CSUS Gerontology Program

Culminating Community Project Presentations

Spring 2013 ~ May 10th
Benicia Hall 1029 ~~ 8:30-2:05

8:30
Introductions
Cheryl Osborne & Barbara Grigg

8:35
Recognition of Soul Volunteers & Their Therapy Dogs in the SOUL 2014 Calendar
Ashley Yanagihara
Agency: Mercy Hospice
Agency & Faculty Supervisors: Terry Stewart LCSW & Dr. Cheryl Osborne

The SOUL volunteer program at Mercy Hospice is a unique program that allows volunteers to provide pet assisted therapy to the hospice patients through interactions during their visits and respite care. These types of visits provide hospice patients an opportunity to feel a sense of relaxation, a chance at comfort, pain relief, improved range of motion, as well as socialization and supportive listening. This pet assisted therapy program provides Mercy Hospice an opportunity to offer a service to their patients that other hospices cannot. There was a need to establish a project that would show recognition to the SOUL volunteers in order to hold their retention and keep the program running strong. The calendar that is being produced is the perfect opportunity to provide the SOUL volunteers with the recognition they deserve while at the same time providing Mercy Hospice the opportunity to market the SOUL program. Each month of the calendar features a different dog in the SOUL program with a short biography about them. This biography includes the dog’s name, breed, favorite activity, and an inspiring story from volunteering. The photographs for the calendar were taken by one of Mercy’s Hospice’s physical therapists and exhibit the beauty of each dog with a lush field as the background. Each volunteer is going to feel a sense of pride when they see their beautiful pet featured in this 2014 calendar for Mercy Hospice. With this type of recognition, the SOUL volunteers will be able to follow Mercy’s mission by providing the highest quality of care to their patients while utilizing an innovative way to do so. The calendars are currently being printed and will be available to each volunteer at no cost. The rest of the calendars provide Mercy Hospice with a fundraising tool through sales of the calendars to their team and the public while at the same time allowing them to market the SOUL program to future users and volunteers.

9:05
Cultural Diversity at Assisted Living
Teresa B. Aviles
Agency: Chateau at River’s Edge
Agency & Faculty Supervisors: Kim Adams & Professor Barbara Grigg

With the rapid growth of the aging population in the United States, there is also greater cultural diversity. Along with this diversity is the need for cultural diversity (CD) awareness. This change within the population has resulted in a large number of immigrants entering the country and the births of millions of babies after World War II. As this large population has grown older, many have planned for aging in place; that is living independently outside institutional care. In other cases, some have chosen, or their families have chosen for them, a life in an Assisted Living Community (ALC). At an ALC the older adult population is often becoming more culturally diverse each day. Older adults with different cultural backgrounds may have different cultural needs, and their individual issues have to be addressed. In addition, older adults with different cultural backgrounds act and react accordingly to their individual culture, and interact with those of different cultures in a unique tradition all their own. All members of the staff, at all levels, need to be aware of, and work toward recognition of these distinctive needs. The importance of understanding the cultural needs of older adults residing at ALC is the primary goal of this Project. To generate better understanding the student proposed to create, develop, and conduct a survey collecting information from residents and personnel of this ALC regarding their language preference or cultural identification. Ultimately, the acknowledgment of CD awareness will improve the quality of life for those individuals with different cultural backgrounds residing at this ALC.
New Approach to Seated Exercise by Adding Music to Benefit Older Adults in Assisted Living

Allison Ming

Agency: Chateau at River’s Edge
Agency & Faculty Supervisors: Kim Adams & Professor Barbara Grigg

One of the biggest issues an activities director can face is lack of participation by the residents. As part of the activities department, staff members have the important job of persuading residents to attend social events and daily activities. With the increase in the number of residents, the afternoon hours between lunch and dinner became the most popular hours of socializing and taking time to relax in the lobby compared to other activity rooms where structured activities were held. This Project presented a new approach to seated exercises by moving them to the lobby and adding music. This type of activity can benefit a resident's physical and mental health, as well as boost mood and morale within the lobby. Bringing this activity directly to the seated residents reduces the rejection of exercising due to moving to a different location. Also, adding popular music from the generation of the residents is a key factor in relaxation and boosting a resident's willingness to participate, along with the informal approach to exercising. After the first session, a small survey was handed out to the participants to observe the positive and negative reactions as well as suggestions for the next gathering. After multiple sessions of bringing music and exercise to the lobby gatherings, a packet consisting of all of the seated exercises and a CD of the music played was put together to leave with the agency for staff members to continue with the new approach to exercise classes.

