

Lifetime Achievement Award to
Dr. Deborah Good, Ph.D., ATR-BC, ATCS, LPAT, LPCC

June 11, 2016

Given by Lisa Graff, MA, LPAT board member of the
New Mexico Art Therapy Association

I first encountered Dr. Debbie Good at a public talk she was giving here in Albuquerque, some 18 years ago, on art therapy and the graduate program at Southwestern College in Santa Fe, NM. At the time, I was just becoming interested in art therapy myself. Later, after a few years of being in the program at Southwestern College, I interviewed Debbie for a class and wrote a paper about her. A few years after that, when I started my internship, Debbie became my supervisor. And now, I am blessed to have her as a good friend.

When Valerie asked me to present today, I thought I already had a good understanding of who Debbie was, but on doing a more in-depth exploration by talking to some of her friends and colleagues, and reading her article about her work with the New Mexico legislature, I was even more touched by what an amazing person she is. She has devoted her life to furthering the profession of art therapy, and the effects of her volunteer service have enhanced the lives of hundreds of people and will continue to so into the future. Words like determined, trail-blazer, tenacious, visionary, dedicated, hard working, passionate were what came up again and again — she has used these qualities to serve the art therapy profession for the last 35 years.

Debbie received her bachelors degree in Art Education in 1972 from Edinboro University in Pennsylvania. Early in her career she began working on an intensive treatment unit with boys between the ages of eight and eighteen, doing music and art. She felt it was an extremely eye-opening experience seeing how the art reflected what was going on with the kids and how it helped them process their conflicts. She was amazed at how the art was working as therapy and this is when she got hooked on the idea of practicing art therapy.

Debbie came to New Mexico and received her masters degree from the University of New Mexico in 1983. She was the first graduate from the newly developed art therapy program under Howard McConeghey and Jean Carrigan. Debbie was Howard's guinea pig — she would take a few classes and then Howard would suggest a few more. By the time she finished the program, she had accumulated 60 graduate credits!

Later she returned to the University of New Mexico to get her Ph.D in Counseling.

After getting her masters degree, she worked as an art therapist at the Pediatric Oncology and Hemophilia unit at the University of New Mexico Hospital. There she did art with severely ill children before and after their treatments and worked with a team of doctors and medical staff. She would present the children's art to the team to assist with the treatment plan and in determining the prognosis of the child. She based a lot of her work on the experience and theories of Susan Bach. She found that the children often knew within their psyche what their prognosis was even if they were unable to speak it, but the drawings were more reliable predictors than any of the doctors were with their medical tests.

After this, Debbie went on to develop a program in Santa Fe at the New Mexico School for the Deaf as an art educator and art therapist. She also worked at a preschool in Albuquerque, working with the visually impaired population, and did some contract work within the drug & alcohol community. In 1986 she became the Director of Expressive Arts at the Charter Hospital of Albuquerque and developed a program of music, movement, psychodrama, art, and recreation where patients from all units, including psych and chemically dependent, could come for expressive art therapy. Debbie said it was a wonderful program with a great staff, and at one time she had eight employees.

In 1989 she taught her first class at Southwestern College. From 1990 through 1996, she worked as an art therapist and counselor for the visually impaired at the District Diagnostic Center for Albuquerque Public Schools. Then from 1991 to 1999, she was the Program Chairperson for the Art Therapy Graduate Program at Southwestern College. In 1993 she assisted Southwestern College in switching from an Expressive Arts Program to an Art Therapy Program with the help of people like Susan Wilkinson-Davis. She left Southwestern College in 1999 when their approval came in from the American Art Therapy Association, although she taught classes there until 2000. She still supervises students. Concurrently, she started her own private practice at Family Therapy of Albuquerque (now Formation Counseling Services) in 1990, and has been doing private practice there for the last 26 years.

