

## **Wings of Care: A Season of Growth and What's Next for A Caregiver's Butterfly Garden**

On a warm June afternoon at the Saugatuck Center for the Arts, something extraordinary unfolded. It wasn't just an art installation—it was a gathering of hearts, hands, and stories. *A Caregiver's Butterfly Garden* hosted a reception after its second wave of the installation and what bloomed was more than color or creativity—it was connection.

The “Garden Party” brought together direct care workers, artists, and Michigan dignitaries who moved through the exhibit, taking in fluttering paper butterflies, video stories, and quiet places to reflect. Some paused to write notes of gratitude. Others recognized themselves—or someone they love—among the stories of care and resilience. It was an emotional, affirming experience. For many, it was the first time their caregiving journey felt seen and honored in such a public, artful way.

It's a beautiful visual way of celebrating direct care workers, recruiting [00:00:30] direct care workers, and also trying to address their mental wellness,” says Clare Luz, executive director of MSU IMPART Alliance.

Direct care worker, Jennifer Lugo, said at the event, “ When you see things like this, you understand that the community's getting engaged and coming together to celebrate us. To know personally that there is so much support means a lot to me because it just feels like it's getting bigger and bigger, and that's what we want.”

Tracy Anderson, communications director for MSU IMPART Alliance, adds, “Direct care work is really symbolic of what butterflies represent, joy, beauty journey in life. And if I were to just casually speak about direct care workers, I would be able to use all of those terms because it's really about seeing the joy and not just the direct care workers space, but those that they help support.”

The event marked more than a celebration; it was a call to action, a reminder that caregiving is both deeply personal and profoundly communal. From the stories captured on film to the butterflies folded by hand, each contribution stitched a new layer of humanity into the statewide fabric of this project.

Zahrah Resh, artist-in-residence for MSU IMPART Alliance, says about this project, “I feel my life has a purpose. My art has a purpose and has meaning; and I love it when people just say, oh, it's so beautiful. That's fine with me when I build something. It is for them.”

And now, the wings are extending further.

As of July 1, we're proud to announce the launch of *Butterfly Kits*—beautiful, hands-on art kits designed so that direct care workers, anywhere in Michigan, can participate. Each kit includes simple instructions and materials for making paper butterflies to be included in Impart Alliance's *A Caregiver's Butterfly Garden* exhibits. These butterflies are meant to honor direct care workers, offering mental health support and advocacy for their profession.

**Butterfly Kits are available to [ORDER NOW](#).**

Next on the horizon is our upcoming [A Caregiver's Butterfly Garden](#) installation at the **City of East Lansing's Hannah Community Center**, opening **Wednesday, November 13**, with a public reception and celebration. This will be a powerful continuation of the work started in

Saugatuck, showcasing new voices and deeper engagement at a venue deeply rooted in community life. The exhibit will run through April 2026.

We hope you'll join us in East Lansing for this moving experience—and bring someone with you who could use a moment of reflection, gratitude, or inspiration. More details to come!

Looking ahead to 2026, we are now **seeking three additional host sites** across Michigan to carry the torch of this growing movement. Art centers, libraries, healthcare organizations, community spaces—if you believe in honoring the work of caregivers and creating space for stories of compassion, we want to hear from you.

**[SUBMIT A HOST SITE INTEREST FORM.](#)**

From a single idea, *A Caregiver's Butterfly Garden* has grown into a statewide journey of art, advocacy, and appreciation. With every folded wing and every shared story, we are shaping a more caring Michigan—together.