2017 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 111 programming nominations. Seven award winners, along with seven honorable mentions, were chosen. There were also 49 entries in this year’s highlighted category, Marketing Strategies or Campaigns. Two professors from Winona State College judged this area. The complete listing of submissions will be available in two booklets as a NISC member benefit. Each program is proof of the important work that happens at senior centers.

Entries were accepted in the following seven categories and highlighted category:

1. Community Development, Leadership and Intergenerational – programs that increase community involvement in senior centers, enhance diversity appreciation and understanding, and develop strong leaders and volunteers.
2. Cultural Programs – programs that showcase performing and visual arts, music, and literature.
3. Fundraising: Programs designed to generate revenue for the senior center.
4. Health and Wellness – programs designed to improve the health of seniors through programs, screenings and education.
5. Nutrition – programs geared to improving nutritional health or combating malnutrition.
6. Special Events – programs designed as one-time events or projects. May be intergenerational, thematic, seasonal or patriotic.
7. Technology – programs that teach the use of technology, or use technology in program delivery.
   ❖ Highlighted Category: Marketing Strategies or Campaigns.

NISC members will have access to all submitted ideas. These programs may inspire you to tweak your current programming or add a new program that will be a winner for your participants. Excellent programming ideas are found throughout the booklet, and after reading, you might consider connecting to your community through an intergenerational Battle for the Ages Basketball Game or a fun Talent Show; you could raise funds through a Lucky Duck Race; or provide learning experiences through a hands-on approach to Diabetes Prevention or a fun educational cooking class or you might even decide to celebrate and explore a colorful cultural tradition and add a Holi-Hindu Celebration of Spring to your programming selections. The opportunities are endless.

Look for your next chance to be part of the NISC Programs of Excellence Awards competition and share your best programming idea to inspire others. Applications are accepted during Senior Center Month in September.

COVER: Holi-Hindu Celebration of Spring, Flower Mound Senior Center, Flower Mound, TX
# Table of Contents

- **Community Development, Leadership and Intergenerational Award Winner** ................................................................. 5
  - **Battle of the Ages: Intergenerational Basketball Game** ........................................................................................................ 5
    - Bykota Senior Center, Towson, MD ................................................................................................................................. 5
- **Community Development, Leadership and Intergenerational Honorable Mention** .............................................................. 7
  - **Southborough Trailblazers** .................................................................................................................................................. 7
    - Southborough Senior Center, Southborough, MA ............................................................................................................... 7
- **Cultural Programs Award Winner** ......................................................................................................................................... 9
  - **Bain’s Got Talent** ............................................................................................................................................................... 9
    - Bain 50+ Center, Columbia, MD ........................................................................................................................................ 9
- **Cultural Programs Honorable Mention** .............................................................................................................................. 11
  - **Polka and Pierogies** ......................................................................................................................................................... 11
    - Rosedale Senior Center, Rosedale, MD ............................................................................................................................... 11
- **Fundraising Award Winner** .................................................................................................................................................... 12
  - **Lucky Duck Race** ............................................................................................................................................................. 12
    - Rockport Council on Aging, Rockport, MA .......................................................................................................................... 12
- **Fundraising Honorable Mention** ........................................................................................................................................... 13
  - "**SoupéR Bowl**" Saturday .................................................................................................................................................... 13
    - Town of Groton Senior Center, Groton, CT ......................................................................................................................... 13
- **Health and Wellness Award Winner** ....................................................................................................................................... 14
  - **Derby Senior Center Health Corner: Diabetes 101 A Hands On Approach to a Healthier You** ................................................ 14
    - Derby Senior Center, Derby, KS ...................................................................................................................................... 14
- **Health and Wellness Honorable Mention** ........................................................................................................................... 15
  - **Fitbit Wellness Training Program** ..................................................................................................................................... 15
    - Newport 60+ Activity Center, Newport, OR ....................................................................................................................... 15
- **Nutrition Award Winner** ......................................................................................................................................................... 17
  - "**Fresh Bites**" - Nutrition/Cooking/Tasting Class .............................................................................................................. 17
    - Agudath Israel - Moriah Senior Center, New York, NY ...................................................................................................... 17
- **Nutrition Honorable Mention** ............................................................................................................................................... 18
  - Rigdely Senior Center Straw Bale Community Garden ........................................................................................................ 18
    - Rigdely Senior Center, Rigdely, TN ................................................................................................................................... 18
- **Special Events Award Winner** ................................................................................................................................................ 19
  - "**Who Matters**" A Multigenerational Photo & Story Project .............................................................................................. 19
    - Madison Senior Center, Madison, WI ................................................................................................................................ 19
Special Events Honorable Mention ................................................................. 21

HOLI - HINDU CELEBRATION OF SPRING ................................................................. 21
Flower Mound Senior Center, Flower Mound, TX ....................................................... 21

Technology Award Winner ...................................................................................... 22

THE SELFIE PROJECT .............................................................................................. 22
Old Bridge Senior Center, Old Bridge, NJ ................................................................. 22

Technology Honorable Mention .............................................................................. 23

