

# The Coby Co-Curricular

Newsletter by the Division of Student Development

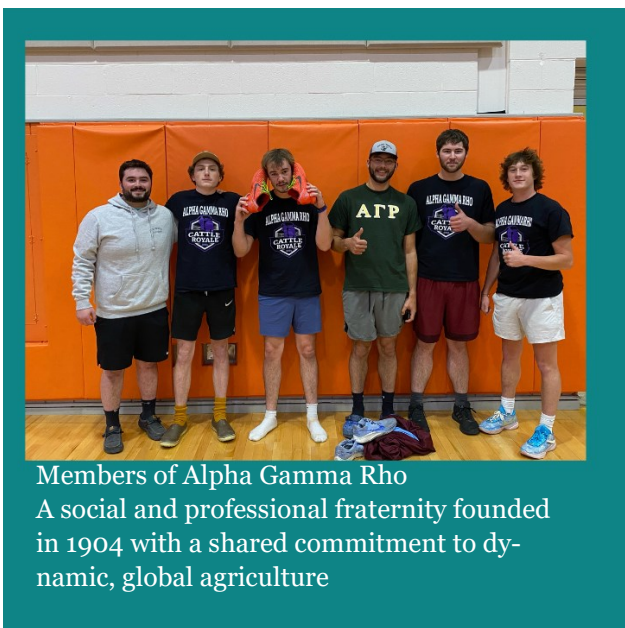
January 2025 Issue 2

## Fostering Inclusive and Supportive Environments

The **student Multicultural Educators (MCE)** and staff of the Unity Center are dedicated to fostering an inclusive and supportive environment for all students and employees. The Center serves as a hub for commuters, international students, Greek Life, multicultural education, LGBTQ+ students, and many others seeking community and engagement. The MCEs proudly host over 90 programs each year, including signature Table Talks and Deliberative Dialogues, focused on fostering cultural awareness and open conversation around diversity and inclusion. Multicultural Education programs offer dynamic learning experiences to help students and faculty engage with critical social issues and promote equity.

This year, **new internship positions** have been created, including an Anti-Hate and Bias Prevention role that allows students to gain hands-on experience addressing these important issues and gain practical skills in advocacy, civic engagement, and social justice.

The **Greek Life program** is committed to cultivating leadership, academic excellence, and service. With six active organizations, engagement expands to hundreds of students and alumni in meaningful programming that builds lifelong bonds and creates a lasting impact on campus and beyond.



Members of Alpha Gamma Rho  
A social and professional fraternity founded in 1904 with a shared commitment to dynamic, global agriculture

Staff and students of the Unity Center continue **to build community partnerships**, organize impactful service projects, such as participation in local parades and community clean-ups, including a collaboration with the mayor of Cobleskill on October 19th. Through Community Engagement, alternative spring break opportunities are offered, including an annual Philadelphia trip, where students assist food-insecure families and support small businesses aiding the homeless. Regular events, such as involvement with the Lord's Table and collaborations with the Schoharie School District, strengthen our connection to the wider community. In partnership with Cobleskill Head Start and with generous donations from students, staff and faculty, SUNY Cobleskill was able to sponsor eleven families in need as part of the annual **Holiday Adopt-a-Family Program**. This continues the meaningful tradition to give back during the holiday season while building stronger ties between students, faculty, and the community.

## LINKing Students to Peer Support

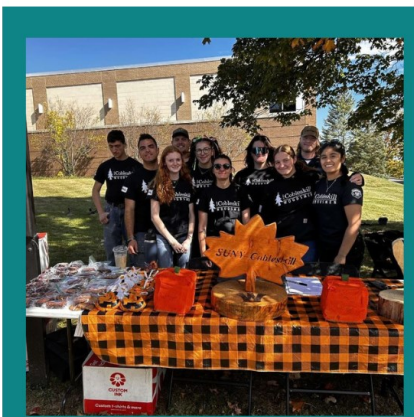
During the Fall semester, the Wellness Center and Unity Center launched a new **peer support program called LINK: Listening Inspires New Knowledge**. Designed to address the growing challenges students face in adjusting to college life, LINK empowers students to uplift and support one another. Peer Support Specialists will focus on fostering empathetic listening and providing peer support for students navigating various obstacles, while also guiding them to professional resources when needed. Through meaningful connections, six Peer Support Specialists will promote academic, personal, and social growth. Interested students may contact the Wellness Center for opportunities to become a paid Peer Support Specialist.

