

2014 Leck Grant Report: North/Eastside Senior Coalition (NESCO)

Internet Café (\$4,193)

The NESCO Internet Café is open four days a week, Mon-Thurs, from 8-11:30am at the Warner Park Community Recreation Center (WPCRC). There are six laptop computers available for seniors to use and a volunteer is available each day to assist seniors with basic computer needs.

The Internet Café opened August 4th and in the first four months 104 seniors (unduplicated) used the Café far exceeding our goal of 60 seniors (unduplicated) as indicated in the grant. Approximately half of the seniors who used the Internet Café have come multiple times. The Internet Café averages 6-8 users each day. Almost all of those attending the Internet Café reside on the northeast side of Madison. Some of these seniors used to go to the library but come here now because they can spend more time on the computer and do not feel rushed. The age range of seniors using the Internet Café is 58-89 years old. Of these participants 60% are female.

Since October, the Internet Café has been open the first Friday of each month for our Latino seniors to use when they come for a meal at our senior dining site. Initially we had problems getting the computers to translate in Spanish and finding a bilingual volunteer to assist the seniors. A handful of Latino seniors have used the Café so far and we expect this number will continue to grow.

The kinds of things our seniors are looking for help on are:

- Starting an email account
- Buying and selling on eBay and Craigslist
- Checking daily Stock market values
- Research
- How to download photos from their tablets
- How to create photo collages
- Assistance with their (Smart) cell phones
- Assistance with operating their tablets
- Assistance navigating the Internet such as looking up topics of interest (i.e., Art)
- Learning how to operate a computer someone has passed down to them
- Learning what to look for when buying a new computer
- Learning how to fill out job applications and send out their resumes electronically
- Learning word processing application such as Word to create their resumes and cover letters
- Learning how to create an Excel spreadsheet for work
- Learning how to research genealogy
- Reading the daily news
- Taking tests on the Internet for job/education
- How to look for reasonable housing on the internet
- How to join social medias such as LinkedIn and Facebook
- Advertising their businesses on Facebook and creating an user friendly web page

The food and socialization component of the Internet Café has not been as successful. Some seniors coming to the Café to use our computers order a coffee and a few of those individuals occasionally purchase food. The objectives of the Internet Café are to develop a more open attitude about NESCO as a place that younger senior adults can meet their needs and interests; help seniors become more knowledgeable and skilled in

using the computer; fill an important need in their lives; and increase the number of seniors exposed to NESCO programming.

18 Internet Café participants completed a survey after using the Café and the feedback has been very positive:

- 100% of those using the NESCO Internet Café have learned a new skill on the computer.
- 94% felt the NESCO Internet Café meets an important need in their life.
- 78% of those who had not attended a NESCO program before said they would consider attending another NESCO program in the future.

The overall feedback has been very positive. The individualized attention provided at the Internet Café has really helped a number of seniors to feel more computer literate and more connected with others. The only suggestion for improvement is to station the Internet Café in the same room each day, away from where the daily senior activities occur (gets too noisy). NESCO is located in a shared facility and there are days when it is not possible to honor this request but we have worked with the WPCRC staff to address the matter.

2014 Leck Grant Report: OutReach
LGBT Seniors of Color Engagement Project (\$2,850)

\$2,850 was allotted to this project for the period June 1 through December 31, 2014. The goal is to identify LGBT seniors of color in Dane county, and to involve and better serve more people of color in the senior programming offered through OutReach.

The project evaluation is based on the responses from the staff of agencies and churches who serve people of color. Other ways the success of the project will be evaluated is by 1) the turnout we get to the social events, 2) the numbers of LGBT seniors of color who participate in OutReach's senior program events.

Our objectives were to: 1) Contact at least six agencies or churches to identify and reach out to LGBT seniors of color in order to improve the diversity of our senior programs. 2) Increase the attitude of acceptance of LGBT seniors of color in OutReach's Senior Alliance activities. 3) Increase the knowledge agencies serving people of color have about OutReach and our services. 4) Increase the positive behavior and comfort level of agencies serving people of color toward their LGBT seniors. 5) Increase the skills of both people of color and white to work together equitably with OutReach's Senior Alliance program.

The project timeline was:

June – Contact the project partners and orient them to the program.

July – Contact six agencies and/or churches serving people of color.

August through November – Hold a social event supported by six agencies or churches of color.

December – Meet with agency directors to evaluate the program and do future planning.

