

National Forum – Coalition for Community Schools

Barbara A. Newland
Executive Director
Interages, Inc.

Interages History

- Founded in 1986 to serve at risk children and frail and isolated seniors in Montgomery County, Maryland.
- Address community needs through caring and supportive partnerships between older adults and children and youth.
- Our programs where elders help children address at-risk children and youth. Most of the elementary aged children we work with are from Title I and high FARMS rate schools.
- ESOL population in MC has risen steadily over the years, and in recent years has risen about 15% each year.
- Numbers of children and adults served and volunteering continues to grow/maintain. We currently serve over 425 children and over 160 frail and isolated seniors. We also have approximately 200 older adult volunteer mentors and tutors.

Partnerships

- Montgomery County Public Schools
- Montgomery County Department of Health & Human Services
- Senior Communities
- Linkages to Learning
- Individual School Principals and Teachers – Reading Specialists, ESOL Coordinators, etc.

Organization

- Mostly Part Time Staff - 9
- Program staff creates curriculum, activities and manages volunteers
- Volunteer Manager responsible for recruiting and placing volunteers
- 200 Older Adult Volunteers
- ED – fundraising, community outreach, new program development, etc.

Funding

- Fiscal Year 06 Budget \$ 385,000.
- County contracts 60% of budget.
- MC HHS Aging & Disability Services provides office space.
- Goal has been to diversify income sources:
 - ◆ Corporate donations rose from \$3,000 in 2003 to \$45,000 in 2006.
 - ◆ Foundation support grew from \$30,000 in 2002 to \$105,000 in 2006.
 - ◆ Goal – increase donors from volunteer base.
 - ◆ Been successful in a corporate and a foundation matching program.

Goals – Intergenerational Programs

- Overcome negative stereotypes.
- Supportive and nurturing environment.
- Enhance the self-esteem of children and youth.
- Enable isolated senior adults the opportunity to reinforce a sense of worth.
- Ensure that each generation has the opportunity to learn and benefit from the other.
- Meet a community need.
- Provide meaningful volunteer opportunities.

Current Interages Programs

- Intergenerational Bridges
- Dialogues Across the Ages
- Project SHARE & SETS
- Grandreaders
- Across Ages
- Global Wizards
- Ruth Rales Comcast Kids Reading Network
- Intergenerational Resource Center

Intergenerational Bridges

- Mentoring project in several schools pairing seniors with children recently immigrated to the country
- Outcomes include building a support system for the child, helping them get familiar with a new environment while sharing their own customs with mentors

Dialogues Across the Ages

- Structured opportunity for senior adults and high school students to engage in cross-age discussions involving various social studies topics that are of interest to both groups.
- Outcomes include increased awareness that seniors and youth have much to learn from the other, and in many cases share the same sentiments

Self-Esteem Through Service (SETS)

- Partners vulnerable middle school students and isolated seniors living in low income housing facilities to undertake projects together that benefit a third population.

Project SHARE

- Involves children of all ages in organized visits to adult day care centers and assisted living facilities for shared activities.
- Makeover Madness

Across Ages

- Model Intergenerational Prevention Mentoring Program (Temple University)
- Mentoring, Problem Solving Skills, Community Service, Family Activities/Involvement
- Outcomes include improved self awareness, ability to solve problems/deal with stress and anger, improved attendance at school

Grandreaders

- Designed to increase literacy and promote reading readiness in children grades K-3 who come from limited English-speaking immigrant and/or low-income families.
- Outcomes improved fluency and comprehension

Global Wizards

- After school academic enrichment program that helps children with reading, science and math skills using geography as a base.

Ruth Rales Comcast Kids Reading Initiative

- Major MCPS early reading initiative focusing on 2–3 graders and engaging the community as reading tutors.
- Interages and two other nonprofits in the community partner with MCPS to recruit volunteers of all ages.
- ‘Reading Together’ curriculum.

Interages - New Initiatives

- Teen Service Learning Program with Montgomery Hospice
- One/One Grandreaders Tutoring Program

Volunteer Services

- Dedicated volunteer manager
- Year round volunteer recruiting
- Volunteer Screening
- Volunteer Training & In-Service Support
- On-site Staff Support

Why We Are Unique

- Take great care in matching Older adult volunteer with children
- Volunteers are our staff & the people who provide direct service to our constituency
- Provide all training and orientation for volunteers
- In most programs, our volunteers work as a group
- 'No Homework' – we do all of the planning, activities development, etc.
- 20 years of experience and results in the community

Challenges - Solutions

- Constant need for resources – human and financial – to meet community need
- Program scheduling time – school schedule
- Commitment of partners
- ‘Super Volunteers’ as on-site program managers
- Transportation
- Looking for older adults who are still working and/or who have recently retired.
- Need more male mentors.
- Volunteer availability and program time.

Resources

- Call me – Barbara Newland (301-949-3551, x 14)
- Generations United www.gu.org
- Center for Intergenerational Learning
www.templecil.org
- Generations Together www.gt.pitt.edu
- Civic Ventures www.civicventures.org
- Experience Corps www.experiencecorps.org
- Volunteer Match www.volunteermatch.org
- Corporation for National & Community Service
www.cns.gov