

Expressive Therapies

Empowering individuals—those living with social, cognitive, emotional, physical, and/or spiritual needs—through music, art, and mental health therapies to improve health and well-being.



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Creative Therapies Awareness and Meet the Staff

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During the month of March, we commemorate music therapy, art therapy, and other creative arts therapies during a variety of events to celebrate and spread the word about the value, efficacy, and opportunities for growth that each field provides to different individuals and groups around the world. This newsletter highlights our fabulous staff members and the work they do for our clients at Expressive Therapies!

Music Therapist

Sara Devine MT-BC, LCSW, NMT-member

Where have you lived prior to landing in Appleton?



St Paul, MN; Phoenix area, AZ; Washington DC

What's your favorite music-related memory?

One unique memory is from high school choir —our choir was

singing a medley from Aladdin for our talent show and we were told that when we sang about Arabian Moons we could do whatever we wanted as choreography...Well, a peer and I got a lot of great laughs, AND a much lower grade that semester than I think we deserved...

What's one of your favorite hobbies or things to do outside of work?

Anything outside: running, swimming, paddle boarding, hiking, biking, listening to bands outdoors...Sunshine is needed!

If you could learn any instrument, art medium, or creative pursuit, what would it be?

An incredible stylist: interior design, clothing/sewing, just being able to give a fabulous creative flair to everything that is day to day

If you weren't a music therapist, what would you be?

A wanderer traveling the world...maybe making music about it, maybe just eating my way through different continents

If you had a theme song, what would it be?

"Nothing More" by Alternate Routes



MUSIC AND IMAGERY

Music and imagery is a psychotherapy process that allows us to tap into our psyches in order to address issues in our lives in a different method beyond pure talk therapy. A music and imagery session utilizes carefully selected music depending upon the focus and desire of the session. After the music is selected, the therapist and the music become "co-facilitators" with both

components playing a major role in the session, offering a different technique in order to get "a glimpse of the psyche." Types of imagery include: visual, auditory, olfactory, gustatory, tactile, kinesthetic, body, and noetic. The intent to work with one specific issue or intention. After the imagery work is over, the experience is continued on paper in order to process, usually through a mandala.

Music Therapists

Rachel Lofton MT-BC, NMT-member

Where have you lived prior to landing in Appleton?
Raised in Elizabeth City, NC, and lived all over the state of NC; Knoxville, TN; Washington DC; most recently in Durham, NC for about 4 years before moving to Appleton in 2016.

What's your favorite music-related memory?
I think I'd have to go with a combination of all the shows/concerts I've been able to see since middle/high school. Those are some of my happiest memories - I don't think I could pick just one!

What's one of your favorite hobbies or things to do outside of work?

Cooking

If you could learn any instrument, art medium, or creative pursuit, what would it be?

Photography

If you weren't a music therapist, what would you be?
I'd love to be a zoologist or work at a wild animal rescue/wildlife conservation.

If you had a theme song, what would it be?
"The Breeze" by Dr. Dog

Tiffany Vollrath MT-BC, NMT-member

Where have you lived prior to landing in Oshkosh?
Oshkosh, WI!

What's your favorite music-related memory?
My family was having dinner at another family's house. I was picking out the melody for a hymn on their piano by ear and my friend's mom said to my mom, "You should have Tiffany take piano lessons!"

What's one of your favorite hobbies or things to do outside of work?

Cooking, baking, camping, walking my dog

If you could learn any instrument, art medium, or

creative pursuit, what would it be?
I would love to learn to play the oboe!

If you weren't a music therapist, what would you be?
I would be a barista at Starbucks!

If you could have dinner with anyone, who would it be?

I would love to have dinner with my Grandma Lucy. She died before I was born and I've heard she was a funny, tough lady!



FEATURE: "NOWHERE TO HIDE THE REFLECTION"

Who are you, where do you come from,
sleeping
creeping
up my spine.

I can't see you from here, not all of you.
A splatter, a stain, the rhythm of your energy.

Your whole life chasing me, confused.
Rightfully so, by the hostility.
It wasn't enough. And I've had enough of that story.

Your hips shatter with the weight of emotional pain...
seeping
creeping
out the sides.

The colors seep into her aura, undefined.

Poem and art by Meghan Fischer



Music Therapists

Pam Andersen MT-BC, NMT-member

Where have you lived prior to landing in Oshkosh?
Florida, Minnesota, North Dakota

What's your favorite music-related memory?