VIRTUAL PROGRAMMING ....................................................................................... 23
Lexington Senior Services, Lexington, MA ............................................................... 23

Marketing Strategy or Campaign Award Winner ....................................................... 24

REIMAGINE AGING ................................................................................................. 24
Baltimore County Department of Aging, MD .............................................................. 24

Marketing Strategy or Campaign Honorable Mention .............................................. 26

GREENLEAF SUPPORTIVE DAY MARKETING CAMPAIGN .................................... 26
Amesbury COA, MA ................................................................................................. 26

Thank You! .............................................................................................................. 28
Community Development, Leadership and Intergenerational Award Winner

Battle of the Ages: Intergenerational Basketball Game

*Bykota Senior Center, Towson, MD*

With an initiative in 2017 of Reimagine Aging, Baltimore County Department of Aging decided to put that theme into motion! A group of more than 30 men aged 62-88 from our Bykota Senior Center took on members of the sophomore class from Loyola Blakefield Jesuit High School in an intergenerational game that was dubbed “A Battle for the Ages”. What better way to show that “age is just a number” than to pit these two age groups together and see who came out on top! (Hint - it wasn’t the high school students!)

On the big day, the crowds topped over 100 at Loyola’s gymnasium. There to cheer and energize the crowd were the Baltimore Orioles mascot in addition to a local broadcaster from Fox 45 News who served as our announcer. The Bykota team had their own vocal cheering section decked out in the center colors of green and white. During halftime, the Bykota ballroom dancers stole the show with a performance followed by an invitation to all attending to take the “dance” floor for impromptu lessons. The students and crowd cleared the benches to participate with the older adults. To see dancers, from age 2 to 90, moving to the music on the court was a beautiful sight to behold. At the close of the second
half, the score became tied. Rather than ending the game that way, both teams rushed to the referees to demand overtime. Bykota took the win with a thrilling 34-32 finish.

Showcasing an intergenerational event to the local community proved to be an educational tool for all involved. The players recognized perhaps their own inherent stereotypes towards younger or older age groups. The local community, regardless of what preconceived notions they possessed walking into the gym that day, left just talking about the exciting game. The ages of who scored a three pointer and who committed the most fouls didn’t matter. This program was significant because it proved to those there that day and in the press we received following, that age truly is just a number.

**Outcomes**: Raised awareness to the initiative, Reimaging Aging. Intergenerational event involving community. Good exposure for all ages involved. BCDA benefitted from the media coverage and event publications.

**Measurement Tools**: In addition to inviting older adults through our BCDA in-house marketing platforms, we also utilized both social (Facebook/Twitter/Instagram) and print media to invite the community at large. One Twitter post highlighting our event was re-tweeted by national sports broadcaster Jason La Canfora to his half million followers. A Baltimore Sun photographer and reporter came to interview the students and seniors and we received significant online and print coverage on the story. A YouTube video we put together after the game garnered one of our highest view counts online for a BCDA event.

Staff followed up with all of the players involved to survey their thoughts about the game before they played and after they played. Eighty seven percent (87%) of the high school students thought, prior to the game that the seniors would have limitations to playing. After the game, sixty two percent (62.5%) said the seniors were more competitive than they expected.

**Number of Staff/Volunteers Required**: Four (4) Staff Members  Fifteen (15) Volunteers  (6 Middle School Students/1 High School Student/3 College Students/Additional Adult Volunteers)

**Expenses**: $400.00  **Revenue**: $100.00  **Net**: about broke even - sponsored donated $250.00 to event

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Community Development, Leadership and Intergenerational Honorable Mention

Southborough Trailblazers
Southborough Senior Center
Southborough, MA

Trailblazers is a group of seniors who work together with a volunteer leader to develop activities to meet the interests of active older adults. In addition to a full array of programs at the Senior Center, there was an interest in programs utilizing local resources such as walking trails, wildlife, and conservation resources. This was discussed at a Council on Aging meeting and volunteers stepped forward to research local trail options and lead trail walks. These walks drew a wide variety of ages and abilities and an unexpected amount of participants. A professional was hired who provided equipment and instruction for snowshoeing, kayaking, and geocaching. This was a popular area of programming that needed to be pursued but with staff time was limited. Utilizing a volunteer leader who was willing to take on the role, do the research, and work with the COA Director and Program Coordinator, a whole new array of programs have been created. Clear guidelines and boundaries were outlined and the volunteer was empowered to pursue a wide variety of new options. To market this new venture, a letter was sent to individuals who had participated in the initial programs. They were invited to be part of a group who would create a whole new schedule of options for active seniors. Along with the volunteer leader, members of the group have also taken on researching and leading new adventures such as zip lining, horseback riding, hikes, cross country skiing, curling, and a very successful summer boating program at a local state park. Trailblazers has over 45 participants and has run over 40 programs over the past year and a half.

The Trailblazers grew out of a need for primarily outdoor active activities that seniors had requested and were not easily available. The program utilizes and empowers volunteer leaders who work with Senior Center staff to research, plan, and executed a variety of programs for active adults. The Trailblazers Group can be easily replicated and can be done with minimal cost, space, and staff time. The program not only empowers the group leader but has been expanded to utilize the group members as volunteers to research and executed more programs and activities. This program meets a need that was not being met for active seniors, develops and empowers volunteer leadership, does not add to already limited staff funding, and creates a sense of comradely with those who participate.

