



Featured Member: Emmy Lou Glassman, 2017 Distinguished Clinician Award Recipient

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Emmy Lou Glassman, MA, ATR-BC is the 2017 recipient of the Distinguished Clinician Award – Adolescent Services. This honor is conferred on a Professional member of the Association in recognition of significant contributions to work with clients, rather than service to the Association or contributions to the field of art therapy in general. In their nomination letters, colleagues commend Glassman for her clinical excellence, her ability to connect with youth, her talent to draw the community and whole care team together, and the example she sets for others in the practice of art therapy.

Ms. Glassman holds a BA in Early Childhood Education from William Paterson University and earned her MA in Art Therapy from The George Washington University (GWU). She designed a unique high school art therapy program for youth with emotional disabilities in Fairfax County Public Schools, located in suburban Washington, D.C. Through a framework of integrated government mandates and well-founded art therapy theories and practices, Glassman encouraged and fostered individual growth and self-expression in an open studio classroom setting for 19 years.

During that time, she served as a Clinical Field Supervisor at GWU, providing art therapy student interns with first-hand experiences. In addition, she was an adjunct faculty instructor for both the Corcoran School of Art + Design and GWU graduate programs. Glassman has facilitated workshops, lectured at public and private schools, universities, and conferences, and has been published on the positive role that art therapy can play in enhancing the lives of students.

Since transitioning from the school setting, Glassman established, and continues to maintain, a private practice which provides expressive arts services for clients of all ages, as well as professional supervision for new and established art therapists in the field. Most recently, she realized a personal dream of creating Circle Art Studio, an art therapy studio, accessible to all in the community, and serving children, teens, adults, and seniors. This inspirational space serves her, too, as she continues to enjoy and explore the power of mixed-media artwork.

Glassman's colleagues describe her unique ability to not only reach children who struggle with emotional challenges but also to help other people in the care team interact more empathetically with them. One colleague says, "I am continually impressed by her astute clinical abilities and assessments as well as her compassion and dedication to children and adolescents who felt

marginalized, ostracized and unwelcomed in the school setting. Through her work as an art therapist in the Virginia public school system, Emmy Lou guided and supported those angry, depressed and disenfranchised children and teens who often wanted to give up because they could only see themselves through the eyes of their diagnoses and limitations that so often defined them.”

She continues, “Emmy Lou possesses a rare gift of calling people together. In this work and through this calling, she provided many ways in which teachers, counselors and the administrative staff could begin to see the varied strengths and positive aspects of these very challenging and challenged children and teens.”



*“A Life in Earnest” by Emmy Lou Glassman. 2011. Four-part mixed-media.
Artists’ statement: “A tribute to my loving and gifted mother.”*

A mentee of Ms. Glassman shares how she was inspired during her first art therapy internship: “I must admit that working in a closed environment all day with these children was draining at first, but with encouragement and modeling, Emmy Lou showed me how it should be done.” She recalls, “Her calm and focused demeanor helped the class keep on task and create artwork. Even though some did not want to be in the room working, her presence and direction kept them in line. You could see that they had true respect for her and in most cases chose not to act out or to act out through art, which is what she really wanted them to do.”



4875 Eisenhower Ave., Suite 240, Alexandria, VA 22304, [Contact Us](#)