

Nashua artist to kindle creativity in memory loss

NASHUA - One of the city's artists has a new business on Main Street, where she will teach art classes to those with Alzheimer's and dementia.

Healing in Color, founded in May by Dominique Boutaud, opened its 120 Main St., Suite 104, studio Friday and is now accepting students.

Boutaud said she decided to focus on helping those with Alzheimer's and dementia because they often feel alone or left out of society.

"They were involved in society before, so they should be able to stay inside society," she said.

"I have always had a very good relationship with elderly people, and I have always thought they had wisdom - giving good advice, living in peace - because they find a place in their life where they've received so many experiences that they live their lives happy," Boutaud said.

Boutaud, who is also an art teacher at Second Nature Academy in Nashua, has won a multitude of awards internationally for her work - including, most recently, a silver medal and diploma from La Societe Academique Arts, Sciences, Lettres in 2014. This French academic society gives yearly awards of honor for men and women of merit in the fields of art, science or liberal arts.

Boutaud, who speaks animatedly, exudes optimism.

"I started painting when I was born," she said with a laugh.

"My father was an artist, too. I've always liked to create, and I find quietness in doing arts."

Originally from Nice, France, Boutaud moved to Massachusetts in 1996 with her then-husband, and eventually made her way to Nashua.

"For me," Boutaud said, "art is a way to express myself and find beauty in life."

Boutaud said she has volunteered much of her life, including for the Red Cross in France. She is also a certified dementia practitioner and a certified OMA dementia facilitator.

She noted that her services are not limited to those with Alzheimer's and dementia - she also wants to help veterans and children with incarcerated parents.

"My goal is to give people the possibility to become independent in creativity," she said. "I don't want them to be dependent on me - I only want them to propose some activities, practice, and develop the ability to do so independently.

"It is like you are in a restaurant - the waiter does not help you; they serve you."

Those interested in taking classes from Healing in Color can call 577-1946, email healingincolor@gmail.com or visit the studio at 120 Main St., Suite 104.

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