The general goal for residents residing in care center facilities is to improve their quality of life while aging in place. This project looked at the issue of quality of life through communication and socialization. Social interaction and engagement are areas that enhance the aging populations’ general well-being in day-to-day living. In particular, this project considered ways in which the elderly population can be empowered through social engagement tools, to improve their quality of life experience while living in a care setting. This project took place over a period of 4 months within a senior care center agency known as Eskaton Village Carmichael. The participants included a total of 35 residents living within the Assisted Living Unit at the agency. A photo album was created as a social engagement tool, to be used during social-related activities, to connect/engage the residents to each other or other people. The photo album included short questions, a short biosketch, and a photo of all 35 residents. The results of the project revealed, only 27 residents completed all the interview questions; however, all 35 residents were still included into the photo album. All the residents consented to have their pictures taken, while only 6 residents did not consent to getting their pictures taken. The engagement tool was placed at a station where the residents could access the information. In the result and outcome of this project, the residents did utilize the photo album as a tool to socialize or connect to other residents residing in the Assisted Living Unit. In conclusion, this project found that residents who utilized the social engagement tool experienced increased joy and happiness, thus improving their social and communication aspect in quality of life.
8:50

*Dementia Guidebook for Hospice Volunteers*

*(Susan) Uchechukwu Chukwujekwu*

*Agency: Mercy Hospice*

*Agency & Faculty Supervisors: Terry Stewart LCSW & Professor Barbara Grigg*

There has been an increase in the amount of research conducted on stages, progression, and behaviors of dementia diseases. Some of the many causes of dementia stem from diagnosis such as Alzheimer’s, Parkinson’s, vascular dementia, and Lewy body. These were studied for their unique progression and communication needs. Evidence based research exhibits how knowledge of these diagnosis cause dementia. Communication skills tests could help to reduce behavioral changes and benefit patients living with dementia. At Mercy Hospice, the healthcare team often relies on the volunteers and interns to provide services to hospice patients who have shown symptoms of dementia. Educating volunteers with specific information and subsequent skills could reduce stress and improve quality of life for the hospice patients as well as their family members. A Guidebook was created for the Hospice volunteers to help them understand the progression of some specific causes of dementia. It presents effective communication skills when assisting patients and their family members. By understanding these specific dementia behaviors and using effective communication skills, the volunteers would gain more confidence while working with patients. It also displays high levels of care to their family members and increase their quality of life. The content presented throughout this Guidebook from evidence based sources related to these specific causes of dementia. The Guidebook was evaluated and reviewed by the volunteer supervisor of Mercy Hospice Terry Stewart and the volunteers for effectiveness and improvement while receiving positive feedback.

9:05

*SOUL Therapy Program: Registration and Renewal*

*Egypt Fitts*

*Agency: Dignity Health Mercy Hospice*

*Agency & Faculty Supervisor: Terry Stewart LCSW & Professor Barbara Grigg*

Companionship is necessary and a vital part of our existence as human beings. Companionship can stem from a friend, family member, or even a pet. Across the globe dogs are used to fill the void of loneliness and warm the hearts of many. This project provided a handout that was given to inquiring pet owners to inform them of which pet therapy agencies Mercy Hospice will accept and each agency’s contact information. An additional “Things to Consider” handout was given, that listed many questions the inquiring pet owner should ask themselves before going fourth with the SOUL pet therapy program. The project began with research into 6 or so major therapy dog licensing agencies, the information gathered was: their years of operation, licensing standards, license renewal requirements, licensing and renewal fees, and pet insurance policies. From the gathered information the top 3 agencies were chosen as the Mercy Hospice approved agencies. The approved agencies along with their information was published on a handout. To evaluate the effectiveness of this project the student consulted with Senior Program Assistant and the hospice supervisor to gain verbal feedback on the project.
Housing Resource Update, Senior Center 2014
Sabrina Yang
Agency: Hart Senior Center
Agency and Faculty Supervisor: Alicia Black MSG & Dr. Cheryl Osborne

