Art Therapy & Visual Education Newsletter
Wayne State University

INSIDE

Warrior Community Quilt Squares of Strength (p.g. 3)

American Art Therapy Association’s 52nd Annual “All Virtual” Conference (p.g. 3)

They Didn’t Know We Were Seeds: Detroit Tales of Resilience Photo Exhibition (p.g. 4-6)
This is the first newsletter published since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic. Because of this, we want to have an open conversation with WSU students regarding the changes in our lives within the last two years. Earlier in the semester, an email was sent to current students asking: How has the pandemic affected you? What have you been doing/not doing to cope? Would you like to return to campus life pre COVID? Why or why not? A current student responds:

“It’s been difficult to prioritize my own art and meditation routine during the pandemic so by running the weekly 15-minute mindfulness practice for Wayne State students and faculty on Wednesday mornings, I’ve been able to stay connected with this much needed practice. Just as a pianist must care for their hands, I feel that I must care for my own nervous system in order to best serve others as a future therapist. I appreciate that I don’t have to do this self-care alone, and that I have such supportive peers and faculty to practice with me.”

Anyone who would like to share an experience or provide input regarding this newsletter is encouraged to email arted_arttherapy@wayne.edu

In regards to the future, winter 2022 semester classes will be online, and perhaps transition to in person (if health conditions improve.) The Art Therapy department takes your thoughts and concerns into consideration to then make decisions about in-person vs. online instruction for future semesters. Decisions about class schedule are based on classroom polls from students, the TED and TBF Divisions in the College of Education, and campus health recommendations. Please visit https://wayne.edu/coronavirus/messages for more information. If you would like to receive the zoom links for Wednesday meditation, please email vantsevi@umich.edu
Warrior Community Quilt-Squares of Strength

The “Warrior Community Quilt” is a piece created by Jessica Smigels and Wayne State University Community Members. It represents the strength displayed during the COVID-19 pandemic when participants were asked, “How did you stay strong?” and to provide their answers by decorating a canvas square. This community quilt was adapted from another community project originally intended for Jessica’s art therapy master’s project, which was modified following the Covid-19 pandemic. Despite having to adapt her planned masters’ project, the Warrior Community quilt was a successful alternative. Jessica inspired others to remember the mantra of this campus- “Inside every Wayne State Warrior is a strength that pushes us past obstacles and towards success.” To view this beautiful project, please visit the second floor of the Undergraduate Library near the presidential portraits. (WSU Community Members: Faten Alhalabi, Catherine Bernas, Cynthia Bourgeois-Kherkher, Mary Clark, Julia Davis, Solange Deneau, Anna Devlin, Amanda Duvall, Holly Feen-Calligan, Christina France, Morgan Glover, Lana Grasser, Stephanie Hawkes, Christine Huang, Christine Jackson, KaRie Jorah, Janis Kaufman, Angel Kelly, Lisa Kyle, Warren Laws, Faith Lyons, Ida Martinez, Natalie McCabe, Janet Mick, Julie Osburn, Madeline Osburn, Shelia Primas, Akelah Reese, Celine Shamoun, Sue Sillory, Royanne Smith, Sylvia Stancil, Farhin Sultana, Shanmin Sultana, American Art Therapy Association’s 52nd Annual “All Virtual” Conference

The 2021 American Art Therapy Association’s 52nd Annual “All Virtual” Conference was hosted October 23rd and 24th and continues December 18th and 19th. Due to COVID-19, the conference is online (live, and via-on demand through December 31st, 2022). With this year’s theme, Reconnecting and Visualizing Future Pathways for Art Therapy in a Diverse Society, the full, 4-day 2021 conference covers subject tracks such as clinical approaches and contemporary issues/current trends. David Sniderman, MA, and Sara Nasser (graduating December 2021) from the Art Therapy program), Lana Ruvolo Grasser, (Ph.D. candidate in Translational Neuroscience), and Dr. Holly Feen-Calligan (Ph.D, ATR-BC, ATCS) had the honor of presenting Refugee and Immigrant
They Didn’t Know We Were Seeds: Detroit Tales of Resilience Photo Exhibition

Wayne State University’s College of Education hosted “They Didn’t Know We Were Seeds: Detroit Tales of Resilience,” an exhibition about individual and community strength in Detroit. The exhibition is in the David Adamany Undergraduate Library, located at 5155 Gullen Mall, on Wayne State’s main campus.

