



JCA® HEYMAN INTERAGES® CENTER

FISCAL YEAR 2016

PROGRAM REPORT



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Hello Friends,

I am pleased to share the JCA Heyman Interages Center Fiscal Year 2016 Program Report with you. FY 2016 was a busy one for us – as we worked to expand our programming throughout Montgomery County - in the schools and within the larger community. Throughout the year, we worked closely with individual schools and community organizations to develop intergenerational solutions to their challenges. We know that effectively engaging the generations will provide strong outcomes for older and younger individuals and the greater community. As all generations benefit immensely from the wisdom, strengths and knowledge that they can share with one another, the outcomes from our cross-generational programming are evident through the evaluation data in this report.

In FY 2016, the JCA Heyman Interages Center touched the lives of over 2,100 children, youth and older adults living in Montgomery County. More than 350 of our trained, active older adult volunteers tutored and mentored over 1,300 at-risk children and youth. These volunteers provided over 6,778 hours of tutoring and mentoring services, which is valued at the equivalent of \$180,574.96 of in-kind support. Additionally, youth spent 2,351 hours with frail elderly residents engaging interactive, age-integrated programs and teaching technology to older community members.

Some highlights from FY 2016 include:

- Through support from the City of Gaithersburg, JCA Interages volunteers provided 17 students at Gaithersburg Middle School with extra academic support. The volunteers supported students in Math, Science and ESOL classes, in small groups or individually.
- The Tech Connect intergenerational technology program was launched as a program collaboration with Montgomery County Recreation in March 2015. Youth were trained in aging sensitivity and effective techniques to teach seniors technology, and spent their Spring Break at Schweinhaut Senior Center teaching basic computer skills, email, Skype and Facebook.
- The REAL (Reading and Educating to Advance Lives) program was launched in collaboration with Montgomery County Department of Health and Human Services - Children, Youth and Family Services, Montgomery County Department of Health and Montgomery County Public Libraries to provide literacy activities to children in Service Center lobbies.
- The Beauty of Aging project, a program in which photography students from Gaithersburg High School took photos of intergenerational interactions as well as portraits of JCA Interages volunteers, was successfully implemented and featured at the Gaithersburg High School Art Fair in April and at the Gaithersburg Library during the summer months.

We are incredibly grateful to all our supporters, including the Montgomery County Department of Health and Human Services, Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS), the Montgomery County Executive and Council, foundations, corporations and individual contributors, to allow us to use intergenerational strategies to make a difference in the community. We also want to thank our extremely dedicated Jewish Council for the Aging® volunteers, staff, Board Members and Advisory Committee Members.

This Program Report provides details on our programs throughout FY 2016. I look forward to hearing your comments and suggestions as we continue to expand our programs.

Warmest regards,



Carol Croll, Senior Director, JCA® Heyman Interages® Center
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IMPORTANCE OF INTERGENERATIONAL PROGRAMS

Nationwide, the demographic and racial/ethnic landscape is changing. By 2030, the numbers of older adults and children will be approximately the same, each about 22% of the population. Fifty-six percent of youth under age 18 will be children of color while 70% of older adults will be white. Both youth and older adults are often marginalized in mainstream American culture and immigrant populations are even more isolated. Montgomery County, Maryland is one of the most racially and ethnically diverse counties in the country and provides a rich landscape for increasing multi-cultural intergenerational cooperation while addressing the needs of vulnerable youth.

JCA Heyman Interages Center meets this need by engaging participants in meaningful cross-age opportunities that are mutually supportive and beneficial. The overarching goals of JCA Interages are to mobilize adults 50+ in roles that utilize their skills and experience to support the academic achievement and social/emotional development of at-risk youth in the Montgomery County Public Schools; provide opportunities for children and youth to connect with frail elderly and active older adults in a meaningful way to thrive, learn from their elders and dispel stereotypes; and educate the community about intergenerational programs, resources and opportunities.



GRANDREADERS

PROGRAM OVERVIEW: Grandreaders is an intergenerational literacy program for students who are reading below grade level. School staff, including classroom teachers, English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) teachers and Reading Specialists, select students who they believe would most benefit from individual support to improve reading language and comprehension. Older adult volunteer tutors meet weekly throughout the school year with an individual child utilizing a variety of reading and literacy activities to enhance the student's reading and comprehension skills. Expected program outcomes are: improved ability to read more fluently while increasing comprehension; enhanced literacy skills; establishment of strong intergenerational relationships and communication; and increased self-esteem and self-confidence of volunteers and students.

PARTICIPANTS: During the 2015-2016 school-year, 126 volunteer tutors contributed 2,467 hours to serve 146 2nd grade students and five 4th grade students at 10 elementary schools: Bel Pre, Brown Station, Diamond, Gaithersburg, Georgian Forest, Glen Haven, Greencastle, Maryvale, Rolling Terrace and Sequoyah.