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## Engaging Students Through the First 50 Days

Each week we are greeted with a **Weekly Events Blast**, compiled by Mike Wacksman, Associate Director of Student Leadership, showcasing programs sponsored by the Campus Engagement Board (CEB), the Office of Student Leadership, Student Government, Residential Life, UPD, Wellness Center, Greek Organizations, student led clubs and student organizations. Numerous events and activities are purposefully planned in the first 50 days of the Fall semester to encourage students to meet new people, make connections to resources, on-campus and in the surrounding Cobleskill community, and develop their sense of belonging at Coby.

Bus trips to explore NYS and beyond, crafter-noons, intramural sports, competitive challenges for prizes, bonfires, food-centric events, and themed movie nights brought students together.



Woodsmen Club



Student Government Association Senators with mascot Coby T Tiger

Students explore future careers, identify common interests and develop leadership skills through participation in clubs including: Agricultural Engineering, Plant Science & Sustainability, Pre-Veterinary, Livestock, Waterfowl, Equines, Canines, Pollinators, Biodiversity & Conservation, Coldwater fisheries and watersheds, Wildlife, E-sports, Anime, Archery, Chess, and Culinary Arts. These opportunities for engagement in the campus community have been met with superb attendance and student enthusiasm, and contribute to the social, emotional learning and growth of students beyond the classroom. More information about student clubs/organizations and upcoming campus events for Spring 2025 can be found on [COBY Engage](#) and the CORQ APP, available for download from Google Play or the Apple Store.

## Promoting Civic Engagement



SUNY Cobleskill is one of thirty-nine SUNY campuses to participate in the “**ALL IN Campus Democracy Challenge**” and was awarded a monetary mini grant. The Challenge is intended to provide support for nonpartisan student outreach, increase student voting and civic engagement. SUNY Cobleskill has also been recognized on the 2024 Most Engaged Campus for College Student Voting list. The efforts of the Campus Engagement Board included distribution of the red, white and blue “Register to Vote” signs around campus, handing out “SUNY Votes” postcards, and coordinating an Ice Cream Cookie Sandwich Truck and costumed historical figures to enhance awareness on September 16th National Register to Vote Day. In addition to providing information about voter registration, the process of applying for absentee ballots, and reminders about important dates, CEB collaborated with Facilities to provide a shuttle service on Election Day to transport students who were eligible to vote in-person to their local polling place in Schoharie County, the Cobleskill Fire Department.



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## Supporting Mental Health & Well-being

Through the New York State Conference of Local Mental Hygiene Directors (CLMHD) and the New York State Office of Mental Health (OMH), SUNY Cobleskill has been selected to participate in a pilot program that establishes **Mental Health First Aid (MHFA) instructors** at six college campuses across NYS. Similar to physical First Aid and CPR, MHFA empowers those trained to assist someone in a mental health or substance use crisis until professional help is available or the situation is resolved.



The Beard Wellness Center

The SUNY Cobleskill MHFA instructors are:

- Lynn Ontl, Director of the Wellness Center
- Senior Counselors: Danielle Reu, Kristyn Esposito, Dorothea VanValkenburgh, and Sierra Devlin
- Marie Curran-Headley, Director of Athletics
- Morgan Flamholtz, Head Softball Coach

Staff interested in becoming a Certified Mental Health First Aider please contact the Wellness Center to explore training options!

The Wellness Center is excited to highlight an ongoing collaboration with **BetterMynd**, an online therapy platform specifically designed for college students. Through BetterMynd, students can choose from a diverse range of counselors, ensuring they find the right fit for their needs. BetterMynd services are available during evenings and weekends, making it easier for students who may be unable to attend in-person sessions at the Wellness Center during regular M-F hours (8:15 AM - 4:15 PM) to access support. Getting started is straightforward: students simply contact the Wellness Center expressing their interest in BetterMynd. They will have a brief meeting with a Wellness Center provider who will guide them through the registration process. After that, students can explore various therapists and filter their options based on preferences such as gender, specialty, ethnicity, and language. Best of all, engaging in counseling with a BetterMynd counselor comes at no cost to the student.



