

Opening Minds through Art

Advocacy for Community Service
Enhancing the Quality of Life for the Elderly



Opening Minds through Art (OMA) is an evidence-based program that forms intergenerational and cognitive connections through creative expression in the form of art. In this program, elderly people with dementia, Alzheimers, or cognitive delay are paired with volunteers who are trained to draw on one's imagination to create healing artwork. This creative expression is used to improve physical and psychological well-being, establish social bonds, and strengthens the remaining skills an artist may have, as well as increases self-esteem and one's sense of autonomy. The OMA program enables people with cognitive impairment to assume a new role as an artist and empowers them to form a compelling legacy of artwork.

Avani Rakholia, BSN, RN, received training with the OMA program in Miami University, Ohio, and has been successfully coordinating and volunteering with this program for the past 8 months. Once a week she works with memory care residents at Moldaw Residences in Palo Alto. **Avani encourages others to volunteer with this rewarding and stimulating community service program.** Volunteers are able to gain meaningful experience with older populations, especially with those who have cognitive barriers, and they can be inspired by the beautiful art and contributions of the older generation while enhancing the elderly's quality of life.



Join Avani at the Moldaw Residence,
899 E. Charleston Road, Palo Alto, CA every
Thursday from 10AM to noon!

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