

Inspiring Lives

35 year old Leah Turner is a walking example of overcoming the odds. Leah was born with a cognitive disability that affects her speech, eye movement and balance. “When I was born, the doctors said I would never walk or talk and probably wouldn’t live past the age of three,” she said. She has spent every day since proving them wrong.

Leah’s interest in art started earnestly with coloring, drawing and doodling. It was when she decided to take classes at the Soul Studio that she started getting into painting. Her enormous talent took over from there. “Painting makes me feel free,” she says. “I am in my zone and able to block out whatever else is going on.” Leah paints strictly from what is in her imagination and does not use pictures or other types of props.

With the help of her sister and brother in-law, Leah recently established a website called Dragonfly Art to show and sell her artwork. “To me, dragonflies are calm, pretty and serene,” she says. These are the types of sentiments Leah hopes to convey with her art. Leah is currently working on expanding her business so that people can purchase other types of merchandise such as coffee cups, shirts, pens, etc. with her paintings or photographs on them.

Leah has been receiving services from MORC for 13 years and receives support from her Support Coordinator Lervetris Clora and clinician Julie Frei. “Lervetris is so positive,” says Leah. “She helps me with my goals and plans and encourages me in everything I do.”

Leah is also very community minded and enjoys giving back to causes that are important to her, such as a local animal shelter that helps prevent animal cruelty. Last year when California was being ravaged by wildfires, Leah started an online donation campaign to support the victims. Currently, she is doing her part to support the Ukrainian people. “I am making paintings of the Ukraine flag and for every one that sells, I am donating half the money to support the victims of the war,” she says.

Leah uses her own experience to encourage others not to give up, even when faced with obstacles. “Don’t let anyone say you can’t do it,” she says.

Please check out Leah’s work by visiting, <https://dragonflyden.art/>

