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Personal Statement

The creative process is a universal form of therapy. I have worked with individuals with disabilities over the past four years and earlier during my middle school and high school years. Through working with the Creative Endeavors Art Center, a day program of Saratoga Bridges, I have assisted adults with developmental disabilities by engaging in art with them. While working with this organization, I have gained appreciation and understanding of art as a healing medium. Such experiences promote my interest in working with these individuals in a day habilitation setting. Using art as a therapeutic tool, I have witnessed this population become independent and self-expressive while creating advanced pieces of artwork. This includes how they respond to various instructions and materials in both group settings and individually. These experiences allow me to grow as both an aspiring artist and as an art therapist.

In classes at Creative Endeavors, I have helped participants build upon previously acquired skills in order to learn new techniques. Due to the diverse population that Creative Endeavors services, I have adapted to working with individuals of various abilities, skill levels, and interests. I have taught and designed curriculums for classes such as bookbinding and stenciling. The first class I led at Creative Endeavors was a bookbinding course where each student assembled an accordion book and compiled its content. I was able to use bookbinding skills that I learned at Skidmore and printmaking skills from SUNY Purchase to design the curriculum for this course. Due to the nature of projects, individual assistance was vital to the success of the class. A stenciling class was the last course that I taught at Creative Endeavors. This class was made to be accessible for a wide range of individuals. The student began with

experimental projects with fewer guidelines before starting final projects, which were more structured. As the head teacher, I had the challenge of addressing the class as a whole and working with each student individually.

I enjoyed interacting with participants from Saratoga Bridges in different settings. As the teaching assistant to the Jewelry and Metals studio at Skidmore, I arranged a tour and demonstration in the studio. I showed them my own work as well as various tools and explained the importance of safety and cleanliness. They were engaged and asked thoughtful questions. At the end of our time, they wanted to stay and see more. This experience conveys the innate human interest in art.

I am interested in the practical nature of art and how it may improve physical and psychological wellbeing. I have learned to design projects that are appropriate for the particular group that I am working with. I hope to learn methods for working in this field as well as how to merge art and psychology.