Outcomes: We were able to add a whole new dimension to our program schedule which has attracted a large number of new participants without adding staff to do so. Participants have gotten very involved in creating new activities for the program. The Trailblazers have also given the Senior Center a great public relations opportunity. Pictures of their activities are featured on our website, local blogs, twitter, and local newspapers.
Measurement Tools: The numbers have continues to grow every month. Feedback from participants as well has other town residents and public officials has been extremely positive.

Number of Staff/Volunteers Required: Minimal staff supervision by the COA Director and Program Coordinator. One volunteer group leader as well as volunteer assistants within the group.

Expenses: minimal cost unless buses are used which is not often. Revenue: zero Net: can be at a variety of price points

Contact: Pam LeFrancois
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If you think America’s Got Talent, then you would be pleasantly surprised at what great talents we have here at the Bain 50+ Center. The talent represented for this program reflected the classes and programs offered at the center. Each scheduled program received a personal invitation to participate from the Assistant Director. The following groups that were invited included: The Soul Line Dancers, The Gospel Choir, The Tap Dancers, Howard Community College Senior Choir, The Korean Dancers and The Country Line Dancers. The invitation was given two months in advance in order to give each group enough time to rehearse their routine and get excited about their presentation. Each group was allowed to perform between two and three songs. The show was filled with music, singing, dancing, comedy and excitement. Each group came wearing the same color, so that they would look uniformed. The program was free however; we had attendees to sign-up at the front desk in advance. The program was held in September in the fall season when most of our participants are back from vacation and looking forward to staying busy. We opened the doors a half hour before show time and served refreshments which was the only cost for this program. The attendees and the participants all shared how much they enjoyed the program.

The program is significant and worthy of an award because it gave the older adult community an opportunity to show case their hard work to the community, their family members and friends. Many shared that they felt valued once they had finished and loved the applause. They also enjoyed seeing how great the other groups were that performed. Lastly, it gave the non-participants and opportunity to see how much fun the other groups had and some said that they would join certain groups because the performers took away the fear for many.

Outcomes: The outcome for this program was a success for the center because it brought new faces out to see the performance and gave the members an opportunity to showcase their hard work. The benefit for the center was an opportunity to showcase who we are and what we have to offer the older adult community. We had over 100 people including the performers.
**Measurement Tools:** The observable measures that was used to measure the success of the program was the feedback from the audience along with the participants.

**Number of Staff/Volunteers Required:** We had four staff members and one volunteer. One staff was the host/ MC and we had two working a refreshment table. The other staff person was responsible for taking photos during the event.

**Expenses:** 119.82

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Cultural Programs
Honorable Mention

Polka and Pierogies
Rosedale Senior Center
Rosedale, MD

Every month I try to find something unusual or different to feature at our center, beginning with a Google search of "next month" is national month. January was National Polka Month, and a quick review of my membership roster reveals many Polish surnames. I contacted one of the top local accordionists who plays at many Polish events, and he helped me to find a volunteer to identify and prepare a few Polish dishes. The volunteer prepared and served pierogies (filled dumplings) and galumpkis (boiled cabbage leaves rolled and filled with a rice and meat mixture). The accordionist played several traditional polka tunes, and the attendees ate and danced the afternoon away. The event was promoted throughout the community and garnered a sell out crowd and some new center members.

This program was significant as it recognized the heritage of many members. It also attracted people from outside of our regular membership. I witnessed more than one "reunion" of friends/extended family who had not seen one another in many years; people who had grown up together in the old neighborhood and knew each other either through school, neighborhood or church. Even the accordionist reconnected with a few friends from his past.

Outcomes: The center benefitted by gaining some new members, and the current members benefitted by being able to reconnect with friends and traditions from their past.

Measurement Tools: The event sold out, members asked it we would do it again next year, and we received many positive comments and compliments afterward.

Number of Staff/Volunteers Required: 5

Expenses: $200  Revenue: $300  Net: $100

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Fundraising Award Winner

Lucky Duck Race

Rockport Council on Aging, Rockport, MA

In June, 2017, the Friends of Rockport Council on Aging hold a plastic duck race down a stream in Town. These plastic ducks are sold for $5.00 per duck. We sell approximately 900 ducks. All ages attend the race which takes less than 5 minutes. Prizes for the 1st, 2nd, 3rd, and 4th duck to cross the finish line. The children and adults enjoy the race.

This program is not only a fundraiser but also an intergenerational program in which grandparents bring their grandchildren to participate.

Outcomes: The outcome is that the Friends Group earns a substantial amount for their organization which in turn helps senior programs throughout the year.

Measurement Tools: The amount of profit the Friends Group made.