ACTIVITIES: This school year, JCA Interages offered two versions of the Grandreaders program, based on the unique needs of the schools. At five schools, we utilized a literacy program developed by the JCA Heyman Interages Center staff, which entailed creating lesson plans for books and Reading A-Z.com on-line books. Each lesson plan was tailored to a book on the reading level of each individual child and included a pre-reading activity, reading of a book and a post-reading activity. Each literacy activity was directly connected to improving reading fluency as well as reading comprehension. These Grandreaders programs were managed by JCA Heyman Interages Center Program Coordinators who were on-site weekly, providing materials and supervision. The Program Coordinators worked closely with a school liaison to ensure that the lessons were complementing the skills being taught in the 2nd grade classrooms.

At four schools, the Grandreaders tutors implemented a reading program, Reading Together, a structured comprehension based program, which was originally supported by Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS). Each Reading Together kit provides books and activities for tutors and students, with an emphasis on fluency and comprehension. At one school, Grandreaders tutors utilized Reading A-Z.com books and comprehension worksheets to assist students in their literacy skills. These Grandreaders sites were managed by a MCPS staff member, often a librarian or reading specialist, who provided the volunteers with their Reading Together materials each week.

JCA Heyman Interages Center staff assisted with volunteer recruitment, training and management as well as oversight of all 10 of the Grandreaders' programs.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS:

- The Grandreaders program continued to be our largest volunteer program, with a high rate of returning volunteers. Many of our participating schools requested that we increase the number of students involved and we were consistently able to meet the school's requests through our dedicated volunteers and on-going volunteer recruitment.
- We were able to assist a small number of 4th graders who were reading significantly below grade level at Diamond Elementary School, through use of our Reading A-Z resources, and volunteers who were willing to acquire the skills to use materials connected with the 4th grade classroom curriculum.
- JCA Heyman Interages Center offered initial tutor training in the fall which included a basic orientation for new volunteers, including best practices and tips for success. Our mid-year in-service for new and veteran

volunteers focused on learning styles of volunteers and students. In addition, a Reading Specialist from Sequoyah Elementary School discussed strategies for helping support student reading improvement.

- Beginning in the summer of 2015, we expanded our reach into the community by offering year-round volunteer opportunities. We addressed the summer reading slide for students by collaborating with Montgomery County Public Libraries to offer an eight-week Grandreaders program. The libraries supplied age-appropriate books and JCA Interages volunteers read one-on-one or with small groups of students, primarily those entering kindergarten through 3rd grade. During the summer Grandreaders program, 50 volunteers donated 247 hours of their time to read with 169 students at seven county libraries.

EVALUATION METHODOLOGY: Upon conclusion of the Grandreaders program, classroom teachers as well as Grandreaders volunteers evaluated the program through an on-line or written evaluation form. The questions to both the volunteers and the teachers centered on the specific students and their changes in reading levels and literacy skills. The criteria were given numerical values to specify the program impact on the student.

SUMMARY OF EVALUATION:

Evaluation Highlights:

- During the 2015-2016 school year:
 - 100% of students who worked with Grandreaders during the school year showed improvement in reading fluency and comprehension, all of whom were considered to be struggling readers or at-risk students.
 - 100% of students tutored by Grandreaders volunteers improved by one or more levels in reading and literacy performance over the course of the school year.
 - Over 50% of the students improved by two or more levels in reading and literacy performance over the course of the school year.

Teacher Evaluations: The teachers evaluated their individual students’ reading and literacy improvement on a scale of 1-4, (with 1 noting minimum improvement and 4 noting maximum improvement) in several areas with the following results:

High frequency words	3.2
Reading comprehension	3.0
Motivation to read	3.2
Enjoyment of reading	3.2
Confidence in self as reader	3.1
Overall improvement compared to similar students <i>not</i> participating in Grandreaders	3.1

Additionally, teachers were asked to report on a similar 1-4 scale the extent to which the student looked forward to Grandreaders. The average score was 3.1, underscoring just how significant this program is for the students.

Teacher Comments:

- “Wonderful Program! Whenever kids can read with a caring, helpful adult it is a positive experience.”
- “This student really needed some special attention because of a traumatic event in his life. This experience was wonderful for him.”
- “The student made leaps and bounds of improvement. I am so thankful for this program as it boosted her reading and overall confidence!”

Grandreaders evaluations: Our volunteers were asked to evaluate their individual students as well. 85% of our volunteers thought that their student’s reading comprehension improved during the school year.

Over three quarters of the volunteers responded “Greatly” to the statement: “I feel that my life has been enriched by being a volunteer for this program.” The majority of the Grandreaders volunteers intend to return to the program in the fall and quite a few of the volunteers intend to participate in the program at multiple schools.