Tracy Boyce writes (in previous College of Education newsletter), “Created and curated by young changemakers in Detroit who overcame hardship and carved out opportunities in community development projects amidst the backdrop of the COVID-19 pandemic, this project seeks to inspire leadership and resilience, educate others about responsible citizenship, and uncover various pathways for social advancement and economic mobility. Using videos and photographs as platforms for storytelling, participants – all between the ages of 18 and 24 – share largely untold narratives of Detroit by documenting the experiences and perspectives of various individuals, families, and groups, highlighting the city’s vitality, ingenuity, and resourcefulness. The exhibit includes stories about urban farming and food security, immigrant entrepreneurs, trauma and resilience, feelings of pride and shame, navigating the city as insiders and outsiders, and the intersections of race, class, gender and sexuality.”

Roland Sintos Coloma, teacher education professor and project director stated the following in an interview with Boyce: “Our young storytellers highlight ordinary people doing extraordinary things in Detroit. Their stories reveal there’s more to this city than meets the eye. They disrupt stereotypes of urban areas by showcasing individuals and communities that make it vibrant and thrive. They inspire us to see Detroit differently and to see the people in Detroit differently.”

For more information, visit https://education.wayne.edu/shifting-urban-narratives

Experience: Eight Young Women Share Their Stories Through Photovoice on October 23rd. The presentation described a university-museum photovoice collaboration that transitioned from a focus on resettlement challenges and triumphs to an online format reflecting on lived experience during COVID-19. In the art therapy and photovoice program, participating teens demonstrated an increase in expressive skills and new perspectives, suggesting the potential of photovoice to aid the transition of other immigrant and refugees. Those interested in registering for the December sessions should visit www.arttherapy.org/annual-conferences/ Registration closes at 11:59 p.m. ET two days prior to each event day. For cancellation and refund policies, please refer to the website.
Bridge Drawing Study

Researchers are seeking participants 18+ to complete a health survey as well as a bridge drawing as part of an art therapy assessment study. Participation is anonymous. For more information or questions/concerns, please contact

Visual Thinking Strategies Study

Wayne State University School of Medicine and the Art Therapy Program worked on a cross-disciplinary study with students from the School of Medicine and Art Administration programs. In using the university's collection of art along with Visual Thinking Strategies (VTS), students learned how to practice visual literacy to create an environment for patients to be understood as they share an important perspective in relation to their health. The study enhanced the student clinicians’ ability for translation and interpretation of images. Medical
students mastered the skills required to review ultrasound images: This a challenge in the field to translate two-dimensional images into three-dimensional anatomical structures and is an unmet need in the curriculum. Concurrently, art therapy students also gained interpretation and assessment skills.

All students gained awareness of biases as they interacted with their peers in answering the VTS questions: What do you think is going on in this picture? What do you see that makes you say that? What more can we find? This collaborative effort fostered new, professional partnerships and various points of view for review and analysis between students. The pilot study involved up to 30 medical students, 30 art therapy students, and 10 art administration students. Data were collected from pre and post VTS participation questionnaires and a survey assessing implicit bias. Data collection continued via the final focus group meeting on November 29th.

Alumni Updates

Emily Lindenbaum, MEd, 2021) exhibited at ArtPrize 2021 in Grand Rapids! She is also in the process of applying for art therapy positions. To view her submission, please visit https://www.emilye.art/art/recent-artwork Congratulations Emily! We cannot wait to continue supporting you in your future endeavors.

Kelly Darke and Shannon Scott-Miller published Art Therapy with Transgender and Gender Expansive Children and Teenagers. The book explores the personal ideas and biases art therapists may have about gender and how to provide gender affirming therapy. This is a great read for all audiences in learning how to be more supportive of transgender and gender expansive youth. Both authors were students in WSU’s MEd Art Therapy program, and Kelly is now an adjunct faculty member. To purchase, please refer to the Amazon link: https://www.amazon.com/Therapy-Transgender-Gender-Expansive-Children-Teenagers/dp/1785928082

Parina Davis-Usher, MA alumnus, is an art therapist, former teacher, mother of three and now an author! I Thought I

Interview with Deb Duranczyk, Saturday Art Therapy Instructor

Tell us about the art therapy program on Saturdays.

The Saturday Art Therapy Workshop, started in 1992, was designed to provide graduate level Art Therapy students an opportunity to practice current art therapy theories and techniques in a Practicum experience on campus, supervised by registered Art Therapists.