My mother cooked and cleaned for my piano teacher so I could have lessons.



What's one of your favorite hobbies or things to do outside of work?
Anything with my family, movies, kayaking

If you could learn any instrument, art medium, or creative pursuit, what would it be?

Harmonium

What's your favorite quote?

"Let the wild rumpus start"

If you had a theme song, what would it be?

"Living in the Moment" by Jason Mraz, or "I Am Here" by Pink



Jennifer LeVasseur MT-BC, NMT-member

Where have you lived prior to landing in Appleton?
Mississippi (on 2 different occasions), Colorado, California, Minnesota, and Texas (also on numerous occasions, in both San Antonio and Dallas)

What's your favorite music-related memory?

I think it'd have to be high school marching band. I had wonderful teachers, learned so much about work ethic and motivation, and made lasting friendships with fellow musicians.

What's one of your favorite hobbies or things to do outside of work?

Reading (I'm a major bookworm!) and writing (mostly poetry, but really anything that sparks my creativity in the moment). Also, spending time with friends and family.

If you could learn any instrument, art medium, or creative pursuit, what would it be?

French horn! It's one of my favorite instruments.

If you weren't a music therapist, what would you be?

An author and poet, for sure!



What's your favorite quote?

"All I need is a sheet of paper and something to write with, and then I can turn the world upside down." -Friedrich Nietzsche

NEUROLOGIC MUSIC THERAPY (NMT)

Sara, Rachel, Tiffany, Pam, and Jennifer are all certified in Neurologic Music Therapy (NMT), and JoAnna will be completing her training at the end of March. The practice of NMT uses music to treat cognitive, affective, sensory, language, and motor dysfunctions a client may have due to a disease or injury

that affects the human nervous system. Research has shown how music can change areas of the brain that are non-musical, as well as areas of behavioral function. NMT has been standardized using 20 techniques across 3 domains—sensorimotor, speech and language, and cognitive—many of which we use with a variety of clients!

Music Therapist and Music Therapy Intern

JoAnna Ayala MT-BC

Where have you lived prior to landing in Appleton?

Lombard, IL; Eva Beach, HI; Cheltenham, PA; Nazareth, PA; Greensburg, PA; Dallas, TX

What's your favorite music-related memory?

I participated in the Freddy Awards every year (like Tony Awards for students) in high school. My senior year, I was fortunate to be 1 of 4 students that represented our school by performing in the opening and closing production numbers! I made some great friends, sang some awesome music, and got to dance. A lot.

What's one of your favorite hobbies or things to do outside of work?

Comedy/rom-com movies; being outdoors, hiking, swimming, and running; new restaurants/foods; and spending time with family and friends.

If you could learn any instrument, art medium, or creative pursuit, what would it be?

I would love to learn how to paint! I like to doodle/draw/DIY; painting just seems so tricky to me!

If you had any superpower, what would it be?

Teleportation, since I have friends and family all over the country. Teleporting would



sure beat a 15+ hour car ride. And traffic.

What's your favorite quote?

"We have two ears and one mouth so that we can listen twice as much as we speak." -Epictetus

Claire Collingwood (MT Intern)

Where have you lived prior to landing in Appleton?

Indianapolis, IN; Kansas City, KS; Freeport, IL; Sun Prairie, WI; St Louis, MO

What's your favorite music-related memory?

My grandma played the flute and I wanted to be just like her, so the first time I ever made a sound on the flute successfully was super exciting for me.

What's one of your favorite hobbies or things to do outside of your internship?

I work at a local coffee shop on the weekends and love that atmosphere!

If you could learn any instrument, art medium, or creative pursuit, what would it be?

French horn or oboe

If you had any superpower, what would it be?

Teleportation—I would be so punctual!

If you had a theme song, what would it be?

"La Vie En Rose" by Louis Armstrong



INTERNS AND STUDENTS

At Expressive Therapies, there are wonderful opportunities for interns and students pursuing degrees and careers in creative therapies and counseling. Our office has hosted numerous social worker, counselor, and therapist interns, providing a place for learning and growth on

their individual, professional journeys. Claire, our first music therapy intern, will complete her internship and music therapy degree this spring, allowing her to then test for board certification as a music therapist. Many of our previous interns have gone on to work as creative and counseling professionals across the state.