Volunteer Comments:

- “My student was always eager to begin the book. He did not hesitate to sound out words and was attentive the whole time. He seemed to enjoy being there.”
- “[I told my student to]...look at me straight in the eyes and tell me why you really liked Grandreaders. His response nearly brought me to tears as his reply was ‘because I learned to like to read books.’”
- “My student very bright. I've seen a fantastic development since we started.”
- “My student is a bright and motivated student. Her reading fluency has greatly improved this year.”

READ ALOUD

PROGRAM OVERVIEW: The Read Aloud program provides an opportunity for older adult volunteers to support pre-kindergarten and Head Start classrooms through reading books aloud to small groups of children and assisting in small groups with classroom literacy centers. Volunteers provide extra assistance to the teachers while inspiring the children to develop an appreciation of reading and books.

PARTICIPANTS: Four MCPS schools hosted and helped train JCA Interages enthusiastic volunteers in their pre-kindergarten and Head Start classrooms throughout the school year. Eighteen older adult volunteers contributed 732 hours reading to 204 students weekly at Captain James Daly, Georgian Forest, Maryvale and Wheaton Woods Elementary Schools.

ACTIVITIES: Weekly throughout the school year, Read Aloud volunteers read picture books to small groups of students during class reading or literacy center time. In addition, volunteers worked individually and in small groups with students, helping the students learn their letters, numbers, shapes and colors and reinforcing the teacher's lesson of the day.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS:

- The JCA® Heyman Interages® Center was able to meet the needs of each of the schools by filling all available volunteer slots. The classroom teachers noted how much they appreciated the extra support in the classroom and how critical the volunteers are for student success. All school sites told JCA that the Read Aloud program is an integral part of their classroom learning experience.
- We moved *Playtime with Parents*, a program in which JCA Interages volunteers provide resources, activities and reading suggestions to use at home from Wheaton Woods Elementary School to Georgian Forest Elementary School. Each of the two *Playtime for Parents* sessions educated 12 current and incoming parents and engaged little children in interactive literacy activities.

EVALUATION METHODOLOGY: Throughout the school year, JCA Interages staff facilitated informal, quarterly check-ins with each of the classroom teachers with whom the volunteers assisted. We also received evaluation feedback from the volunteers.

SUMMARY OF EVALUATION: Feedback was 100% positive from the classroom teachers, as well as from the staff involved with Playtime for Parents.

Teacher Comments:

- “Our volunteers are AWESOME!!! They are soo kind and thoughtful! The kids love love love them.”
- “Each time they enter the room, it's like that: some special moment with all, then they take their small groups that need the extra TLC!!”

Volunteer Comments:

- “I just wanted to tell you that volunteering with the Head Start four-year-old class at the school was life-changing for me. I almost immediately began volunteering not for just one hour but for the whole session two and three days a week. I loved it!! I love the children and love working with that population. I felt as if I were doing something meaningful, important and helpful, and I felt productive.”
- “Thank you so much for this program. It has given me a new lease on life. I really enjoy all the learning going on from both sides.”

INTERGENERATIONAL BRIDGES

PROGRAM OVERVIEW: Intergenerational Bridges builds relationships between older adult volunteers and at-risk immigrant students through a weekly in-school or after-school mentoring program in elementary, middle and high schools. Student outcomes include improved English communication and language skills, strengthened academic success strategies, enhanced transition to life in the United States and increased self-confidence.

PARTICIPANTS: During the 2015-2016 school year, 74 senior volunteers contributed 2,064 hours to 307 students at 8 schools. One-on-one after school mentoring programs continued at Rolling Terrace, Gaithersburg, Georgian Forest and Captain James Daly Elementary Schools, as well as at Eastern and Argyle Middle Schools. Our in-school Bridges program at Gaithersburg Middle School had our mentors supporting students with classroom work and academic needs identified by the students' teachers. Our Gaithersburg High School Bridges program took place in ESOL (English for Speakers of Other Languages) I & II classes. In this program, volunteers assisted students one-on-one and in small groups, while supporting the ESOL teachers.

AFTER-SCHOOL INTERGENERATIONAL BRIDGES

ACTIVITIES: After-school Bridges students and mentors chose from a variety of paired and group activities each week. "Talk, Read, Play" was the standard order of a day's program. Students talked with mentors about their classes, homework, and family issues. Together, they read Internet articles, books and magazines (*Scholastic Action*[®], a teen magazine for below-grade readers, and *Scholastic*[®] *News*, for second-grade-level readers). Pairs vied over word games and math bees and completed grammar and vocabulary worksheets. They made crafts and also enjoyed a variety of vocabulary games while engaging in conversation.

LANGUAGE

Volunteers and students at all of the sites engaged in a variety of language-enhancing activities designed to expand and develop the students' English vocabulary, increase their ease with speaking English, and improve their comprehension of spoken and written English. Activities were designed each week around a weekly theme. Students would read brief selections related to the theme and then complete their choice of theme-related activities such as word searches, crossword puzzles and other word-generating activities.

