

# Good Things Continue to Perk at Molloy Education Center



The Molloy Education Center, located in Morton Grove, educates students with a wide range of special needs ages 3 to 22. The daily curriculum is as individual as the students served and the educational content is delivered in a wide variety of ways.

Recently, the idea of a café staffed by high school students with cognitive disabilities and overseen by several physical, occupational, and speech therapists was developed and brought to life. The majority of the students are D219 students but have attended Molloy for their elementary years as well.

NTDSE occupational therapist Helen Conroy, physical therapist Ellen In and speech therapist Jenny Spiegel developed the idea to promote functional daily living skills into an educational forum.

Each Thursday, Molloy's high school students staff "Molloy Perks", the name of the school's new coffeehouse. The school kitchen is turned into a small café where these students, supervised by teachers, make simple treats which are then sold to staff. The students also act as baristas and will make coffee with the help of the single brew coffee maker. These goods then are sold at a low price to NTDSE staff.

Because some of the students face communication challenges, placing orders for food and coffee is done by the "customers" supplying the "baristas" with color coded pictures to indicate their food and beverage choices. Students also act as cashiers and greeters for the "customers".

On December 22nd, the team developed a true "coffeehouse experience" and offered music and ambiance to their customers. Music and readings were performed by some of the staff for the enjoyment of those teachers and students visiting the café that day.

"We are having fun with Molloy Perks and working with the students in a functional way", said Spiegel at the end of the morning coffee rush.

The pictures show that the fun is certainly shared by all those involved.