation for the staff that serves my son, Tyler. I am grateful for their hard work and dedication, and I try not to take that for granted.

Day after day, they are there making sure our guys are safe and well cared for. It is not something we usually think of, but they spend more time with our kids than we do, and because of that, they sometimes pick up on things that we may not notice during home visits or when we visit them on campus. Once such time really stands out to me...

A few years ago, my husband, Tyler's father, died after a long illness. In the months that followed, Tyler seemed to be doing ok when he was home with me. I knew he was sad, he often talked about his dad, but he was sleeping and eating ok when he was with me and most of the time he seemed as happy as ever. That is why I was surprised when his Q called me to tell me that she and the DSP staff, who knew him so well, thought he was experiencing signs of depression. Based on their observations, I contacted his doctor, who made some medication changes. While this helped, the depression still continued. So, further steps were initiated. He was paired with an art therapist at Mis and met with her regularly. Through drawing and artwork, Tyler was able to express some of his sorrow that he could not otherwise articulate. But it still did not end there. The amazing staff organized a small grief support group with a few other residents who had recently lost a close relative. This group did wonders for Tyler. I don't know the details of these group meetings because I wasn't present, but they had an impact on my son that both his house staff and I noticed. He loved getting together with this group of friends who understood what he was going through. I loved hearing about their kind and thoughtful activities. One time, the group talked about their loved one's favorite foods, took a trip to the store, and prepared food to share what reminded them of that person.

What I think about when I recall this time in Tyler's life, is that the Misericordia staff cared enough for my son that they took extraordinary measures to make sure he was doing well. They went the extra mile. That is amazing. That is nothing to take for granted.

## UPCOMING EVENTS AND ACTIVITIES



**The Hearts & Flour Bakery and Cafe is accepting pre-orders for paczkis!**

The cafe is now taking online orders through the Toast app. [Click here](#) to place an online order.

*\*Employee discounts cannot be applied in online orders.*



**Heartbreakers Performance on Feb 28th!**

Catch the Heartbreakers performing at the Red Heart Bash at 7pm at the Walden.



*In partnership with Irish Music School of Chicago*



## CAMPUS CONNECTIONS





# COMMUNITY SHOWCASE (CONT'D)

## DENTAL CLINIC CELEBRATES ITS 10TH ANNIVERSARY



**Pictured:** Camille S (Dental Asst. & Coordinator), Jena C (Manager & Dental Hygienist), Dr. Ashley K (Dentist), Maggie F (Dental Asst. & Coordinator) with Shannon Apt. resident, Fran for her dental treatment.

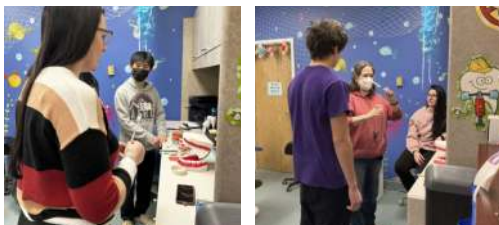
**Not Pictured:** Dr. Daniel Bicknell (Dentist)

Consisting of managers, coordinators, assistants, hygienists, and oral doctors, Misericordia's dental clinic, located on the second floor of the Main Building, celebrates its 10th anniversary this March!

When asked what makes the dental clinic team so special, Dentist Assistant Camille S says, "We pride ourselves not only on the highest level of care but also on the warmth and dedication of our team. Every member, from our skilled dentists to our compassionate hygienists and dental assistants, is committed to making every visit as comfortable and positive as possible. We go beyond just treating teeth; we build relationships with our residents, focusing on personalized care and a friendly atmosphere. Whether it's their first visit or they have been with us for years, our team is here to listen, support, and ensure you leave with a smile inside and out."

