



Self portrait by Dr. Bruce Moon, Ph.D., ATR-BC, director of Mount Mary's graduate art therapy program

Picture this: An adolescent is recovering from a broken leg. To help him pass the time, a friend offers to teach the boy to draw in exchange for guitar lessons.

Fast forward several decades and picture the now-grown boy as director of Wisconsin's only graduate art therapy program approved by the American Art Therapy Association. Clearly the bartered lessons were a blessing for both the young man and the people whose lives he since has touched through art.

Dr. Bruce Moon, Ph.D., ATR-BC, director of Mount Mary's graduate art therapy program, recalls that time long ago as his initial introduction to the power of art as therapy. He further credits a high school art teacher for redirecting his interests from athletics to art, which, he said, "captured my attention and imagination."

Moon went on to pursue a degree in art education, and later two master's degrees from a Methodist seminary. But in the course of his studies he had occasion to meet Don Jones, considered by many to be "the father of the American art therapy movement." Jones introduced Moon to art therapy and Moon has been introducing it to others ever since.

For the past seven years, Moon has been at the helm of Mount Mary's graduate art therapy program, the third graduate art therapy program he has directed and one of only 28 such programs in the nation. Mount Mary's program traces its roots to the Art Therapy Institute originally offered by the College as an adjunct to its undergraduate art therapy program. When the master's degree became a requirement for art therapy certification, the Institute evolved to become the College's graduate art therapy program, launched in summer 1990.

Under Moon's guidance — and that of his predecessors and current faculty colleagues, Moon is quick to add — the program has flourished. Today the program has grown from four new students in Moon's first year to more than 40 current enrollees, one of the largest graduate art therapy pro-

Art Therapy: Compassion in Action

grams in the country. Mount Mary fills its entering class from among many competitive applicants; 50% hail from outside Wisconsin and Illinois. They are drawn, said Moon, "by the excellent reputation of the program, the nationally recognized faculty, and the features that make the program distinct from others."

"An art-based, experiential orientation is a hallmark of Mount Mary's program," said Moon, "We are one of the strongest programs in the U.S. for this. We provide a creative integration of artistic, academic and clinical education."

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"Art therapy is a combination of art and psychology and is seen by some as a tool to get people to talk. But we see the art itself as therapy," continued Moon. "It can be useful for those people who have a desperate need to express themselves, but can't or won't talk, such as child abuse victims or other traumatized persons." That is important, said Moon, "because in most treatment settings there are a host of people whose job it is to talk to clients. Our special gift as artists/therapists is that we don't have to talk. Our thing is doing." There are only two or three other programs in the country that emphasize this approach, Moon added.

An outstanding faculty shares the program philosophy inside and outside the classroom. Dr. Lynn Kapitan, professor and chair of the College's Art and Design Division, is currently editor-in-chief of the *Journal of the American Art Therapy*



Dr. Lynn Kapitan is a professor and chair of the College's Art and Design Division and recently led a study abroad trip to Nicaragua with art therapy students.

Association and a past president of the organization. In November 2007, Moon received the AATA's Lifetime Achievement Award, their most prestigious honor, in recognition of his major contributions to the profession. Faculty members routinely write articles and books (Moon has published several highly regarded works), present at conferences, and perform art therapy service work locally and abroad.

Mount Mary's faculty is supplemented by the frequent appearance of guest lecturers in the program's classes and by three intensive, weekend-long learning sessions held each year. "This exposes students to other approaches and fosters networking and professional development," said Moon.

Mount Mary's program also allows students to choose from a variety of exit options, not just the traditional thesis. "Students

can mount an exhibition, conduct a social action project, or even do performance art," said Moon. "This accommodates different learning styles and interests and underscores each individual's unique approach to the profession."

The program also collaborates with the Wisconsin Art Therapy Association to organize and host a symposium each spring, one of the largest gatherings of art therapists outside of the national convention and featuring nationally known presenters.

Field practicum supervisors for Mount Mary students routinely praise the students' preparation, and many graduates end up working at their practicum site. Program graduates practice throughout the country, including California, Washington, Oregon, Florida, Arizona, and D.C. About 90% of Mount Mary's graduates pass the national registration exam on the first try and 95 % are employed as practicing therapists within six months of graduation.

In the future, Moon would like to attract more males to the field and to continue spreading the word about Mount Mary and the merits of the art therapy profession. "Ours is an outstanding program and our graduates do important work," said Moon. "We are educating art therapists who really do live out our program slogan 'compassion in action.'"

Art Therapy Provides an Outlet for Clients and Therapist

The world of art is where Janine Bussa belongs, and the more she can share her love of art with others, the better.

Janine, 29, who now lives in Seattle, is a native of Wisconsin and a 2001 graduate of UW-Whitewater where she earned majors in journalism and art. After graduating, she went to work as a graphic designer in Madison, Wis., for a large retailer but grew increasingly frustrated with what she was doing.

"I sat in a gray cubicle all day long staring at a computer screen and I hated it, she said. "I felt I was good with people and was wasting my time, so I called my art teacher from high school and asked what he thought. He asked if I had ever heard of art therapy - I hadn't."

After meeting with program director Dr. Bruce Moon and taking a tour of the campus, she enrolled in Mount Mary's graduate program in art therapy in 2005.

"Dr. Moon had a very calming effect and made me feel I could do this work and that it would be fun and interesting," she said. "He made me feel comfortable." About the College, she added, "The first time I visited was in January and I still thought the campus was beautiful."

Janine now works as a mental health counselor at the Community Psychiatric Clinic in downtown Seattle. She provides one-on-one as well as group art therapy for her clients, many of whom are homeless and have drug or alcohol problems.

"I feel exhausted sometimes but I really love it," she said of her work. "It makes me feel like I am accomplishing something. I would love to open my own practice and teach art therapy all day long. I feel most at home with that."





For Your Information...

For more information about the graduate programs featured in this issue please contact:

Master of Science in Art Therapy

Program Director: Dr. Bruce Moon, Ph.D., ATR-BC, HLM, LPC
(414) 256-1215
Email: moonb@mtmary.edu
Website: www.mtmary.edu/arttherapy.htm

Master of Arts in Education: Professional Development

Program Director: Dr. Debra Dosemagen, M.A., Ph.D.
(414) 256-1214
Email: dosemagd@mtmary.edu
Website: www.mtmary.edu/education.htm

Master of Science in Occupational Therapy

Program Director: Dr. Jane Olson, Ph.D., OTR
(414) 256-1246
Email: olsonj@mtmary.edu
Website: www.mtmary.edu/ot.htm

Coming in our next issue

Part Two

In our Fall 2008 issue we will continue our examination of the Mount Mary College Graduate Programs. Featured in that issue will be: Master of Science in Dietetics, Master of Arts in English, Master of Business Administration, Master of Science in Community Counseling.

Watch for program overviews, hear from the directors, and learn some exciting news about each of these programs.



Attention Alumnae

Want to move ahead in your career?
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Mount Mary College alumnae may take these prerequisite business courses at a reduced tuition rate! Individuals holding a baccalaureate degree from Mount Mary College receive a **50% tuition reduction on undergraduate courses**, up to a maximum of four credits per semester. **In addition, our graduate tuition is very competitively priced at only \$485 per credit.**

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