The Saturday Workshop is open to the community, offering group and
Heard an Angry Bear explores a little boy’s imagination versus reality when hears rumbling and growling. This book is wonderfully illustrated by Lizette Duvenage. To purchase, please contact OneAngryBear1@gmail.com or via Facebook page @OneAngryBear. We hope you enjoy this read as much as we did!

A Welcome to Farah

This newsletter was provided by the Art Therapy Program and graduate research assistant, Farah Qureshi. Farah graduated from the University of Michigan-Flint in 2020 with a bachelor's degree in Applied Psychology. She is currently in the Counseling Psychology master’s program at Wayne State University. Farah hopes to work with the child and adolescent population upon graduation and shares an interest in art therapy. “My professor at Flint, Autumn Heddy-Reed, graduated from Wayne State. She is the reason I know so much about the field. I’m new to campus, and I love both my program and this incredible faculty.” Stop by the office to say hello!

The goal of Art Therapy is to help people express their thoughts and feelings through the creative process leading to personal insight, improved coping skills, and a sense of well-being. It is a distinct therapeutic discipline that requires Masters level training and we are proud that the Wayne State University Art Therapy program is the only accredited program in Michigan that offers a degree in Art Therapy either as an M.A. or M.Ed.

What are some of the challenges faced due to COVID-19?

The challenges we faced this year were different from last year because we did not know until right up to the start date whether we were going to be in-person. We followed university and state health and safety guidelines in making our decision to offer both in-person and remote options, depending on various factors such as scheduling and health concerns.

For in-person meetings, many protocols were put
into place such as Daily Screeners for both staff and participants, vaccine mandates, cleaning workspaces before and after sessions, social distancing, individual art kits to reduce sharing materials and supplies, and making PPE available such as hand sanitizer, wipes, and gloves.

For remote sessions, challenges included technology issues, limited media choices, privacy, and adjusting to making and sharing artwork on camera. However, our Student Art Therapists rose to the occasion by offering flexible, dynamic, and personalized experiences.

*What are some things we can look forward to in the next semester?*

One of the positive outcomes of working through a pandemic, was that while the hybrid model was a challenge, it was also an opportunity. By offering both in-person and remote sessions, we found that we could be more flexible in accommodating schedules and health concerns. Continuing to offer this model will be a future consideration.

For more information about the WSU art Therapy
Fall 2021 Graduating Students

Congratulations to following the Fall 2021 Graduating students:

Lauren Alfonsi (MA)
Angela Farah (MA)
Marte Marini (MA)
Natalie McCabe (MEd)
Sara Nasser (MA)
Kalle Pasch (MA)
Madeleine Pazzi (MA)
Calli Perry (MA)

Congratulations to Angela Farrah (MA, December, 2021) for her employment at Blossom Behavioral Center! Angela was previously working as an intern and was then offered a position at their facility!

Angela updated us with the following:
“My internship site is Blossom Children’s Center, which offers early interventions for children with autism spectrum disorder (ASD) including ABA, counseling and art therapy, speech therapy, and occupational therapy. Several factors have influenced my career choice. A major influence has been my brother who has autism spectrum disorder; he has inspired me to be an advocate for the ASD population. I have always believed that people have the right to a safe space where they can be free to express themselves without judgement; this pushed me into the direction of becoming a clinical mental health therapist. I’ve always loved the process of creating art, and learning how expressive this process can be without the pressure of verbal communication influenced me to pursue art therapy. A challenge I have experienced while working with children is that each child has a different level of energy and learning style. Learning to expect the unexpected while embracing the child exactly as they are is incredibly important. Adapting to situations as they unfold and being constantly creative with therapeutic approaches and art therapy experientials help ensure a strong therapeutic rapport. A rewarding aspect of this job is being able to watch children gain the ability to identify and regulate their emotions over time. Also, being able to see clients use the coping skills they have learned to regulate themselves is incredible.”

Congratulations to the following students on their employment offers! We are proud of you and wish you the best! ☺

Lauren Alfonsi, (MA), hired at Karmanos Cancer Institute Weisberg Center
Sara Nasser, (MA), hired at Common Ground
Kalle Pasch, (MA), hired at WillowsEdge
Calli Perry, (MA), hired at Aloe Integrative Psychology Group
Madeleine Pazzi, (MA), hired by Samaritan Counseling Center

Best wishes to all for a safe and healthy holiday break! ☺