

SUPPORT FOR ADULTS WITH MEMORY LOSS AND THEIR FAMILIES

CELEBRATING OVER 35 YEARS OF SERVICE



*An OPICA artist Mike McGurk, discusses a painting with an Art Show visitor.*

## AN OPPORTUNITY TO SHINE

The doors open at two in the afternoon and some OPICA members with their families are waiting with anticipation to enter the art gallery at Bergamot Station in Santa Monica. And who can blame them? Even if you never had aspirations to be an artist, the idea that your work, your personal expression brought to life on a canvas, will be professionally displayed in a creative environment such as a gallery at Bergamot is compelling. OPICA's annual Outsider/Insider Art Show is an extension of its art programs and members look forward to this event months in advance, proud to share their creations with their families.

Central to OPICA's philosophy is the use of art to nurture our members' creativity. Art making is therapeutic in that it engages attention and visual pathways and reinforces learning, memory, visuospatial abilities, and existing language. Other benefits that help minimize the negative impact of memory loss include

“ It [painting] connects me to my father, he was an artist. When I finish a drawing I'm excited and all those memories come back. ”

*Gerry L.*

enhanced self-esteem and communication, as well as reduced stress, anxiety, and depression. In addition, the art programs at OPICA provide an opportunity for participants to make connections with peers, develop a sense of community, and attain an improved quality of life.

OPICA's visual art programs have been integrated gradually over time and are vital aspects of the Adult Day Program and its Early-stage Memory Loss Program, the OPICA Brain Train. The different approaches to art making, whether it's Open Art Studio, Formal Art Class, Art Lounge, or Art Therapy, offer multiple opportunities for engagement, and all activities occur in a supportive environment. Although each program has a specific focus, the overarching benefits and outcomes are similar.

**Open Art Studio**, conducted by a credentialed art therapist, takes place in an atmosphere that encourages self-expression, spontaneity, sensory stimulation, and relaxation among day program members. This format provides an opportunity to explore one's creativity through the art making, with a focus on the process more than on the product. For rich sensory and memory stimulation, a variety of media are made available. At the close of the session, there is a sharing of the process of making the artworks to support the sense of community, mastery, and social engagement.

**Formal Art Class**, taught by a credentialed art instructor, offers day program members the opportunity to learn new skills through the art making process. The classroom environment provides structure, guidance, encouragement, and intellectual challenge. The class engages multiple senses by including music, a variety of art media, still-life arrangements, photos, and artworks as creative inspiration.

**Art Lounge**, held in the afternoon, when members can become agitated (sundown syndrome), provides a calming atmosphere.

*continued on page 4*

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OPICA's roots run deep. If we have omitted the name of an OPICA Board member who has passed away, please let us know so that we may include him or her in future publications.

## A Message from our Executive Director

Dear Friends of OPICA,

As leadership expert Warren Bennis once stated, "Leadership is the capacity to translate vision into reality." Leaders possess social skills, a zest for change, and above all, a vision that allows them to set their sights on the things that truly merit attention. It is the job of leaders to develop a vision—establish what matters and articulate why—set direction, and inspire others. Recent research on the skills leaders need establishes the increasing importance of inner resources of the psyche such as self-awareness and self-mastery.

OPICA has been most fortunate to benefit from the leadership of Mary Bomba for the past three years as the Board Chair. Mary is passionate about the mission of OPICA and communicates the vision and direction, inspiring the Board and staff to continue to improve and enhance our programs and services to benefit the individuals and families we serve. I am most grateful to Mary for her leadership of OPICA and look forward to the opportunity to work with Teresa Riddle as she moves into the role of Board Chair. Both Mary and Teresa have experience as family caregivers. That personal experience enhances their understanding and sharpens their vision for OPICA.

Leadership has some parallels to being a caregiver: The need for awareness of our inner psyche and the importance of taking care of our own needs and well being. It's easy to go through life when things are comfortable, but resilience is enhanced when things are uncomfortable. Next time you are pressed to make a choice, and the place is anything but pleasant, look for the choice that will bring you beauty.



**Mary Michlovich**  
*Executive Director*



### Celebrating OPICA's Legacy Society

There are many different ways to support OPICA, but a legacy gift will allow future generations to receive the same exceptional care provided to our members today. When you designate OPICA as a beneficiary of your estate, your enduring legacy honors yourself and your family. Your single action has the power to change lives.

