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## **Returning to Cheyenne River: Art Based Service Learning in Art Therapy Education**

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This panel presentation provides an overview of our service-learning experience as art therapy educators and clinicians, with student volunteers and Lakota youth at Cheyenne River Youth Project (CRYP) located in Cheyenne River Reservation, Eagle Butte, South Dakota, USA. Connecting to the conference's theme of repetition and return, we have made the journey annually to Cheyenne River Reservation over the course of 10 years, cultivating meaningful relationships through art-based service learning.

CRYP hosts the RedCan Graffiti Jam, an annual event where mostly Indigenous graffiti artists are invited to create murals with themes of social justice and advocacy. Community leaders have repeatedly called on our return to assist in facilitating a festival of Lakota art, language, and culture. During the festival, Lakota youth are invited to engage in many activities. We provide art as therapy practices responding to requested needs of Lakota community members.

Service-learning has become a popular pedagogical approach that combines classroom learning, civic engagement, and volunteer work. In fields of mental health counseling and art therapy, service-learning has become a process of creating reciprocal knowledge between the social and personal, as well as objective and subjective experiences (Kolb, 1984). Jacoby defined service learning as "...a form of experiential education in which students engage in activities that address human and community needs, together with structured opportunities for reflection designed to achieve desired learning outcomes. Reflection and



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reciprocity are key concepts of service learning” (Jacoby, 2015, p. 5). When considering arts-based practices within other cultures, it is important to be open and curious, reflect on one’s cultural contexts, and share dialogues with and nurture relationships with community members, which then creates significant didactic, civic, and volunteer engagement. It is because of reciprocal and relational dialogues that we have repeated and returned to work with the people of Cheyenne River Reservation.

### References

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### Biography

**Katherine Jackson** has her Ph.D. in psychology and is a licensed and board-certified art therapist in the United States. She is a full-time professor at Ursuline College in the Counseling and Art Therapy Masters program, as well as the director of the Service-Learning Program. Katherine has a private practice in Cleveland Ohio, USA and sees teens, couples and adults utilizing art therapy and holistic health practices to heal.

**Heather Denning** is a licensed and board-certified art therapist in the United States. She is the director of the undergraduate Art Therapy Program at Mercyhurst University in Erie, Pennsylvania, USA and an adjunct faculty member for graduate studies in art therapy at Ursuline College and Southwestern College. She provides art therapy supervision to graduate art therapy students and new professionals. Her clinical experience in art therapy has focused on treating adults with mental health difficulties in group settings. Currently, she is facilitating women’s wellness groups using art-based interventions.

**Megan Seaman** has her PhD. in Counselor Education, and is a licensed professional counselor. She is an assistant professor at Ursuline College in the Counseling and Art Therapy program. She co-leads the in the Service-Learning program. Megan also has a private practice using creative counseling modalities with children, teens, and adults.



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**Melissa Hladek** is a doctoral candidate in Counselor Education and is a licensed professional counselor and licensed and board-certified art therapist. She is an adjunct faculty member at Ursuline College and has a private practice utilizing creative arts therapies in her work with children, teens and adults.

**Monica Brown** is an art therapist and licensed professional counselor. She is in private practice using creative arts therapies with children, teens, and adults.

### Recent Publications

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