

# ARCH Report for FFA 2020-2021

## 1. What problem were you addressing?

Many Friends do not have adequate access to the support we all need to thrive (or even survive) as older and differently abled people. Combine this with our culture's toxic aversion to growing older and to disability and we have created a perfect storm of inadequate access. Quakers from every walk of life may have difficulty accessing the care we need as we grow older and live with disability.

## 2. What change did you expect to create? How? What were the desired objectives, outcomes and outputs of the program and progress made toward each during the reporting period?

We sought to make change through our core values of advocacy, love, vulnerability, and joy. Our program supported access to the care we need to thrive as older people by offering trainings, workshops, and continuing support to volunteer Visitors and Quaker communities.

We planned to offer two ARCH Visitor Trainings in 2021 that would train a minimum of 12 Friends. In the summer of 2020 an experimental 4 week version of the ARCH Visitor Training was offered to two people. After that experience, and in consultation with ARCH Staff and the Committee on Aging Concerns, the decision was made to re-imagine what involvement in the ARCH program looked like.

As we considered barriers to participation among Friends, we consistently encountered a sense of overcommitment, and a perception that participation in the training would be "taking on another Quaker commitment". At the same time the data collection indicated that the vast majority of participants were themselves older. Based on these two findings the training program was re-structured as a foundational 4-week workshop in mutual accompaniment (ARCH Foundations Workshop), open to any NYYM Friend, and focused on the process of aging we all encounter. Workshop participants are welcomed into the ARCH network, a community of pastoral care practice with older Friends, where Friends can access support for their own journey of aging, and/or as they accompany others in their journeys. Follow along workshops on various aging related topics can then be offered independently as interest and availability allows for each Friend.

The inaugural ARCH Foundations Workshop was held in the spring of 2021 and 13 Friends participated. This allowed us to exceed our goal of maintaining 130 participants in the ARCH network, and we now have 153 active Friends who have either participated in the ARCH Visitor Training of the ARCH Foundations Workshop.

We set a goal to revise and adapt our ARCH Visitor Training to new modalities, exploring at least one new modality by 2022. This year we experimented with offering a workshop on housing in later life as an asynchronous week long workshop via Google Classroom in which there was no live Zoom interaction. The intention was to offer the content of the workshop that we would normally provide in a live groups setting, as a series of readings and queries that participants could engage with as they chose or were able to throughout the week. Content posted daily over the course of the week followed the progression of the ARCH Housing

Workbook we have been working on for some years now, so this was also a way for us to try out this content in a responsive group.

We set a goal to offer a minimum of five workshops, learning, and reflection opportunities in NYYM, and two additional to opportunities outside of NYYM, with at least three of them facilitated by ARCH coordinators or volunteers from the ARCH network. We were able to offer 12 such opportunities between August 2020 and September 2021, including one as part of an FGC roundtable, and one for Chestnut Hill Friends Meeting in PhYM. Every offering was either facilitated or co-facilitated by ARCH coordinators, members of the ARCH network, or other facilitators not affiliated with ARCH.

We set a goal of developing at least two new stand alone resources or engagement experiences, and were able to meet that goal as we developed a detailed trauma and resilience information sheet and support resources for Friends meetings who anticipate welcoming home formerly incarcerated Friends and returning formerly incarcerated Friends.

We set a goal to develop one workshop and one written resource in collaboration with children, young adults, parents, and/or middle aged people specifically that draws on the experience or expertise of older people. I was able to administratively support a project that connected people currently parenting children in mutual support groups that were facilitated by older Friends who parented children in the past. I was also able to support two additional projects that are still in process that will produce a newsletter and a written report on the needs of children and their families in our yearly meeting. I'm currently collaborating with Powell House to produce a series of gatherings for Friends in the second third of life (ages 35-59ish) that will include a workshop on supporting aging parents and another considering leadership transitions in meetings.

3. How did you measure success--both quantitative and qualitative? A chart of objectives, actions, and results is helpful. Include numbers and demographics of people touched by the work. Explain your organization's efforts toward diversity, equity and inclusion.

