

## **In The Mix With AOD**

### **DRAFT: In The Mix With AOD Episode Two- Alternatives to Drinking/Substance Use**

With the school year kicked into full swing and welcome week festivities calming down, the stress of school work is beginning to set in. Homework, quizzes, exams, study groups, on top of taking care of yourself physically and mentally AND having a social life?- it's exhausting. With our weekdays being filled with classes and homework, it's completely acceptable to take a much needed break from school on the weekends and go out with friends. It's necessary to have a balance between an academic and social schedule because burnout can sneak up on all of us without warning. However, students may experience thoughts that the only social gatherings they can find include alcohol or drug consumption. But I am here to tell you that this is far from the truth! Allendale may seem like a not so exciting place to hang out, but expand your horizons out twenty minutes and the options are endless in downtown Grand Rapids or out by the lakeshore in Holland. Even right here on Grand Valley's campus there are a variety of opportunities offered to get out and have fun with friends. College fun does not need to be defined by consuming alcohol or other substances every weekend-there is so much more around us to take advantage of!

Hey, I'm Bethann Long and welcome back to episode two of "In the Mix" with AOD, a podcast provided through the Alcohol and Other Drugs Services here at Grand Valley. School is going at full speed for all of us now as we have officially finished the first month of classes, can you believe it? I hope you are all adjusting well to your class schedule and are discovering some balance between school work and giving yourself some time to have fun. This isn't an easy transition to get used to, even as a junior I myself still have a hard time adjusting back to a weekly class schedule while also spending time with friends or even just giving myself a second to breathe. But we all got this! In this episode we are going to go through the activities and events that are happening in the surrounding areas around Grand Valley's campuses that are great opportunities to explore the city and take a break from weekend parties. We will also go over the events and club opportunities that are offered right here at Grand Valley.

Let's first dive into the great city of Grand Rapids and what it has to offer for some weekend fun. You will always be able to find something fun to do around the city, especially now as fall is kicking into full gear. An amazing event to make time to go see this month is Grand Rapids ArtPrize. ArtPrize is the world's largest art competition, and it takes place right in downtown Grand Rapids! This is running from September 15 through October 2, 2022. Art is exhibited throughout the whole city in public parks and museums, storefronts, and even in bars and bridges. Their mission is to produce citywide contemporary art experiences that celebrate artists and transform urban space while promoting cultural understanding. This is a good time to get out of Allendale and explore the city of Grand Rapids with friends while looking at art that is displayed everywhere. This is a free event to everyone, and local restaurants set up outdoor eating areas and even some food trucks around the city. This gives you a chance to explore other food options around the city as well. The art exhibits will still be displayed throughout the city for a few days after the competition is over.

Following the same art theme we have going on, if you and your friends are looking for an interactive event to go and have a love for art, then the Van Gogh Immersive Experience in Grand Rapids is the place to be. In this space light and sound is used to exhibit Van Gogh's most compelling pieces of work and makes you feel as though you are a piece of his art. This is located on Center Dr. which is only

## **In The Mix With AOD**

about 15 minutes away from Grand Valley's Allendale campus, and has a Rapid bus stop not too far from this location. This exhibit is expected to take about 60-75 minutes to go through and you can attend with a group of up to twelve people. With a valid ID, students can buy discounted tickets for \$20.

Now, this city has plenty of art to offer that will catch your eye, but you can find so much more! The Grand Rapids Public Museum also has some truly interesting exhibits currently and is right next to the Pew Campus. The museum is open until 5pm Monday through Sunday. Students have access to enter the museum at a discounted price of \$5 if they come with their student ID. A few of the current exhibits at the museum include- Streets of Old Grand Rapids, Fashion + Nature, A Celebration of Souls: Day of the Dead in Southern Mexico, Egypt: Be Curious. The Grand Rapids Public Museum is also the home of Roger B. Chaffee Planetarium. Some shows that are offered here to watch include- Dark Side: The Light Show (light show to the album Dark Side of the Moon by Pink Floyd), Under Starlit Skies, From Earth to the Universe (theories about the world's existence of this universe), and Incoming (explores asteroids, comets, and meteors). Admission into the planetarium is an extra \$4 on top of the general admission price, but is just \$4 if you only want to attend one of those shows. The Grand Rapids Public Museum is just a few minutes walk away from the Pew Campus and has a Laker Line stop right down the road from the entrance.

If you want to spice up dinner plans with your friends, smash rooms, also called Rage Rooms, are becoming a growing trend lately and there happens to be one located around Grand Rapids. These rooms are designed to let you destroy as much property as you can in the given time that you pay for. This is geared towards letting you release any frustration or stress out, which might come in handy around exam period. Break Room is a Grand Rapids location that is close to the Byron Center area. Packages range from \$30-\$50, and can be booked either for an individual or group. You can be breaking bottles, different types of glass, electronics, or even have the chance to bring your own items to break.

Escape Rooms are also a fun activity to do with a group of friends that puts your puzzle and problem solving skills to the test. There are a few different escape rooms that can be found all around Grand Rapids. The Great Escape Room is located on Fulton in downtown Grand Rapids. The escape rooms they offer include:

- Infirmary: Surgical Crisis
- Poker Night at The President's Bunker
- Escape Artist: The Final Seance
- Mountain Top Murders

They also offer two scavenger hunt rooms that focus on following clues in the given time. When you present a student ID, it will only be \$31 per person in your group. These types of activities would be so much fun to add on to a night out with friends whether it's getting dinner or exploring the city for a bit.

Despite how much Grand Rapids has to offer, sometimes the city isn't where you are looking to spend your night. If you are looking for a night out but want to get away from the big city, downtown Holland is also only a twenty five minute drive from the Allendale campus. Holland's downtown district is filled with a variety of shops and restaurants to explore and the lakeshore of Lake Michigan is only another ten minutes down the road!

## **In The Mix With AOD**

All of these are amazing opportunities to get out of Allendale for a fun weekend with friends that are alternatives to consuming alcohol, but Grand Valley's campus also offers so many opportunities to get out and become involved with the community. With over 400 student organizations offered through the Office of Student Life, there are groups for everyone that range from sports, to interfaith, to fraternity and sorority life, to social cause groups, and organizations focused on a variety of hobbies. On the Grand Valley Student Life website under Student Organizations, you can find a link to the LakerLink which is students' way to connect to organizations, reach out to members, and explore more of what campus has to offer.

Also on GVSU's Office of Student Life website the Events/Student Life Events calendar can be found where all events that are occurring on campus for the month will be posted. This provides students with a wide variety of pop up events happening throughout campus, when sport teams are playing, guest speakers that are coming, etc.. There is an endless amount of opportunities on campus every single day of the week, it is just knowing where to find the information!

The beginning of a new semester can be a hard time to get readjusted to, and it may seem like there isn't much to do outside of partying; however so many memorable nights can occur from the choices there are around Grand Valley's campus! I hope some of the events we discussed in this episode helped spark some ideas for you to do this weekend with your friends. This has been the second episode of "In the Mix" with AOD and I can't wait to be back soon with the next episode!