## Empowering a Safety-minded Campus

SUNY Cobleskill's UPD follows a philosophy of community policing, with a focus on involving the College community as a whole in helping identify and solve law enforcement-related issues on campus. Several **Threat Evaluation and Reporting Office (TERO) trainings** have been offered for staff with curriculum developed by the US Department of Homeland Security. TERO offers an introductory understanding of the concept of targeted violence and a fundamental comprehension of the Behavioral Threat Assessment and Management process.

This fall UPD also offered **RAD, Rape Aggression Defense**, a free, three-day Self-defense course, culminating in a dynamic simulation for participants to use their training.

Focusing on pedestrian and vehicular traffic education, multiple traffic enforcement details have capitalized on in-the-moment interactions, and enforcement opportunities which are all part of a broader campaign to create higher awareness of blended traffic safety across campus.

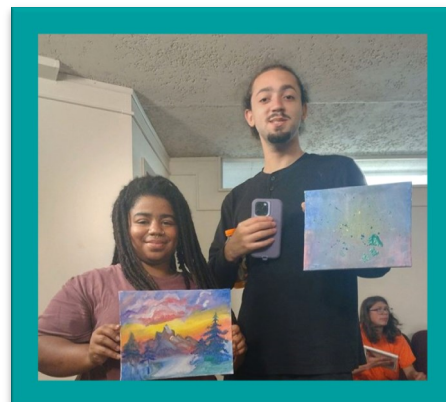


**Everbridge, the Campus-wide alert system**, in conjunction with InformaCast broadcasting announcing has been tested to continue to support emergency notification to all of campus. These two platforms of communication transmit to all campus email points, all registered cell devices, all campus line phones (650), and more than 50 outdoor speakers. Everbridge is also the communication method to announce delays or class cancellations due to inclement/winter weather.

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## Building an Inclusive Community

The residential experience at Coby is intentionally designed to support students as they grow both personally and academically. Following a **curricular model** with six goals based upon the acronym O.R.A.N.G.E., Open, Responsible, Achieve, Navigate, Global, Engage, programming in ResLife has been as robust and impactful as ever this year. During the first six weeks of Fall 2024, Resident Assistants (RAs) have planned and led themed programs related to safety, community building, de-stressing through art, cultural awareness and sense of belonging. Programs included: a Decorate a Mug event, two fireproof spraying events, Fire Safety Kahoot, Jellybean Guessing Game, "Waffles & Games" program, "Duck Scavenger Hunt", "Happy Accidents with Bob Ross", "Color Your Emotions", "Master of Puzzles", "Ohana Means Musubi", "Rolling into October", "Popping Facts" and "Dumplings Around the World", a celebration of Hispanic Heritage Month in combination with a celebration of Asian heritage. RAs tailor programs to the unique needs of residents and draw from their personal interests, hobbies, and cultural backgrounds.



## Equipping an Active Campus

For students looking to be involved and stay active, various outdoor game equipment is available at **the Campus Recreation Equipment Room**, located in Bouck Hall. With a Valid CobyCard, students can borrow basketballs, volleyballs, soccer balls, pickleball and disc golf sets, and snowshoes. The Fitness Center, located in Bouck Hall, is open M-F from 11am – 9pm, Sa & Su 2-6pm during the semester. Contact Mike Jorgensen, Senior Staff Assistant Sport & Exercise, and Campus Recreation Coordinator [jorgenmc@cobleskill.edu](mailto:jorgenmc@cobleskill.edu)

## Bolstering Resources of Fresh, Nutritious Foods

The SUNY Cobleskill **Emergency Food Pantry** is open to all current students, faculty and staff. Since the start of the Fall semester, the Food Pantry has logged over 550 visits. To further help combat food insecurity in our area, the local SNAP Benefits representative from Catholic Charities, has been tabling monthly to help students apply for SNAP benefits. If you are interested in donating non-perishable food items, or personal hygiene products to the food pantry, please email [EmergencyFoodPantry@cobleskill.edu](mailto:EmergencyFoodPantry@cobleskill.edu) or utilize the [Food Pantry Donation page](#) with secure link to submit a monetary donation.



Food Pantry: Sample meal planning options