For several years, the Hart Senior Center has been providing older adults seeking housing information with copies of a comprehensive Housing Resources packet. The Housing Resource packet includes sixteen pages of detailed information about various independent apartment rental options for seniors in the County of Sacramento. The housing resource packet was originally created by Eskaton’s Senior Connection, a service that provides comprehensive resource and referral information to Sacramento’s seniors. The Housing Resource packet was made available as part of Senior Connection’s Caregiver Resource Guide which was formerly available in print and online, however, it was last updated in 2011. The Housing Resource packet includes information about ninety-two locations including contact information, costs of one and two bedroom apartments, amenities offered, utility information, pet costs, and whether rental rates may be adjusted based on income. The Hart Senior Center routinely provides this packet to seniors who come in looking for independent housing resources. When the senior center runs out of copies, they take the master printed copy and copy more. One major issue staff found was that without an electronic copy in its original format, they did not have access to modify information to reflect changes over time. Due to the significant demand by older adults and their caregivers who visit the Hart Senior Center for this type of information, staff desired their own copy that could be maintained on a more routine basis but lacked the time to produce it themselves. Over the semester, the intern has completely recreated the Housing Resource packet using Microsoft Word. The intern first designed an identical template and transferred all of the original information over manually. Then the intern called each facility listed to verify accuracy and made updates as needed. The intern also surveyed many participants at the center to see what types of housing options they would prefer. Out of the 40 surveyed, the top three choices included independent housing, assisted living, and low income. The finished product looks like the packet staff is familiar with, but this new version offers electronic access from the ease of their computers as well as on a portable USB drive. This assures that the staff members will be able to conveniently update any information in the future and easily print out more copies as needed.

Preserving Memories with a Digital Album
Susan Yang
Agency: Hart Senior Center
Agency and Faculty Supervisor: Alicia Black BSG & Dr. Cheryl Osborne

The Ethel MacLeod Hart Multipurpose Senior Center was first opened by the City of Sacramento in 1961 as part of their expansion in Older Adult Services. The center’s focus is to provide seniors with a welcoming environment involving cultural, educational, health and recreational programs that would enhance their dignity and well-being, support independence, encourage involvement with the community, and add joy to life. In order to support the mission of the Hart Senior Center, the student intern developed a digital photo album using the Corel Video Studio Ultimate X7 software, a type of slideshow software, to help participants preserve visual and audio family memories. This project required the student to meet with the participants twice for a one-on-one session lasting approximately one hour. In the first session, the participant and the student intern sat down together to design the various features of the slideshow including style, color, scheme, and captions. Once the video was complete the student met with the participant for a last session to return their photos and verify the content and satisfaction of the video slideshow. The student then burned a digital versatile disc (DVD) and/or saved a copy of the video onto a flash drive for the participant to take home and share with their family and friends. During the participants first one-on-one session, the student had participants take a survey to determine what they were expecting from the project and which parts they liked best and felt needed modifications. All the participants felt that the student was very patient, knowledgeable, and organized throughout the entire process; they also noted that they would recommend the project to friends and family members and that there was nothing unpleasant about the project. In relation to the ego-integrity theory, the evaluation showed that many of the participants were satisfied and content with what they’ve accomplished in life thus far. Overall, the desired outcome for implementing this project was to create a lasting digital photo album that participants could have to enjoy with their family and friends, provide the Hart Senior Center with a multimedia photo album that cataloged and preserved the center’s history, as well as leave a folder with the center that contained directions on creating videos for future use.
Healthcare professionals are mandated to continually educate themselves about new information in healthcare. Continuing education courses range from medications to innovative programs for quality care. CNA’s are certified nursing assistants that make up the majority of the staff in most organized health care agencies. These individuals are charged with 80% of the care and well-being of patients, residents, clients, and participants from every corner of the health field. In order to remain a CNA, these individuals are required to attend in-services workshops held at their employment locations in order to retain their certification. The purpose of this study was to develop a more interactive and engaging in-service experience for all CNA’s in attendance. The methods used involve open ended questions to engage in conversation, tools and group activities to insure equal participation for all that were present. Data collection is conducted using a Likert scale questioner to evaluate the effectiveness of the workshops. Results indicated that out of a total of 22 participants for 2 out of 3 in-service workshops, 18 people learned how to better interact with older adults, 18 learned new things about older adults, all 22 participants were engaging and interacting with other cna’s, and 20 wanted more workshops. Further studies on the subject may apply the same concept with all-staff workshops.