If you have included OPICA in your estate planning or intend to do so, please let us celebrate you by attending our third annual recognition event, a brunch reception with guest speaker at the home of Marilyn Levin, Legacy Society Chair - 11:00 am, Sunday, October 21, 2018.

To RSVP or to get more information about creating a legacy gift, please contact Stacey Barrett at 310-478-0226, or email her at [stacey@opica.org](mailto:stacey@opica.org).

**Celebrating Your Generosity**  
**Sunday, October 21, 2018 • 11:00 AM**

## Greetings from OPICA's Board Chair

Dear Friends of OPICA,

I would like to take this opportunity to thank Mary Bomba, OPICA's past chair, for her vision and service to OPICA and the Alzheimer's community. Under her leadership, the board of directors and staff have worked together to advance OPICA's mission, continually asking the question, how can we better fulfill it?

I am honored and humbled to move into the position of Board of Directors Chair. I am very dedicated and committed to OPICA and have served on the board since 2012. I care deeply about people with dementia and their families as I come from such a family.

My mother had Alzheimer's disease for fourteen years and every member of my family was involved with her care.

One of the most important services OPICA provides is the relief our Adult Day Program gives to family caregivers. It is so reassuring to know that one's family member is in a clean, safe, engaging environment. I often reflect on how nice it is for family members who serve as caregivers to be able to have a day to take care of their own needs. Caregiving is very taxing and OPICA provides relief from the stress.

OPICA also has classes for caregivers. These classes focus on what one can do to reduce the stress of being a caregiver for a dementia family member. Research shows that taking care of the caregiver is just as important as caring for the person coping with dementia affected. More and more, as we baby boomers age, there will be caregivers who need to learn to care for themselves so they can then help the dementia patient.

I encourage you to join me and support OPICA in any way you can. Make a donation, come to our art show, volunteer to help in the day program, come to our luncheon. We are doing good work to help our community. Alzheimer's disease is on the rise. We need your support. I look forward to serving you during my term as Board Chair.



**Teresa Riddle**

*Board Chair*



## OPICA is Expanding Its Footprint

OPICA is proud to partner with health professionals in the community and organizations that serve older adults, and specifically, individuals with dementia. We are committed to ensure that families who would benefit from our services know how to find us.

To help OPICA enhance its relationship with our partners and forge new relationships with health professionals in the community, we wish to introduce Elisa Gomez, OPICA's Community Outreach Associate. Elisa's experience with OPICA goes back to when she volunteered as a High School student, an experience that left an impression. She is also familiar with

dementia first-hand; her great grandfather had Alzheimer's. At a young age, Elisa was involved and understood the demands of being a caregiver for a loved one.

"If only I'd known about OPICA," is a common refrain when people familiar with OPICA's services meet someone who is struggling with the demands of caring for a loved one with dementia. Elisa's primary role will be to expand OPICA's reach in the community to ensure that families on this difficult journey are not alone. Please join us in welcoming Elisa to OPICA.



## An Opportunity to Shine, continued from page 1

There is a lively interplay among participants, and the camaraderie provides much-needed socialization as well as the opportunity to learn from one another. The Art Lounge is open to drop-ins, and art materials are set up and ready if they want to use them. Participants have the freedom to choose whether to create or simply to observe—or do both.

**Art Therapy** is one of four elements that constitute OPICA's Brain Train, a four-hour weekly program that addresses the needs of adults in the early stages of memory loss. The art therapy hour is a support group guided by an art therapist. The support group offers psychoeducation, and emotional and social support. The group uses art materials to express emotions and share experiences and allows participants the opportunity to offer one another support and encouragement.

Art therapy activities are more focused on a particular theme. For example, a project might be to create an "emotion wheel" using color, lines, and shapes to explore emotions. Another directive might be to create imagery or a mandala, followed by a meditation to reduce stress.

**"It's always better to laugh than to cry. I enjoy being with other arts, just being here. Someone is noticing me."**

*Maidew A.*

The art making is a shared experience in which participants work either separately or together on an art piece related to their mutual experiences. This group therapy format enhances resilience, hope, and well-being, as it helps participants know that they are not alone.

The idea to hold an art show began nine years ago and has since expanded to

a full day of celebration that includes music and dancing, with no shortage of good food. It truly is a community event which many families look forward to every fall. The music has been provided by Tom Gramlich and his band free of charge for the past eight years and some of the food is donated by local restaurants and markets. While proceeds from paintings sold benefit OPICA's art programs, this event is more of a FUNraiser.