As a religious organization we struggle to reconcile the "bigger is better" social norm with the reality of the project of religion, which is our spiritual health. We strive to keep our meeting communities vital - while recognizing that even meetings have a life cycle that has an ending (and that vitality can even be expressed in that ending). Success for our yearly meeting means that we are spiritually healthy and our communities are vital. Success for our program within our organization means that we are doing our part to support the spiritual health of older Friends, and to keep our meetings vital, so that they can effectively support one another in our aging process. Measuring spiritual health of older Friends and meetings' vitality remains a challenge we are not likely to solve.

Given that limitation, we can express our experience of success through what we can measure from the time period of 8/31/20-9/1/21.

Current Participants in the ARCH Network	157
Participants in Workshops and Gatherings	245
Estimate of Friends Touched by Mutual Accompaniment	260*

\*Mutual Accompaniment is a way of describing what we used to refer to as an “ARCH Visit” but more accurately describes the sense of supporting and being supported in an experience of mutual ministry. This estimate was based on encounters recorded in a form by those in the ARCH network, and extrapolated from those entries.

Our organization as a whole is considering adopting a guiding anti-racist statement of intention. At the same time, we work to recognize the ways that we can create anti-racist “pockets” in our program now. Our joint ARCH Staff and CAC retreat last fall was facilitated by Angela Hopkins from the Friends Center for Racial Justice, to help us consider what kinds of changes were possible for us to make in ourselves and in our program. We then asked the organization Being Here, Human to conduct a Grief Literacy Training with us that culminated with a session on disenfranchised grief. Both of these opportunities prompted us to make important shifts in how we operate our program. The most notable change is the reimagining of the ARCH Visitor program. The process of becoming anti-racist in our program is both ongoing, and we hope will go further than a nominal DEI initiative. We recognize that white supremacy is one root cause of our often counterproductive striving for independence in older age, and at every age. We will continue to seek how this can be dismantled both in ourselves and in our structures.

4. Please note any collaborations that supported your work and/or ways that you leveraged resources. How did this project engage and empower staff from all levels of your organization?

This year we collaborated with the Friends General Conference and with Chestnut Hill Friends Meeting to offer a reflection on remote pastoral care and a workshop on Quaker Values and end of Life Decision Making respectively. In addition, we are currently collaborating with Powell House on a series for Second Thirds (ages 35-59ish) in an effort to recognize the impact of this age group on our meetings’ vitality now and in the future.

5. Please share any unanticipated outcomes or barriers encountered. Indicate any changes in the program’s goals, strategies, personnel or timelines and the reasons behind the changes.

The COVID-19 pandemic remains unpredictable, and affects us in terms of what we are able to do, and how we are able to do it. We continue to try to remain responsive and creative, and to recognize when such barriers arise in the course of our work - which they still do often.

6. How do you plan to share and replicate your results?

Our exploration into cross-yearly meeting collaboration in support of aging concerns was paused due to the demands of the pandemic on our yearly meeting organizations. However conversations are continuing, and the perspective and time the pandemic has given us may result in even more creative thinking.

7. Include a project financial statement (budget and actual) for the reporting period. Please explain significant variances from the original budget and reasons for the variances (with corrective measures if overages), as well as plans for future sustainability.

	2020 Budget	2020 Actual
Funding Source		
Grants (FFA)	64,000	64,000
Contributions Designated to Aging Concerns	10,000	20,043
Other Sources (Products and Services Contributions)	9,000	160
Total	83,000	84,203
Expense		
Staff Salary and Hourly Wages	85,324	87625.25
Payroll Taxes	6,826	7130.75
Health Insurance	19,594	14544
Pension	3,178	3311
Travel and Administration	7,362	1452.27
Visitor Training and Enrichment	200	153
Total	122,484	114,216
Funds		
Margaret Dietrich Fund (Aging Concerns Invested Trust)	5,000	4,573
Balance From NYYM Operations**	34,484	25,440

8. Feedback on your interaction with FFA would be helpful. How have we helped? Made it harder? What else can we do to facilitate your work?

We have really appreciated the regular and ongoing conversations with Susan and more recently with members of the CAC and the FFA board.

9. Additional comments:

Thank you!