As adults age, it is crucial to continue to participate in stimulating activities so older adults are keeping their minds active. All of the participants at the Yolo Adult Day Health Center (YADHC) have a variety of interests, needs, and issues. At the YADHC, older adults participate in activities, such as exercise and table games. They also have a writing group and a book club that meets once a week. However, for some participants at the Center there is not enough stimulating activity or they do not have an interest in the activities or groups currently offered. Therefore, this Project was for YADHC volunteers at the Center to give them ideas of expressive therapy, and focusing only on art therapy that is patient centered. The patient centered activities are specifically of interest to particular participants and are evolved from their own ideas. The expressive therapy involves the participant expressing and exploring personal interests and experiences when assisting with developing an activity project. Some of the art therapy projects that are included in this Guide are looming, origami, painting, and jewelry making. This will ultimately assist the volunteers with the special activities they can do with the participants at the Center. Any of the attendees, at the Center that are interested, will be able to participate in these sessions. These therapies consisted of a wide range of activities which provided more opportunities for older adults to participate in activities to help improve their quality of life such as decrease depression, increase social interaction, increase sense of purpose and meaning, improve cognition, and sensory stimulation. The Project included creating a Guide about this type of therapy, utilizing two different types of surveys to determine specifically the participants interests and desires, so that volunteers could run the sessions. This Project was evaluated by taking formal surveys of the participants’ opinions. The participants’ feedback was very positive and they reported that expressing themselves in these art activities was helpful, enjoyable, and they would like to continue doing them.
10:30

**Memory Trips, A Life Story Booklet Project**
Jennifer Phung

**Agency:** Multi Senior Services Program

**Agency and Faculty Supervisor:** Teresa Ogan MSW & Dr. Cheryl Osborne

California Health Collaborative’s Multipurpose Senior Services Program (MSSP) works with older adults who are frail and at risk for nursing home placement that desire to stay at home. MSSP strives to provide and connect this cohort to holistic services in order to improve their quality of life. Some issues that arise with this cohort are depression and social isolation. Studies have shown that older adults who are frail feel dissatisfied with their life due to physical and psychological limitations as well as unhappy events from his or her past life which are true for most cases at MSSP. Many studies show integrative reminiscence therapy and life review strategies improve the quality of life in many older adults. This reminiscence project aims to decrease the symptoms of depression and promote the willingness to socialize for older adults receiving services through the MSSP program. This project will benefit the client, his or her family, and the community. The product of this project was a life story booklet. The booklet is comprised of photos, stories, and information about the client’s childhood, adolescence, adulthood, and present life. Through this experience, clients will take a memory trip where they will be able to come discuss past issues such as regrets, positive and happy events to strengthen their sense of self, and their relationship with their family. The effectiveness will be evaluated by comparing pre and posttest questionnaires that asked about depression, life satisfaction, how often the elder reminisced about happy and sad events in their life, and their willingness to socialize every month. Comparing the pre and posttest surveys and observing the client’s proactiveness to socialize, clients showed a decrease in depression and willingness to socialize and open communication to others. The clients expressed happiness with their booklet stated they gained an understanding and came to terms with unhappy events with their life which validated their reality and existence. Clients communicated they will carry on with the booklet and utilize it as a legacy for future generations.