**THIS YEAR'S ART SHOW - BEYOND ALZHEIMER'S, THE ARTIST WITHIN** will be held on **SATURDAY, OCTOBER 13, 2018**. We hope you will join us to celebrate OPICA artists and enjoy a day of inspiration.

## INTRODUCING OUR NEWEST BOARD MEMBER



Please join us in welcoming OPICA's new board member, Sister Sharon Margaret Ninteman. A member of the Sisters of St. Joseph of Carondelet (CSJ) since 1965, Sister Sharon is currently the Community Life Coordinator of the Retirement Center of

the Sisters of St. Joseph in Los Angeles, adjacent to Mount Saint Mary's University.

With a strong background in healthcare, administration, gerontology, and leadership, we are confident Sister Sharon will be an asset to OPICA. Her previous board experiences include Buenaventura Interfaith Caregivers, Santa Marta Hospital and Circle the City - Medical Respite Center for Homeless Men and Women.

Sister Sharon expressed enthusiasm when invited to join the board: "I am fascinated with new ways of approaching the challenges of health, aging and cognitive loss. I am energized by anything that allows me to collaborate with others for the good of the vulnerable. For an organization that describes itself as an environment that provides joy, nurturing, dignity and structure for adults in all stages of memory loss, I can't imagine not wanting to be a part of this."

## SUPPORT FROM KEIRO'S GRANTS' PROGRAM

OPICA is proud to be receiving support through Keiro's grants program to increase access for Japanese American adults and their family caregivers in the Adult Day Program.



As Japanese Americans and other Asian American populations grew in the program, OPICA incorporated specific cultural activities to create a warm and welcoming environment. Our Nisei group, facilitated by a bilingual licensed therapist of Japanese descent, meets weekly. In addition to serving as a support group, participants engage

in specific cultural activities such as tea ceremonies, flower arranging and origami art. OPICA's program uniquely aligns with many, if not all, of the values of Genki living: emotional, environmental, financial, intellectual, occupational, physical and social.

Keiro is a mission-driven organization engaged in improving the quality of life for older adults and their caregivers in the Japanese American and Japanese community of Los Angeles, Orange, and Ventura counties. Keiro delivers a wide range of resources to address the challenges and barriers that aging presents: isolation, limited financial resources, complex health conditions, and cognitive and memory disabilities. Keiro also partners with companies and organizations that can expand its services and ability to reach seniors and caregivers, and participates in research and innovative work where Keiro can contribute to advancing progress in resolving the challenges of aging.



# OPICA's First Family Day



For many people weekends are an important time to unplug from the day-to-day stress and get a chance to relax, maybe have a chance to reflect on life's bigger issues. That's not always possible if you are family caregiver for someone with dementia. For family caregivers, even when they're not technically working, they're always "on."

At OPICA's first Family Day held on Saturday, June 23rd, OPICA was buzzing with the art room open all day offering art classes and art therapy. Yoga classes in one room and Sing-fit exercises were enjoyed with Sing-fit founder, Andy Tubman, in another. Educational sessions were also offered for caregivers while plenty of fun activities were available for their loved ones. As a result, the event turned out to be a lively one that made everyone smile and ask for more.

What a great sense of community—caregivers and their loved ones joining together in fun activities that included art, music

and yoga. Thanks to the generous support of the Archstone Foundation, OPICA will be holding two family days per year through 2020.



**To address the needs of family caregivers for older people, in March 2018, Archstone Foundation funded five adult day service programs in Los Angeles and Orange Counties. OPICA is**

**proud to be one of the five programs selected to be awarded \$100,000 per year for three years.**





# Recognizing Joyce Leanse with the Founders' Award

Friends, family and colleagues gathered at the Four Seasons Hotel on June 14, to honor a very remarkable woman, Joyce Leanse, for her contributions to improve the lives of individuals and their families coping with memory loss. A special thank-you to everyone; your support made this year's luncheon a beautiful and memorable tribute to Joyce.



