Journey's Way

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**Community Site**
Journey’s Way is a community-based center for older adults located in Roxborough, a neighborhood in northwest Philadelphia. Although Journey’s Way is a single site, it offers both a center for adults 55 years of age and older and an adult day center for older adults with dementia and various other mental impairments.

The center at Journey’s Way provides a community-based setting for fitness classes, art classes, journal club, singing, dancing, café dining with friends. The adult day center provides enrichment for dependent older adults through crafts, singing, exercise, and games that engage the mind and body.

**Experience Goals**
Throughout the summer, we worked with the Journey’s Way participants to highlight health topics of interest and engage the dependent adults at the day center through various interactive activities emphasizing the five senses.

We prioritized nutrition through all of our health presentation, offering ideas for foods that are accessible and healthful, targeting the health topic of that week.

Heart health was a topic of interest for Bridging the Gaps that we interwove at both the day center and main center through crafts and our health presentations, respectively. We also sought to include the importance of oral health through our health presentation on bone health.

Through the veggie voucher program, we hoped to be able to interact with seniors interested in accessing local produce without the barrier of cost. We helped to facilitate voucher distribution both at Journey’s Way as well as smaller centers without their own vouchers.

Though our presence at Journey’s Way was only through the summer, we sought to leave materials for future presentations through the provision of typed pamphlets filled with the outlines of our presentations, particularly the diseases we covered and the suggestions for care interventions and nutritional topics that correlated with the topic at hand. It is our hope that these materials continue to circulate to those interested and spread awareness of these important health topics.

**Personal Statements**
“My experience at Journey’s Way has been much more than I expected. It’s not until you get to know the people and see the connections between them that you can really appreciate the community of Journey’s Way. Each day brought a new conversation, a new story that showed just how vital and inspired a place Journey’s Way truly is. The enthusiasm that was brought to each health presentation made it a dialogue that allowed both the participants and us as interns to learn much more than the information we brought with us that day. Journey’s Way has taught me that aging is not something to fear, but something to aspire to with the love and support of family and friends.”

Lindsay Michel

“Bridging the gaps afforded me the opportunity to understand the value of education thru experience. Working with the seniors helped me to negate some of the stereotypes associated with aging and my own bias learned from the nursing home setting from the eyes of a child. Journeys way allowed me the opportunity to embrace aging with open arms and to understand that I may have limitations as I get older but that should not stop me. These seniors had a different perspective and appreciation for the world. They were beyond knowledgeable on all topics and taught Lindsay and I so much.”

Allanda Williams

**Project Outcomes**
Healthful Taste Of Independence: We created a cookbook of healthy budget friendly meals that were perfect for the summer. We also prepared samples so that members were more likely to prepare the recipes for themselves.

Health Topic Discussions: When working in healthcare in order to have the best patient-doctor relationship, you should acknowledge the patient’s wants and desires. To emulate this concept, at the start of the summer we spoke to various members and asked what health topics interested them. Ultimately, we used this list to guide the presentations we gave, and our end result was presentations on bone health, eye health, thyroid, nutrition and the importance of getting a good night’s rest. We were fortunate enough to collaborate for the importance of sleep with an expert from Roxborough Hospital’s sleep center.

Container Gardening: We collaborated with other BTG students from Temple Medible gardens, not only to introduce Journey’s Way participants to a new hobby, but also one that is beneficial and nutritional.

Adult Day Care: Half of our day was spent at the Day center with individuals who have a dependent lifestyle. We implemented weekly activities that stimulated cognitive function through the five senses. Some of our activities included: What’s In The Sock?, focused on the sense of touch; Spa Day, focused on smell; group baking, focused on taste; and a karaoke/dance celebration, focused on hearing.

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