Number of Staff/Volunteers Required: 10 people

Expenses: $ 150.00  Revenue: $4,500.00  Net: $4,350.00

Contact: Diane Bertolino  
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The “Souper” Bowl Saturday is a fundraising event held the day before the Super Bowl Football game. This is a soup tasting fundraiser where the soup, bread, desserts and drinks are all donated from restaurants and suppliers in the area. Participants are able to come in and sample five of the soups and then if available, sample more. Restaurants who donate soup have a banner with their information on behind the soup station as well as having copies of their menus available for individuals to take. In addition, the seniors paint soup bowls that go to the first 150 people that attend. As part of the event, the staff raffles off sports memorabilia. The memorabilia is requested from professional teams and amateur sports teams. Items have included signed helmet from the Dallas Cowboys, a signed hockey puck from the Boston Bruins, a lacrosse stick from North Carolina and a signed basketball from the University of Connecticut women’s team. Towards the end of the evening, raffle tickets are pulled and winners announced so that they are able to take their item before the end of the event. If not present, they are called to pick up their items at a later time. This is a community wide event which has grown each year since inception.

This event is worthy of an award because it takes a soup tasting fundraiser and adds the sports aspect to it. The sports theme draws attention to the event to people in the community interested in the sports items, and families that have children interested in specific sports. Each year this event has grown. Different groups of seniors are involved through painting bowls to volunteering to serve soup. The community restaurants that support the event are featured in a monthly “Dine Out” program.

Outcomes: The goal of the program is to raise funds to support programs at the center. In the first year, the center raised $750. By the third year, the center raised almost $2000. This event has community members coming into the senior center. This event gets the seniors involved. They serve soup and manage the sports memorabilia raffle, and hand out soup bowls for the event.

Measurement Tools: The center used the net profit as one measure of success for the program. With no experience going into this, the center aimed for raising $1000 with this event. The first year raised $750, the second increased to about $1100 and the third year to $1600. The second measure was attendance. The number the first year was about 100 participants, the second year about 120 participants. We expected possibly 140 for the third year but jumped up to 175 participants.

Number of Staff/Volunteers Required: One Program Supervisor lead and approx 10 Volunteers


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Health and Wellness Award Winner

Derby Senior Center

Health Corner: Diabetes 101 A Hands On Approach to a Healthier You

Derby Senior Center, Derby, KS

The HCD program is a two-part course created to give both diabetic and pre-diabetic participants a hands on approach on how to manage diabetes. Part one of the course is taught by a certified diabetes educator on how to properly use a glucose monitor and is given a monitor for free to test on themselves. Pamphlets are handed to each student and reviewed to encourage questions in a group setting. Part two of the course consists of a certified nutritionist that provides a live cooking session to discuss different options of healthy food preparation. The students are allowed to assist in the preparation and sample their completed meals. Once complete the student takes home a prepared meal, cooler bag, ice pack, monitor, and various books and pamphlets.

This program is worthy of an award because most courses that teach diabetes only allow students to listen to a lecture and go home. By the time the student is home, they have forgotten key points mentioned in the class and still may not know how to use the monitor or fix their meals. This course allows them to participate, aiding in memory and activity functions that help to create a sense of responsibility to the student and the importance of their health.

Outcomes: The outcome of this program is to provide a healthy approach to combating diabetes and a hands on approach for diabetics and pre-diabetics to learn more about diabetes and how to properly manage it; The students all stated that they learned something about diabetes they had not heard before and some of them have been diabetic for over 30-40 years. There is always something missed and it helped to have a hands on approach; The Senior Center benefited by allowing others to know that we have a resource and that we are here to assist them.

Measurement Tools: We used information from the American Diabetes Association to provide data to the students. A Certified Nutritionist with the Sedgwick County Extension office provided knowledge and demonstration on the cooking matters. An RN from Via Christi hospital brought in national data for the students and reviewed diabetes monitor selections according to the students insurance.

Number of Staff/Volunteers Required: 1 staff, 3 volunteers (includes 1 RN, 1 Nutritionist)

Expenses: $560 Donated dollars from the Lions Club of Derby Revenue: Cost of the class, $5.00; $120 Revenue Net: Profit

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Health and Wellness
Honorable Mention
Fitbit Wellness Training Program
*Newport 60+ Activity Center
Newport, OR*

The Fitbit wellness training program consists of six one-hour classes and provides a Fitbit wristband. The Fitbit wristbands are designed to help each person to stay motivated and improve their health by recording steps taken, miles walked, heart rate and calories burned.

- **Week 1:** program overview, Fitbit operation instructions, gather general personal client Fitbit data, introduction of class participants & leader and discuss recording data totals per day.
- **Week 2:** Determine client baseline steps and miles. Talk about experiences. Discussion of possible individual and group goals, including SMART goals (Simple, Measurable, Attainable, Realistic, and Timely).
- **Week 3:** Guest speaker: a fitness instructor to introduce available 60+ center classes. Compare 1st and 2nd week and have open discussion on fitness/wellness goals.
- **Week 4:** Guest Speaker: Health Coach. Discussion of SMART goals.
- **Week 5:** Set goals: review previous goals, discuss accomplishments, class feedback etc.
- **Week 6:** Pictures, evaluation, group totals (steps, miles, calories), certification/awards. Share stories that we can use to describe what this program has done for them.

