2016 Programs of Excellence Awards

February 2017
NISC Senior Center Programming Awards
2016 Programs of Excellence Awards

NCOA’s National Institute of Senior Centers (NISC) Programs of Excellence Awards are designed to honor and promote outstanding efforts made by senior centers throughout the nation to offer innovative, creative, and replicable programs for older adults.

A NISC Committee selected the award winners from 99 nominations. Six award winners, along with six honorable mentions, were chosen. The complete listing of the 99 submitted programs is included in the booklet as a NISC member benefit. Each program is proof of the important work that happens at senior centers.

Entries were accepted in the following six categories:

1. **Educational:** Programs designed to educate seniors. Examples may include new and unique classes, technology, legislative, or literary programs.

2. **Expressive & Creative Arts:** Programs related to visual or performing arts.

3. **Fundraising:** Programs designed to generate revenue for the senior center.

4. **Leadership, Civic Engagement, & Community Development:** Programs to increase community involvement and develop strong leaders and volunteers.

5. **Nutrition, Fitness, & Health Promotion:** Programs designed to improve the health of seniors through health-related programs, lectures, and screenings.

6. **Special Events:** Social Programs designed as one-time events, may be inter-generational, musical, artistic, thematic, seasonal, or patriotic events.

This year’s award-winning programming includes fundraising events held in a parking lot or at a Grand Gala; strategies to be more inclusive through an LGBT Senior Alliance or by exploring cultures in a Diversity Workshop; ideas to connect to your community by hosting a community aging conference, a college/senior center health education series, a senior walk, or a garden expo; intergenerational ideas such as holding a memoir writing experience; and you’ll find tips on having fun with a drumming group along with a creative way to construct the drums.

NISC members have access to all 99 submitted program ideas. Become a member to see all programming submitted. You may find a new program that will be a winner for your participants. Excellent programming ideas are found throughout the NISC member booklet, and you might try starting your own Meet the Candidates Forum, connecting to volunteers through a Volunteer Fair or by beginning a Lifelong Leaders Program, hosting a fashion show like Project ReRunway, or leading a new educational program like Express Learning or Minds in Motion.

Look for your opportunity to be part of the next NISC Programs of Excellence Awards competition and share your best programming idea to inspire others during Senior Center Month.
Table of Contents

FUNDRAISING AWARD WINNER ........................................................................................................... 4
  PARKING LOT GARAGE SALE ................................................................................................................. 4
  Malley Senior Recreation Center, Englewood, CO ................................................................................. 4

FUNDRAISING HONORABLE MENTION ................................................................................................. 5
  GRAND GALA 2016: HAVANA NIGHTS ................................................................................................. 5
  Senior Center, Inc., Charlottesville, VA ................................................................................................. 5

SPECIAL EVENTS AWARD WINNER ................................................................................................... 6
  SENIOR ENRICHMENT DAY ................................................................................................................... 6
  Spartanburg County Parks Department: 50+ Wellness, Spartanburg, SC ............................................. 6

SPECIAL EVENTS HONORABLE MENTION ...................................................................................... 7
  15TH ANNIVERSARY OF LGBT SENIOR ALLIANCE ......................................................................... 7
  Madison Senior Center, Madison, WI .................................................................................................... 7

NUTRITION, FITNESS AND HEALTH PROMOTION AWARD WINNER .............................................. 8
  COMMUNITY GARDEN EXPO ............................................................................................................. 8
  Frank Bailey Senior Center, Riverdale, GA ............................................................................................ 8

NUTRITION, FITNESS AND HEALTH PROMOTION HONORABLE MENTION .................................. 9
  SENIOR WALK/STROLL IN COLLABORATION WITH KAISER PERMANENTE .................................. 9
  J. Charley Griswell Senior Center, Jonesboro, GA .............................................................................. 9

EDUCATION AWARD WINNER ........................................................................................................... 10
  DIVERSITY WORKSHOPS - AN EXPLORATION OF CULTURES AND CUSTOMS ................................. 10
  SNAP of Eastern Queens Innovative Senior Center, Queens Village, NY ............................................. 10