CULTURE

Students and mentors immersed themselves in activities that fostered an appreciation of the diversity of cultures and heritages of the U.S. in reading, games and songs. To honor Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., students at the middle schools read a short selection depicting his achievements and then, as a group, discussed the meaning of segregation and racism. The students offered opinions about how to respond if they see or experience racism. Students and mentors learned about Japanese culture and, in tandem with the Cherry Blossom Festival, sampled some vegetarian sushi and made beautiful tissue paper cherry blossom trees. There was also a special day for each student to make a presentation on something about their culture, whether related to food, flag, map, agriculture or another topic.

MATH

Students incorporated the practice of math concepts and English language enhancement in a restaurant-themed exercise through which they calculated total bills and tips and rehearsed restaurant etiquette and ordering. Students at several of the schools also discussed budget planning and comparison shopping as they used grocery store flyers to shop and put together a dinner meal for their family for the least amount of money. They also participated in a holiday shopping exercise in which they had to budget their allotted money so that they could buy presents for each member of their family. We used paper money and magazine ads to make the activity more realistic.

SCIENCE

Throughout the year, students incorporated science-themed activities into general language-building experiences. Students learned how and why the seasons in this area differ from year-round warmer climates in other countries. They read about the various seasonal changes that take place and the role the earth's tilt and its rotation contribute to these changes. They used atlases to look up the equator and the northern and southern hemispheres. Group games such as "Fall Fun Facts" encouraged students to incorporate season and science related vocabulary to answer questions and score points for their team.

Students learned about nutrition and healthy eating and which foods were good for growth and development of various organs and tissues in the body. With their mentors' guidance, students learned how to read and interpret food labels, and compared and contrasted a variety of food labels to find foods with the healthiest amount of vitamins, minerals and protein.

Students searched for signs of spring, read about the growing cycle of plants, and then planted sugar snap peas and marigolds. Many of the students' plants sprouted at home and were still growing at the end of the program. In celebration of Earth Day, students recycled water bottles and turned them into lovely flower vases. To commemorate national Kite Day, students explored making aerodynamic structures and then constructed kites out of paper bags.

FIELD TRIPS

This year's trips included a bowling alley, a "paint-your-own" pottery store, and a magic show that was brought into the school. Most of the students had never experienced bowling or painting pottery. These trips and other in-school activities provided bonding, end-of-the year experiences that were fun for all. A program liaison at one of the schools commented afterwards that the students "were all beaming the following morning and telling all of us about their trip."

SOCIAL SKILLS AND PEER INTERACTION

The nature of the student/mentor relationship helped to facilitate and nurture positive changes in social skills and peer interaction. Students realized the importance of playing fair, taking turns and engaging in positive peer interaction during free playtime. Games provided the conduit for Uno tournaments, Pick-up Sticks groups and more. There was a lot of laughter, joking and playful conversations as the students and mentors enjoyed spending time together.

IN-SCHOOL INTERGENERATIONAL BRIDGES

GAITHERSBURG HIGH SCHOOL

Gaithersburg High School has the second largest population of ESOL students in Montgomery County. Most of these students are not accustomed to the rigors and expectations of students that schools in the US demand. Having adults in the classroom working in small groups and providing individual support helps encourage the students to believe in themselves. Seven volunteer mentors supported students in ESOL I classes, Reading, METS, Academic Language and ESOL 4 Writing classes. Volunteers worked one-on-one in several classes and in others they worked with small groups of students. Some of the activities in ESOL I included helping with vocabulary related to rooms in the house and to drawing and labeling objects. Other activities included helping with vocabulary relating to food and to putting together nutritional meals. Then students presented their projects to the class. Mentors also worked with students in Reading class studying the environment. They used laptops to look up an ocean animal and then presented detailed information to the group. On the final day that mentors were in class, they presented each ESOL I student with a special certificate commenting on a special quality that mentors observed. Many students posted pictures of this on Facebook because they were so proud.

GAITHERSBURG MIDDLE SCHOOL

Mentors at Gaithersburg Middle School helped ESOL students with academic support in the classroom. Teachers were extremely positive about the impact of the mentors. Teachers reported that the program truly made a difference for their students. Grade point averages improved for many of the students. Also, the number of students working with JCA Interages mentors who had behavior referrals was significantly lower compared to students not involved in the Bridges program. Pre- and post-program survey data demonstrate that English reading and writing skills improved by at least 25% for the majority of the students working with JCA Interages volunteers. Additionally, the survey data indicates that there is a strong increase in program participants demonstrating the social skill of asking for help.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS:

- During the year, JCA Interages staff offered two training sessions for mentors: one prior to the start of the school year and the second in mid-year. At the first session, new mentors listened to a discussion on “Best Practices for Successful Programs” in addition to learning from staff about Bridges program objectives and expectations. There were presentations on self-esteem and recognizing how students feel at school, building intergenerational relationships and assessing students’ progress throughout the year. There was also an overview of the practice of active listening and the important components of effective communication. The mid-year training focused on understanding and identifying different learning styles to enhance their ability to effectively communicate with their students.
- We successfully started a new Bridges program at Georgian Forest Elementary School, which had eight 3rd grade students who had previously participated in the Grandreaders program at that school.
- In all programs, the opportunity for mentors to connect with one another and share ideas, accomplishments and challenges was an important component of the program. In addition to their work with their students, mentors enjoyed the chance to socialize with each other before and after each Bridges session. This practice helped improve volunteer stability at the schools and cemented their commitment to the program.