10:05 ~ BREAK

Establishing LGBTI-Specific Aging Programs and Services in the Sacramento Area/S.A.G.E. Affiliation

Eileen Sealock

Agency: Sacramento LGBT Community Center
Agency & Faculty Supervisors: Shara Perkins Murphy & Professor Barbara Grigg

Due to the increase in the aging population, many newly identified concerns will need to be addressed in order for all members of the aging population to be adequately served; one such concern relates to the larger openly Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Intersexual (LGBTI) population coming into their later years. Services and programs that are based on society’s heterosexism will not easily recognize, nor serve, this population’s needs. Sacramento has the seventh largest LGBTI population per capita in the nation. Sacramento’s LGBT Community Center (The Center) is the major outlet for information and referral about, and for, LGBTI persons in the Sacramento area. By creating and implementing programs at The Center to serve the area’s LGBTI elders, the benefits are manifold. One of the benefits would be affiliation with Services and Advocacy for GLBT Elders (S. A. G. E.) in New York City, New York, which is the model of how to provide elder services and programming to LGBT persons. In order to gain S. A. G. E affiliation significant steps must be taken and documented. 1) Focus groups and community meetings need to be held; 2) Participation in monthly meetings with potential affiliates is necessary; 3) A needs assessment must be conducted; 4) Relationships with key community partners need to be established; 5) Regularly scheduled programming for LGBT older adults has to be created and maintained; and 6) Development of a three-year work plan and case statement need to be completed. After completion of these steps, the eventual outcome of this Project will be affiliation with S. A. G. E and the current 23 other affiliates in the nationwide SAGENet. This affiliation will allow our senior programming to bear the SAGE designation, share in the experience and knowledge of other current affiliates, and assist potential new affiliates in their process of affiliation.
Sutter Hospice provides end-of-life care for individuals who have a terminal illness and a prognosis of six months or less to live. The agency is committed to providing their patients and families a high quality of care. The mission of Sutter Hospice is to enhance the well-being of the communities they serve through a not-for-profit commitment of compassion and excellence. Hospice team members pride themselves on providing comprehensive care including: spiritual, physical, psychological, and social comfort. Their comprehensive care approach addresses the whole person, which enhances their overall quality of life. Conversations between hospice patients, families, and volunteers play a critical role in the complex effort to give comprehensive care to individuals who are dying. Although patients and families are faced with end-of-life challenges, volunteers have a unique opportunity to enhance the patients’ and families’ quality of life by prompting and listening to their stories through reminiscence and life review. However, volunteers who visit patients and families under hospice care often feel awkward and do not necessarily know what to do or discuss. Consequently, the goal is to develop and distribute a reminiscence and life review guideline for volunteers to use for interacting and communicating with patients and families. The guideline describes activities and dialogue that can get everyone involved, thus increasing the rapport between patients, families, and volunteers. The effectiveness was evaluated by a survey and by faculty review. Surveys were distributed to volunteers during the presentation process to obtain feedback and comments. The final guideline was presented to the monthly volunteer hospice meeting and faculty. The guideline was approved as a valuable educational resource. By volunteers utilizing reminiscence and life review while providing emotional support or companionship, patients and families are given an opportunity to explore their past, resolve conflicts, validate their existence, and pass their knowledge on to future generations, thereby leaving their legacy.

The death of a loved one can be one of life’s worst experiences and brings about a wide range of emotions. These emotions can include anger, guilt, a feeling of numbness, and greatly depends on the relationship one had with the deceased. Grief does not follow any set pattern and is a different experience for everyone. Death is not usually discussed in regular conversation and there is a definite lack of knowledge on how to talk about death. This can add even more stress to a difficult situation when the bereaved doesn’t want to burden others with their grief, and those surrounding the bereaved don’t know how to help. Grief support groups are one way grieving individuals can get help. With the guidance of a trained counselor, the bereaved can feel a connection within the group. Transferring this connection to loved ones can be difficult without proper tools on how to ask for support. Information gained through research was compiled into a handout to help grieving individuals gain the support they need from loved ones. This handout was presented to and evaluated by the UCDMC monthly Hospice volunteer meeting.
Personal Piano Lessons for Older Adults: Expressing Creativity & Maintaining Memory
Sarah Zickefoose
Agency: LifeSTEPS
Agency & Faculty Supervisors: Sharon Nakada, Lisa Gayle & Dr. Cheryl Osborne

