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## Quilting Inclusion: Community Quilt in Collaboration with Wood County Board of Developmental Disabilities

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**Quilting Inclusion: Community Quilt in Collaboration with Wood County Board of  
Developmental Disabilities**

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HNRS 4990: Honors Project

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Author Note

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### Abstract

Utilizing the timeless art forms of quilting and embroidery, I expanded the fields of both community art and disability studies through a collaborative quilt project with Wood County Board of Developmental Disabilities (WCBDD). During a facilitated workshop, six artists with intellectual/developmental disabilities decorated triangle quilt pieces with images and phrases about their favorite recreation, athletic, and self-advocacy opportunities offered at WCBDD. Following this workshop, I utilized embroidery art to embellish and enhance the drawings and colorings done by the participants as well as creating three triangles to showcase the WCBDD mission statement. The nine triangles were then hand-stitched together into a pyramid shape, representing the WCBDD logo. Finally, the quilt was hand assembled and presented to WCBDD. Through the displaying of this community quilt, the creative and applied research elements of this project will continue to promote diversity and inclusion throughout Bowling Green. Although the final quilt is ultimately a gift to WCBDD, the community at large will hopefully benefit from the showcasing of this quilt on BGSU's campus as well as other staple Bowling Green locations. Viewers of this quilt will hopefully be positively impacted by the talented and dynamic artwork of my friends from the Wood County Board of Developmental Disabilities for years to come.

*Keywords:* community quilt, collaborative art, embroidery, intellectual/developmental disability, inclusion

## Quilting Inclusion: Community Quilt in Collaboration with Wood County Board of Developmental Disabilities

As an incredibly passionate student who likes to work straight from the heart, I had a strong desire to use my honors project as an opportunity to combine different passions of mine to make a lasting difference in the greater Bowling Green area. I have always been very passionate about community activism and building meaningful connections with those around me. One of the main areas of connection I have formed while at school is with adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities through the Best Buddies program. I have loved connecting with people in this way, and I have grown to value the importance of inclusion. Another passion of mine is embroidery arts. Hand embroidery is one of the main ways that I express myself, and I wanted to honor this passion in my project by using embroidery to spread a message and give back to my community. Pulling from these passions in my life, my project will address this research question: how can I create something incorporating embroidery alongside adults with developmental disabilities to grow community connections and promote inclusion?

### **Community Organization Inspirations**

Before jumping into the specific details of my project, it is important to start with my inspirations, since they helped me to initially form my research question into a cohesive project. Since honors projects are interdisciplinary, my inspirations were found in the two disciplines of disability studies and textile arts. Within these two fields of study, I sought out organizations that would specifically focus on disability inclusion and community textile art initiatives, since those were both pivotal aspects of my leading research question.

As I entered into my research on community organizations, I knew that I wanted to do something with textile arts, but my heart had not yet been set on making a community quilt. I did not find a specific organization that works to make community quilts with adults with disabilities. However, through researching and connecting with these community organizations, my desire to make a quilt that could be displayed grew more and more. I have found some amazing organizations from both my disciplines that will help to connect my project. I wove together elements of these four organizations into my direct planning and execution of this community quilt project.

### **Disability Inclusion Inspiration**

#### **Best Buddies Bowling Green**

Best Buddies International strives to create opportunities for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD) in these four main areas: one-to-one friendships, integrated employment, leadership development, and inclusive living (“Mission,” 2020). Best Buddies Bowling Green, which is the program I am involved in, focuses on the one-to-one friendships pillar. Best Buddies states that this pillar is important because it allows for greater inclusion and connections among people with and without IDD (“Mission,” 2020). I have really benefited from being involved in Best Buddies as a Peer Buddy since high school. I have been paired with my current buddy, Dennis Miller, for three years now, and we are very close. My hope is that my honors project has served to further this mission of inclusion and connection and has highlighted some of the amazing one-to-one friendships that have been formed between BGSU students and adults serviced by the Wood County Board of Developmental Disabilities. Three of my quilt participants are close friends of mine through the Best Buddies program, and they all included references to Best Buddies on their quilt triangles.