EDUCATION HONORABLE MENTION ................................................................................................ 11
  GETTING TO KNOW YOU SERIES ...................................................................................................... 11
  Margaret Schweinhaut Senior Center, Silver Spring, MD ...................................................................... 11

LEADERSHIP, CIVIC ENGAGEMENT AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AWARD WINNER ................... 12
  GENERATIONAL MEMOIR PROJECT .................................................................................................. 12
  Vesper Hall, Blue Springs, MO ............................................................................................................ 12

LEADERSHIP, CIVIC ENGAGEMENT AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT HONORABLE MENTION ............ 13
  "HEALTH & WELLNESS" EDUCATIONAL SERIES ............................................................................ 13
  Salvatore Mancini Resource & Activity Center, North Providence, RI .............................................. 13

EXPRESSIVE AND CREATIVE ARTS AWARD WINNER ...................................................................... 14
  COMMUNITY DRUMMING EVENTS/BUILD YOUR OWN DRUM ....................................................... 14
  Mill Race Center, Columbus, IN ......................................................................................................... 14

EXPRESSIVE AND CREATIVE ARTS HONORABLE MENTION ............................................................. 15
  REMEMBERING THE DREAM .............................................................................................................. 15
  Indian Head Senior Center, Indian Head, MD ...................................................................................... 15

THANK YOU! .......................................................................................................................................... 16
So you cleaned the house and now you have stuff to sell? Well, we have just the event to help you out. The Malley Senior Recreation Center hosted a Parking Lot Garage Sale in June 2016 and it was a hit! It’s a win-win situation! The event provides an opportunity for seniors in the community to sell their used items just like as if they were having a garage sale at their home. However, they may live in an apartment, a gated community, would rather not have people come to their home or just don’t have enough items to warrant a personal garage sale. For Malley it allows the Center to provide a community event, bring in revenue and provide a service to the seniors. How does it work? Malley’s large parking lot has 48 spots. We “rent” the spots to the senior vendors for the day at $20 each and $10 for an 8 foot table if need. The vendors then bring their items during set-up time, sell their items throughout the day and then take what they don’t sell back home with them or to a local donation center. The Malley Staff takes care of the registrations, advertising of the event, safety, providing of tables, the concession stand for snacks and drinks, plus the final clean up. One person’s junk is another person’s treasure! We find that is true at this community event.

The Parking Lot Garage Sale is not only creative it is different than most senior events. It provides an avenue for seniors to make money while cleaning their house. Plus, it becomes an intergenerational connection because it is open to people of all ages come to shop.

**Number of Staff/Volunteers Required:** 4 staff and 8 volunteers  
**Expense:** $1,103  
**Revenue:** $120  
**Net:** $983 Profit

**Contact:** Cheryl Adamson, Malley Senior Recreation Center - Englewood, CO  
cadamson@englewoodco.gov
Fundraising Honorable Mention
Grand Gala 2016:
Havana Nights

Senior Center, Inc., Charlottesville, VA

The annual Grand Gala is a destination-themed event to benefit the Senior Center’s mission to positively impact our community by creating opportunities for healthy aging. Italy, France, Cuba – having a different “destination” theme each year not only makes for a great party, it also ties into the Center’s travel program. This event is a reflection of what the Center is all about - a gala that is fun, self-supporting, and enjoyable for people of all ages. On February 25, 2016, the Grand Gala: Havana Nights was infused with Caribbean rhythms, island flavors, tropical colors, and the captivating charm of Cuba. Guests enjoyed themed drinks, dinner, and dessert; games of Double 9 Dominoes and Cubilete Dice; dancing to Big Ray & The Kool Kats; La Lotería Cubana Raffle, and Raise Your Maraca to Fund Healthy Aging. The Gala exceeded its marketing and financial goals, enhancing the Senior Center brand, raising awareness about healthy aging, and creating opportunities for the local community to engage more deeply with our organization as volunteers, guests, and contributors. Specifically, Gala marketing touched 1,000 invited households, 300 attendees, 50 volunteers, and thousands through TV and radio ads. Financially, the 2016 Grand Gala produced a phenomenal $165,000 in unrestricted funds for the Center, thanks to 26 sponsorships, 50 individual tickets, 15 program ads, 73 raffle tickets, and 90 donors who contributed $78,000 by raising their maracas to Fund Healthy Aging.