EVALUATION METHODOLOGY: Teachers, mentors, and students in our after-school program all completed program evaluations. Teachers assessed students’ social skills and English language abilities at the beginning and end of the year. Mentors rated their individual student’s progress in these areas and also completed surveys regarding overall program activities, the effectiveness of program management and the impact of their participation on their own quality of life. Students completed a post-program survey in which they assessed their improvement in English and peer and adult interactions, and their overall satisfaction with the program.

SUMMARY OF EVALUATION: The students were evaluated by teachers and mentors using a 4-point scale (with 1 the lowest and 4 the highest), assessing students’ level of improvement in social skills and English language skills.

Teacher Evaluations show that 74% of students improved 1 to 2 points on the four point scale in such social skills as listening attentively, following directions, self-management, making friends, obtaining teacher’s attention in a positive way, asking for help, and general self-confidence. Data also shows that 78% of students demonstrated improvement of 1 to 2 points in English language skills including reading, reading comprehension, speaking, writing and motivation to read/speak in English. Teachers were pleased to have their students participate in the Bridges program. They saw a connection between the students’ participation and positive growth and change in their social skills, self-esteem, English language usage and academic performance.

Teacher Comments:

- "There was a huge improvement in her English. Her reading and writing skills improved greatly. She struggled with timeliness and speed but the program gave her many skills to improve on these issues. Her ideas and skills were clear and well thought out thanks to her practice with her Bridges mentor."

- “Your patience, kindness and genuine caring is exactly the type of support these kids need at this pivotal point in their lives. You have been a very important part of the team that keeps them coming to school every day and deals with their challenges.”
- “My ESOL students LOVE being a part of the Bridges program and expanding their skills in English comprehension and acculturation. There are three third graders that have increased their general self-confidence and overall motivation to learn while feeling included, and working on their English in a safe environment. The Bridges program does just that. They continue to progress in reading and writing but also try their best in all subjects. I think the Bridges program has helped improve their classroom skills.”
- “Being in Bridges was a boost to her self-confidence. The additional attention impacted her in a positive way.”

Student Evaluations: Overall, the students enjoyed participating in Bridges and 95% said they would recommend the program to a friend. 85% said that their English had improved and that it was easier to talk to other students and speak up in class as a result of their time in Bridges and their work with their mentor.

Student Comments:

- “I learned the meaning of words, how to play games and how to do my work quickly.”
- “I love that we learned about new people, holidays, and how to write paragraphs with good punctuation. It was fun too.”
- "I learned how to carry on a conversation with my mentor and then other people too. I also liked sharing ideas with one another and doing art projects which I had never done before.”
- “Bridges is awesome!”

Mentor Evaluations: Mentors found their participation in the Bridges program to be rewarding:

- 88% felt a special connection to his/her student.
- 94% looked forward to attending each week.
- 88% felt that their life had been enriched through this volunteer experience.
- Two thirds of the mentors noted that they saw improvement in their student’s social skills, English language skills, and/or self-esteem.

Mentor Comments:

- "I was delighted to see the relationships that formed between the students in the Bridges program as well as the close relationships that were formed with their volunteer mentors throughout the year. The program was a great success in helping them to speak in front of groups, learn more, compare life here to life in their countries and improve their communication skills. This program gives them the confidence they need to make their way in a new country with a different culture.”
- “The Bridges program let students know that they are not alone and there is a person to confide in, and be there for them. It is such an important part of child’s development to know that they are important and that they matter even to those outside their family.”
- “This after-school program is a value to the student, school, and entire community.”

DIALOGUES ACROSS THE AGES

PROGRAM OVERVIEW: Dialogues Across the Ages engages volunteers and high school students in cross-age discussions of current events and social studies topics. The two generations learn about each other's interests, lifestyles and views during 6-to-8 week-long sessions designed to foster mutual understanding and respect while developing student leadership skills.

PARTICIPANTS: In the Fall of 2015, Interages held a 6-session Dialogues Across the Ages program for at John F. Kennedy High School. The students were all involved with the Leadership Training Institute senior class. In early 2016, we held a 6-session Dialogues Across the Ages program at Gaithersburg High School as part of a Leadership elective course. During the 2015-2016 school year, 22 adult volunteers spent 108 hours in this program actively communicating with and learning from 37 students in this program at the 2 high schools.