### **Wood County Board of Developmental Disabilities**

The Wood County Board of Developmental Disabilities is an organization that I am constantly impressed by. I am partnering with them for this project because they are a great local resource for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities to receive service and support. Also, their recreation department offers many different activities that suit the interests of community members. The main goals of the recreation program are to provide avenues for socialization with an emphasis on forming lasting friendships. Along with the development of social skills, the recreation program can be beneficial to adults with IDD who are looking to learn healthy lifestyle skills and engage meaningfully in the community (“Recreation Program,” n.d). Many artistic events are already offered through their department, but a community quilt is something that they have not done before. For this reason, I felt that a community quilt would be an amazing addition to an already thriving recreation department.

### **Community Art Inspiration**

#### **Social Justice Sewing Academy**

The Social Justice Sewing Academy is a movement that is empowering youth to share their voice through textile art. Many students collaborate to make quilt blocks that represent a social issue that they are passionate about (Anderson, 2016). Their organization strives to get many different people involved in each step of the process to facilitate community engagement. For example, once the quilt blocks are completed by students during workshops, they are then sent to volunteer embroiderers around the world to embellish and embroider (“Community Quilt Process,” n.d). Although my engagement varied from theirs in terms of target participants and levels of in-person involvement, I still strived to model their commitment to community involvement. Their method of embroidering quilt blocks after they are designed by someone else

is something that I directly implemented into my project. Once I learned about SJSA, I was more confident that I could honor and enhance my participant's drawings with embroidery. Also, SJSA showcases finished quilts to let the message spread beyond those immediately involved in the project. Hearing about their method of sharing quilts influenced my decision to have the finished community quilt be displayed at Wood County Board of Developmental Disabilities offices. I want my message of inclusion to continue well after my hands are done quilting, and displaying the quilt will do just that. I have learned a lot from the Social Justice Sewing Academy, and I am grateful to have this organization as an influence for my project.

### **Slow Stitch Movement**

The Slow Stitch textile art movement emphasizes the importance of connecting with the textile work in an intentional and enriching way, rather than rushing through to get things done. As a counter to the fast fashion culture, the Slow Stitch movement encourages textile artists to slowly complete projects using sustainable methods (Wellesley-Smith, 2015). This movement is countercultural, especially in college when multitasking and productivity are very important. Learning about this movement was a large influence for me, since I try to take my time with my work and really savor the process. Also, this movement encourages mindfulness (Wellesley-Smith, 2015), which has been something I have kept with me throughout the countless hours of embroidery. The sustainability emphasis of the Slow Stitch movement has also been an influence for me because I chose to purchase all my quilting supplies from our local quilt shop in Bowling Green. Although it may have been cheaper to buy things on Amazon or a large-scale crafting store, the Slow Stitch movement inspired me to source my materials in a way that would further my mission of community connection. The intentionality of this movement surely led me to

connect with this quilt on a deeper level and better represent the artistic voices and visions of all my quilting participants.

## Methodology

### Project Overview

For my project, I combined the research areas of community art and disability social inclusion to create a community quilt in collaboration with individuals served by Wood County Board of Developmental Disabilities. My plan was to recreate their organization's logo and work with nine individuals to decorate the nine triangles found in the pyramid section of the logo. Below is an image of the WCBDD logo as well as my mini quilt which shows a triangle grid of nine different artworks. Although my final design shifted slightly from this initial proposed plan, the mini quilt still played a pivotal role in my planning and execution of my full-size quilt.



### Justification

#### Applied Component: Triangle Decorating Event

The main applied component of this project took place during my triangle decorating event at Wood County Board of Developmental Disabilities on January 30, 2021. I collaborated



directly with six adults served by the Board of DD to help them come up with designs and decorations for their quilt piece. I explained to the participants the purpose of a community quilt, and then prompted them to draw something that showcases what Wood County Board of Developmental Disabilities means to them. To break this prompt down, I asked additional prompting questions such as:

- What are your favorite things about Wood Lane?
- What do you and your Wood Lane friends do together?
- How has the Wood Lane community helped you during COVID?

My mini quilt was present at the event as well, and it served as inspiration and guidance about what each participant could possibly include on their quilt.

Through asking these questions, I offered an opportunity for reflection and creative expression. Also, the event itself offered a chance to relax and try something new. My event was a fun opportunity for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities to come together and have fun while creating something in a communal way!