In addition to seeing residents in a clinical setting, the dental clinic also offers other programs that promote the oral well-being of our residents:

- **Desensitization Therapy Program** - This program is available weekly or monthly to any residents who have anxiety and/or fears of the dental office. During these sessions their focus is on having FUN in the dental setting. They read books, play games, listen to music, and work on forming trust. Once rapport and trust is established, and the resident feels they are in a safe space, the dental staff then work on the resident sitting in the dental chair, laying back, practicing an exam, and so forth to help them prepare for their actual dental visits, ultimately decreasing their needs for oral pre-sedation, and a much better dental experience.
- **One-on-One Oral Hygiene Sessions** - These sessions are for any resident who wants to improve upon their own oral care, by improving their brushing and flossing skills. The participants typically come weekly for about 5 – 10 minutes at a time, and get individualized help from one of the dental staff. This helps to strengthen the resident's independence, and put less of a strain on staff having to assist with home care.
- **Staff In-services and individualized help** - All new staff participate in a very detailed 2 hour dental education in-service, and all current staff will typically get yearly refresher in-services, as requested by their supervisors. The dental staff also will come to the houses for individualized in-services to help staff with brushing/flossing for specific residents, as requested by the staff or supervisor/QIDP.



**Pictured (L to R):** Dental Clinic Manager Jena C and CILA staff Nora O who are working with Northwestern's engineering program on designing prototypes for user-friendly, adaptable toothbrushes.

## LET'S SOLVE PROBLEMS TOGETHER

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](mailto:tiffanyj@misericordia.com) by March 3.

Campus Connections would like to congratulate them on their achievement and thank them for providing oral health care and education to our residents weekly.

## CAMPUS CONNECTIONS



# HIGHLIGHTS AND OPPORTUNITIES

## DAY SERVICES INSTITUTE DAY



**Pictured:** Day Services staff at Institute Day in the Jean Marie Ryan Center (JMRC).

Day Services kicked off the year with their biannual Institute Day on Monday, February 17th. This event brought together department staff from across all program areas—including developmental training, community day services, pool & fitness, and recreation & leisure—to participate in professional development sessions. In addition to the learning, staff took part in a fun and engaging scavenger hunt, fostering teamwork and a sense of community. These activities are designed to enhance staff skills, support their daily roles, and ensure residents continue receiving the highest level of care and support. We look forward to the impact this learning will have throughout the year!

## INTRODUCING NEW JOB COACHES



**Pictured left (L to R):** Rebecca T (Village), Elida R (CILA), Bobbie V (Shannon Apt), Goreth N (CILA), Rosa C (Shannon Apts), Dominique G (McAuley), Jesenia S (Village), Bridget M (CILA), Ashley D (Shannon Apts).

Congratulations to our new Job Coaches! Job Coaches are instrumental in providing guidance and coaching to new staff during their training period and throughout their first year of employment. They work to ensure new staff are receiving the best guidance, coaching and support to be successful.