In just its second year, the Grand Gala was one of the top-earning events in our community, despite several challenges. Charlottesville has hundreds of organizations and many longstanding event fundraisers each year. Events must compete for attendees, such as a 2016 championship UVA basketball game scheduled for the same night as the Gala. To stand out, we replaced the typical silent/live auction with a highly-themed raffle and powerful call-to-action. More broadly, there are often limiting misperceptions about “senior center” events. To counter this, we intentionally plan a fun event, supported by engaging marketing that always emphasizes the Center’s mission.

Number of Staff/Volunteers Required: 70
Expense: $42,500 Revenue: $207,500 Net: $165,000

Contact: Kirstin Fritz, Senior Center, Inc. - Charlottesville, VA
kirstin@seniorcenterinc.org
Special Events
Award Winner
Senior Enrichment Day

Spartanburg County Parks Department: 50+ Wellness, Spartanburg, SC

Senior Enrichment Day occurred on May 10, 2016 at Cleveland Park in Spartanburg, SC. This special event occurred in May because May is Older Americans Month. The purpose of the event was to provide seniors with the knowledge they need to have a life full of vitality. This was done by bringing together professionals in the senior industry: educators, medical experts, and entertainers.

Senior Enrichment Day was designed as a conference day for seniors. There was a keynote speaker, 4 sessions comprised of 5 classes each, and a lunch with entertainment. During the closing time period, door prizes were given out and evaluations were collected. The classes offered included: physical-dance and yard games; cognitive- home safety, fall prevention, healthy eating on a budget, Andy Griffith trivia, and brain health; and hobbies- bird watching, storytelling, fishing, and button art. In addition, there were classes that encouraged people to re-imagine their lives post-retirement, to seek out intergenerational opportunities, and to celebrate who they are at their age.

A vendor fair occurred during lunch. This allowed participants to learn about services in the community. We asked each vendor to pay $25 to help offset the cost of lunch. Each vendor was also asked to bring a door prize. This was a partnership between Spartanburg County Parks and local agencies. Over 150 seniors were able to attend free of charge.

According to the Activity Theory, a person must be as physically, cognitively, and socially active as possible in order to achieve full vitality. The conference style of Senior Enrichment Day allowed participants to educate themselves about important issues, do physical assessments, and try out hobbies. The social atmosphere allowed participants to have conversations with leaders in the senior industry (medical and professional) without pressure. Finally, the event was free to all seniors to access this valuable information.

Number of Staff/Volunteers Required: 20
Expense: $1212.76 Revenue: $1,000 Net loss/cost: $212.76

Contact: Bates McKinney, Spartanburg County Parks Department: 50+ Wellness - Spartanburg, SC bates.mckinney@spartanburgparks.org
In the Summer of 2001 the Madison Senior Center and OutReach, Inc. (an LGBT Center) began a collaboration that sought to serve the interests and needs of LGBT senior adults. These two agencies formed a group of interested people to provide requested social activities for older (over 45) seniors. This self directed team, called the LGBT Senior Alliance, planned and organized programs and advocated for LGBT senior adults.

Quarterly social events are held at the Madison Senior Center with trips and other special events held almost monthly, coordinated by the team. Meals with invited speakers, emphasizing LGBT leaders, authors and historians, and/or music have been successful to attract LGBT seniors, their friends and families. Additional advocacy resulted in both the City of Madison and the County AAA providing funding for a half time LGBT senior advocate who provides information and referral to important social services to members of the LGBT senior population. The 15TH anniversary on September 29, 2016, celebrates the partnership, validates the LGBT senior population and encourages others who might benefit from this program to join us.

