SUMMARY
This proposal entails a planned collaboration to develop the Interdisciplinary Autism Initiative, a cross-college and cross-departmental effort to unite autism research, services, educational training, and community outreach across campus and the community, via faculty, staff, student, and community agency involvement.

ABOUT OUR TEAM
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Educational Policy & Leadership, Marquette University
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Emily Levine, Community Partner
Executive Director, Autism Society of Southeastern Wisconsin
Fr. John Schwantes, SJ, IAI Chaplain

Our team, comprised of community partners and MU faculty and students from 5 colleges, has come together to improve the lives of individuals with ASD. This project synthesizes prior cooperative work done by team members over the past 5 years.

DESCRIPTION
To meet the needs of people with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) and their families, and to build momentum in establishing Marquette as a leader in ASD, we propose developing an Interdisciplinary Autism Initiative (IAI) that has four primary objectives: 1) interdisciplinary ASD Research, 2) interdisciplinary Services, 3) inter-professional ASD Education for undergraduate and graduate students, and 4) ASD Outreach to connect with stakeholders and support the MU and Milwaukee community.

MILESTONES
07/18-10/18
1) Convene Deans of associated colleges; 2) Develop space needs request; 3) Develop a website
10/18-12/18
1) Create mission statement; 2) Create goal plans for each division; 3) Develop business plan
1/19-3/19
1) Develop research IRB proposals with community partners; 2) Furnish space; 3) Create Research Registry
3/19-6/19
1) Develop undergrad internship; 2) Plan summer/fall ASD Programs; 3) Transition to revenue generation

BEYOND BOUNDARIES
(1) Pursuit of Academic Excellence: Inter-professional training opportunities in ASD will increase; (2) Culture of Inclusion: Empathy for people on the spectrum, who struggle with an “invisible” difference, will be targeted via educational campaigns; (3) Research in Action: Research collaborations will grow, via a joint Research Registry, joint grants, and conferences; (4) Social Responsibility through Community Engagement: IAI will engage with community stakeholders and create a community advisory board. Further, it is expected that over 150 families will participate in programs, over 600 toddlers will be screened, and over 30 school professionals will be trained, each year, all while providing training opportunities for students.

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