**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**Cleary offers de-stress activities during final exam week**

(Howell, MI) Cleary University staff are hosting a variety of activities for students during exam week to help them relax, unwind and find a sense of calmness and clarity when studying for fall semester final exams. De-Stress Fest runs Monday, Dec. 2 through Thursday, Dec. 5 on Cleary’s campus in Howell.

The week is designed to help students improve their concentration and decrease their anxiety so they can manage their stress effectively and do well on their final exams, reports Andrew Chamberlin, MA, LPC, a licensed professional counselor and adjunct professor at Cleary.

The week consists of stress ball making, cookie decorating, yoga, therapy dog visits and a late-night breakfast study break.

“Experiences like De-Stress Week offer a better chance for calm, balance and improved mood, data our brain works with to manage what is happening during stressful times,” Dr. Chamberlin finds. “This is vital to focus, concentration and the energy students need to academically succeed in the tough finals week.”

According to countless studies, student stress levels intensify during final exam week. One study shows that 45 percent of American college students experience more than average stress.

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Student mental health is worsening. According to the Healthy Minds Study of 373 college campuses across the US, more than 60 percent of college students met the criteria for at least

one mental health problem. In a national survey by the American College Health Association, almost 75 percent of students reported moderate to severe psychological distress.

In other studies of college students, it has been found that students report their stress about exams negatively affects their mindset and their test results. They are worried about failing and its impact on their future. As a result, many isolate themselves, neglect their social life and focus exclusively on their studies, which only intensifies their stress.

“Our goal at Cleary is to educate students about the importance of finding balance, managing expectations and choosing a pace throughout the school year that safeguards against burnout and overwhelming feelings,” Dr. Chamberlin explains.

In his classes throughout the year, he incorporates techniques to help students manage their stress. These include recognizing the power of self-awareness, identifying signs of stress, learning the practice of connection, and becoming aware of distractions that can impact their academic life. He also introduces emotional intelligence into his coursework to “help students identify and understand their nervous system states to respond, rather than react, to emotions moment to moment,” he explains. “These tools and practices can impact energy and focus immensely, and have an important impact on academics, including positive results on test scores,” Dr. Chamberlin finds.

“Our students manage so much throughout a school year from a mental and emotional standpoint,” he adds. “Healthy eating, adequate sleep, and social and relational habits are fuel for the brain as it seeks to manage our embodied experiences. Far too often, students neglect these until it’s a come-from-behind situation, an uphill challenge. Education, balance, and mood and mental health enhancement are key,” Dr. Chamberlin points out. “We recommend our students step away from their studies for some fresh air or a change of scenery. De-Stress Fest activities can be the healthy diversion they need.”

Dr. Chamberlin offers this additional advice for de-stressing during finals week:

* Get a good night’s sleep. Without adequate sleep, students will be mentally and physically fatigued and not able to perform at their best.

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* Unplug from social media while studying. It’s hard to focus when you are constantly reading and answering text messages. And you are losing valuable study time, which increases stress levels.
* Avoid drinking alcohol. It may help you fall asleep, but it does not give you a full, rested sleep. You won’t feel your best in the morning.
* Avoid caffeine late in the day. It may keep you awake, but you won’t be alert in the morning.
* Get some exercise. Even a walk around campus will refresh and re-invigorate you. According to the Anxiety and Depression Association of America, a 10-minute walk can relieve as much stress as 45 minutes of rigorous exercise.
* Practice breathing exercises. Push yourself away from your study area, close your eyes, and slowly breathe in and out, thinking only of your breathing pattern. Within a few minutes, you will feel the stress leaving your body.
* Talk to someone. You are not alone. Most students are feeling the pressure of final exams and need an outlet.

“By focusing on healthy coping skills during final exam week – and throughout the school year – students can succeed, build new resilience skills, find support from fellow students, and feel good, happy and mentally balanced,” Dr. Chamberlin reports.

**About Cleary University**

Founded in 1883, Cleary University is a four-year, private, nonprofit accredited university, offering undergraduate and graduate degrees from a unique Business Arts curriculum, and

driven by a faculty of thought leaders with deep, practical experience in their industries.

Providing on-campus and online education models, Cleary also offers a robust athletic program of 19 sports and a rich residence life with nearly 200 students living on the quiet, rolling 50-acre campus. Cleary graduates tend to land jobs faster than their peers and with higher earning salaries at the start of their careers. Cleary’s campus is located at 3750 Cleary Drive, Howell, MI 48843, with an education center within the Durfee Innovation Society at 2470 Collingwood St., Detroit, MI 48206.

**Cleary University**:

* Ranked #1 in Michigan for Return on Investment (ROI) among private, nonprofit business schools for its Bachelor’s in Business Administration, Management and

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Operations (The Foundation for Research on Equal Opportunity – FREOPP)

* Ranked first in Michigan for earnings one year post graduation and 10 years post graduation (FREOPP)
* Ranked #3 in Michigan for Net Present Value (NPV) of all private, nonprofit schools 10 years post graduation (Georgetown University’s Center on Education and the Workforce)
* Ranked #4 Best Business College in Michigan (Niche)
* Named a top 25 school in Michigan for its MBA program and its online degree programs (University HQ)
* Ranked ninth best university in the US for its MBA online leadership degree program (OnlineMastersDegrees.org)
* Named “Best for Vets College in 2022, 2023 and 2024” by *Military Times*
* Earned Gold Level Veteran-Friendly status from The Michigan Veterans Affairs Agency three years in a row for continued excellence in serving military-connected students

To learn more about Cleary University, visit its website: [https://cleary.edu](https://cleary.edu/).

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