

CAMPUS & COMMUNITY



Participants chatting by the Sauna at “Winter Sauna” hosted by Live Well partnered with The Pruitt Center, Feb. 22

Photo by Baylee Nygard | Promethean

“Connection is key”: a LiveWell Story

Baylee Nygard
bnyard@uwsuper.edu

With what it feels like never-ending winter here in the Twin Ports; LiveWell has events to curate University of Wisconsin-Superior students and community needs this winter.

LiveWell launched their organization in the fall of 2022 and expanded as part of the Pruitt Center on UWS campus early 2025. Ever since, they strive to provide opportunities everyone in the community to find connections and overall well-being.

“I do see people making connections with other people and that is the beauty of it; it’s like sitting in a sauna, you just naturally will have conversations with people,” LiveWell coordinator Lynn Goerdt said. “Sometimes you leave and say, ‘that was special’, because I just connected with somebody even though that connection might not continue.”

Goerdt and the LiveWell team coordinated a ‘LiveWell Sauna’ event which included two sauna tents, a campfire, s’more fixings, and a beautiful view of Lake Superior which took place on Sunday, Feb. 22.

According to Mental Health

America, 5% of U.S population experience seasonal depression; that is roughly 17.5 million people in America that experience symptoms of depression. The further people are away from the equator, the more at risk they are for seasonal depression. LiveWell wants to prevent the symptoms of seasonal depression in the Twin Ports and create opportunities for people to go outside and do things they don’t typically do.

“Most importantly, I don’t want people to feel lonely. Like even for a little bit, I don’t want people to feel lonely,” Goerdt said. “I want people to have a chance to tell their story to other people and to be heard. Social isolation is a thing and the implications are serious.”

LiveWell’s main goal is human connection. Human connection is important to everyone’s life because whether we know it or not, it improves our mental, physical health and helps shape a sense of self.

LiveWell and Pruitt Center try for 6-8 free events a week such as, yoga, pickleball, kettlebell classes and more. If you want a place to rest and ease your mind on UWS campus, the Pruitt Center is in Swenson Hall 3117 and open for everyone!

Twin ports is wearing joy in support of Hope Haven

Alicia Zoltowski
azoltows@uwsuper.edu

On Friday Feb. 27, hosted in the ballroom above Fox and Fireflies, the third annual Wearing Joy upcycle fashion show brought a colorful spin on fashion and what you can do with used items. All items shown at this event are handmade, upcycled items that are usually able to be bought. Most items showcased are donated to be auctioned off.

In the past, this event has been able to fundraise \$2,000-\$4,000 for Hope Haven. Hope Haven is a “peer respite home,” meaning everyone that works at Hope Haven has “lived experience with good mental illness and mental health, and for some people substance use.” This program is very “person centered,” Lynn Goerdt said.

This year’s fashion show is “really special.” Hope Haven officially opened their doors in July 2025. Since opening, they’ve been able to serve “over 1,800 people,” Goerdt expressed before



Gen wearing her own creation to promote “More Love”

Photo by Alicia Zoltowski | Promethean

having Chrissy Barnard, the director of Hope Haven shared three stories that showcased the way Hope Haven has impacted peoples lives and expressed, “it’s just good to see that we’re actually able to help people.”

The original idea for Wearing Joy was inspired by a Facebook post from Goerdt’s hometown, Sitka, Ala. The post showed how “everybody made fashion out of, like, Alaska things.” This pushed Goerdt to fulfill her dream of doing her own fashion show

as a fundraiser.

Goerdt has always liked fashion, but if she was going to do this, it would be to support something she’s passionate about. This fashion show “was like a Hope Haven fundraiser” there was no other place Goerdt wanted this support to go.

Besides fundraising for Hope Haven, the secondary mission of this show was “celebrating the people that make the clothes, celebrating the people that are modeling the clothes.”

The Fashion show had many participants from the Yellowjacket community ranging from creating clothes, modeling, to even hosting. This event ended with smiling, dancing, and joy.



Left to right: Sophie wearing s handmade ballerina styled dress with pink and purple butterflies created by Jamie, Erica wearing a cd sequenced skirt created by Jamie, Lily wearing her own home-made pizza box skirt creation.

Photo by Alicia Zoltowski | Promethean



Erica, wearing her own up cycled patch work Canadian tuxedo

Photo by Alicia Zoltowski | Promethean



Kendallyn Kalenburg wearing a “steampunk look” that includes a lampshade and umbrella hat. Created by Lynn Goerdt

Photo by Alicia Zoltowski | Promethean

Cuddle Crew comes back to campus

Ella Hill
ehill12@uwsuper.edu

The Yellowjacket Union was filled with stuffed cuddles on Feb. 12 for Yellowjacket Activities Crew (YAC) Build-A-Buddy event. “Students can stuff stuffed animals. Whichever one they choose from our selection, and they get one for free,” YAC coordinator Charlie Olsen said.

Build-A-Buddy has seen growing success in the eight to nine years it’s been running. This year had 12 buddies to choose from, and the first 75 students received ‘Cuddle Crew’ shirts. Students can choose to make a buddy for themselves or give it to someone they love. “This is my new axolotl, and I like plushies, so I might as well make a plush,” Vance Moench said, who made

the axolotl for themselves this year.

Students like Gaia Belich also found community in the buddy and with fellow students. “I chose the axolotl. I think my favorite part is being able to be in a community with people I know and talk to them, listen to music while I make my new friend,” Belich said.

Build-A-Buddy continues to see growing success as an event to bring the University of Wisconsin-Superior students together through self-love and kindness this Valentine’s Day season. “We [YAC] like build a buddy as an event because we have a lot of students joining together...and it’s something that they can give to a loved one or just stay for themselves with that,” YAC coordinator Chelsy Canales said.



Chelsy Canales (Right) and Temuulen Battulga (Left) working to hand out buddies and stuffing on Feb. 12.

Photo by Ella Hill | Promethean



Yellowjacket Union Antrim from the second floor looking down at the “Build-a-Buddy” event Feb 12.

Photo by Ella Hill | Promethean