## WINTER QUARTER PROMOTIONS

- **Nelliz Granados** promoted from a DSP in the Village to a DT Trainer in DT
- **Renita Johnson** promoted from DSP to PM Supervisor in Quinlan
- **Michael Woods** promoted from DSP Rel Sup to ON Supervisor in Quinlan
- **Migdalia Ortiz** promoted from Supervisor, Accounting to Manager of A/R and Resident Funds in Finance
- **Fred Wood** promoted from DSP Rel Sup to ON Supervisor in Mercy Glen
- **Katie Peterson** promoted from Compliance Manager to Director in the CILAs
- **Tatyana Kellough** promoted from a DSP in the Village to a RBT in Behavior Therapy
- **Svetla Panagonova** promoted from a BSP in the CILAs to an RBT in Behavior Therapy
- **Jquerra Harris** promoted from DSP to BSP in the CILAs
- **Timothy Strong Jr** promoted from DSP to BSP in Mercy Glen
- **Elizabeth Dick** promoted from DSP Rel Sup to ON Supervisor in Mercy Glen, effective 2/2
- **Maria Gutierrez** promoted from RN to RN Supervisor at McAuley
- **Celia Martinez** was promoted to Accounts Receivable Supervisor in Finance
- **Goreth Nibarore** was promoted from BSP to Lead Job Coach in the CILAs
- **Bridget McDermott** was promoted from BSP to Lead Job Coach in the CILAs
- **Elida Romero** was promoted from BSP to Lead Job Coach in the CILAs
- **Rebecca Torres** was promoted from DSP to Lead Job Coach in the Village
- **Jesenia Sanchez** was promoted from DSP to Lead Job Coach in the Village
- **Dominique Giles** was promoted from CNA to Lead Job Coach in McAuley
- **Rosa Cervantes** was promoted from DSP to Lead Job Coach in Shannon Apartments
- **Ashley Dickerson** was promoted from DSP to Lead Job Coach in Shannon Apartments
- **Bobbie Vongonh** was promoted from DSP to Lead Job Coach in Shannon Apartments
- **Sara Mulloy** was promoted from QIDP Relief Sup to Lead QIDP in the CILAs

## CAMPUS CONNECTIONS



# FOR YOUR CONSIDERATION

## LOCAL BUSINESSES FROM AROUND THE GLOBE

### LITTLE BLACK PEARL

1060 E 47th St, Chicago, IL 60653

[details here](#)

### DEMERA ETHIOPIAN

4801 N Broadway St, Chicago IL 60640

[details here](#)

### WESLEY'S SHOES

5450 S Lake Park Ave, Chicago, IL 60615

[details here](#)

### PROJECT A BLACK PLANET: THE ART AND CULTURE OF PANAFRICA

The Art Institute of Chicago

111 S Michigan Ave, Chicago, IL 60603

[details here](#)

### BLACK CREATIVITY JURIED ART EXHIBIT

Griffin Museum of Science and Industry

5700 S Dusable, Chicago, IL 60637

[details here](#)

### WHEN CLOUDS ROLL AWAY AT STONY ISLAND ARTS BANK

Rebuild Foundation

6760 S Stony Island, Chicago, IL 60649

[details here](#)

[Click here](#) to read all about the Chicago origins of Black History Month and how it has helped shape the city into a cultural and economic powerhouse.

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!

## BLACK DISABILITY ACTIVISTS AND ADVOCATES

Courtesy of DisabilityRightsFlorida.org



**Harriet Tubman** sustained a traumatic brain injury and suffered from seizures all of her life. She is also one of the greatest Black liberators of all time. She is well known in history for leading hundreds of enslaved people escape slavery in the South.



**Brad Lomax** was an essential part of the disability rights movement. He founded the East Oakland Center for Independent Living which provided support and resources to Black individuals with disabilities.



**Kathy D Woods** is the 1st African American fashion designer for little people. Recognizing disparities in access to clothing for little people, Kathy D Woods founded and is the CEO of her own clothing company designed for adult little people.



**Donald Galloway** was an impactful activist working to center Black people and People of Color (POC) in the disability rights movement. Blinded at a young age due to a lack of medical care, he had been a disability advocate his entire life.

[Click here](#) to continue reading about a growing list of black advocates working to make society more inclusive for all!

## QUARTERLY D&I RESOURCE GUIDE

[Click here](#) to access our quarterly D&I resource guide for January, February, and March. The content includes media recommendations, web articles, activities for residents, and other content around the values of belonging and connection!

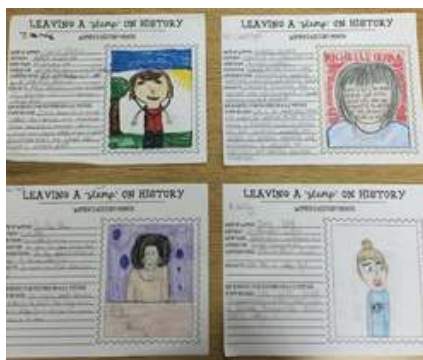
The content in the guide was gathered by members of the Diversity and Inclusion (D&I) Committee and/or submitted by staff. If you would like to contribute, please email [campusconnections@misericordia.com](mailto:campusconnections@misericordia.com).