The Administration on Aging identified LGBT seniors as a target population for Older Americans Act funds and programs. The National LGBT Health and Aging Center report identifies isolation, finding friendships, caregiving and health as the biggest issues older gay persons face. A unidentified lesbian asks, "Who will be there for us, who will help care for us without judgment?" This program is a national model both as a collaboration and as a self directed team, highlighting the LGBT senior population and developing activities that meet their interests. This advocacy also expanded awareness, visibility and made resources available to the population.

**Number of Staff/Volunteers Required:** agency staff (2) and the self directed team (6).

**Expense:** Meals, speaker and activity fees ~ $1,500 annually

**Revenue:** Participant fees, grant funds~$1,500 annually

**Net:** break even, if possible

**Contact:** Christine Beatty, Madison Senior Center - Madison, WI

cbeatty@cityofmadison.com
Nutrition, Fitness and Health Promotion Award Winner
Community Garden Expo
Frank Bailey Senior Center, Riverdale, GA

The Community Garden at Frank Bailey Senior Center is a catalyst for community and social interaction. It creates opportunity for recreation, exercise, therapy and education for our seniors. On July 8, 2016 the members of the garden club presented their first Garden Expo. They invited Master Gardeners from Clayton County Extension Services to speak on maintaining a healthy garden and how to create a container garden. The event began with a showcase of the beautiful garden which consisted of fruits, vegetables and flowers. They then played a game called "Name The Plant" which enabled the visitors to be actively involved in the garden. This was followed by a 10 minute presentation on community gardening and then members were invited to speak on "What I've learned and how I've benefited from being involved with the garden."

The garden members were very excited about the garden experience and what they had learned which will enable them to be able to grow their own fresh produce. Throughout the rest of the day the participants were able to enjoy light refreshments, talk one on one with the Master Gardeners and enjoy the beauty of the garden. At the end of the event some items such as garden gloves and hand tools were given away as door prizes.

The primary reason for establishing a community garden at Frank Bailey Senior Center was to promote a healthy lifestyle and offer a place for socialization for the seniors. The garden expo afforded them both health education and physical activity. The seniors were able to walk through the beautiful garden and talk with others about the produce they had planted and the joy of seeing the results. As the garden continues to grow more seniors are able to learn how to grow healthy food.

**Number of Staff/Volunteers Required:** There was a total of eight volunteers and staff

**Expense:** $150

**Contact:** Elaine Jackson, Frank Bailey Senior Center - Riverdale, GA
elaine.jackson@claytoncountyga.gov
Nutrition, Fitness and Health Promotion
Honorable Mention

Senior Walk/Stroll in Collaboration with Kaiser Permanente

J. Charley Griswell Senior Center, Jonesboro, GA

The J. Charley Griswell Senior Center created the Senior Walk and Stroll in conjunction with Kaiser Permanente which encouraged our seniors to challenge themselves and live healthier lives by walking. Staff supported our seniors every step of the way by walking alongside with them. The program lasted six weeks and each week provided a new challenge while they fellow-shipped and encouraged each other during their journey. The 80 participants who ranged in ages 55 to 90, walked at their personal pace while outdoors experiencing nature’s beauty and the serenity of autumn. Most members began by power walking 1.5 miles and ended the program with a 6-mile walk. One week they walked in honor of survivors, and in remembrance of those affected by breast cancer. The seniors tracked the steps they took throughout the week with pedometers provided by Kaiser. Staff assisted them with logging their information and weight loss progress. Some seniors reported losing five pounds within the first week. At the end of each week, the participants enjoyed healthy, sugar-free snacks, gifts such as key chains, water bottles, and gift cards for meeting their goals. The program concluded with a bang! Participants were cheered on as they finished the last step. Each person received a gift certificate for completing the program.

The Senior Walk and Stroll provided our seniors with a fun, exciting, and purposeful program. It encouraged them to set goals and meet them with the support of staff and their peers. They were challenged and inspired by each other to leave their comfort zone by pushing themselves to try new things. Some had not walked in years and felt that this was the perfect time to begin. Seniors were dedicated to their health and creating long-term goals for wellness and future success in healthy living. It provided them with the tools to continue what they have learned and achieved.

