

# Resident Art on Exhibit in Chicago

While walking past the CBRE/Neiman Marcus building in downtown Chicago, visitors can see a special message displayed on the large lobby window:



Participating in an exhibit of this magnitude in the Windy City is exciting for Marklund's residents, community clients and students. The opportunity arose as a collaboration between CBRE, Live Art International and Marklund. CBRE enjoys presenting artwork from charitable organizations in its well-visited lobby, and Live Art International had worked with Marklund in providing artists for fundraising events in the past. It recommended Marklund for this late-winter event.

"We heard about this exciting opportunity and checked with our Therapy team to see if they would be interested," said Heather Graves, Chief Development Officer. "With everyone on board, even with a short time frame, the pieces just fell into place."

CBRE commissioned the exhibit through the Marklund Development Team, also providing a generous stipend for supplies and framing. The Recreational Therapy staff then got the ball rolling with selecting artists among the Marklund residents, community clients and students. Ideas were formed, colors chosen, and then the unique process of Marklund-style creativity and execution began.

Choosing the theme "Awaiting Spring," the Rec Therapists each had a vision for their projects, but as what often happens with art, the plans changed as the process took over. Spending nearly 50 hours over four weeks, the teams used various techniques that included brush painting with brushes of all widths, sponge painting, scrape art, drip painting, squeegee art, block painting with taped-off sections, and even rolling objects through paint that was plopped on the canvas.

The result is 13 beautiful, large paintings, ranging in style from Impressionist to Abstract, to mimicking the recognizable styles of Monet, Picasso and Jackson Pollack.



*"I had the idea of doing abstract art, so it was easier for the residents to paint and participate in. If things didn't go as planned, it would still be abstract. Two-thirds of the paintings turned out as I anticipated, but the Stay in Your Lane turned out different. I had one idea for the background, and as we started, the designs we made with the scraper turned out differently and we just went with it—next thing you know, it turned into our own art piece. For us it was more than painting, we worked with the residents and students on reaching, tolerating hand-over-hand guidance, attending, visually tracking items, focusing on items (canvas), range of motion, etc."*

– Brittany Maertzig, Marklund Wasmond Center



*"I was expecting to achieve the spring-themed paintings with adapted equipment as well as the help from my fellow therapy team members. The paintings turned out different than my original vision, but better than I could have imagined or hoped for – the students made it their own! They worked on the painting during recreation therapy sessions throughout the school day. To assist them, we used hand-over-hand assist, large and wide paint brushes, a handheld shower squeegee, sponges, and later we connected the shower squeegee to a "goose neck," which is a long bendable mount, with duct tape so that students in wheelchairs could reach all the way across the canvas while painting."*

– Mara Dunn, Foglia Education Center at Marklund Day School-Geneva



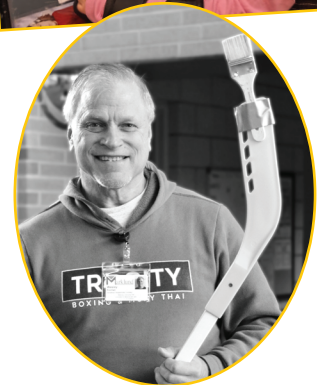
*"Our expectations were to work with residents/clients and come up with wonderful artwork that can be creatively done using their motor patterns combined with adaptive techniques and equipment. We met the objective. To assist the residents, modifications were made to traditional art techniques. Being able to help them reach the canvases with the brush was done with a combination of attachments, like securing a brush to a lightweight hockey stick. And we worked on doing brush stroke patterns that fit their motor patterns such as laterally, side to side. Also, areas were sometimes taped-off so after painting and removing the tape, nice symmetrical shapes and lines were achieved."*

– Wesley Kochan, Marklund Hyde Center



*"To assist the residents and students, I attached brushes to rulers or to water squirters since many can't fully extend their arms. With those modifications, we then helped them paint with hand-over-hand assist from teachers, aides and therapists. Matt, the Occupational Therapist, built this spinning buckets contraption for one of the paintings to create splatter art. The students helped pour paint into a bucket and then we would spin the bucket to create the splattered effect. For another piece, I used real leaves in order to create stamps to press on the canvas. In the end, they all turned out very different than what I had originally intended. That was part of the fun though!"*

– Celia Padilla, Marklund Philip Center



The Therapy team hand-selected several residents, community clients and students from each Marklund location to help with this project. Criteria included those that enjoy art and had some upper extremity movement, some who could make choices in choosing which color they wanted and which size paint brush, and those that were visually attentive to the canvas, having the ability to remain calmly focused or at least relaxed. "If I could have, I would've had everyone participate!" shared Celia.

## Therapy Team Artists:

Wesley Kochan	Susie Reardon	Jennifer Riley
Mara Dunn	Amrita Singh	Norma Pepsnik
Celia Padilla	Gunjan Patel	Jill Bradley
Brittany Maertzig	Jenny Banuelos	April Smith
Matthew Medick	Sandi Adamowicz	Michelle Sosa

## Resident, Student, Client Artists:

Mohammad Y	Langley F	Connor P	Michele H	Claire D	Rosemarie K	Rosie W	Dylin B
Maggie D	Tiernan M	Andrew B	Travis H	George F	Mary C	Jenna V	Brian R
Lily M	Lillian G	Cassidy K	Kirsten B	Nick C	Sam T	Mac S	Dina Z
Makaila D	Sarah B	Matthew P	Ryan F	Darren W	Niko P	Octavia T	
Kyle H	Jason B	Samantha S	Jacob H	Kandace B	Kirsten J	Ashley H	
Nicky D	Reanna M	Riannah F	Joy P	Dawn M	Tish S	Akira W	
Kahlen S	Makiah H	Lauren I	Megan K	Mirella G	Mike B	Symone U	
Charity P	Amyia J	Joseph C	Kitt Z	Anna H	Rosie B	Asia W	