Art Therapists

Meghan Fischer M.A.AT, ATR, LPC-IT

Where have you lived prior to landing in Appleton?

Born and raised in Appleton, moved to Pennsylvania for 3 years for school, came back!

What's your favorite art-related memory?

My grandpa's doodles

What's one of your favorite hobbies or things to do outside of work?

Play with my rats (:

If you could learn any instrument, art medium, or creative pursuit, what would it be?

Woodworking with large, scary wood-shop tools

If you weren't an art therapist, what would you be?

Handwriting analyst/Forensic profiler



What's your favorite quote?

"She will lose part of herself that will never be recovered. She risks all this for the possibility of a better existence." (From the book, "On Being a Therapist" by Jeffrey A. Kottler)

Alyssa Gruett MS, ATR-BC, LPC, RYT

Where have you lived prior to landing in Appleton?

Crandon, WI; Oshkosh, WI; Orlando, FL; Milwaukee, WI; Federated States of Micronesia; Duluth, MN

What's your favorite art-related memory?

In high school, I made a pirate tea pot. I really struggled to figure out how to make the different materials stay together while still keeping it functional. My teacher sensed my frustration and told me "if it was easy, then everyone would do it." This encouraged me to continue to explore my own creativity and take risks. I was encouraged to think for myself!

What's one of your favorite hobbies or things to do outside of work?

Spend time with family playing outside or practicing yoga

If you could learn any instrument, art medium, or creative pursuit, what would it be?

Make bowls out of wood (woodworking)



If you had a superpower, what would it be?

To breathe underwater (like a mermaid!)

If you had a theme song, what would it be?

"Hot in the Shade" by Poolside

COUNSELING

Sara, Alyssa, and Meghan are also counselors, tying in the creative process of music and art therapy to counseling for all ages and populations.

Music and art therapy interventions can be paired with counseling in many ways. Both can serve as a mirror in the counseling process, reflecting back inner processes, barriers, and strengths. Creative interventions enrich the counseling process and can offer assistance in challenges including, but not exclusive to: self-esteem and identity, trauma, stress management, grief and loss, problem solving, and relationships.

Administrator and Community Outreach

Melissa Benson

Where have you lived prior to landing in Appleton?

Grew up in Morrison, IL—bounced around between Dekalb and Rockford, IL after high school before moving up to WI in 1997.

What's your favorite music- or art-related memory?

My school art teacher would take us to Chicago yearly to visit the art institute and the Museum of Contemporary Art. My choir and English Lit teachers would introduce us to a musical yearly, which we'd study and practice before taking a trip to see the musical.

What's one of your favorite hobbies or things to do outside of work?

Yoga/Working out/Running; time with my labradoodle Benny and my family

If you could learn any instrument, art medium, or creative pursuit, what would it be?

I'm currently taking ukulele lessons!

If you had any superpower, what would it be?

Superhuman endurance—not only for when I'm doing physical activity, but so I



don't tire as easily at the end of the day!

What's your favorite quote?

"She needed a hero so that's what she became"

Debbie Wagner

Where have you lived prior to landing in Appleton?

I have lived only in Menasha, Oshkosh, and now Appleton—not very adventurous, am I???

What's your favorite music- or art-related memory?

In kindergarten, for a talent show, with my twin sister Diana, I played a child-sized electric guitar and sang "Twinkle Twinkle Little Star," all while dressed in a green elf costume made by my mom.

What's one of your favorite hobbies or things to do outside of work?

I love to ride my bicycle, I love to ride my bike...

If you could learn any instrument, art medium, or creative pursuit, what would it be?

I would love to be able to create art and sculptures with Legos and Lincoln Logs!

If you weren't a therapist, what would you be?

If I were not a therapist, I would be a forensic pathologist like "Quincy"

If you could have dinner with anyone, who would it be?

I would have dinner with Carol Burnett!



THANK YOU FOR READING OUR NEWSLETTER!

We appreciate connecting with the community by sharing the specifics of music therapy and art therapy. If you have further inquires, we highly recommend you visit our website at www.expressivetherapies.net, our Facebook page (Expressive Therapies), the American Music Therapy Association at www.musictherapy.org and the American Art Therapy Association at <https://arttherapy.org/>, or email us at info@expressivetherapies.net.

Take care and be well!