10:45

**Exercise: Enhancing Quality of Life**
Min Cho

**Agency & Faculty Supervisors:** Nina Moran & Professor Barbara Grigg

The physical activities have been well-known to be beneficial to strengthen the muscles, and increase independence and quality of life. However, as people age, many older adults tend to withdraw from physical activities related to physical/psychological disabilities or limitations due to increased prevalence of diseases or injuries. It is necessary to motivate and engage older adults to participate in physical exercises routinely. This will promote their health, independence, and therefore, self-esteem. Hence, although dementia is an irreversible mental disorder, providing a structured exercise program with clear instructions may slow the disease process. For the project, the student has developed a chair yoga booklet consisting of various yogic techniques along with relaxing music that were tested to be appropriate and feasible for the participants. Prior to developing a booklet, the student had visited a chair yoga class offered to seniors and watched various chair yoga classes on the internet to gain some ideas. The student had found that many chair yoga classes required standing and lying down on a floor; therefore, techniques that were perceived to be inappropriate and too difficult to follow were excluded during the process. The student had led a yoga class at the agency to test the findings. She also conducted a written survey among the staff to evaluate its feasibility and usefulness. The majority of the staff claimed that the chair yoga booklet is extremely applicable to the agency, as well as to their own lives. The participants also seemed to enjoy it.
11:00

*Engagement Center for Cognitively Impaired Individuals*

**Sylvie Castro**

*Agency: Eskaton Village Carmichael*

*Agency & Faculty Supervisors: Kate Madaus & Professor Deon Batchelder*

Alzheimer's disease is a disease that affects many people all over the world. In the United States, Alzheimer’s disease is the most common form of dementia (Moschetti et al., 2012). Alzheimer’s disease affects a person's memory, cognitive, and even motor skills. There have been studies done to research the integration of drugs and non-pharmacological intervention with Alzheimer’s disease patients. The use of pharmacological drugs, like Donepezil and Namenda, must be accompanied with non-pharmacological approaches like social activities and reminiscence therapy so as to stimulate the brain (Matsuda et al., 2010). Based on random controlled trials in research studies, there have been positive results with using different kinds of non-pharmacological forms of cognitive therapy (Takeda, 2012). One of these forms is reminiscence therapy. Reminiscence therapy activates a person's memories, causing good or bad emotions. The project for this practicum course was based on studies done about reminiscence therapy for those with Alzheimer's disease and dementia related issues. This project helped with the expansion of an engagement center at Eskaton Village Carmichael's Memory Care Lodge, where residents interact with each other and the staff and reminisce about their lives. This project was evaluated by asking questions of the residents and staff members interacting in the engagement center. Participating in the engagement center helped residents express joy and curiosity for reminiscence project. This was an observational and interactive project.