ACTIVITIES: Prior to the start of the program with each group of students, JCA Interages staff conducted an aging sensitivity orientation with the students, discussing generational stereotypes and biases and encouraging a creative generation of topics for the session.

During the Dialogues Across the Ages program, the students focused on a single topic at each session, and those topics included politics, technology, and the participants' future plans. Each week, small groups of students and volunteers discussed a specific topic, and engaged in other stimulating conversations. Week after week, the students and adults noted just how much the different generations have in common, which was often startling to each generation. During the course of the program, students stayed in the same groups while the volunteers changed groups every 2 weeks so all program participants could get to know one another.

The last session included a pot-luck lunch with students and adults alike bringing in food, informally talking and enjoying each other's company.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS:

- A teacher reported that one of the students (who had previously spent every class period throughout the school year holding and looking at her phone) was able to focus on conversations with the volunteers and have conversations face-to-face.
- There had been some challenging school-wide events that occurred during the time of the program at Gaithersburg High School, and the students asked if they could change the planned topics to process the events through conversations with the volunteers.

EVALUATION METHODOLOGY: Students in the Dialogues Across the Ages program completed pre- and post-program surveys of attitudes towards older adults. Volunteers completed a post-program evaluation.

SUMMARY OF EVALUATION:

Student surveys demonstrated that:

- 100% agree that older people have skills to share with teenagers.
- 100% of students changed their opinions towards older adults after finishing the Dialogues Across the Ages program.

Student Comments:

- “I thought I was pretty good at avoiding stereotypes but it made me realize that I stereotype more than I thought.”
- “I used to believe that older adults were cranky, judgmental people but they were quite the opposite.”
- “This session definitely opened up my mind and attitude towards people and how we are all different which sometimes makes it hard to come to one conclusion.”

Volunteer evaluations indicated that:

- 100% of volunteers who responded indicated that they agree or strongly agree that the Dialogues Across Ages Program improved communication between generations.
- 100% of volunteers who responded indicated that they agree or strongly agree that the Dialogues Across Ages Program fostered mutual understanding between generations.
- 100% of volunteers who responded indicated that they agree or strongly agree that the Dialogues Across Ages Program dispelled stereotypes of teenagers.

Volunteer Comments:

- “I believe the program is valuable and gave us a chance to dispel stereotypes (of the teens and the older generation). The discourse was always interesting and thoughtful.”
- “I think this was a very positive experience for all concerned.”

PROJECT SHARE

PROGRAM OVERVIEW: Project SHARE (Students Help And Reach Elders) enriches the lives of health-impaired seniors in nursing homes and assisted-living facilities by linking them with children from kindergarten through high school in interactive ways. SHARE focuses on what people can do rather than on their limitations, as students encourage and work with senior participants in various activities at senior facilities. The program works towards dispelling negative, age-related myths and stereotypes and raising the self-esteem of both young and old participants.

PARTICIPANTS: A total of 253 students and 191 frail and isolated seniors visited one another during the year. The seniors involved in the program spent 931 hours with the children.

- Two 3rd grade classes from Darnestown Elementary School and a group of homeschooled children visited Collingswood Nursing Home in Rockville.
- Elementary-age homeschooled children visited the JCA Misler Adult Day Center in Rockville.
- Kindergartners and 7th Graders (separately) from St. Mary's School visited Sunrise Assisted Living in Rockville.
- Middle and high school students from the City of Gaithersburg Youth Center visited Kindley Assisted Living at Asbury Methodist Village.
- A group of high school students from the Gaithersburg Student Union visited the Rosborough (independent living) of Asbury Methodist Village.
- Children from Magruder Discovery HOC residence visited the JCA Kensington Club.
- Children from HOC housing in Olney participated in SHARE sessions at Leisure World.
- Residents from the Charles E. Smith Life Communities as well as participants from the JCA Misler Adult Day Center and Kensington Club enjoyed a Senior Prom with teens from Bnai Brith Youth Organization, a Jewish youth organization with members from high schools across the county.

ACTIVITIES: At each of our programs the participants enjoyed doing a wide range of activities together: singing, conversing on a variety of topics, doing creative movement and exercises, creating group poems and collaborative works of art, sharing riddles and trivia questions, solving word challenges, doing crafts and playing games. All of the activities were designed to encourage involvement and to stimulate interaction between students and their senior friends. We planned the activities to help make everyone feel comfortable and capable of participating. The emphasis was always on students and their senior friends helping and working with one another.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS:

- In February 2016, we began a new monthly program at the JCA Misler Adult Day Center with a new group of homeschooled children ages 8-12. The program got off to a great start, continued throughout the summer, and will continue year round.
- At our program at Kindley Assisted Living at Asbury Methodist Village, the ratio of students to adults is close to 1:1. This allows the participants to make more personal connections with one another, and to hear their life histories. During one session, students were able to hear one woman's story about how her family was sent to a Japanese internment camp during World War II, and another man's experience growing up as an African-American living in the segregated South.

