



IONA UNIVERSITY

IONA UNIVERSITY'S ANNIKA ZIELS '24 COLLABORATES WITH CEREBRAL PALSY OF WESTCHESTER TO BRING GIFTED CORNER SHOWCASE TO CAMPUS

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New Rochelle, N.Y. – When [Cerebral Palsy of Westchester](#) (CPW) turned to Iona University's Annika Ziels '24 to help premiere their Gifted Corner showcase, she quickly joined forces with partners across campus to make it happen. The event took place last month as part of Iona Advocacy Week, giving participants an opportunity to showcase a range of talents from singing, cooking and poetry to a live sports podcast.

Since 1949, CPW has worked to empower individuals with developmental disabilities including autism, neurological impairments, intellectual disabilities, epilepsy and

cerebral palsy by fostering their sense of independence and productivity.

In the fall of 2022, Ziels, a Campus Minister, started volunteering at the CPW every other week. As her dedication blossomed, she started volunteering every week. Ziels' commitment continued as she organized friendship visits with her Iona peers and recruited a team of up to 10 volunteers every week to support the CPW's art and recreational programs.



"Going to CPW every Friday was hands-down always the best part of my week. There was nothing like ending each week dancing, hanging out and chatting with my friends there," said Ziels, who just graduated with degrees in Media & Strategic Communications and Arts Leadership. "It is an incredible facility that I was honored to be a part of during my college experience."

In creating the Gifted Corner showcase, CPW's self-advocates were vocal about their desire to be acknowledged and "seen" as vibrant contributors to society.



Joan Colangelo, special projects director at CPW, said, "Annika has been a wonderful addition to CPW, helping to bring in different people from the Iona University community, helping them to get to know the individuals here, and connecting our communities."



ABOUT IONA

Founded in 1940, Iona University is a master's-granting private, Catholic, coeducational institution of learning in the tradition of the Edmund Rice Christian Brothers. Iona's 45-acre New Rochelle campus and 28-acre Bronxville campus are just 20 miles north of Midtown Manhattan. With a total enrollment of nearly 4,000 students and an alumni base of more than 50,000 around the world, Iona is a diverse community of learners and scholars dedicated to academic excellence and the values of justice, peace and service.

Iona is highly accredited, offering undergraduate degrees in liberal arts, science and business administration, as well as Master of Arts, Master of Science and Master of Business Administration degrees and numerous advanced certificate programs. Iona students enjoy small class sizes, engaged professors and a wide array of academic programs across the [School of Arts & Science](#); [LaPenta School of Business](#); [NewYork-Presbyterian Iona School of Health Sciences](#); and [Hynes Institute for Entrepreneurship & Innovation](#).

Iona is widely recognized in prestigious rankings, including [The Princeton Review's 2024 national list of "The Best 389 Colleges"](#) and [The Wall Street Journal/College Pulse's "2024 Best Colleges in America,"](#) which ranked Iona at #66 in the nation overall and #8 in the nation among Catholic schools. Iona's LaPenta School of Business is also accredited by AACSB International, a recognition awarded to just six percent of business schools worldwide. In addition, The Princeton Review recognized Iona's on-campus MBA program as a "Best Business School for 2023."

Iona also offers a [fully online MBA program](#) for even greater flexibility. In July 2021, Iona announced the establishment of the NewYork-Presbyterian Iona School of Health Sciences, which is now principally located on Iona's Bronxville campus in collaboration with [NewYork-Presbyterian](#). Connecting to its Irish heritage, the University also recently announced it is expanding abroad with a [new campus in County Mayo, Ireland](#). A school on the rise, Iona officially changed its status from College to University on July 1, 2022, reflecting the growth of its academic programs and the prestige of an Iona education.



<https://www.iona.edu/news/iona-universitys-annika-ziels-24-collaborates-cerebral-palsy-westchester-bring-gifted-corner>