The Program was supported by the Friends of the Newport 60+ Activity Center. They purchased the 10 HR Fitbits for the program. With that support there was initially no costs associated with the program as the first 6 classes were led by a volunteer fitness instructor. The program was so successful that we wanted to continue so the last two classes were led by support staff.

This free Fitbit Program is offered to low income seniors to experience the benefits of walking, and provide the ability to track their daily progress. This program allows seniors to gain more knowledge of their health practices and also learn about technology. The program re-introduces mindfulness in their activity levels. They check their Fitbit throughout the day to see if they have accomplished their goals. They experience a renewed interested in their wellbeing and are inspired to continue on their path to walking wellness. The facilitator has reported that this program has been life-changing and has given hope to many.

**Outcomes:** The outcome of this program is the creation of a regular walking group. It has increased our annual trips by including hikes that are out of area. The primary outcome has been an increase of health awareness of all individuals attending the Fitbit class. Also, many have accomplished other personal goals that were set in the program. Many new friendships have occurred because of this supportive program.
Some of the class participants’ comments about the program were as follows:

- Mary --It makes you aware of the steps you take in a day. It inspires you to get up and move more. It is nice to get together with others who have common goals. It is amazing how far we walked as a group!
- Kenny--The class was really good. It builds your desire to try to beat your own record every day. It motivates you to go for walks and gives you goals to go for that you otherwise wouldn’t do. It is a good way to improve yourself. The leadership was good.
- Shirley-- The class kept me moving and working to get more exercise in. It was good for me. My kids were enthusiastic about me doing it. The trainers were pleasant and helpful.
- Barbara-- I liked the encouragement. I do better when I have other people around; I don’t have the self-discipline by myself.
- Our facility benefited by introducing this free innovative program to our area. We received tremendous positive feedback from participants and we are meeting our goal to provide inspirational wellness programs to low income seniors and to increase their health and wellness.

**Measurement Tools:** The tools were the Fitbit HR with charger. The observable measures were the weekly forms to document their miles, steps, comments and goals. Weekly group walking totals were shared and recorded on the map of America. We have walked across America and back! Evaluation program forms were used for feedback.

**Number of Staff/Volunteers Required:** 1

**Expenses:** 1,500.00 Provided by the Friends of the Newport 60+ Center  
**Revenue:** -0-  
**Net:** -0-  

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Nutrition Award Winner

"Fresh Bites"
Nutrition/Cooking/Tasting Class
Agudath Israel - Moriah Senior Center
New York, NY

The “Fresh Bites” Nutrition/Cooking/Tasting class was designed to provide seniors a fun and innovative way to learn about nutrition in a setting where they can ask questions and adapt the information being presented to their own set of circumstances. A Registered Dietician prepares fresh food in keeping with a monthly theme in front of the seniors, while discussing the nutritional benefits. The seniors are able to taste the finished products and take home copies of the recipes. Recipes are designed with seniors in mind regarding yield sizes and ease of preparation.

This class is particularly beneficial because it introduces fresh, healthy ingredients that the participants may or may not have been exposed to previously. It discusses current nutrition topics while in a less structured and more easygoing environment. Seniors are encouraged to try new things and learn how preparing fresh and healthy food is definitely within their abilities.

“Fresh Bites” is especially significant because as seniors age, food preparation becomes more difficult and nutrition suffers at a time when a healthy diet is most critical. Even seniors who think they are not interested in listening to lectures about what they should be eating, will be interested in watching a cooking demonstration and tasting class and will absorb the important health information in the process incidentally.

Outcomes: The outcome of this program is that the seniors leave the class with the knowledge and increased confidence that they can prepare fresh and healthy meals for themselves. We have seen heightened interest and awareness on a variety of important health and nutrition topics based on participation in these sessions.

Measurement Tools: Along with increasing attendance at these classes, which is in itself an indicator of success, we receive feedback from the seniors about which recipes they have tried preparing and at home and they are more communicative with the staff and their fellow seniors about their nutrition concerns. This class allows them the forum to open up a dialog that continues long after the sessions end.

Number of Staff/Volunteers Required: 1 Staff Person - A registered dietician (in our case, our consultant is also a Certified Diabetes Educator) 2 Volunteers to help with shopping for ingredients and plating and handing out samples for tasting. Expenses: Cost of Consultant to Teach the Class (In our case, $125) + Groceries (Varies) Revenue: $0 Net: Appx. $150-175 is spent per monthly session

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Nutrition Honorable Mention

Ridgely Senior Center Straw Bale Community Garden

*Ridgely Senior Center, Ridgely, TN*

With guidance from the Lake County University Extension office, the Ridgely, TN Senior Center has implemented a large community garden. One great thing about this garden is that it is wheelchair accessible and uses straw bales for the base. This allows participants of all mobility levels to join in the fun of gardening! Each year, the seniors work together to get the plants in the ground early spring and have maintained the garden for 3 seasons. They then use this produce to supplement the noon congregate meal as well as their own diets.

This program generates a twofold return from a modest investment: (1) nutritious food fit for consumption and (2) an activity with social, physical, and educational components. The latter may arguably be more significant than the former. Participants come together to work, to learn from one another, and to eventually enjoy the fruits of their labor.

