

Quotes from Staff Members

- *“The fact that there is measurement, that it is not just ...okay, let’s do an art project... that there’s training of the volunteers and pretesting and post testing. All of those things make OMA much more than let’s do an art activity, and I think that, for us, was something that had enormous appeal and validated our moving forward with OMA.”*
- *“When we give people control over the creative process, I think there’s a power associated with that. I think there’s something so fundamental in saying whoa, ... this is something I can still do that speaks to that part of myself that’s still there. So I think that structure and the whole philosophy was part of what really struck us in making that decision [to adopt this program].”*
- *“The OMA art show blew us away in a lot of ways, you know, and the level of art ... and the photographs of the participants and the way in which they’re engaged...I mean it’s just extraordinary. ... There’s nothing like seeing an exhibit that really sparks a dream, that gee, this would be wonderful to be able to have this for us.”*
- *“The community of the dementia residents, they get closer. The families get closer, the students...the staff gets closer. Even the residents get closer [with one another]. I mean they look over each other’s shoulders ... they do have this connectivity during that time.... I’ve seen people’s mood change as they’re working on their art piece.”*
- *“I went to her funeral and they had OMA art on the casket and I mean talk about powerful. I mean really powerful. ...She was an artist [her entire life] and you could tell, but the family said some of her best artwork was when she was in the special care unit here. ... [Families told me,] “I saw a side of my mother I didn’t know still existed.”Huge emotional impact.”*
- *“I would always try tolike be a perfectionist and so I would always try to...oh, why don’t you put it here? Why don’t you put there? And I don’t do that anymore. I catch myself. And another thing is that it helps me to slow down. Like a lot of times I’m so goal [oriented]... okay, it’s time for this. It’s time for that. [Now,] if we’re in the moment and it’s working...like if we’re doing a program and it’s working, now I’ll stay to whenever.”*
- *“Dementia isn’t really a real glamorous topic. Nursing home isn’t a glamorous topic. ... Most people have a pretty negative image just in general about nursing homes. ... This program adds ...I don’t want to say hope, but maybe it is hope. It took a fairly negative, a fairly uncomfortable topic and made it emotionally yes, you can connect. That’s huge.”*

- *“I felt a lifting of spirits in the entire house, for myself, and the residents. It felt special to have such a kind and accomplished team of volunteers and professionals come into our world.”*
- *“I am generally amazed at what beautiful compositions emerge from this process. It’s like magic. Some of the art is so beautiful people who view it in the exhibits want to buy it.”*
- *“Doing an OMA art project brought both our friend who has dementia and his wife back to themselves, at least for a while. It was the first time either of them smiled or expressed any sense of enjoyment since he had been admitted to the facility.”*
- *“OMA is a testament that there is place for creative arts in dementia care. It is empowering, inspiring and life changing. It is also instrumental in realizing one of my missions in life: to bring joy and meaning to the life of people living with dementia.”*
- *“OMA offers caregivers of individuals with memory loss an opportunity for socialization and support since they all are participating the dementia journey together.”*
- *“OMA allows people of all capabilities to be successful and have choices. No other program seems to do that.”*