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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

May 1, 2013

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**Art Exhibition & Education Highlight ADMH's Promotion of  
National Mental Health Month**

MONTGOMERY – Each year the Alabama Department of Mental Health joins statewide and national organizations to promote National Mental Health Month, observed in May. Throughout the month, various advocacy organizations will host events statewide, and ADMH will present its 8<sup>th</sup> annual Capitol Showcase Consumer Art Exhibition.

Art Exhibition Details

More than 100 consumers around the state with mental illnesses, developmental disabilities, substance use disorders or co-occurring disorders will showcase their artwork throughout the month at the Capitol. The exhibition promotes consumer dignity and helps the public gain a better understanding of the individuals ADMH serves. This exhibition is about more than just the artists' work. They also have the opportunity to share their heartfelt testimonies about the obstacles they have overcome in their lives, why art is an important part of their recovery, and their own personal love of creating art.

The exhibition can be viewed in the Old Supreme Court Library in the Capitol May 1-30. Each day throughout the month, the department will also share pictures of consumer artwork, along with their accompanying stories, on ADMH's Facebook page at [www.facebook.com/ALMentalHealth](http://www.facebook.com/ALMentalHealth). Many of the pieces are also for sale, and posts will notate prices and how they can be purchased. A closing reception will be held for artists, their friends and family members on Thursday, May 30.

Information about National Mental Health Month

May is Mental Health Month was started 64 years ago by Mental Health America to raise awareness about mental health conditions and the importance of mental wellness for everyone. *Pathways to Wellness*, this year's theme for May is Mental Health Month, calls attention to strategies and approaches that help all Americans achieve wellness and good mental and overall health.

Dr. Wayne Lindstrom, president & CEO of Mental Health America says, "Using strategies that promote resiliency and strengthen mental health, and prevent mental health and substance use conditions, leads to improved general health and a healthier society: greater academic achievement by our children, a more productive economy and families that stay together."

It is always a good idea to take periodic stock of one's emotional well-being. A recent study noted that everyone should get their mental health checked as often as they get a physical. Many doctors routinely screen for mental health, which typically includes a series of questions about lifestyle, eating and drinking habits and mental wellness. However, a checkup doesn't necessarily require a special trip to the doctor as there are also online screening tools available.

(more)

In addition, fact sheets about mental and overall health are available on Mental Health America's website at [www.mentalhealthamerica.net/go/may](http://www.mentalhealthamerica.net/go/may). An electronic calendar with daily tips on advancing pathways to wellness can also be found there.

In Alabama, ADMH serves more than 100,000 people per year with mental illnesses through community contract providers and more than 2,000 people per year in state hospitals. While mental health conditions are common, it is vital to spread the message that they are also extremely treatable.

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### RESOURCES

For more information about ADMH's 8<sup>th</sup> annual Capitol Showcase Consumer Art Exhibition, please contact the Office of Public Information and Community Relations at 334-242-3417.

Information about mental health services can be obtained by contacting ADMH at 334-242-3417 or by visiting us online at [www.mh.alabama.gov](http://www.mh.alabama.gov).