# EMPLOYEE RESOURCES

## ENTER FOR CHANCE TO WIN OUR KNOWLEDGE OWL RAFFLE



**Pictured:** Leaving a "Stamp" on History: Women's History Month Activity, shared through Knowledge Owl/The Current.

Access Knowledge Owl/The Current this month, tell us when the next FLOAT session is, and your name will be entered to win a raffle prize! Knowledge Owl/The Current is an activities resource available to all Misericordia team members. The resource currently has 900 (and growing) interactive activities from several core topics like communication, wellness, and culture and community. Every activity has a meaningful suggestion on connecting the concepts into community opportunities and exploration. March is Women's History Month, [check out](#) this fun activity. To access the resource, click the icon any Misericordia desktop, type in your reader login and password, and you're ready to explore. If you do not have a reader login for Knowledge Owl, please reach out to Nora Turgeon at [norat@misericordia.com](mailto:norat@misericordia.com).

Once you've explored Knowledge Owl/The Current, [click here](#) for a chance to win the raffle.

## THE FUNDAMENTALS REFRESH SERIES

Throughout the year, all staff will complete trainings as part of the Fundamentals Refresh Series. These trainings are designed to enhance and strengthen your skills as well as make sure that you are up to date on key topics and changes to help you continue to succeed in your role.

The Fundamentals Refresh Series includes:

- OIG Rule 50 Abuse & Neglect Training (ends March 16)
- Expo Part 1: Health & Safety (April 14 - May 18)
- Bystander Training (TBD)
- Expo Part 2: Campus Safety (TBD)
- Sexual Harassment Prevention Training (TBD)
- Expo Part 3: Staff-Related Policies (TBD)

Completion of this series helps to foster a culture of integrity, support staff's personal and professional growth, and maintain a safe and inclusive environment for all.

These trainings will be offered on Infinitec. If you have any questions, please reach out to [training@misericordia.com](mailto:training@misericordia.com).

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



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



What is a good way to give back to the community?



What is the best example of a community you have seen?



Who is someone in your community that makes a difference?



# MONTHLY RECOGNITIONS

## WELCOME NEW RESIDENT



### Vintrell

*Residence: McAuley*

- likes hugs
- enjoys watching Gracie's Corner
- likes to joke around

## DEPARTMENT APPRECIATION

February follows another round of monthly appreciation for the various departments on campus. This month we hosted a special luncheon for the following areas:

- Dental Clinic
- Dietitian
- Doctors
- Therapists
- Respiratory Aide
- Medical Clinic Clerk

We thank all our clinical services staff for all they do to support are residents.

### Check out what some of our celebrants had to say about what makes their department special:

- *"Our clinical team is a dedicated, compassionate, and highly collaborative group. We are incredibly lucky to have these wonderful people at Mis!" - Sam S. (Therapy)*
- *"Food is love and our department shows our love for each other with really great food on a regular basis!!!" - Lisa H. (Therapy)*
- *"We can fix anything!" - Alli R. (McAuley Therapy)*
- *"Everyone in my department works well together to get things done!!!" - Tara R. (Medical Team - Nursing)*
- *"We work well together. We are like a peanut butter and jelly sandwich. You can't have one without the other." - Stephanie H. (McAuley Therapy)*
- *"At our Dental Clinic, we pride ourselves not only on the highest level of care but also on the warmth and dedication of our team [...]" - Camille S. (Dental Clinic)*
- *"That we appreciate a good, celebratory event - to include a meal of appreciation!!!" - Constance A. (Therapy)*