**Outcomes:** One clear outcome is a tangible one: the food that is grown. The more significant outcome, the benefit to participants, is the activity that is stimulated by the project.

**Measurement Tools:** The measure is in the quality more than the quantity. The return is evident in the pride and pleasure of the participants as they consume the food that is grown.

**Number of Staff/Volunteers Required:** Several volunteers made this program a success. The agent and assistant from the Lake County Extension Office and the director from the senior center supervised the program. A total of ten senior volunteers keep the garden watered and gathered after the program.

**Expenses:** All supplies were donated with no cost to the senior center.

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"Who Matters", a Multigenerational Photo & Story Project was initially conceptualized at the Madison Senior Center with a partner, the Madison Public Library.

In August & September 2017, on two days of scheduled appointments, allowing walk-ins as well, photographs were taken of multigenerational relationships at the library in a wide open space full of natural light. A professional photographer coached, but mostly captured the magic as it happened among the participants - family, friends, co-workers, neighbors, brought together by bonds of family or friendship, mutual interests and talents, love and respect. There was only one rule: At least one person in the photo had to be 55 years of age or older and with another person of a different generation.

No other limitations were placed on ages, number of people, silly or serious, or anything else. As their pictures were captured, their stories and conversations were recorded by a local author during an on the spot interview. Simple stated, she asked, "What brought you here together today?" The resulting photo and story narrative will be exhibited through December in both the senior center and the public library which are located one block from each other. Different photographs at each site will encourage viewers to travel between the locations and enjoy staggered opening receptions. Plans are underway to build on this success and broaden the reach of this community project in 2018.

"Who Matters" is a unique community building event which created a moment in time and a place to consider who is important to you and more so, why? Through the act of planning to have pictures taken, diverse groups of people came together and stayed to explain why. This program acknowledges the importance of multigenerational bonds that strengthen a community, the uniqueness from which they are created and the enduring friendship, love and respect that sustain them throughout the years. Providing a comfortable setting, experienced facilitators and displays of artistic merit was uncomplicated yet created a significant message.

Outcomes: The emphasis on and engagement with the arts - specifically photography and writing - may be unique to older adults who are traditionally marginalized from artistic endeavors. Senior Center participants joyfully reaffirmed their relationships (and value) in a very tangible manner: They also received a keepsake photo and a copy of "their story". These simple treasures may become a part of the history of their families and our community. Participants of all ages also gained key exposure to both downtown host organizations, a remodeled public library and a municipal senior center.

The Senior Center draws strength from its mission "to promote successful aging", a life-long effort, and the importance of engagement in the community is demonstrated by this interaction with a multigenerational focused Madison Public Library. Both establishments benefit greatly from combining
their resources, including staff time and space, for a remarkable program which generated community exposure and participation and which emphasized an important message: "WE ALL MATTER". It is anticipated that additional partnership opportunities will develop from this collaboration. We expect the program to be replicated with neighborhood centers, branch libraries and with other senior organizations in the future.

**Measurement Tools:** Our primary goal was to generate a sufficient number and variety of pictures and stories to display at both the Senior Center and Central Library. We chose two different days, a month apart, and varied the times of day to gather the photos and stories. Reserved appointments were arranged on a weekend daytime and a weekday evening, but we also accommodated "walk-ins". We exceeded our expectations of 50 participants, due to the combination of robust appointments and a high volume of walk-in traffic. Total participation numbered 92, and there was a range in ages, ethnicity and genders with both sessions having a mix of family and non-family based groups.

The displays run through December at which time we will measure community response and interest in the project and theme to better enhance the program for next year.

**Number of Staff/Volunteers Required:**

**Expenses:** **Revenue:**

**Contact:** Laurie Bibo
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Special Events Honorable Mention

Holi - Hindu Celebration of Spring

*Flower Mound Senior Center*

*Flower Mound, TX*

Staff noticed a growing population within the membership from Hindu countries. However, they struggled to find a place within the Senior Center community. Many had recently moved to the United States and spoke little or no English. They were hesitant to participate in activities and programs and began to isolate themselves. Therefore, staff reached out to these individuals to find ways to include them. The members spoke about an upcoming holiday called Holi, a Hindu celebration of spring. Each year during Holi, people flood the streets and throw brightly-colored powder at each other, shoot water guns filled with color, and throw balloons filled with colored water. They dance and celebrate the new season of happiness and in the hopes of leaving behind all regrets and forgiving each other.

Staff scheduled a Holi Party for March 8. During the event, volunteers prepared and served a traditional lunch and others brought their favorite foods to share. After lunch, staff showed a video about the Holi Festival and played traditional music. Members were asked to share stories about Holi in their home countries. Then, members were invited outside for the throwing of the colors. Staff purchased colored powder in a variety of colors for the event. Members greeted each other with “Happy Holi!” as they lovingly marked friends with colors and threw handfuls of colored chalk. Participants laughed and played with the colored powder for almost an hour. Following the event, staff saw members forming new friendships and embracing each other.