I also gave participants the opportunity to further explain their work by creating a short artist's statement. I asked them simple questions about what they drew and why they decided to draw that. Including this element into the project will allow all viewers of the quilt an opportunity to gain context about what each participant was thinking while making their quilt triangle. I also took a portrait of each participant holding up their work when they finished decorating it. Once every artist finished designing their fabric triangle and sharing their artist statement, the hands-on work for the participants was complete. However, the applied element of the project will continue as more people view the completed quilt. The plan is to gift the quilt to Wood County Board of Developmental Disabilities to be displayed in their offices. Additionally,

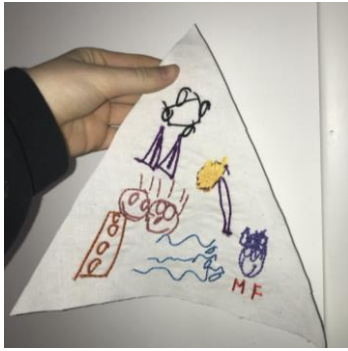
I would also like to obtain quality photographs of the quilt to be shown virtually in the greater Bowling Green community. Research has shown that the act of gifting art to others can be a generate opportunities for genuine encounters and transformation (Hall, 2013), so I want that to be offered to as many people as possible.

### **Creative Component: Embroidery and Quilt-Making**

There are creative elements to every step of this process, but the main creative elements began once I received the fabric triangles back from my event participants. After that, I started embroidering onto the fabrics to embellish and enhance the drawings and colorings done by the participants. I coordinated embroidery thread colors to match closest to the colors used by the participants in their drawings. Each triangle required different embroidery stitches depending on the drawing itself, so I demonstrated proficiency in a variety of different stitches and techniques during this aspect of the project.

Embroidering all six of the participant's triangles was both the most time consuming and most rewarding section of my honors project. As an art form, embroidery is incredibly time consuming and meticulous since every stitch must be in place. However, that is also what makes embroidery and stitchwork so meditative and enjoyable for me. I am incredibly grateful to have had the opportunity to utilize my craft to empower individuals serviced by Wood County Board of Developmental Disabilities!

After the embroidery was completed, I began the quilting process. I pieced, basted, quilted, and finished the quilt all by hand. Doing the work by hand is important for me because I want to follow the Slow-Stitch method and stay as connected to the work as possible (Wellesley-Smith, 2015). Below is detailed images showcasing the different steps of the quilting process along with progress updates for the project completion on April 30, 2021.



A.



B.



C.



D.



E.



F.

A. *Cutting out quilt triangles.* This was my first step after the completion of the embroidery.

I was so excited to cut out my first triangle once I finished embroidering!

B. *Assembling quilt triangles.* It was important to make sure that the design worked in a cohesive way, so assembling the triangles before stitching was key.

- C. *Piecing quilt triangles together.* During this step of the process, I hand-stitched all of the triangles together to make a pyramid grid. My six participants' triangles are on the top and bottom layer, and three triangles showcasing the WCBDD mission statement are in the middle.
- D. *Assembling quilt top.* I started adding background fabric along the edges of the pyramid to assemble the quilt top, which is what will be seen on the front of the quilt.
- E. *Fully assembled quilt top.* This is what my quilt top looked like when the background and borders were added. It was so satisfying to reach this stage in the process!
- F. *Basted and partially quilted.* Basting is the process of putting the back fabric, the batting, and the quilt top together. I used a thread basting technique, which explains the temporary grid pattern. Quilting is the action of sewing the three layers together and forming it into a quilt. For this process, I am quilting along the edges of the triangles, and I will add accent quilt lines in the blue sections. I will also add detailing in the three middle triangles, so there will not be as much white space in the finished design.

As of April 21, 2021, I am in the process of quilting, and once that is finished, I will trim and bind the quilt by hand. I will be gifting my completed quilt to be presented at Wood County Board of Developmental Disabilities on April 30, 2021.