**Number of Staff/Volunteers Required:** (4) Center employees and (2) Kaiser employees  
**Expense:** n/a-Pedometers, snacks and prizes were provided by Kaiser

**Contact:** Linda McKenzie, Center Manager, J. Charley Griswell Senior Center - Jonesboro, GA  
Linda.Mckenzie@claytoncountyga.gov
Education Award Winner

Diversity Workshops - An Exploration of Cultures and Customs

SNAP of Eastern Queens Innovative Senior Center, Queens Village, NY

As the ethnic makeup in our community has changed, the seniors attending the senior center voiced discomfort, unease and even anger at the growing immigrant population moving into the neighborhood. It became evident that education and an open, accepting dialogue was needed to break down the barriers among new neighbors who speak different languages and practice different customs and traditions. Key center staff decided that each month the senior center would hold a Diversity Workshop to highlight a particular ethnic holiday or event particular to that month. The staff facilitates a discussion on the history, practices and customs associated with each event. With education comes understanding and a lessening of distrust. Lively discussions, as well as various craft sessions, word games and ceremonies commemorating the holiday are also held. Every workshop concludes with a sampling of foods associated with that holiday, celebration or event allowing the participants to learn and eat together in an atmosphere of new awareness and appreciation for other cultures and religions. For example, in September we highlighted Hispanic Heritage Month with a short history followed by a game identifying famous Hispanic and Latino men and women who have contributed to the growth of our country. Lunch featured Chicken Fajitas with a dessert of Churros and Dulce de leche Ice Cream. The non-threatening environment of the Diversity Workshops allows for active engagement and a new empathy and acceptance of others by the senior participants.

Honoring the heritage, customs, culture and traditions of the myriad of groups that reside in our community opens the door to greater tolerance and acceptance of differences. Sensitive conversations that tackle stereotypes is the beginning of better understanding among neighbors. The Diversity Workshops at the SNAP of Eastern Queens Senior Center allow for honest dialogue in an atmosphere of trust and open-mindedness that models the hopes and dreams for the larger community and for a world living together in peace. Our seniors have expressed appreciation for the opportunity to open their hearts and minds to the changing neighborhood in which they reside.

**Number of Staff/Volunteers Required:** 2-3 staff members

**Expense:** $50.00/month

**Contact:** Marian Lewek, SNAP of Eastern Queens Innovative Senior Center - Queens Village, NY

mlewek8@aol.com
The Getting to Know You Series highlights our center participants based on their diversity, country of origin, or special interest and gives them a platform to share with other center participants. Every month a different participant or group of participants is featured. Our Getting to Know You Series launched in February of 2015 with Chinese Tea & Chat. We featured two participants born in different parts of China that immigrated over to the United States. Each participant shared their personal story including memories, struggles and triumphs. They shared pictures, maps and tastings from their home country. This first program started with 20 people attending. Since then, we have had India/Sri Lanka, Vietnamese, Hispanic and South America. As more and more people attended the Getting to Know You Series, more ideas were tossed around. More hidden talents and specialties were found. We discovered that we had two sisters (nuns) that have spent a good portion of their careers combating Human Trafficking. We also had a Professor that specialized in the Dead Sea Scrolls. Our last program had a crowd of approximately 50 people. Our participants have lived through the events outlined in our history books, they have unique stories about war, love, immigrating to the United States, life-long careers and passions, these stories should be heard. We have simply given them a platform to do it.

This idea was brought to me by a participant, Beverly Bryce. She has taken this idea of bringing our community closer together through our difference and passions. She facilitates, organizes each program of the Getting to Know You Series. As I stated above, our seniors have lived through the events outlined in our history books. We give them a platform to let their stories be heard to those in attendance to do with as they see fit, which could be that they tell another person who tells another person and so on. A living record of history. Amazing.