EVALUATION METHODOLOGY: Many of the older adult participants in the SHARE programs completed evaluations on their own or orally with JCA Interages staff or volunteers in the middle or at the end of the program year. Other participants, who were unable to answer the evaluation questions, were observed during SHARE sessions by the program coordinator or a volunteer. They were rated on a four-point scale (1=rarely, 4= always) in three different areas: engaging with students, participating in activities, and sharing memories.

SUMMARY OF EVALUATIONS: Of the senior participants interviewed, 92% indicated that the program improved their overall quality of life. Of those, 54% said the program improved their quality of life “greatly.” 100% of the seniors surveyed were satisfied with the SHARE program, and 70% were “very satisfied.”

Of the senior participants who were observed and rated by the SHARE program coordinator and JCA Interages staff, 66% scored 6 points or higher (out of a possible 12), and were “sometimes” or “often” engaged in some aspect of the program. Many participants in this category are from the memory units in the various facilities, are unable to speak English or have difficulty communicating due to illness.

When asked what they liked about the visits from the children, the senior participants said:

- “Just seeing them makes me very happy.”
- “I like the easy, smooth interaction with the youth. Kids are open and fun.”
- “Children are my favorite people! I love children.”
- “I like being with the children and helping them learn.”
- “I think it is a fine thing to see how they may look or act differently than when you were a kid.”
- “I hadn’t talked to a kid in a while. None of the grandchildren have been around in a while and it makes a big difference.”
- “I never miss the visits with the students. It doesn’t make any difference what our age is – our mind is the same. It’s good for the kids to see us another way. We are just like them. It’s natural and spontaneous. They look for the positive.”

Student Comments:

- “It made me open up my eyes because a lot of them have interesting stories and a few of them had a difficult childhood and it made me realize how lucky I am.”
- “I respect them more. I am also interested in working in a home for seniors when I grow up.”
- “I enjoy talking to seniors more because I used to feel awkward, but now I feel very comfortable talking to them.”
- “They gave us advice and told their mistakes so we don’t make them.”
- “Being with the seniors helped me realize that every person matters, young and old.”
- “It helped me get ready for when my family members are older and I have to help them.”

When students were asked how they feel now about older adults, they said older adults are:

- “kind, thoughtful, AWESOME, AMAZING”
- “fun to work with and they listen to you”
- “fun, lovable, aging adults who just want to have some fun, and are really cool people to be around”
- “I see them like I see my own grandparents.”
- “basically older kids”
- “more fun to be around than I thought!”

Teacher Comments:

- “(The students) are touched that the residents are interested in their lives and push themselves to leave their comfort zone by spending time with older adults.”
- “It opens worlds between both age groups in a positive way.”
- “We have a Character Counts program that highlights respect, responsibility, fairness, caring and citizenship. The SHARE program gives students the opportunity to work on all of these things.”
- “Some of the students have discovered particular gifts in working with the elderly. All have grown in compassion and understanding.”

MAKEOVER MADNESS – A SPECIAL PROGRAM OF PROJECT SHARE

PROGRAM OVERVIEW: Makeover Madness brings adults from senior facilities and low-income housing facilities to the Thomas Edison High School of Technology and Gaithersburg High School for cosmetic services and friendly conversation with students.

PARTICIPANTS: A total of 60 students from various MCPS high schools worked with 130 seniors from 12 different senior facilities in a series of monthly two-hour sessions, totaling 420 hours of “makeovers” during the school year.

ACTIVITIES: Thomas Edison High School of Technology and Gaithersburg High School both offer cosmetology skills programs that prepare students for employment in a salon upon graduation. In the cosmetology program, students learn all aspects of nail and hair care. The Makeover Madness program brings older adult clients to these schools so students can become more proficient in the field. As their skills improve in shampooing, haircutting and manicuring, the students also learn about the frailties and needs of seniors and how to work efficiently and effectively with senior clientele.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS:

- Makeover Madness at Edison High School of Technology is growing. The cosmetology teachers have received permission to allow some of their morning students to participate in Makeover Madness in the afternoon. A larger number of participating students means a larger number of older adults can participate.
- The Makeover Madness program at Gaithersburg High School has really caught on since January, with a more consistent group of older adults attending. They look forward to each monthly session, and keep coming back. The cosmetology teacher has a hands-off approach, assisting the students only on an as-needed basis. As a result, the students have taken ownership of the program, ensuring that all participants are taken care of in a timely manner, and even provide other services beyond haircuts and manicures, including eyebrow waxing, pedicures and braiding.

EVALUATION METHODOLOGY: The students involved were given a survey to complete at the beginning and end of the program. A reflection session was held at the close of the program, where the students shared their opinions verbally and with a qualitative evaluation form. Evaluations for the older adult participants were conducted by the program coordinator at the end of the year.