### **Interdisciplinarity**

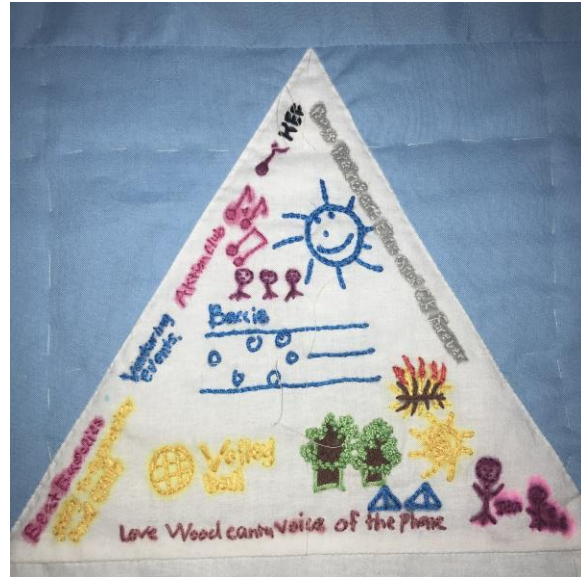
My two disciplines for this project were the fields of disability services and community fine arts. My project involved direct work with adults with disabilities, and there was also plenty of creative behind-the-scenes elements that demonstrated fine art skills. I found that these two subjects would work well together because of the known connection and benefits that adults with disabilities can gain while engaging in community arts (Hall, 2013). Also, utilizing fine art crafts

such as embroidery and quilting can be an effective tool to create communities and spread a message (Knauer, 2019). For these reasons, I felt my project took elements of each discipline and applied them in a transformative new way. Going into this project, I had taken many classes involving disability service and inclusion, but I had never taken a formal class on embroidery or quilting. My self-taught perspective led me to diving deep into the discipline of quilting this semester, and I ended up learning so much from those around me and from content found online. Now that I have learned this background knowledge, I hope to continue to explore the connection of these two disciplines in order to use my gifts to make more positive social change in the future.

### **Participant Spotlights**

Each participant created such unique and talented work that deserves to be honored individually. All six of my participants will be included in their own section with an image of their triangle drawing and a picture of the corresponding triangle embroidered on the quilt. The artist's statement will be written below the images, which give a good idea of what the participant drew and why they decided to draw that. I will also be sharing a personal reflection of my experience working with each artist and what I value most about their work. Lastly, each participant spotlight will end with a highlight of four of my embroidered elements from that triangle that showcase my proficiency in a variety of different embroidery stitches and techniques.

**Participant 1: Kristin**



Artist Statement: Kristin’s colorful quilt triangle reflects the variety of activities she is involved in at WCBDD. Some of the things Kristin drew and wrote about are camping activities, bocce, volleyball, Best Buddies, and her role as a receptionist in the Wood Lane offices.

Since Kristin included many words and phrases on her quilt triangle, I would like to include the quotes: “Best Buddies,” “Going to the movies and craft,” “Venturing events,” “Aktion club,” “Best friend are Einc [Erin] and CK Forever,” Baccie [Bocce],” “Volley ball,” “Love Wood Conty [County] voice of the phone”

**Personal Reflection**

I have been close friends with Kristin through the Best Buddies program for three years now, so it was incredible to see that she had signed up for my event. My favorite element of Kristin’s design was her use of bright colors and her desire to fill up all the space provided to her. During the event, she was continually asking those around her for ideas of what else to add to her triangle, which shows that she was putting a lot of thought into how to best represent all



**Participant 2: Melissa**

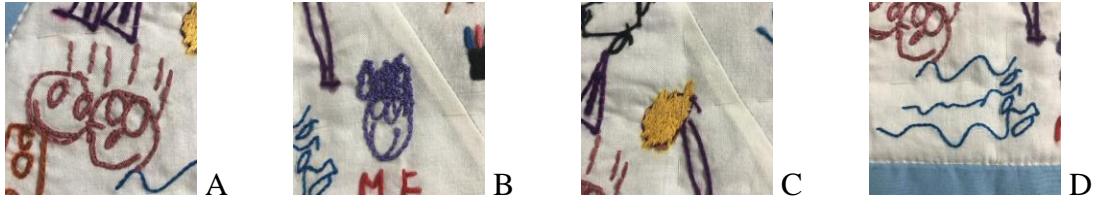
Artist Statement: Melissa's wide range of interests at WCBDD were clearly represented in her drawings. She drew colorful and energetic pictures to show her involvement in Best Buddies, swimming, gardening, volunteering, painting, camping, and attending meetings.