**Number of Staff/Volunteers Required:** 1 Facilitator with approximately 2 additional Volunteers for each program.

**Expense:** <$20 per program  
**Revenue:** $0  
**Net:** $20 per program

**Contact:** Amanda Defilippo, Margaret Schweinhaut Senior Center - Silver Spring, MD  
amanda.defilippo@montgomerycountymd.gov
Leadership, Civic Engagement and Community Development Award Winner

Generational Memoir Project

Vesper Hall, Blue Springs, MO

Mini-Memoir Project - Blue Springs area older adults had the opportunity to build new relationships and have their history recorded as a keep-sake memoir by Blue Springs Freshman Literature and Composition Students. Over 70, older adults met with AP (Advanced Placement) Lit & Comp students to answer questions and share stories about their personal life experiences. Students and seniors were pre-matched and able to exchange names and basic information about each other through a questionnaire prior to meeting. There were up to three, 30-45 minute interviews with three or more different students. With the guidance of their teachers, the end result being a short biography/memoir developed by the students. Participating adults received their own copy at a reception that was held at a later date. Students read the memoirs they wrote to the crowd of over 300.

The idea for the Mini-Memoirs Project was presented to Blue Springs Parks & Recreation staff from the Freshman Center teachers when students were given the assignment of reading the classic Charles Dickens novel, Great Expectations. After discussing the book, it was suggested that students could benefit by hearing from area senior adults about their life choices. Students found the classic novel's present day relevance by connecting it to their own community through conducting the interviews.

The inaugural 2015 Mini-Memoirs Project was well received and allowed youth and area senior adults to form unique relationships with one another and create some lasting memories. Many of the same Senior Adults as well as many more participated in the 2016 and now annual event. One of the teachers proclaimed the interview day to be the best of her teaching career. Many of the Seniors families said they enjoy having a story about their loved one in print to pass down to the next generation.

Number of Staff/Volunteers Required: 1 Administrator - Clerical Staff help from registration
Expense: 0 Revenue: 0 Net: 0

Contact: Pam Buck, Vesper Hall, Blue Springs, MO pbuck@bluespringsgov.com
Leadership, Civic Engagement and Community Development
Honorable Mention

"Health & Wellness" Educational Series

Salvatore Mancini Resource & Activity Center,
North Providence, RI

Students of R.I. College's "Health & Wellness" Program offered this 8 week program on-site at the Senior Center. This partnership allowed students in the program to directly teach a variety of Health & Wellness programs to our members. These programs included: "Being a Social Butterfly" (the benefits of socializing); "Give Life a Shot/Get Vaccinated" (Communicable Diseases); "Delicious Microwave Meals in Minutes" (healthy microwave cooking); "Help Your Doctor Help You" (how to write your medical history); "Tips for a Successful Trip to the Doctor" (building relationships with medical/healthcare system); "Get your Smile On" (happiness & mindfulness); "Snacking is Good for You" (health snacking/6 meals a day); and "Let's Keep It Going" (how to keep motivated).

An RI College instructor, our Program Coordinator and our part-time nurse developed the wellness subjects to be presented and the students developed the classes. The content of each class was reviewed by the RI College instructor and our part-time nurse prior to being presented to our members. This 8 week series of classes were one hour classes, 10:30 - 11:30 AM. Also included as part of this "Health & Wellness" Series was an 8 week "Strength Training is for You" program. One student from RI College's "Health & Wellness Program" conducted an 8 week internship on wellness & movement in older adults. The student completed participants assessment and assessed their areas of need and developed an individualized strength training program to be measured at the completion of the 8 week program. The student was on-site 3 days per week 5 hrs. per day, to assist and motivate. Many of the participants who attended the "Health & Wellness" weekly presentations, expanded their participation to the "Strength Training is for You" Program. These programs allowed college students the opportunity to interact with older adults and to share information about life enhancing topics which also instilled greater respect for both generations.

