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AATA NEWS AND EVENTS

Autism Awareness and Acceptance Month at Make Studio



Jill E. Scheibler, PhD, ATR-BC, LCPAT



Since the early 1970s, April has been recognized as Autism Awareness Month and, more recently, it has been additionally or alternatively celebrated as Autism Acceptance Month. In his official proclamation for this year's World Autism Awareness Day on April 2nd, President Obama observed: "From home to school and in businesses and communities around the world, people living with autism spectrum disorder contribute in immeasurable ways to our society. They remind us each day that every person is born with unique talents and should be treated

with respect, play an active role in planning for their futures, and feel empowered to fully participate in and contribute to their communities. When those with autism have access to equal opportunities, we all do better, and that begins with making sure our country lives up to its commitment to ensure all things are possible for all people." All of us at Make Studio could not agree more with those sentiments.

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AATA Represented at the American Counseling Association Conference in Montréal, Québec



Donna Betts, PhD, ATR-BC, AATA President

The American Counseling Association (ACA) and the Canadian Counselling and Psychotherapy Association (CCPA) joint conference took place last week at the Convention Center in Montréal, Canada. From Thursday, March 31, through Sunday, April 3, I had the honor of representing the AATA, at the invitation of the ACA. Along

with 3,500 attendees, I enjoyed the diverse array of conference offerings. I was the ACA's guest at Division and Leadership receptions, which enabled me to network with key representatives of the counseling profession. **READ MORE**



Reminder — Voting for Annual Election Now Open

AATA

Voting for this year's annual election has now begun. The complete 2016 Election Slate is available on the [Members-Only website](#) and includes candidate bios, photographs, and answers to a set of proposed questions. A candidate for Honorary Life Member is also being presented by the Honors Committee, as well as proposed bylaws changes that require your vote (please refer to "Proposed Bylaws Updates" document, Version 29 March, 2016) **The link to the election, along with login credentials, has been emailed to all voting member of The American Art Therapy Association through our on-line voting system, Association Voting.** Voting is a privilege of membership so please take the time to make your voice heard and vote!

Arts Advocacy Day: Highlights from Americans for the Arts



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Americans for the Arts recently released a follow-up [report](#) that outlines the impact of [Arts Advocacy Day: The National Arts Action Summit](#) on public policy and funding for the arts. More than 500 grassroots advocates from across the country gathered in Washington, DC, on March 7-8, 2016, representing a broad cross-section of America's cultural and civic organizations. Together, these arts advocates met with members of Congress to generate support for arts education policy, funding for the National Endowment for the Arts, and expansion of opportunities for creative arts therapies and artist-directed programs. In a previous report, [National Recognition for Art Therapy through AATA's Partnership with Americans for the Arts](#), Dr. Donna Betts, AATA President, discussed the Association's role in supporting the profession of art therapy through this national platform. The AATA is proud to have a continued voice and presence in the movement to raise awareness for the arts in the United States.

AATA Featured Member



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When Jennifer "Jen" Baldwin, ATR-BC, began to see art therapy services being dropped from students' Individualized Education Plans (IEP), her initial frustrations helped her commit to making a change in the way that art therapy was recognized and valued. As a former volunteer for the AATA Governmental Affairs committee herself, she gained firsthand appreciation for the continuous work provided by other volunteers in the way of advocacy through outreach and research. Jen's understanding of the role of art in supporting youth of all ages stems from experience, and she currently provides individual art therapy at a day school for children and adolescents with severe learning and emotional disabilities. "Many of these students are not only dealing with learning and emotional challenges," she explains, "but are also faced with poverty, are in the foster system, or come from dysfunctional homes." **READ MORE**

In last week's issue of *Art Therapy Today*, Dr. Shaun McNiff's surname was misspelled in an announcement about his role as a keynote speaker for the Art as Research Conference 2016 in Shropshire, England. The AATA would like to apologize to Dr. McNiff for the error, which has been corrected in the archived publication.

ART THERAPY IN THE NEWS

Creating wellness: The power of art



My Prime Time News

"Wow! I didn't know I could do this!" Charlotte proudly held up the soft pink blanket she created with the other members of an expressive arts group at an assisted living community. As they touched the pieces of fabric, the group members talked about the blankets they had as children, the quilts their grandmothers made, and the clothes they sewed for their own families. Like the varied colors and patterns of a well-loved blanket, older adults

have many rich and dynamic textures in their lives. Sometimes though, it can be a challenge for care providers to find meaningful activities that promote self-expression and freedom of choice. As an art therapist, Amy Jones helps facilitate the creative process while emphasizing capabilities, providing community connections, and fostering self-awareness. **READ MORE**

The AATA's Art Therapy Today includes a digest of the most important news selected for the AATA from thousands of sources. Guest articles may be submitted to Kat Michel at kmichel@arttherapy.org. Publication of any guest article is at the sole discretion of the American Art Therapy Association.

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Art Therapy Today

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