**Personal Reflection**

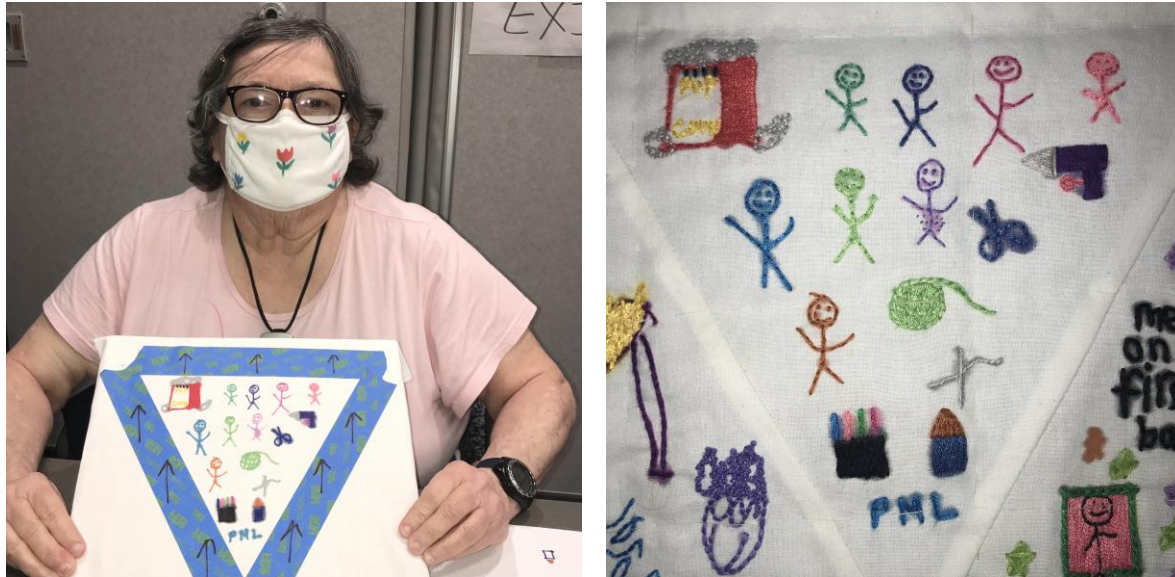
Having been friends with Melissa for two years now through Best Buddies, I have come to know her as an incredibly determined individual; her quilt triangle decorating was no exception, as she was diligently focused on adding meaningful drawings to her design. I provided scrap paper for participants to practice their drawings before adding them to their triangle, and Melissa practiced each of her drawings multiple times before adding anything to the fabric. During the event, Melissa could often be found checking in with other people to make sure that their designs were going well. She was a joy to work with, and I am grateful to have her artwork on the quilt.



### Embroidered Highlights



I chose to utilize both a backstitch and a chain stitch to add texture and dimension to Melissa's drawing of the Best Buddies logo (A). I absolutely loved her rendition of the logo, and it was such a personal joy to embroider. For Melissa's drawing of a nursing home resident (B) that she volunteers with, I utilized a backstitch for the head and added texture to the hair with French knots. Melissa had already drawn the hair to look rather curly, and the French knots really help to give that curly haired look. For her paintbrush drawing (C), I chose to use a more natural filling method using repeating straight stitches to honor the coloring style she used. Lastly, for her swimming lane with swimmers (D), I used a lighter thread weight and a clean backstitch to add definition to this fine line work that Melissa had included.

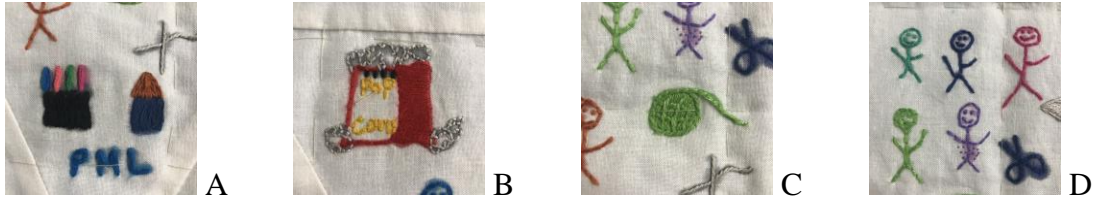
**Participant 3: Phyllis**

Artist Statement: Some of Phyllis’s favorite activities at WCBDD are making crafts, watching movies, and spending time with friends. She illustrated this by drawing crafting supplies, popcorn, and a multitude of different colored stick-figure friends.