One of the most monumental accomplishments that Debbie is known for is carrying the torch and doing the majority of the footwork in the creation of the first art therapy licensure bill to be written and entered into the state legislative system. She did this with the help of other art therapists Paula Banek, Howard McConeghey, Josie Abbenante, Kris Sly-Lynton, Robin Gabriels, Janice Havlena, Elaine Giovando, and Cay Drachnik (then president of AATA). There were others who helped such as Dr. Robert Waterman, then president of Southwestern College, Aviva Ariel and many folks in the legislative system.

Debbie reached for this dream and with the help of others, carried the vision to completion — making countless trips to Santa Fe, sometimes 2 trips in a day, in all kinds of weather to meet with legislators at 7:00 am, and on their breaks during the legislative

sessions in 1989, 1991 and 1993. Five years after the introduction of this legislation, the state of New Mexico passed into law the first licensure bill of the United States to govern the practice of art therapists on March 18th, 1993. Each of us has Debbie to thank for this incredible and outstanding effort! If you are interested, Debbie has written a great article about this process which reads like a suspense thriller. You can find it online on Southwestern College's website. And by the way, Debbie is a very good writer!

Debbie has been all about service from the start of her art therapy career. Locally, she has served on the New Mexico Art Therapy Association as President and the Governmental Affairs Chairperson among other roles.

Debbie loves the American Art Therapy Association and has served on various committees and in various roles for the past 28 years such as the Registration and Standards Committee, the Governmental Affairs Committee, the Nominating Committee, as President-Elect and as President, the Relocation Task Force, the Local Arrangements Committee for the 32nd Annual Conference, on the Video Awards Committee, and as Chair of AATA's Past-Presidents Advisory Panel.

She has also served on the Art Therapy Credentials Board as the Nominating Committee Chair, on the Board of Directors, as President, as a Committee Member, on the Disciplinary Panel, and as the Chair of the Disciplinary Panel.

Other professional involvement has included:

- 3 years as a Biopsychosocial Task Force Member for the Joint Commission of Accreditation of Healthcare Organizations (JCAHO), Chicago, Illinois
- 2 years on the Editorial Board, ART THERAPY Journal of The American Art Therapy Association
- 3 years on the Statute Revision Committee, New Mexico Counseling & Therapy Practice Board

Some of the rewards and honors Debbie has received include:

- Award of Recognition from The New Mexico Art Therapy Association,
- Presidential Service Award from Southwestern College
- Distinguished Alumni Award from Edinboro University, Edinboro, PA
- WHO'S WHO IN THE WEST in the Silver Anniversary 25th Edition
- Distinguished Service Award from The American Art Therapy Association
- Outstanding Faculty Award from Southwestern College
- Extraordinary Support Award from Webster University
- Distinguished Service Award the New Mexico Art Therapy Association
- A Friend of Music Therapy Award the National Association of Music Therapy
- Outstanding Teacher Award from the University of New Mexico Student Evaluations

Since 2000, Debbie has been invited to present at international art therapy and counseling conferences, in Taiwan, South Africa, South Korea and France.

She has spoken Nationally and conducted workshops and written chapters and articles on such subjects as:

- Treating Disaster Trauma
- Ethical Issues with Adoption and Foster Care
- Secondary Traumatic Stress
- Working with Stroke Victims
- The Treatment of Dissociative Disorders
- Group Work
- Addictions Recovery and Dual Diagnosis
- Art Therapy In The Schools
- Medicaid Reimbursement
- Legislative Skills Building
- PTSD, Sexual Abuse & Dissociative Identity Disorder
- Ritual Abuse Survivors
- Symbolic Language of the Sexually Abused
- Cult Abuse
- Children's Creativity
- Suicide
- Family Art Therapy
- Art Therapy in Prisons and Correctional Settings

Debbie is a beautiful example of someone who has been committed to the art therapy community and to her clients, employees, co-workers, supervisees and associates since the beginning of her career in art therapy. She has paved the way for many of us following in her huge footsteps, making our lives and careers easier and giving our profession the credibility it deserves in these great times of change on this planet. One can only feel to do something such as this, is a tremendous act of love. We are grateful to you, Dr. Debbie Good.