11:15

*An Introductory Class in Hospice Care*

**Baotram Duong**

*Agency: Asian Services Inc.*

*Agency & Faculty Supervisors: Thyan Pham & Dr. Cheryl Osborne*

Many Asians prefer family caregiving of their aging, terminally ill relatives. In addition to being reluctant to place their elders in nursing homes for hospice care, they may also be reluctant to discuss specifics about illnesses with those in their care to keep them hopeful and without worry. In addition to that, death and end-of-life matters are very difficult to discuss within Asian cultures. According to one statistics, only 4% of Asian Americans have utilized hospice care (Luijkx & Schols, 2011, p.581)). Yet this is such an important fact of life that all of us will eventually face with family and for ourselves. To deliver the great philosophy of hospice to some of Asian groups, the Gerontology student has a project of conducting a workshop about hospice care. The workshop happened on November 18, 2014 at ARI's classroom with presence of fourteen Vietnamese elderly and fourteen Chinese elderly. Prior to the workshop, surveys were passed to see if the elderly feel comfortable to talk about death topic. During the workshop, some showed interested in the topic; some even wanted to sign up to hospice right away because they thought it is great and it is free. At the end, the student received many thanks from the elderly for the work that she had done at Asian Resources, Inc. and the information that she brought to the ESL students and clients there.
There are many seniors who are in need of resources but have trouble finding the right ones that they can use and afford. The few resources that they have already, they get from the Stanford Settlement Senior Center. Many of the seniors who go to Stanford Senior Center are low-income minorities and live in urban communities. The staff does their best to help all the seniors and find the information they are looking for, but have had some difficulties because of the wide variety of needs. The need for resources can vary depending on the location. A survey was done with 15 female seniors and 10 male seniors are between 65-92 years old. They were asked a series of questions about their needs, interests and the area they live in. The survey showed that many of the seniors are from the same area and have similar needs. The results from the survey were then researched and combined together into a resources booklet. The resources provided by the booklet will provide resources that are specific to the needs of the seniors and their communities. After resource directory was handed out to the seniors, a survey was done with 3 males and 3 females and it showed a positive outcome. The participants stated that the resources were relevant to not only their living area, but also to what they needed.

Unintentional falls are the leading cause of death and the leading cause of death from injuries among adults 65 and older (Stevens & Rudd, 2014). Presently, LifeSTEPS is looking for ways to address and improve such a critical issue, particularly among older residents in their communities. The purpose of the project was to create a fall prevention guide that contained resources to obtain free or affordable home modifications for older adults. Additionally, the intern created a short assessment that Directors of Social Services (DSS) would be able to utilize during educational classes. The goals of the guide and assessment were to educate clients about the importance of fall prevention while efficiently collecting data regarding their home modification requirements. The intern conducted an initial survey to explore self-reported accounts on behaviors and beliefs about falls and home modification needs of residents at two properties. Physical disabilities and limitations were noted but not included in the survey. Results revealed that while many of the participants believed it should be a priority for older adults to take steps to reduce falls, many did not consider it a top priority in their own lives. An overwhelming majority were more concerned about not having enough money to meet their needs. However, almost half of participants reported a desire to obtain home modifications such as grab bars, raised toilet seats, and walk-in showers instead of tubs. While a combination of education and exercise maybe a partial solution to preventing falls, the inclusion of home modifications may be essential. One implication of the project may be the need to incorporate a grant program to provide low-income seniors with free home modifications.
12:45

**Empowerment Model: Embracing the Aging Experience, Promoting Wellness & Encouraging Personal Growth**

*Michael Mesina*

**Agency:** Life Steps

**Agency and Faculty Supervisor:** Tamika Bennett & Professor Deon Batchelder

Possessing high levels of resilience may be one factor that helps older adults adjust to hardships associated with aging. Screening the resilience levels of older adults is needed to identify those at risk for adapting poorly when exposed to stressors (Wells, 2010). The purpose of the study is to empower resiliency, encourage personal growth, and engage community building. The sample population consisted of 19 older adults (7 male, 12 female) living in rural senior living communities; with an age range from 48 to 73 years of age. The student evaluated the functional status of the sample population by using The Lawton Instrumental Activities of Daily Living (IADL) Scale and provided social support to the senior while conducting a personal interview survey. The purpose of the personal interview survey was to explore holistic measures to understand deeper correlations from the responses of the sample population. The student assessed behavioral and environmental factors by directly conducting assessments within the client's property unit. The results from the IADL Scale varied in range. Among 19 participating seniors, 13 older adults (5 male, 8 female) were reported to have strong social ties and good mental and physical health associated with high levels resiliency and functional status. Transportation shortages were recorded and noted. Upon further study, the student concluded that there were no shortages in overall senior adult resources. Rather senior adults prefer not to engage in external resources to conduct IADLs. The sample population studied preferred the support of family members, friendly neighbors, and the community social worker. In conclusion, the quality of daily social interactions influences physical health and well-being associated with high levels of functioning (Cyranowski et al., 2013). Factors of social support and isolation will further be discussed.