L-R Mary Michlovich, Joyce Leanse and Mary Bomba



Bobbie Bilson and Joyce Leanse



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L-R Estee Bienstock, Gail Holtzman, Sue Pomerantz and Courtney Hogenson



L-R Tom and Barbara Leanse, Joyce Leanse, John and Julie Leanse, and Jodi and Steven Leanse





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L-R Marjorie Tiven, Joyce Leanse and Nancy Peavy



L-R Sandra Allen-Arnold, Violette Peters, Ava Brown and Audrey Carter

OPICA gratefully acknowledged the essential support of individual donors and foundations whose generosity enables OPICA to provide programs and services to help adults with memory loss and their families. The following list of donors includes donations received during the previous fiscal year, starting July 1 2017 and ending June 30, 2018.

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#### **\$50,000 to \$99,999**

May and Stanley Smith Charitable Trust

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# Tributes and Memorials

OPICA Tribute Cards honor, celebrate and commemorate life's most important events with a unique message of care and compassion. We express appreciation to the individuals listed below who contributed to OPICA in the form of a tribute between January 1 – June 30, 2018.

## In Celebration of

### **Patty Kaye's Birthday**

Allen and Judy Maller

### **Marilyn Levin's Birthday**

Arthur and Anne Bleier  
Marilyn Garber  
Nelson and Priscilla Gibbs  
Edythe Kenton  
Rita Loew  
Michel and Roberta Stern  
Robert and Annette Swezey

## In Honor of

### **Stacey Barrett**

Mary Bomba

### **Don Barth**

Kelley Warbinton

### **Phyllis Bellano**

Laura Vick

### **Pete England**

Sheldon and Nancy Brucker

### **Marty Felton**

Alan and Barbara Levy

### **Shirley Kleiman**

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### **Joyce Leanse**

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Shana Passman  
Jesse and Stacy Sharf  
Thomas and Jessica Sipkins

### **Tom and Barbara Leanse**

David Raizman

### **Rita Loew**

Jeff and Lisa Cohen  
Andy Davis and Jennifer Loew

### **Kathleen McCann**

Mary Bomba

### **Keith McCoy**

Mary Bomba

## In Loving Memory of

### **Donald Arensdorf**

Tracy Conway  
Gabriela Mafi  
Sergio Troncosco

### **William Bryant**

Charlotte Jepson

### **Maynard Center**

Ruth Center

### **Sharon Childers**

Marilyn Levin

### **Jack Glantz**

Erika Korda

### **Aron Goldberg**

Marlene Rotblatt

### **Ron Golden's brother**

Rita Loew

### **Phil Harris**

Cyrille Schiff

### **Choi-Nong Jan**

Steve Schneider and Joan Linden

### **Jay Leanse and David Leanse**

Thomas and Jessica Sipkins

### **Mary Lyday**

Raymond H. Goldstone

### **Albert Ortega**

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Frances Saito

### **Ron Reisner**

Margaret Kohner

### **Alex Siefert**

Janet Arenberg

### **Geraldine Sirott**

Phyllis Bellano

### **John Weingarten**

Marilyn Levin

### **Ted Williams**

Rita Williams



To send an OPICA tribute card to honor, commemorate, and/or recognize life's most important events with your own personal message, visit OPICA's website at [www.opica.org/make-a-tribute/](http://www.opica.org/make-a-tribute/) Your tax-deductible gift contributes vital support to help older adults with memory loss and their families.

Please accept our sincere apology if you made a gift to OPICA in a form of a tribute and your name does not appear above. Contact Stacey Barrett at (310) 478-0226 or [stacey@opica.org](mailto:stacey@opica.org) to let us know and we will list your name in our next newsletter.



## OPICA Adult Day Program and Counseling Center

11759 Missouri Avenue  
Los Angeles, CA 90025

(310) 478-0226

[www.opica.org](http://www.opica.org)

### Adult Day Program Hours:

9:00 a.m.—4:00 p.m.  
Monday—Friday

### Counseling Center Hours:

8:30 a.m.—7:00 p.m.  
Monday—Friday

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**OPICA** As the first Adult Day Program and Counseling Center in Los Angeles, OPICA has been serving adults challenged with memory loss and their families in the West Los Angeles Area for more than thirty-nine years. OPICA provides comprehensive programming specifically focused on all stages of memory loss in a nurturing environment. Offerings include cognitive stimulation activities, such as therapeutic art and music, brain fitness, counseling, education and the OPICA Brain Train early-stage memory loss program. Through on-site and select satellite programs, OPICA fills a critical need as one of the leading nonprofit community-based organizations focused solely on memory loss.