The Holi Party was a very successful special event. SIM staff achieved the goal of hosting a multicultural event that taught members about a fun tradition from another country while including a minority segment of the membership.

**Outcomes:** Since this event, participation by members from Hindu countries has soared. They discovered friends outside of their own circle and became involved in a variety of other programs, special events, and day trips. The Holi Party was a beginning of cultural unity and understanding throughout the Seniors In Motion Program.

**Measurement Tools:** Staff has noticed that members from this community have become more involved in the program. They have begun participating in other areas of the program that they had not before. Furthermore, staff has observed that these members have built relationships with other members outside of their community.

**Number of Staff/Volunteers Required:** 2 staff, 4 volunteers

**Expenses:** $220  **Revenue:** $180  **Net:** -$60

**Contact:** Jaime Jaco-Cooper, Flower Mound Senior Center, 2701 West Windsor Drive, Flower Mound, TX, jaime.jacocooper@flower-mound.com
Technology Award Winner

The Selfie Project

Old Bridge Senior Center
Old Bridge, NJ

It’s amazing to see how a single technology can empower seniors. However, learning and adapting to new technology is not only challenging but also frustrating for an older adult. Anxiety, resistance, anticipation, confusion, stress and uncertainty are common feelings when trying to overcome a learning gap. In order to make this process fun for our seniors at the Old Bridge Senior Center, we introduced a “technology” program entitled “The Selfie Project”. To eliminate resistance to learning something new, we encouraged our seniors to get out their smart phones and take photos and “selfies” that they could then text and share with their family and friends.

During this month long project, seniors were asked to take selfies doing a variety of activities from exercise to dancing, to riding on our bus, shopping and at special events. These selfies were then sent to our staff via e-mail or text, which were then imported into an old fashioned Polaroid photo. The selfie had to include a hashtag as well. While some did not know what the hashtag was for, we were able to explain what Instagram is, hoping that some might pick it up. We kept this very basic in skill level and had so many people participate that we created a “Selfie Project” bulletin board to display their work. Whether the photo was fuzzy, blurry, or off-centered, it was used and a hashtag applied. Seniors should be able to use their cell phones in a fun way to communicate with family and friends instead of just calling a doctor or for a ride. Opening this door to visual communication provides them with the ability to go from a basic cell phone skill to advanced uses such as Facebook, Instagram, Snap Chat to continue to be engaged with ever changing technology.

Outcomes: The participants learned a basic cell phone skill and had fun doing it.
Measurement Tools: The amount of photos we received, the daily questions and answers for help, and the energy and effort put into the project by the senior.

Number of Staff/Volunteers Required: Two

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Technology Honorable Mention

Virtual Programming

*Lexington Senior Services*

*Lexington, MA*

In the last fiscal year the Lexington Senior Services has been offering an array of virtual programming that covered art, history, culture, and music. We connected with organizations from around the world and across the country to tour museums, talk to local organizations, and get a tour of different well renowned locations. Two examples of such programs: we had a tour of the Philadelphia Art Museum to look at their French art collections and the other program we live connected with a school in Ghana, Africa to learn about their history, culture, education system, and pop culture. Virtually programming live connects us with a staff member at the location of our choice to provide us with a tour and answer questions our seniors might have.

This program is significant because it allows us to connect our seniors to learning about a wide variety of topics without leaving the comfort of their community. We can experience the lives of those living in Ghana or the English Renaissance while sitting in a chair in Lexington and live talking to someone in that country. This type of programming offers an individual with mobility issues and/or lack financial means to travel an opportunity to virtually travel to well renowned museums and countries while speaking with an actual person to ask questions.

**Outcomes:** We experienced an increased rate in participation of programs. As for the participants they are able to engage in a program that teaches them something new and keeps them active.

**Measurement Tools:**

**Number of Staff/Volunteers Required:** One

**Expenses:** $400  **Revenue:** 0  **Net:**

**Contact:** Hemali Shah
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Marketing Strategy or Campaign Award Winner

Reimagine Aging

Baltimore County Department of Aging, Maryland

The media often portrays aging as a negative experience, but the Baltimore County Department of Aging knows better! This year we challenged the stereotypes of getting older and celebrated our later years using a comprehensive marketing campaign.

1. **Employee Launch**

   We encouraged individuals of all ages to discuss the perceived limitations placed on older adults and their ability to live to their fullest potential through programs and intergenerational events. We highlighted individuals in our community who are making a difference as they age on our website and in our Senior Digest newspaper, and we offered resources to grow older successfully at our senior centers, professional conferences and EXPO.

2. **Media Campaign**

   We encouraged our county's residents to share their thoughts, pictures or tips on how they were embracing aging and breaking ageist stereotypes by using #reimagineaging2017 on their social media posts. We asked them to join in the conversation by following our Instagram account @BaltCoAging, Facebook page @BaltimoreCountyAging and Flickr account BaltimoreCountyAging.

3. **Social Media Sharing**

   We had well-known ageism speaker, Ashton Applewhite, as the keynote at our Senior Solutions Conference.