SUMMARY OF EVALUATIONS: For students completing both the pre-and post-tests on their attitudes about older adults, 84% scored higher at the end of the program year. Most students said that they enjoyed talking with and hearing the stories of the seniors they worked with. All of the students said that they think they made the seniors happier, saying that they could tell by the smiles and expressions on their faces, the thanks they received and the way people would proudly show off their new looks. Several students commented:

- “I liked making them feel special.”
- “The life stories they share – it helped me.”
- “Now when I talk to older people, I feel connected.”
- “I got to experience what some older people go through first-hand.”

The evaluations completed with the senior participants showed 100% are satisfied with the Makeover Madness program, and 76% indicated that they were “very satisfied.” 76% of the adults also reported that the program improved their quality of life. Most of the clientele were thrilled with the quality of the services they received, and of the efforts of the students. Some adults said:

- “Everyone was very warm and friendly and receptive.”
- “It’s fabulous. I leave here feeling beautiful. Fabulous is the word!”
- “It made me feel completely relaxed and rejuvenated, with much gratitude in my heart.”

ADDITIONAL INTERGENERATIONAL PROGRAMS

The JCA Heyman Interages Center also coordinates the other programs listed below, these in conjunction with MCPS and the community. These programs did not have a formal evaluation during FY 2016.

MATH CLUB

PROGRAM OVERVIEW: Math Club provides classroom math support to 3rd, 4th and 5th grade students at elementary schools.

PARTICIPANTS:

- During the 2015-2016 school year, 4 senior volunteers contributed 150 hours to 79 students at Diamond and Rolling Terrace Elementary Schools.

MATURE MENTORS

PROGRAM OVERVIEW: Mature Mentors matches volunteers one-on-one with high school students enrolled in the special education program at Churchill High School. Volunteers meet weekly with their students to offer academic support and help students connect with resources needed to achieve success personally and academically.

PARTICIPANTS:

- Six volunteers worked individually with 6 high school students, donating 133 hours of time to the Mature Mentors program at Churchill High School.

REAL (Reading and Educating to Advance Lives)

PROGRAM OVERVIEW: Volunteers age 50+ read and engaged in literacy and healthy living activities with children, their families and caregivers in Montgomery County Department of Health and Human Services Regional Offices. Volunteers read picture books, do simple art projects (i.e. coloring and making puppets) and use pictures and interactive items to talk about healthy food and healthy lifestyles with the children (and their families).

PARTICIPANTS:

- From April – June 2015, 13 volunteers contributed 112 hours reading to 81 children in 3 Regional Offices.

TECH CONNECT

PROGRAM OVERVIEW: Tech Connect provides an opportunity for older adults to increase their digital literacy skills by learning technology skills from youth volunteers. In addition to learning new skills, older adults and teenagers benefit from relationship building and cross-generational learning and communication.

PARTICIPANTS:

- During FY 2016, 67 youth volunteers contributed 443 hours instructing 84 seniors in the use of technology.

JCA® HEYMAN INTERAGES® CENTER 2015-2016 PROGRAM PARTNERS

Montgomery County Public Schools

Elementary Schools

Bel Pre
Brown Station
Capt. James Daly
Darnestown
Diamond
Gaithersburg
Georgian Forest
Glen Haven
Greencastle
Maryvale
Rolling Terrace
Sequoyah
Wheaton Woods

Middle Schools

Argyle
Eastern
Gaithersburg

High School

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Asbury Methodist Village
CHI Centers
Charles E. Smith Life Communities
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Easter Seals
JCA® Kensington Club
JCA® Misler Adult Day Center
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Support Center
Winter Growth

Other Community Partners

Beloved Community Initiative
B'nai Brith Youth Organization
City of Gaithersburg
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Housing Opportunities Commission
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Montgomery County Public Libraries
Montgomery County Recreation
Penn State University
Rockville homeschool group
St. Mary's School

ABOUT JCA

JCA Interages is a program of the Jewish Council for the Aging, an organization that provides access, answers and opportunities for older adults and family caregivers throughout the Greater Washington, D.C. region. JCA's award-winning programs enable older men and women to maintain their independence, dignity, vitality and self-respect despite physical, financial and emotional challenges. Along the way, JCA delights in shattering stereotypes about growing up and growing older while striving to make the National Capital Region a great place to age.

Approximately 800 volunteers and 90 staff build vibrant programmatic partnerships with funders, fellow charities and local communities. For information about JCA programs about the many ways to help JCA help others, please visit www.AccessJCA.org.

JCA is proud to serve people of all faiths, ethnicities and walks of life.

FY 2016

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SPECIAL THANKS TO THE FOLLOWING SUPPORTERS:

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Montgomery County Public Schools Educational Foundation, Inc.
Montgomery County Executive and County Council
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Thank you to all of our individual contributors and supporters.