LifeSTEPS is a non-profit agency that contracts with affordable housing communities in order to provide social services to individuals, families and seniors. LifeSTEPS mission is to provide effective educational and supportive services to maximize the strengths of individuals and build resilient communities. Directors of Social Services work with residents by providing case management, education classes and social activities. Through observation and participation, the student intern identified the lack of an activity incorporating music at senior properties. Music therapy, both listening to and making music, is extremely beneficial to the wellbeing and quality of life of older adults, providing the opportunity for creative expression and the ability to maintain working memory. In support of the agency’s mission, the student intern created a project of personal piano lessons, which would allow older adults to express themselves through music, strengthen cognitive functioning and gain a fun, stress-relieving hobby. Eleven residents from Vintage Laguna and Sierra Sunrise independent senior housing participated in weekly half-hour piano lessons for four months taught by the student intern. The satisfaction and accomplishment of learning an instrument helped to boost the confidence of participants and was also beneficial to mental health because playing an instrument requires different areas of the brain to work together in order to produce results. The healing power of music has the ability to improve lives through a variety of activities. Piano lessons for older adults are a great way to enhance quality of life, maintain cognitive processes and contribute to successful aging. The student intern assembled two songbooks, filled with a variety of music that will be left at the community piano at each property.

Times of Our Lives: Creative Arts Timeline Sessions
Silvia Molina
Agency & Faculty Supervisors: Sharon Nakada, Lisa Gayle, & Kazoua Heu & Dr. Cheryl Osborne

LifeSTEPS provides effective educational and supportive services to maximize the strengths of individuals and build resilient communities. LifeSTEPS’ clients include older adults living in independent apartment communities who are in need of social and mental health services. The student intern visited multiple communities that the agency serves to decide which of them would be included in the project. The agency’s current curriculum was reviewed and the way in which the agency’s staff engages with the older adults was observed. Results found that residents at two locations were in need of a holistic approach to decrease isolation and increase social engagement. Based on the student’s prior experience, the idea of a reminiscence type of activity came to mind. Research evidence supporting the benefits of reminiscence and creative arts therapy for the older adult population was found. Residents were invited to workshops to make timelines of their lives to validate their purpose and increase opportunities to socialize with other residents. Weekly timeline creation sessions entitled, “Times of Our Lives” were hosted by the student. By the end of the project period, a total of 15 residents participated in the workshops. Surveys were distributed to participants to evaluate the success of the student’s project and ideas for improvement. The student presented the training guide to her direct supervisors on how to replicate the activity throughout the communities served. A copy of the training guide was provided to the agency and will be available to all staff.
There is a current need for cost effective, non-pharmacological, and convenient ways to improve the health and well-being of older adults in long term care facilities. Elders living in long term institutions have a high rate of depression, loneliness, and negative psychological well-being, and generally research has shown reminiscence therapy significantly improves these conditions. Eskaton Village Roseville is an independent residential community, an assisted living community, and a community for memory care. Eskaton’s mission is to help ensure each resident’s health, safety, and emotional well-being. This project focuses on the staff at Eskaton Village Roseville. A reminiscence therapy educational manual was developed using current evidence-based information on the topic. Agency staff and residents participated by assuring needed information was included. Evaluation of the project was done by assessing staff knowledge of reminiscence therapy before and after reading the manual. Current and future agency staff will use this tool to educate themselves on reminiscence therapy, and utilize this knowledge to participate in reminiscence therapy with the residents, to improve their health, well-being, and quality of life. Elders will benefit from having knowledgeable staff engage in meaningful reminiscence therapy more often with them.

Eskaton Lodge Granite Bay is an assisted living community that aims to enhance the lives of older adults by providing support for everyday tasks, comfortable housing, quality care and various innovative services that enable residents to remain as independent as possible. These services may include but are not limited to: dining, medication management, housekeeping, transportation, exercise and other programs. For many residents, Eskaton is their new home and transitioning to a new location can be difficult. Often it is a move to a new unfamiliar environment, where new social networks may be created and many changes are likely to occur. In addition, there are different life circumstances that made the transition from their previous home to Eskaton Lodge Granite Bay more difficult. During transitions, the individual may encounter the theme of loss; whether it is the loss of a home, loved one or of their independence. This project explored the concept of home and the challenges of relocating. To help ease the transition process for new residents, stories and experiences from current residents were collected. Current residents were interviewed about their experiences prior to moving to Eskaton, their first experiences at Eskaton and about their current experiences. Current residents participating in this project also had the opportunity to reminisce and as a result, their contribution to the community may have helped increase their self-worth and eased their transition. These stories were then shared with new residents to become familiar with some of the current residents and take comfort in knowing that everyone at the Lodge was, at one point, a new resident who could understand their experiences. To determine the effectiveness of this collection as a resource during new resident orientation, both new residents and current residents were surveyed and the results compared.