

# UMass Mind Network Newsletter



## UMASS MIND COMPLETED THIRD EXPRESSIVE ARTS DRAMA THERAPY PROGRAM COHORT WITH GENESIS CLUB

BY EMILY HUANG AND GREG BOURBEAU

"My name is Mental Wellness, and I..."

As participants gathered on Zoom for their weekly warm-up exercise, each person practiced character-acting by stepping into the role of Mental Wellness, a symbol of their personal recovery aspirations.

This year marks the third consecutive year of the Expressive Arts drama therapy program organized by UMass Mind and in partnership with Lesley University and Genesis Club. Over the past several months, simple yet meaningful exercises like "I am Mental Wellness" helped the group explore theater and artistic expression as tools for recovery, in which a sense of community and personal belonging could be restored in each participant's life. Through activities such as partner scene-building and character improv, participants shared their emotions, struggles, interactions, and inspirations, eventually creating a full play representative of their path to mental wellness recovery. The final story, written by the participants, represents their strength and the uplifting spirits that will continue fueling their recovery journeys.

The CoATT model offers an innovative, measurable, and replicable framework for therapeutic arts and counseling across diverse populations, including those with schizophrenia, eating disorders, and substance use disorders. The model guides participants to produce a powerful public performance by translating each participant's experiences into an artistic story, using rich metaphors and character interactions while preserving the core emotions. The third cohort participants developed a theme within the CoATT model titled "just keep swimming," emphasizing self-belief and inspiration in the face of mental wellness challenges. The group explored this theme through role, story, and metaphor, ultimately creating a story about a fictional camp where characters face adversity and collaborate to solve problems. The play, titled "Camp Everlight," was performed on June 15th and concluded with an interactive Q&A session in which the audience was given a chance to share their thoughts on the place and ask cast members questions about their experiences in the production.

A recording of this cohort's performance will be available soon on UMass Mind's YouTube channel and website. The videos of the first and second productions produced by previous cohorts in the expressive arts program can be accessed by clicking the titles of each: "[It's Bean a Journey](#)" and "[Forbidden Fruit](#)."



The drama therapy program is based on the CoActive Therapeutic Theatre Model (CoATT), detailed in Dr. Laura Wood's recently published book, [Drama Therapy and Recovery: The CoActive Therapeutic Theatre Model and Manual](#).

A co-active therapeutic theater production

Join us for a play created by the creative minds at Genesis Club about their mental wellness journey.

### It's Bean a Journey:

a story of perseverance, a circus, and a great cup of coffee

Starring:  
Lisa, Heather, Mary, Kip, Parker, Kelly, Lyndsay, & Willy.

A free virtual public performance for the community via zoom

"Celebrating a Beautiful Mind" public event series

### Forbidden Fruit:

a story of hope, a jungle, and a wise monkey

Starring:  
Sherry, Mike, Anders, Sarah, Maria, Leah, & Liz.

# EARLY DETECTION AND INTERVENTION PROGRAM HOSTED TWO EDUCATIONAL TABLING EVENTS AT LOCAL UNIVERSITIES

BY ANNA MAZUR AND ROSALEE YOUNG

UMass Mind's Early Detection & Intervention (EDI) Program is designed to provide education on early psychosis and other serious mental health conditions to young adults. Approximately 100,000 young adults experience psychotic episodes each year, with the first episode typically beginning between the ages of 18 and 25. The earlier these conditions are detected and treated, the better the prognosis of affected individuals will be. The EDI program has partnered with various local colleges and universities to connect with students who fall within this age range through hosting classroom presentations, discussions, and workshops. The team is made up of a diverse team of clinicians, researchers, and students that are committed to sharing pertinent mental health tools and resources so that young adults are more equipped to cope and receive treatment for these conditions.

While in-person events were on hold for a few years, members of the Early Detection and Intervention program worked hard this past spring semester to lay the groundwork for its revitalization. In April, 2024, the EDI program held two educational tabling events at Clark University and College of the Holy Cross. Resources explaining how to recognize the early warning signs of psychosis in one's self or others and advice on how to be supportive of friends experiencing psychotic episodes were shared; contact information of local agencies,

such as our Screening and Treatment of Early Psychosis (STEP) clinic, that offer mental health treatments for these conditions was provided.



Katie Lambert, a student at the College of the Holy Cross and a member of the EDI program noted; "I am very proud of the work [of] the UMass Mind Early Detection and Intervention Program... we were able to book tables at two different local universities, [provide] them with tons of resources and merchandise, and got to interact with students and share the mission of UMass Mind. Collaborating with my team was the best part about it!"

Is your organization interested in working with the UMass Mind Early Detection and Intervention Program? Please contact us at [mind@umassmed.edu](mailto:mind@umassmed.edu)! We are planning more programming events for the upcoming fall semester and would be excited to work with you.

## CURRENT STUDY: ACTIVELY RECRUITING!

### Metabolic Benefits of Adjunctive Lumateperone Treatment in Clozapine-treated Patients with Schizophrenia

The purpose of this investigator-initiated, double-blind, randomized, placebo-controlled study is to determine whether adjunctive lumateperone (Caplyta®) might improve metabolic health in clozapine-treated individuals with schizophrenia. Lumateperone is an FDA-approved medication for adults with schizophrenia. Patients will receive lumateperone or placebo for 12 weeks and meet with the study team approximately 8 times. A variety of metabolic outcomes will be measured, including body fat distribution using a body composition analyzer and lipid particle size using NMR spectroscopy. For a brochure of the study, please click [here](#).

IRB Docket # STUDY0001339

**Our studies are conducted at 26 Queen Street, Worcester, MA 01610. You will be compensated for your time being involved in any study. If you are interested or would like more information about any of our studies, please call 508-856-MIND (6463) or email [MIND@umassmed.edu](mailto:MIND@umassmed.edu)**

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