To continue this project after initial funding is exhausted, the expectation was that “Ideally, some LGBT seniors of color who've been contacted would continue this project and be involved with OutReach's senior programming as volunteers. If this project is successful, OutReach may request funding from the Henry Leck Endowment Fund for a second year. We plan to apply to the local LGBT philanthropic organization, New Harvest Foundation, to support a workshop in 2015 where the findings of the project will be presented.”

The proposal lists several collaborators and four of them submitted letters of support.

As the Project Coordinator, Caroline Werner (the LGBT Senior Advocate at OutReach) was funded to devote 5 additional hours per week solely to working with collaborators/mentors to assist her in making contacts with either Latino or African American LGBT seniors. The collaborators included: Baltazar de Anda of Latino Academy of Workforce Development; Steve Beaver or Emma Fashing of the AIDS Network; local church groups (Rev. Everett Mitchell and Rev. Kevin Evanco and Rev. Gee); Jim Krueger and staff of the Northeast Senior Coalition; Petrovnia McIntosh, a UW-Madison faculty member and former OutReach board member; Gladis Benavides of Benavides Enterprises, Inc.; and John Quinlan of Q Solutions, LLC.

Ms. Werner:

- Attended an equity workshop presented by the City of Madison.
- Met with all the collaborators mentioned above, including Pam Bracey and Yolanda Salazar of the North/Eastside Senior Coalition.
- Received assistance from collaborators to create a culturally sensitive flyer and translate it into Spanish to announce the program.
- Talked with Charlie Daniel of the Alzheimer's/Dementia Alliance and Monica Adams and Kabzuag Vaj at Bayview Townhouses.

- Met with John Quinlan re: his African American and Latino community contacts.
- Attended two African American events.
- Visited the Urban League office and met with their executive director who gave support.
- Joined the Criminal Justice Taskforce of the newly formed Dane County NAACP.
- Attended and announced the project at La Sup Latino monthly meetings.
- Recruited Gladis Benavides and Baltazar de Anda to work on Latino outreach.
- Met with Ricardo Gonzales of the Cardinal Bar.
- Was interviewed on a La Movida radio program in October, 2014.
- Through La Sup, Caroline met Madison City Council member Shiva Bidar and learned about a Latino health group with which Shiva and the AIDS Network are involved.
- Presented at a Domestic Violence all-day workshop offered through the State of Wisconsin and recruited an African American woman who also works with Unidos.

Caroline learned a lot about Latino and African American culture and the various groups who work with these populations and made a lot of new contacts in those communities. It's important for her to be visible in both communities and to be known as a spokesperson for OutReach.

Although two events were planned to be held in the Latino and African American communities by the end of December, the audiences expected were not available at either event. One was with a gathering of the families through Alianza Latina, which meets monthly at OutReach and a second was a meeting of an African American support group led by Pam Bracey. The holidays appeared to interfere with attendances. Caroline intends to follow up with both events in 2015 and to continue her work in these communities.

As regards connecting LGBT seniors of color with the activities of the Senior Alliance, one African American male attended two Gay and Gay discussions—one at the South Madison Coalition for the Elderly and one at the Madison Senior Center. He also attended OutReach's Halloween party. An African American lesbian known to Caroline attended all the Senior Advocacy Training sessions offered by the Dane County Area Agency on Aging in 2014.

All the objectives for this project were met in this brief time period, except for the expectation that we could hold meetings in the communities of color before the end of December. 1) More than six agencies or churches (listed above) were identified and provided assistance to the project. 2) Ms. Werner was in attendance when African American LGBT seniors attended the Gay and Gray discussions, Senior Advocacy trainings and holiday event. She and the Director of the South Madison Coalition for the Elderly witnessed the acceptance between white LGBT seniors and an LGBT person of color in one of the Gay and Gray meetings. Caroline provided a ride for one African American male to the holiday event and witnessed the acceptance in that setting. She also witnessed the acceptance of her African American friend (who did not feel comfortable disclosing her identity) at the Senior Advocacy trainings. 3) Talking with agency workers about this project and the need for it increased their knowledge of OutReach and our services, thus contributing to their willingness to support the project. 4) Conversations with Caroline by agency workers indicate to her that they think they can identify some LGBT senior clients. This awareness shows an increase in positive behavior and a comfort level with serving the LGBT people with whom agency staff come in contact. 5) The willingness of even a few people of color to work with Caroline (a white lesbian senior) and attend LGBT events increases the skills of both people of color and white to work together, just by nature of the interactions. Caroline is learning a lot, confirming for her that other white people will also benefit positively from these collaborative interactions.

OutReach has applied to the New Harvest Foundation to continue this project between January and May, 2015, when we plan to re-apply for the Henry Leck Endowment grant to continue this project.