1:00

**The Healthy Brain & Art**

*Nicole Ward*

**Agency:** Fairfield Senior Center

**Agency and Faculty Supervisor:** Kristin Einberger & Professor Barbara Grigg

The Brain Boosters program helps elders retain and improve their memory and it is run by the Fairfield Senior Day Program. This program implemented a new art activity at the Fairfield Senior Day Program. This art class was added to the program once a week. Some of the art projects were able to be adapted for participants in day program that are farther along in the dementia process. Art can have a great impact for a person with dementia. The many benefits of art range from helping in communication to building a good support group. The art classes were well received. Art does not always have to be the traditional painting of fruit. The art classes varied greatly. One art class the project was to listen to music and paint what the song was saying and another class was working with collages and changing the perspective in the picture. Art does not cure dementia, but it does help create a more positive outlook that one has of one’s self. The participants were given a survey before the art class was implemented to see where they were at with art. The same survey was given at the end of the program as well to see if there was a difference in scores. The first survey showed that many people enjoyed art with a few outliers of people who did not like to do art. The first survey also showed that some people were familiar with certain art activities like painting, but not familiar with other art activities like looming. The post survey showed that participants wanted to continue the art program. The post survey also showed that many participants became more confident in expressing themselves through art.
Let's Join the Party: Seated Zumba!
Noc Nguyen
Agency: Chateau at River's Edge
Agency & Faculty Supervisors: Kim Adams & Professor Barbara Grigg

The Chateau at River's Edge is a community for seniors and is a part of Hank Fisher Senior Communities. As a family business, Hank Fisher Senior Communities is dedicated to providing respectful, compassionate care and special life-enhancement programs catered to meet seniors’ specific needs and encourage meaningful relationships. Exercise and physical activities are important to staff, residents, and families to enhance residents' physical well-being. Understanding how to effectively deliver exercise to residents and how to implement this intervention is essential to addressing residents’ challenges and issues. Information gained through research, communication, observation, application, and subsequent analysis will help residents gain information for enjoyment through music, motivation to exercise, and increased overall wellbeing in life. This project provided a research guide to implement the Project with older adults so that this will enhance many aspects in their physical and cognitive health. Seated Zumba is a Latin-inspired exercise that is directed towards active older adults, people with physical limitation, medical issues, and those new to cardio exercise. It is unique and designed to be a seated exercise to improve strength, balance, and flexibility. An appropriated music playlist was played, and appropriated movements were directed to the residents. A survey asking the residents how the exercise sessions helped them was conducted in the last exercise evaluation session. The survey consisted of a series of questions in terms of how well the exercise classes served them in physical health status, in excitement to exercise, in their mood, and in their overall well-being. Out of 8 people surveyed, they all said that they enjoyed the exercise class and the music, and would continue to participate in future exercise. Throughout the entire process, a short video, a CD and photos were taken, and a book was created to leave behind for the residents to view, and to serve as a model for the purpose of conducting future classes.

Graduate Student Projects

Expanding Affordable Housing in California
Erica Plumb
Agency: Eskaton Corporation
Agency & Faculty Supervisors: Sheri Peifer MSG & Dr. Cheryl Osborne

Expanding Affordable Housing in California discusses the current state, growing need and opportunities for affordable housing. The older adult population is experiencing unmatched growth, increasing the number of older adults living in poverty and needing affordable housing. With severe cuts to affordable housing funding at the federal, state and local levels and fewer resources in general, a practical solution is for partnership and collaboration among private, public and non-profit sectors. The project goal was to create a report describing the current baseline of affordable housing and identifying innovative examples and partnerships serving this need. It benefited Eskaton and the older adult population by furthering Eskaton’s mission to enhance the quality of life of older adults through innovative health, housing and social services by expanding affordable housing in the Greater Sacramento area and California. The project culminated with a well-received presentation to the Eskaton Board about future funding and partnership opportunities to make senior affordable housing feasible. Evaluation was based report completion and presentation to the Board.