



**Media Contacts:**

Vicky Shokatz, [vshokatz@buzzmonkeyspr.com](mailto:vshokatz@buzzmonkeyspr.com), 414-443-0850 x113

Katie Hall, [khall@buzzmonkeyspr.com](mailto:khall@buzzmonkeyspr.com), 414-443-0850 x110

**Student artist-in-residence program brings generations together, inspires creativity**  
*University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee student lives and works at senior living community*

**Milwaukee, Wis. – November 7, 2017** – In an effort to bridge the gap between generations, bring together common interests and inspire creativity, Ovation Communities is taking part in the student artist-in-residence program in partnership with University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee that is mutually beneficial for both students and their elders. In this groundbreaking program currently in its third year, Ovation Chai Point provides room and board, and an open studio in which the student may create art, share it with others and organize arts programming for residents.

The program, led by UWM professor Anne Basting, was developed in partnership with the UWM Creative Trust, an alliance committed to fostering life-long learning through the arts, and transforming aging in the process. The student artist-in-residence program partnership with UWM is the first of its kind in Milwaukee and only the second in the U.S.

In the Netherlands, senior living organizations have been running similar programs for years, and have found that when elders spend time with youth, they live longer and with better qualities of life. In addition to health benefits, such as fighting dementia and even reducing blood pressure, the program provides opportunities for residents to exercise their creativity and stay connected to the world outside of the community.

“People come to Ovation Communities to live life to the fullest, and it’s programs like this that help us continue living and learning,” said Tricia Cohn, Executive Director at Ovation Chai Point. “Being around young people keeps us ageless and keeps us going. They bring in a different kind of energy, and to see young people living with us, growing and blossoming is very inspiring.”

In the open studio at Ovation Chai Point, residents are welcome to come observe the artist while they’re working, engage in conversation and even create some artwork of their own. Here, the artist has the rare opportunity to connect with and learn from their elders.





Ovation Communities selected Christina Theobald, an art student at University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, as this year’s artist-in-residence at Ovation Chai Point. Theobald, who specializes in painting, has primarily worked with youth and teens in the past. She says the program is a way to engage with a new, less familiar community and put the skills she’s been learning in school into action.

“Living and working at Ovation Chai Point, I hope to gain as much knowledge and wisdom from the residents as possible,” said Theobald. “I’m incredibly grateful for this opportunity and to be surrounded by so many kind, supportive people. I can’t wait to see the products of our creative collaborations.”

The UWM partnership includes four other senior living organizations in Milwaukee. So far each of Ovation Chai Point’s artist-in-residence recipients have been art students, but Cohn hopes to bring in students from other disciplines, such as music or dance, in the future. This, she believes, will help residents explore even more forms of inner creativity.

“Being in an urban setting and having the arts surrounding us is one factor that sets Ovation Chai Point apart,” said Cohn. “Everyone has creativity inside of them. When you’re learning and exercising your creativity, that’s when life gets fun and interesting.”

### **About Ovation Communities**

Founded in 1906, Ovation Communities is a Jewish faith-based organization, and offers a full continuum of senior living and care options, from independent apartments to rehabilitation and skilled nursing services. Comprised of three locations – Ovation Jewish Home, Ovation Chai Point, and Ovation Sarah Chudnow – Ovation Communities provides outstanding care and vibrant living environments intended to celebrate independent lifestyles. Ovation Communities welcomes residents of all faiths. For more information visit [www.ovation.org](http://www.ovation.org).

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