

COMMUNITY NEWS

Parker Jewish Institute Hosts Art Therapy

Parker Jewish Institute is proud to have Andre Zileron, 87, as a long-term care resident. Zileron began working as a jeweler in Haiti when he was 12 years old. His skills increased over the years, and he worked in gold, silver and ivory, as well as crafting precious pieces with diamonds, semi-precious stones and even cubic zirconia. Over the decades, Zileron became one of Haiti's master jewelers and a successful businessman and was able to send his two sons, one daughter and several grandchildren to live in the United States. His son even opened a local boutique to sell Zileron's jewelry.

Zileron, who speaks only Creole and was born in Haiti, arrived in the U.S. after the Haitian earthquake in 2013. Thrown to the floor and trapped by debris for three days, Haitian rescuers finally discovered Zileron and brought him to a makeshift hospital. However, his family in the U.S. would have none of this; they immediately made calls and arranged for his flight north and admission to Parker in 2013 for rehabilitation.



Parker Jewish Institute resident Andre Zileron

As Zileron's health improved at Parker, he began looking for something to do. Although he could no longer practice his jeweler's art, he was introduced for the first time to the art of painting at Parker.

"Andre never painted before, but he showed an interest so we got him started in art therapy class a year ago," said Alycia D'avino, Parker's Assistant

Director of Therapeutic Recreation. "Painting got his creative juices flowing again, and now we can't stop him and he was named Parker's January 2019 'Artist of the Month.'"

Michael N. Rosenblut, Parker President and CEO, noted that studies show older adults in skilled nursing facilities benefit from creative activities like art.

"Art projects give one a sense of accomplishment, purpose and self-esteem," said Rosenblut. "In Andre's case, however, Parker's Art Therapy Program has turned a master jeweler into a master artist."

Some of Zileron's paintings will be submitted for the LeadingAge New York Art Competition. Parker is co-sponsoring an exhibition of his work, paintings by other Parker residents and from other skilled nursing facilities, in collaboration with LeadingAge New York, which represents nursing homes from throughout the state. The date of Parker's exhibition will be announced shortly.

—Submitted by

Parker Jewish Institute



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