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## AATA NEWS

### Puerto Rico and Florida AATA Chapters offer Group Art Therapy in the Wake of Maria



Anais Lugo-Axtmann, MA, LGPC, ATR

Experiencing hurricanes Irma and Maria was traumatic for most people living on the island of Puerto Rico. Seven months after Maria, Puerto Rico continues to experience prolonged losses of electricity, water, communications and infrastructure, limiting individuals' ability to recover, keep their jobs and return to their routine (which is so vital for recovery). Many Puerto Ricans are reporting intense feelings of anxiety and depression, which have been linked to the onset of mental health crises. [READ MORE](#)



### Call for Nominations and Applications



AATA National Office

The American Art Therapy Association (AATA) is now accepting nominations for annual Honors Awards as well as Volunteer Officers and Directors of the Board. Applications are also open for annual scholarships, the new Research Seed Grants, and a new Governmental Affairs Award. Read below for details and deadlines for each opportunity. [READ MORE](#)

**EARLY BIRD REGISTRATION IS NOW OPEN**



AMERICAN ART THERAPY ASSOCIATION      49TH ANNUAL CONFERENCE

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OCTOBER 31 – NOVEMBER 4, 2018 | MIAMI, FL

Visit: [www.arttherapyconference.com](http://www.arttherapyconference.com)

## Featured Member



AATA National Office



Rick Conway is an art therapy student at The George Washington University and plans to graduate in August 2018. He currently interns in the oncology/hematology unit at Children's National Medical Center with Tracy's Kids and previously interned with adolescents and adults at Whitman Walker Health. His future goals include improving accessibility to art therapy for adolescents struggling with their identity formation as members of the LGBTQIA community. Conway followed a path of various creative professions that led him to art therapy. After earning his MFA in scenic and costume design in 1990, his journey through the world of theater, opera, and dance took him around the country and finally to New York City and the Broadway theater community.

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## ART THERAPY IN THE NEWS

### How Art Therapy is Helping Children with Autism Express Themselves



Artsy  
For individuals with autism spectrum disorder, art can be an ideal means of expression. Researchers and leaders in the field of autism education, have done well to explain that individuals with ASD tend to think visually. "I have noticed that children with autism think in pictures," art therapist Theresa Van Lith told Artsy. "So it's a natural progression, then, to use the visual arts to communicate what's going on in their world." **READ MORE**


### Expressions of Recovery Showcases Artwork of Residents with Health Issues




The News-Herald  
It's like a big filing cabinet filled with drawers that all of a sudden open up and send papers everywhere. That is how Barbara Rekus describes the thoughts in her head. Rekus suffers with a mental disability. She is bipolar with deficit hyperactive disorder and sees her thoughts as sheets of paper that she tries to file but can't do it fast enough. She says painting is her way of trying to cope when she gets overwhelmed and her metaphoric filing cabinet spills papers everywhere. **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 Clara Keane at [ckeane@arttherapy.org](mailto:ckeane@arttherapy.org). Publication of any guest article is at the sole discretion of the AATA. The opinions expressed and/or contents of guest articles, advertisements, and external links included in any AATA publication do not represent the positions or policies of the AATA. The AATA makes no warranty or representation concerning the accuracy of such content.


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### **American Art Therapy Association**

4875 Eisenhower Avenue, Suite 240 | Alexandria, VA 22304 | 888-290-0878 | [Contact Us](#)

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