Number of Staff/Volunteers Required: 1 licensed RN to coordinate (80 hours)
Expense: in kind space/coffee at each session/part-time staff nurse Revenue: classes were "FREE"

Contact: Karen Testa Leone, Salvatore Mancini Resource & Activity Center - North Providence, RI; ktesta@smrac.com
Expressive and Creative Arts Award Winner

Community Drumming
Events/Build Your Own Drum

Mill Race Center, Columbus, IN

I was searching for a cost-effective way to bring a community drum circle to our center. We had a few commercially available drums, but we were limited to a small group due to the expense of purchasing more drums. I found "Remo Rhythm Lids" that are designed to be used on 5 gallon buckets. Unfortunately, it is not easy to hold a 5 gallon bucket, so we used two buckets fastened end-to-end, which created a comfortable height for seated playing. We turned the idea into a class where participants could build their own drum and finish the drum with decorative duct tape. A local disability service provider heard about the idea and asked if they could use the same design for their program. We combined our orders (they purchased 105 drum heads) and were able to negotiate a lower price for the Rhythm Lids. We capped our class at 20 people, and had to start a waiting list. The participants in the class were able to customize their drums, and we held an impromptu circle after completing the drums. Within the first week we did a combined drum circle with the disability service provider (100+ people) and also held a drum circle at our center, which gave our members the chance to play their own drums. We have already scheduled a second class so that more people will have an opportunity to build their own drums. See Mill Race Center Drumming Circle on Facebook. A group of six members trained to be drum circle facilitators. Combined with the fact that people are able to create music on an instrument that they built, this is an incredibly satisfying community experience on many levels.

Number of Staff/Volunteers Required: One staff person and two volunteers (building drums). The drum circles are facilitated by one staff person and up to 5 volunteers.
Expense: Each drum $47 worth - donated materials can bring this cost down. Revenue: Each participant paid $50 ($55 for non-members.) Net: $3 per drum.

Contact: Dan Mustard, Mill Race Center - Columbus, IN dmustard@millracecenter.org
Expressive and Creative Arts Honorable Mention

Remembering the Dream

Indian Head Senior Center, Indian Head, MD

The staff wanted to involve the seniors in celebrating Martin Luther King’s holiday, so it was more meaningful. To get the seniors involved with the process of remembering how they felt after hearing the I Have a Dream speech for the first time, we played a portion of the speech and asked the seniors to share the first word that came to mind after listening to speech. The process started out slow, but once people started sharing words, the activity became an outlet for expressing their feelings and sharing what they were doing on that momentous day.

One staff member wrote the words on a poster board; like change, peace, equal, hope, together, determination, love, transformation, prayer, humility, unity, forgiveness, comfort and power as the seniors shared. Once the words were written on the board, the seniors had the opportunity to use the words to create an impromptu phrase or poem. For example, one phrase was “through determination and love the transformation of peace brought us together”. We later transferred the words from the poster board to a canvas. We took a picture of the canvas and printed the picture on cardstock, so the seniors could make cards. Inside the cards the senior wrote their phrase or poems to keep or share. The seniors now have unique cards they created to validate and reinforce remembering the dream.

As the older population succumbs to aging, society and their families tend to dismiss their stories and memories. Our job, as senior center employees, is to provide an opportunity for our seniors to validate their past and present memories of prominent historical events. Remembering the Dream not only validated their shared memories through art, but also broaden the social communication skills among seniors.

Number of Staff/Volunteers Required: 2
Expense: $3 - $5 for canvas and cardstock

Contact: Cynthia L. Simmons, Indian Head Senior Center - Indian Head, MD
simmonsc@charlescountymd.gov
Thank You!

Thank you to the following National Institute of Senior Centers Best Practices Team members, who served as judges for the 2016 NISC Programs of Excellence Awards:

- **Alex Langley, Senior Center Manager**  
  Rocky Mount Parks and Recreation Department  
  Rocky Mount, NC

- **Jodi Rodriguez, Program Planner**  
  City of Westlake  
  Community Services Department  
  Westlake, OH

- **Lori Radice, General Manager – Nutrition and Wellness**  
  Hillsborough County Department of Aging Services  
  Tampa, FL

And a big Thank You! to **Jill Hall**, Division Chief, Senior Centers and Community Services Division, Baltimore County Department of Aging, Baltimore, MD, for chairing the Program Awards Committee.