**Personal Reflection**

This event was my first time meeting Phyllis, but I soon found that we would get along great because of our mutual love for crafts and friends. Phyllis initially struggled to come up with ideas for her design, but with some prompting, she was able to fill her triangle in no time. We had a projector in the room that could pull up reference images if participants needed that, and Phyllis really enjoyed utilizing that to get some detailed designs. For example, her popcorn box was drawn based on an online image, and she was able to replicate it flawlessly. This shows that she has an artistic eye and a passion for precision.

### Embroidered Highlights



Phyllis’s design had many small elements to it, which allowed me to utilize a variety of stitching techniques to honor the integrity of each of her drawings. For her crayon box and marker (A), I utilized a short-and-long stitch and a satin stitch for the bases. I used a straight stitch for the crayon tops and a chain stitch to fill in the marker top. Like I mentioned above, Phyllis’s popcorn box drawing (B) is incredibly intricate, and I am proud that I was able to honor her drawing in my stitches. For the red side of the box, I used a satin stitch with a smaller thread weight to get a clean look. I utilized a simple backstitch to add details to her popcorn and writing on the box. Her yarn ball (C) also lent itself to an intricate stitch design. I used a satin stitch for the underlying layers of the yarn, and I used a stem stitch to get a yarn-like twist in the top layers of yarn drawn around the ball. Lastly, I used backstitches and seed stitches to embroider her multitude of stick figures throughout her design.

**Participant 4: Ethan**



Artist Statement: Out of all the involvements offered by WCBDD, Ethan’s favorites are the Special Olympic Sports he plays throughout the year. His quilt triangle shows colorful and creative depictions of him playing baseball, bowling, and playing basketball.

**Personal Reflection**

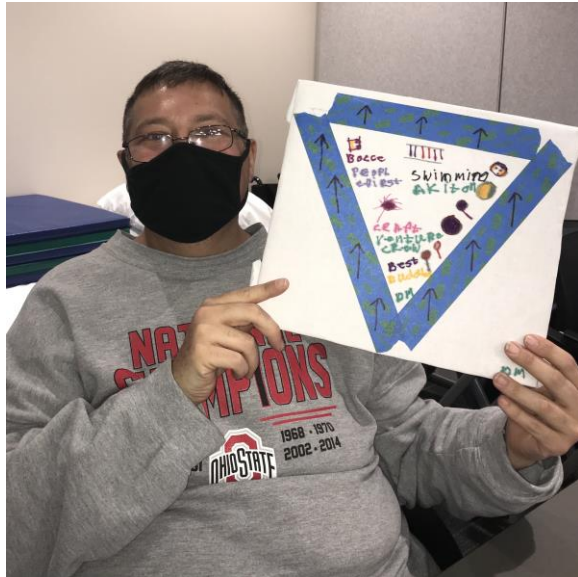
I have watched Ethan perform in many Special Olympics events last year, and it was enjoyable to see his creative and artistic side come out during this triangle decorating event. Ethan colored in many of his designs, and he truly worked to fill the entire triangle with colorful stars. My favorite part about interacting with Ethan and his art during the triangle decorating event was seeing how proud he was of his design. I even overheard him saying that he thinks this is the best drawing he has ever done! Lucky for him, so many more people will now be able to see his incredible drawing as they view the quilt.

**Embroidered Highlights**



Ethan’s unique design led to an opportunity for me to explore new embroidery techniques. For example, for the bottom part of his bowling alley (A), I utilized a split stitch to fill in large areas of fabric. I also used the backstitch and satin stitch to add detailing to his colorful bowling ball. Another element of Ethan’s design was his multiple stars throughout the work (B). I used a straight stitch to get these consistent star designs. I also utilized a technique of including backstitch on top of satin stitch during Ethan’s drawing of him on first base (C). This was a new technique for me, and I am proud of how it turned out. Lastly, I utilized more varieties of satin stitch in his basketball hoop and head (D). Since Ethan’s drawings were more filled in than some other line drawings, his work pops in the bottom middle of the quilt.

**Participant 5: Dennis**



Artist Statement: Dennis shared his love for all things Wood Lane on his quilt triangle. Along with writing names of his club involvements in different colors, Dennis drew a swimming pool, bowling ball, volleyball, and a portrait of him and his Best Buddy.