## FEBRUARY ANNIVERSARIES

- 54** Lois Gates
- 41** John O'Brien
- 34** Nadine Downs
- 30** Melissa Cooper
- 29** Carolyn Sheehan
- 27** Lynette Coleman-Eaton, Adrienne Carter
- 25** Shereese Schaeffer
- 24** Rita Alviar, Yvonne Jordan
- 23** Judy Cavada
- 22** Redith Adraneda, Laura Goschy Kos
- 21** Mirsada Gutosic
- 20** Cristina Roman Martinez
- 19** Ryan Rio
- 17** Rosa Pacheco, Ana Roman
- 16** Cathy Williams
- 15** Stephanie Catain, Azra Colpa
- 14** Michael Baldwin
- 13** Angela Brown, Daniel Driscoll, Sara Mulloy, Antoinette Oden, Darnika Scott
- 12** Valerie James-Campbell, Stephanie Tagle
- 11** Jason Black
- 10** Jena Cahill
- 9** Kevin McCartan, Shannon Giancarlo, Liam O'Donnell, Kristen Rice, Gregory Wagner
- 8** Katherine Alexander, Laera Benard, Shermaine Casimiro, Mary Givens, Lizbeth Juarez, Monika Marek, Jillian Victorn, Alecia Young
- 7** Monica Taylor
- 6** Raquia Tyler, Joana Aleman Delgado, Thomas McManus, China Moore, Lea Weiner
- 5** LaKenya Brown, LaKeelah Clark, Amy Johnston, Miles Lindholtz, Noah Styer, George Tonyi, Tsehayens Tsegaye, Jeremy Wyatt, Hyacynth Salazar
- 4** Dannielle Geronimo, Sierra Griffith, William Bledsoe, Maria Clara, Rozeeya Rose Rai
- 3** Luz Del Carmen Diaz de Rivera, Tammy Sanders, Kayden Byard, Kevin Perry, Danny Swieca, Felix Rivera, Cecilia Mejia
- 2** Jameria Allen, Casey Kurete, Wesley Martin, Rosemarie Aco, Remington Adekola, Ariel Magsay
- 1** Adrienne Green, Adrian Ibarra, Mohmmedabrar Joly, Brittany Morris, Julius Scott, Taliyah Turner, Cyan Vasquez, Monica Woods, Taylor Foster, Amber Harvey, Diona Johnson, Samantha Lopez, Madeline Morales, Dakoby Valentin, Marisa Warner

## CAMPUS CONNECTIONS



# MONTHLY RECOGNITIONS

## WELCOME NEW STAFF



**Arenas, Lesly** (Cila Homes); **Cabanlit, Tredayne** (Quinlan); **Cacho, Kate** (Rosemary Connelly); **Chamlagai, Prajina** (Marian Center); **Cody, Alaina** (Therapy); **Gayle, Kiyanna** (McAuley Residence); **Hanks, Christopher** (McAuley Residence); **Johnson, Courtney** (Quinlan); **Johnson, Jasmine** (Quinlan); **Jones, Jarrett** (Mercy Glen); **Mattox, Courtney** (McAuley Residence); **McKnight, Briana** (Rosemary Connelly); **O'Connor, Christopher** (Mercy Glen); **Richardson, Maquita** (Marian Center); **Rodriguez, Dorren** (Cila Homes); **Russell, William** (Mercy Glen); **Uyirwoth, Lydia** (Village); **Walker, Timesha** (Village); **Almada, Santiago** (Resource Recreation); **Saiyad, Samir** (Quinlan); **Athanasakos, Kathryn** (Nursing Services); **Chavez, Patricia** (Laundry/Housekeeping Aux Bldg); **Gilbertson, Chase** (H&F Cafe); **Lubango, Safina** (Marian Center)

## IN MEMORIAM

Our deepest condolences go to the loved ones of:



**Brian H**  
(1962 - 2025)



**Jonathon "Jack" B**  
(1995 - 2025)

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!