



2012 ANNUAL REPORT

MISSION

The Art Therapy Outreach Center (ATOC) is a nonprofit organization dedicated to providing free art therapy services to underserved populations in the New York City area who have experienced some form of trauma, including war veterans, at-risk youth, and victims of domestic violence or sexual abuse. Our mission is to utilize the visual arts to provide a therapeutic experience for participants that will enhance their physical, mental and emotional well-being.

Ultimately, ATOC's aim is to help our clients see themselves as survivors of trauma rather than victims, and build the confidence necessary to re-engage in their communities and move on with their lives.



March 2013

Dear Friends:

2012 was a year of firsts for the Art Therapy Outreach Center and I am proud of what our volunteers, donors and staff accomplished:

- ATOC's art therapists made over 2,200 client contacts and delivered more than 3,300 client hours of free art therapy
- The number of groups receiving our art therapy services doubled to fourteen
- New Program Partners include Graham Windham; Grand St. Settlement; Good Shepherd Services; Mount Sinai Adolescent Health Center; Mt Pleasant Blythedale School; NYU/Bellevue Program for Survivors of Torture; and Volunteers of America
- Our first fundraising event, An Autumn Affair, was a fun, successful evening featuring an exhibit of client artwork and performances by the USO Liberty Bells
- We hired our first paid Clinical Director to supervise the program and guide us through our expansion

One of our goals for the year was to increase the public's awareness about ATOC and the services we provide at no cost to underserved populations. Our updated website and social media campaign were launched in hopes of reaching more potential program partners, clients, friends and donors. Many of our new collaborations resulted from these outreach efforts and having the trust of some of the City's most established and esteemed non-profits is most gratifying.

The dramatic growth of programs led to ATOC hiring our first paid Clinical Director. I want to recognize and thank our Board Member Deborah Farber who initially supervised the rollout of ATOC's program and provided the necessary clinical oversight until ATOC had the funding to hire a Clinical Director. Thanks, also, to our Board Member David Rhodes, President of the School of Visual Arts, whose ongoing support has been vital to the Art Therapy Outreach Center. I am also appreciative of the other Board Members, as well as the Advisory Council, each of whom contributed valuable advice and guidance throughout the year.

On behalf of the Board of Directors, staff and clients, I would like to thank each of you for contributing to our past year's success. As a young nonprofit organization, ATOC relies on you to help spread the word about our work with trauma survivors. We are grateful for every contribution you make, whether sharing or tweeting a post from our Facebook Page, recommending ATOC to a potential program partner, stuffing envelopes or attending our fundraising events.

There is much to be done in the coming year. The demand for our services continues to grow and the Art Therapy Outreach Center remains committed to doing what is necessary to being New York's go-to organization for free art therapy.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'D. Wasserman'.

David Wasserman
Chairman

Art Therapy Outreach Center

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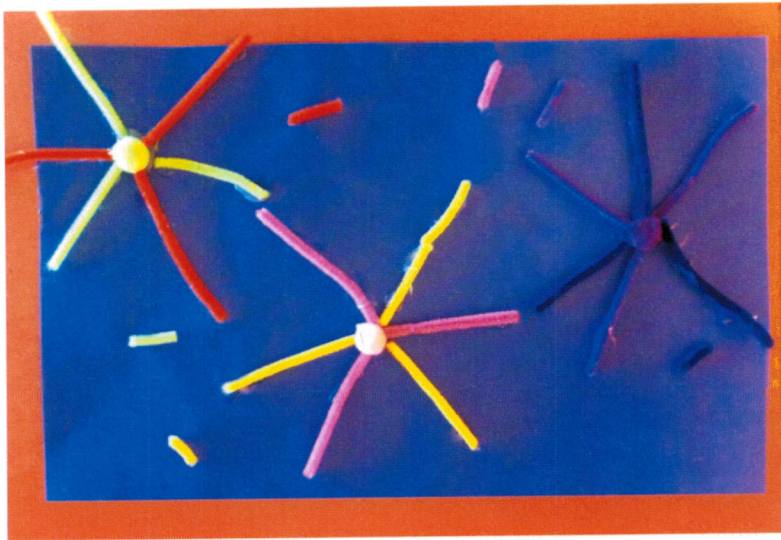
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2012 ATOC Program Partners

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Graham Windham
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World Trade Center Environmental Health Center
at Bellevue Hospital

In 2012 the Art Therapy Outreach Center provided art therapy services to clients that ranged from 8 to 60 years of age, the majority from low-income communities. Each client group, defined by shared experiences, worked together to develop safe relationships and engage in creative, healthy forms of expression, thereby processing traumatic experiences and developing more adaptive coping skills. ATOC recorded more than 2,200 client contacts and provided over 3,300 client hours of free art therapy during the year.



What is Art Therapy?

Art therapy is a treatment method that uniquely combines art and psychology to explore the problems and potentials of individuals. It is a specialized way of using the power of the creative process as a vehicle for healing, communication, self-expression and personal development. Art therapy focuses on the process of art-making itself, rather than the finished product, as a means of healing. An Art Therapist needs knowledge of the visual arts and the creative process, and understand human development as well as psychological and counseling theories and techniques.

ATOC Client Vignette

Shana (pseudonym) is a 19-year-old girl currently enrolled in a public high school program affiliated with a medical facility for children and adolescents with complex medical conditions. Because of Shana's illness, she has minimal expressive language and is temporarily wheelchair bound. She recently began rehabilitation to start walking again.

The ATOC art therapist began working with Shana in group sessions about 8 months ago. Intensive medical illness and long recuperations can affect an adolescent's ability to relate to others, so art therapy group goals have focused on increasing socialization skills as well as building self-esteem.

A few weeks ago, the art therapist presented Shana with the opportunity to create an art piece that might express her feelings about her participation in the ATOC art therapy groups. She eagerly agreed. When asked how it felt to participate in art therapy groups, Shana replied, "Exciting!" The art therapist then asked what the feeling of excitement might look like as a piece of art.

Shana responded by choosing an 11 x 14 inch piece of blue construction paper, various colored chenille pipe cleaners, pom-poms and a glue gun. She cut the pipe cleaners into smaller, equal pieces and connected them together in a star-like formation, gluing a colored pom-pom in the middle. She then placed the star-like constructions on the blue paper, creating what appeared to be a sky filled with exploding fireworks, and repeated, "Exciting!"

Shana's art piece seems to poignantly express her enthusiasm about her participation in art therapy. More importantly, for an adolescent with limited expressive language, the art process provides her with a means to express her feelings.

The Art Therapy Outreach Center is pleased to acknowledge and thank the many individuals, foundations and companies who generously supported our work in 2012:

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