Dennis’s words written on his triangle: “Bocce,” “People first,” “swimming,” “Aktion [Aktion Club],” “craft,” “venture crew,” “Best Buddies”

**Personal Reflection**

Dennis and I have been paired as Best Buddies for three years now, and he has truly become like family to me. Our personal connection just made this event even more special because I got to see his passions come to life through his art. My favorite aspect of working with Dennis on this project was being able to give him verbal feedback throughout the event. He would continuously ask if he was doing a good job, and his face would beam each time I told him that he was doing a great job. He also kept telling me that he was having fun, which made me feel very proud that I was able to offer that experience for him. His contribution to my community quilt means the world to me.

**Embroidered Highlights**



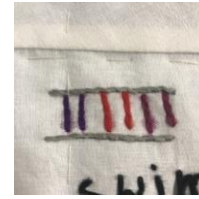
A



B



C



D

I really enjoyed being able to work on Dennis’s lettering (A), because I felt that I learned his handwriting inside and out by the end of the embroidery process. Also, Dennis’s abstract craft ball (B) allowed me to try out a new stitch called the feather stitch. I think the small and detailed lines on this design bring out the whimsy in his drawing. For his bowling ball and volleyball (C), I utilized a filled straight stitch as well as an outline stitch to get the dimension shown in the different colors used. Lastly, I utilized the outline stitch on Dennis’s swimming pool (D), which helped to add definition to this area of his design.

**Participant 6: Angela**



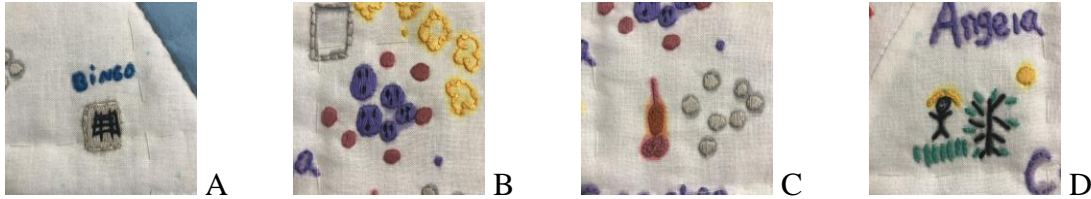
Artist Statement: Angela drew images to show appreciation for her favorite WCBDD activities such as bowling, bingo, golf, watching movies, and going outside with venture club. She also wrote “coaches” because she likes spending time with the Special Olympics coaches during her sport activities.

**Personal Reflection**

I had never had the pleasure of spending time with Angela prior to this event, but I am so grateful that I got to meet her! One of my favorite parts of working with Angela on this project was seeing how particular she was with her drawings. She would take her time and plan out each mark, which really shows through in her polished triangle. I also really enjoyed her use of repetition shown in the golf, bowling, and bocce balls in her drawings. Lastly, I love that she chose to share her gratitude for the Special Olympics coaches on her triangle. This shows that programming through WCBDD has really made an impact on Angela’s life.



### Embroidered Highlights



Angela's Bingo board (A) was small and detailed, which allowed me to utilize a lighter thread weight to get definition in the grid pattern on top of the satin stitch background. I also utilized satin stitch in her bowling ball drawings (B), which helped to make them pop off the fabric. Additionally, I utilized the stem stitch to add movement and dimension to Angela's beautiful golf club drawing (C). I also found myself using the stem stitch to add dimension to her hair, grass, and leaves shown in Angela's drawing of her outdoors (D). Overall, I found that precision was key with Angela's work, and I am glad I had the chance to practice those skills.

### Conclusions and Insights

Overall, I feel that my project went above and beyond in answering my research question of how I could utilize my love for embroidery to make something meaningful with WCBDD. My experience facilitating the decorating event and creating the quilt has been one that will stick with me forever. Since my quilt project has multiple different aspects to it, I will split up the conclusions and insights into the applied participant experience during the quilt decorating and the creative element of my embroidery and quilting experience.

