



Dear Town of Smithtown Youth Bureau participants,

All of us have experienced the effects of a global pandemic; we may be feeling isolated and lonely, despite the fact that “we’re in this together.” We have been separated in a way that is unprecedented in our lifetime. And though it feels like it may last forever, we all know that it will end, and we will be able to be together once more. Now try to imagine that isolation while the rest of the world is not locked down, imagine it’s your birthday or Christmas, or on a beautiful Sunday afternoon. That is the reality for many people who are in an institution. That isolation may lead to feelings of loneliness, despair, and shame about being “different” from everyone else. We want to remind everyone that they are not alone, and that being different also means being an original and unique.

HALI’s Creative Connections campaign connects with our community experiencing loneliness through letters, pictures, drawings, poetry, and art that can be delivered to and kept by people held in these lonely places. We want to remind everyone that they are not alone; we care, and we hold hope when someone may need support. Creative Connections will hand deliver these cards, notes, and pieces of art to people in Pilgrim Psychiatric Center. *To reach every person and keep our campaign going, we will need 275 letters each month.*

If you are interested in participating, we ask that your creation be about the size of a postcard or greeting card. Please send kind messages which inspire hope at difficult times, and address your creations to:

Hands Across Long Island
Attn: Emily Vaianella
159 Brightside Avenue
Central Islip, NY, 11722

If you are looking to complete community service hours toward school, please include your name and email address in the envelope in which you send your letter, so we can award you with a certificate of participation. Completion of 3 cards will earn one hour of community service, and the completion of 6 cards will earn 2 hours of community service.

Let’s work to lift each other out of dark places and support each other in embracing our authentic selves!

Thank you,
Emily Vaianella
Senior Wellness Specialist

With questions, please email Emily at: evaianella@hali88.org