

NEWS!

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ANNUAL ADAMHS-SPONSORED ART SHOW OFFERS UNIQUE INSIGHTS INTO BEHAVIORAL HEALTH DISORDERS

Painesville, OH – A serious mental illness or an addiction can have profound impacts on a person's life. When the creative process is used to help define, cope with, and recover from such disorders, the results can be visually arresting, as well as deeply insightful.

Expressions of Recovery, a showcase of work created by area artists who have a serious brain disorder -- schizophrenia, bipolar disorder or clinical depression for instance – or an addiction, will be on display throughout the month of May in the Dillard's South Concourse at the Great Lakes Mall in Mentor. 2012 marks the twenty-first anniversary year of the show, which is free and open to the public. *Expressions of Recovery* is sponsored by the Lake County Alcohol, Drug Addiction and Mental Health Services (ADAMHS) Board. Much of the work in the show was created in art therapy groups offered through local ADAMHS-supported agencies.

Heidi Sliter is an art therapist with Crossroads, an agency in the ADAMHS network that focuses on children, adolescents and families. She says the *Expressions of Recovery* show offers a unique perspective on the nature of brain disorders. "Art therapy can be an important part of someone's recovery on a number of different levels," she says. "Many use their art to express their feelings about their illness, or make their illness more tangible. For others, the creative process itself provides some very therapeutic relief from the symptoms of the illness. So some of the pieces in this exhibit are fun or silly, some are touching, some even a bit disquieting. But collectively, this is a body of work that will definitely open people's eyes."

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Lake County ADAMHS Executive Director Kim Fraser says she's proud of the twenty-one year history of the show. "This is an important event in our system, and the fact that it has now been around for more than two decades speaks to how successful it has become," she says. "We hold this show in May to coincide with Mental Health Month. It's an appropriate time to celebrate the benefits of art therapy, and to remind people of the important work that happens every day within our network of service providers."

Established by Ohio statute, the ADAMHS Board is responsible for planning, funding, and evaluating Lake County's mental health and recovery services. More information is available at www.HelpThatWorks.us.

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