4. **National Expert**

   We showed “The Age of Love” to an intergenerational audience. THE AGE OF LOVE follows the humorous and poignant adventures of thirty seniors in Rochester, NY who sign up for a first-of-its-kind speed dating event exclusively for 70- to 90-year-olds. From anxious anticipation through the
dates that follow, it's an unexpected tale of intrepid seniors who lay their hearts on the line, and discover how dreams and desires change—or don't change—from first love to the far reaches of life.

6. Involved Elected Officials

We asked elected officials and other celebrities to pose with our Reimagine Aging sign to spread awareness and at EXPO we asked people to put a dot on the age when they would consider themselves “old” to spark additional discussion with college students about aging and ageism.

7. Involved Students

We also hosted “Are you Smarter than a Senior?” game shows with middle school children and seniors and held a Sophomores vs. Seniors basketball game.

- 83% of seniors and 72% of students found they had something in common
- 89% of seniors and 87% of students were more comfortable with talking to each other as the program went on
- On average, students said a person was old at 64 years prior to program and 70 years after program
- 66% of students said they would think about their response to aging jokes differently after being with the seniors
- Social media: 0 to 74 followers and over 800 engagements on Instagram in 3 months
- From 200 to 468 followers on Facebook
- Flickr had 2,770 views in 2 months

Link to Resources:

Reimagine Aging song https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rBoG17GzDGY
Kick off video https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nCY0X9Kb9OQ
Website www.baltimorecountymd.gov/reimagineaging
Facebook page https://www.facebook.com/BaltimoreCountyAging/
Flickr albums https://www.flickr.com/photos/baltimorecountyaging/albums
Instagram Account https://www.instagram.com/baltcoaging/
Power of Age EXPO Video https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NvAN-1G8YNU

Contact: Michelle Mills, Baltimore County Department of Aging, Baltimore County, MD, mlmills@baltimorecountymd.gov
The Amesbury Council on Aging (COA) consistently markets its programs through many different avenues. The Marketing Plan for the Greenleaf Program is taking a new approach. The COA is in the process of building relationships with the medical community. We are scheduling meetings with local healthcare agencies to speak with physicians and other healthcare professionals about the quality and benefit of our program, as well as the convenience of our location.

Greenleaf is a non-medical social day model which is specific for people early in their end of life planning. In seeking out medical professionals, the goal is to enroll clients into a social day program immediately upon diagnosis of a mental illness or dementia. It is important that the right audience get our marketing message. Healthcare professionals are key in connecting families to the appropriate support systems. It is our commitment to develop these strong connections.

As always, the staff continues to market the program through printed media, radio, PSA's, local television, digital media, and in-person community visibility. Printed media can include brochures, newsletters, newspapers, and flyers.

Digital Media includes, the City website, Facebook, Twitter, Google+, Google Maps, and Youtube. The COA offers free trial day coupons on the Facebook page as a promotional advertisement.

The Greenleaf staff are required to take videos or photos daily, to post instantly on Facebook. This allows clients and loved ones to see what goes on day to day in the facility. Promotional videos are produced yearly to showcase the center and its programs.

Campaigning to healthcare professionals – via presentations, on-site introductions to physicians, nurses, etc. these are the gatekeepers who can identify clients early.

“Google Verified”. This means we prove our address to Google and allow caregivers to find our program easily though Google searching.

Real time, live media displayed on Facebook and Youtube, for Caregivers to observe/interact with their loved-ones attending Greenleaf.

City Webpage, Facebook, Google+, and Youtube are interlooped within each page by links. All Greenleaf information can be navigated between the pages easily – fast easy and efficient. FY16-FY17 attendance increased by 20%, resulting in a net profit of $18,000.
Additional Links to Material:

Staff has worked hard at making the program visible upon google search if anyone’s location is in the Amesbury area and they search “Social Day” or “Supportive day” Greenleaf is one of the first mentioned.

- Google maps verification has been made with photos of our building and links to our business. [https://www.google.com/maps/contrib/108750368724107086753/photos](https://www.google.com/maps/contrib/108750368724107086753/photos)
- The city webpage gives us the ability to showcase a lot of space for advertising of the program. [https://www.amesburyma.gov/senior-community-center/webforms/greenleaf-programs](https://www.amesburyma.gov/senior-community-center/webforms/greenleaf-programs)
- Greenleaf Facebook page: [https://www.facebook.com/greenleaf.socialday](https://www.facebook.com/greenleaf.socialday)
- Google+: [https://plus.google.com/108750368724107086753](https://plus.google.com/108750368724107086753)
- Youtube: [https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCVf2JXwLgmbgM9QOeRHHmhg](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCVf2JXwLgmbgM9QOeRHHmhg)

Key Staff/Volunteers Involved in Marketing:
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Marketing Campaign/Strategy Costs: $500

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Thank You!

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- **Susan Curtin**, Norwell Council on Aging, Norwell, MA
- **Malia Fox**, Winona Friendship Center, Winona, Minnesota
- **Laura Kopp**, Center for Active Seniors, Inc. (CASI), Davenport, Iowa
- **Kris Orluck**, Maple Grove Parks and Recreation, Maple Grove, Minnesota

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.

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