### Participant Experience

There were many insights that I noticed from the participant experience that are worth discussing. First, the entire event was filled with lively conversations and laughter from beginning to end. One of my goals going into this project was to create a fun atmosphere during

my event, and that was definitely evident while everyone was working on their triangles. During a time where most social interaction is through a screen, it was incredible to safely meet in person and connect with each other in that way. Another notable element from the participant experience was an atmosphere of encouragement among peers during the event. If one participant was struggling with their design or was at a loss for what to add next, the other participants were so quick to encourage one another. The participants also expressed praise to one another for what had already been drawn on their triangle, which helped encourage them to keep going. Along that same line, there was also a healthy level of collaboration on all aspects of the creative process. If one participant was unsure of what color to use or how to draw something, everyone at the event was willing to lend a hand and offer collaboration. Lastly, the triangle decorating event offered a great opportunity for reflection and moments of gratitude. Due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, many of the recreation and athletic events that participants highlighted are not able to happen fully in person right now. Even though those events are not currently happening, taking the time to draw pictures about those events allowed us all to feel gratitude for when we were able to experience those events, as well as excitement for when the activities will hopefully return in the future.

### **Embroidery and Quilting Process**

Personally, I feel that there were endless insights gained during my months of embroidery and quilting for this project. First, I learned about the importance of sharing my talents with others to impact the community. I have been involved in artmaking throughout my life, but I had never taken the chance to use those talents in such an impactful way. Now that I have had this experience, I will continue to search for ways that I can use my artistic talents and passions to help others in the many different communities I find myself in. Additionally, I found that co-

creating art in this way allowed me to feel very connected to the participants as I worked on their triangles. I devoted endless hours to meticulously planning and embroidering each triangle, so I found myself thinking about each participant often throughout the day. I feel that my bonds with the participants I knew previously have grown stronger, and my connections to my new participant friends have been significant in my life—even if I only was with them in person for an hour and a half.

I also felt that I was able to grow in my collaboration skills while working on this project. I connected with many skilled quilters for advice and guidance, which has been so instrumental to my success. Along that same line, I also gained many insights on the importance of learning and growing from my mistakes. I messed up my quilting many times throughout the past few weeks, but each time I messed up, I was able to collaborate with an expert and learn what I needed to do differently the next time around. These adaptation skills will be applicable to many other projects I embark on later in life.

### **Project Limitations**

As I reflect on my project, there are some limitations to my work that I would like to address. Firstly, I felt that COVID-19 safety restrictions limited my ultimate reach in participants for this project. My original goal was to have nine participants to fill the triangle grid, but I was only able to get six because of room capacity and last-minute safety cancellations. Additionally, my project was not able to engage as much with the community at large as I originally intended. Ideally, a project such as a community quilt should have as many people collaborating as possible. However, to keep this project safe and contained, I limited contact with others while working on it. This was definitely the safest route to take, but it would have been interesting to

see what the project could have evolved into if more community could have worked on it. Lastly, time management was a limitation for me. I wish I had kept count of the hours that I put into this project over the last months, because it would have shocked even me to see all the hours of work combined. This project was a huge undertaking, and time management could be improved upon in future projects of this kind.

### **Project Strengths**

My project has many strengths that I would like to address. First, my finished quilt will act as a staple witness to the dynamic and talented artists at WCBDD. I am so grateful to have worked with such amazing individuals, and I am happy that their art will be highlighted for years to come. It was incredible to see how excited my friends would get when I would send them updates of their embroidered designs. They all have a lot of pride in their work, and I am happy to have been a part of that experience for them. Also, the community quilt can be a point of connection to community members to learn about inclusion efforts that exist in the Bowling Green area. For example, many participants wrote about their involvement with Best Buddies or Special Olympics, and community members without disabilities can join these programs and help to continue to spread inclusion throughout our town. Lastly, my project can pave the way for future community art-based partnerships between BGSU and WCBDD. I have absolutely loved my partnership, and I think that students with plenty of other talents could find ways to share that with the Wood Lane community. I am hopeful that I will see more collaborative projects like this in the future! I know that I will continue to collaborate with local disability organizations in this way in wherever I end up after graduation and beyond.

### **Closing Remarks**

Simply put, this project has absolutely changed my life. I will never be able to fully express my gratitude for the opportunity to share my talents and grow as an artist alongside such an amazing and supportive group of people. I could not have imagined a better first quilt to make in life! I will certainly be making many more community quilts in the future, and I will always remember my time with Wood Lane and the BGSU Honors College as I continue this co-creative quilting journey for the rest of my life.

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