



TEAM WATERCOLOURING

ART & CREATIVE
EXPRESSION

DEPARTMENT

Faculty of Arts,
Office of the Dean

CAMPUS

Point Grey

FUNDING YEAR

2019

ABOUT HWIP

The Healthy Workplace Initiatives Program (HWIP) is an annual fund available to UBC departments and units to support grassroots activities that promote wellbeing in the workplace. The program provides start-up funds and support for health-related, sustainable initiatives.

www.hr.ubc.ca/hwip

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The Office of the Dean in the Faculty of Arts contracted with a local company to hold a team-building workshop focused on art and mental health. The two hour long session held on campus consisted mostly of individual painting time as participants learned and practiced basic watercolour techniques, but also had a team building component as people conversed while painting their various pieces.

At the end of the workshop, a framed mural was created by putting together one piece from each team member. The collaborative team mural now hangs in the central office. A set of paints and cards were given to each staff member to take home so that they could continue the healthy habit of de-stressing through painting.

“Thanks again for organizing [the workshop]. It was fun! My daughter and I have been painting a lot all weekend, including a birthday card for a friend of mine. Truly, I never would have thought I would ever paint a card for anyone! But it was fun to paint and bringing home the watercolors was really neat. They are still on our kitchen table to be used again.”

Staff member

VALUABLE OUTCOMES

Through this workshop, staff members learned a new skill to de-stress and express themselves creatively.

It brought the whole team together, including those who work in separate physical spaces. Connections were made and staff expressed appreciation for being together in the same space and having informal time together.



KEY TO SUCCESS

“For us, the really key piece was making sure we had that leadership buy-in from the beginning. And we also wanted to have that conversation about whether we had their buy-in to continue it after the fact.”

Leadership not only matched the HWIP funding, but they also supported the workshop being held during work hours and on campus to reduce barriers to participation. Everyone who was interested was able to attend.

“Because if people are happier or if they feel supported, they work better. They do better work. So it’s not just about how they feel, it’s also that you’re going to get better work out them because they feel supported and appreciated.”

UBC WELLBEING
STRATEGIC
FRAMEWORK
PRIORITY AREAS

Mental Health &
Resilience

Social Connection

Built & Natural
Environments

wellbeing.ubc.ca/framework

SUSTAINABILITY

The watercolouring workshop generated lots of excitement and enthusiasm among team members to continue painting together.

They plan to continue holding informal drop in painting sessions at the office.

ADVICE FOR FUTURE HWIP GRANTEES

1

Make a value proposition to gain leadership support

Communicate with your leadership what it is you want to do and why. Explain how will it help not only the staff, but the work as well. “[Our leadership] has a commitment to mental health, and so making the connection to this with the art workshop was key.”

2

Plan to follow up on one time events

“Having a plan and support to follow up on the one time event is key. Otherwise, people would be asking what’s the point? There were immediately questions about when we would do it again or what’s next, and it was good to be able to answer and show we had leadership support to continue or do it again.”