

***What problem(s) were you addressing?***

The overarching problems we sought to address through our project in 2020-2021 were as follows: 1) Enhancing quality of life for people living with dementia and care partners in two underserved neighborhoods of North Philadelphia, Hunting Park and a group of abutting neighborhoods in Northwest Philadelphia; 2) Employing community-centered, culturally-specific approaches to developing programs enhancing quality of life: most notably, to create programs designed and implemented in collaboration with and in direct response to the needs and priorities of community members. To follow where they lead.

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

We expected to continue the efforts begun in the first two years of the project to broaden neighborhoods' understanding of and engagement with people living with dementia and their care partners.

***Objectives:***

1. Continuing biweekly community advisory group meetings via Zoom. **Objective met, though on smaller scale than hoped for due to pandemic-related illnesses, family losses, some members' privacy concerns around using Zoom and other related obstacles.**
2. Continuing every-other-day check-ins with group members via text, phone, mail. **Objective met.**
3. Continuing to assess and address technology needs of community members related to full engagement with and participation in the project. **Objective met.**
4. Continue project and program impact evaluation by outside evaluator. **Objective met, though with challenges and disruptions due largely to COVID and online-only communications.**
5. In-house care-mapping workshops for community advisory group members. **Did not happen due to respecting community advisory group members' different priorities during COVID.**
6. New arts-based initiatives:
  - a. Co-create with community members in both neighborhoods a thematic series of "community conversations" books modeled on the Hunting Park "flip book" created in 2018 and 2019, illustrations by community artist, **Objective met in part but not yet fully realized, due to limits of online-only encounters, increasing memory loss among community advisory group members that resulted in discontinuities from meeting to meeting (but also prompted us to develop new practices to address these discontinuities, to be implemented moving forward).**
  - b. Partnership with Mural Arts Philadelphia to co-create community mural on a wall opposite the entrance to Esperanza Health Center on 6th and Cayuga. **Objective met in part but not yet fully realized, due to communication challenges and differing priorities and approaches among participating entities. Project currently on hold while focus group conversations and more broad-based, open-ended listening to community members takes place.**
  - c. Community advisory group members and their networks will recommend and vet music for the 2nd year of the ARTZ Notes music-based program **Objective met in part – input sought from community members but responses limited to date. In the meantime, new music-based program specifically for ARTZ in the Neighborhood communities – "Music in the Neighborhood" – is providing additional opportunities to solicit community input and feedback.**

***Outputs:***

Engage at least 50 additional participants in each neighborhood (for a total of at least 100). **Objective met more successfully than anticipated, due to increased social media presence of NW Philadelphia community liaison (monthly FaceBook Live events, FB page – "Life After Dementia" – developed by her, drawing local participation and participation from all over the country).**

Train 5-6 community advisory group members in the process of care-mapping through informal workshops facilitated by the project team, for a total impact on another 25-60 community members.  
**Objective not met – please see above for reason.**

***Measures of success, qualitative and quantitative; numbers/demographics; diversity, equity and inclusion***

Outcomes were measured through interviews carried out by project evaluator and his assessments of video and audio recordings of advisory group meetings as well as “on the ground” experiential evidence documented in real time by staff and interns. Impacts assessed included:

1. Community members with experiences of the stigmas and isolation of living with dementia continue to articulate increased hope and restored sense of community through participating in the project. ***Successful outcome, though with a smaller reach than anticipated due to COVID***

Member I, at a Zoom meeting, shared how difficult it was for her with no children and immediate family to shelter in place and not be able to meet in person. She followed that up with “thank you everyone in [this] group because you [always] put a smile on my face.” To her, this group, this community, and project was a “blessing.” At the same meeting, Member R, who lost her brother to COVID-19 a few months prior and was unable to visit him during his hospitalization, added: “I love [this] group. Physical contact is very important. I need the people [here]...We should feel blessed and grateful. Think about what we can do for other people.” [from evaluator’s annual report]

2. Community members with dementia and care partners continued to feel "heard" by their community, some for the first time, others, in new ways, as they began to do during Year One. ***Successful outcome, though with a smaller reach than anticipated due to COVID***
3. Community members with dementia and care partners experienced a new sense of self-determination and dignity through participating in a project whose mission is to hear, understand, and meet their needs in various ways. ***Successful outcome, though with a smaller reach than anticipated due to COVID***
4. Community members gained sense of self-esteem, empowerment and connection by encouraging and attending to each other’s stories around dementia and taking on the responsibility for making such connections. ***Successful outcome, though with a smaller reach than anticipated due to COVID***

***Collaborations, leveraged resources, staff empowerment***

We continued to collaborate closely with our colleagues at Esperanza Health Center in Hunting Park throughout the grant period, finding ways to enhance the impact of each other’s programs through mutual support and strategy-sharing. Most notably, we supported and built on the return of their in-person “Young at Heart” program for community elders by hosting our “Music in the Neighborhood” concerts during the same time slots. This drew more participants than normal to “Young at Heart” and more participants than might otherwise have come to “Music in the Neighborhood.” As was the case in 2020, during this current grant our Community Engagement Coordinator – our lead staff member for this project – and our community liaisons in both Hunting Park and NW Philadelphia took on the vital work of adapting strategically to the ever-changing circumstances on the ground in our two historically underserved and highly vulnerable neighborhoods. With the events of each week, we would all regroup and brainstorm about how to connect more effectively

### ***Unanticipated outcomes and barriers***

Virtually all unanticipated barriers, changes in outputs and outcomes, and altered strategies resulted from the continued and prolonged challenges around COVID-19 and its variants. Our outside evaluator documented in his recent report that “One of the changes that we tried to implement this year was ‘feedback sessions.’ The plan was for me to present to advisory members, 3-4 times annually, preliminary findings or recurring themes from data being collected; they, in turn, would offer feedback, share concerns and questions that would help create better and more member-centric programming. Unfortunately, due to COVID-19, scheduling issues, and a lack of systematic data collection processes in light of COVID, there was only one feedback session this year.” He also noted that the disruptions caused by COVID adversely affected his ability to implement a more systematic data collection process. He has recommended the hiring of a graduate assistant to augment and regularize that process in 2022 (see budget narrative accompanying our grant application for 2022).

We also encountered an unanticipated barrier to our work with Mural Arts that has taught us lasting lessons. In August 2020, we met for an initial planning meeting – representatives from ARTZ Philadelphia, Mural Arts, and Esperanza Health Center (our community partnership hub in Hunting Park). At the conclusion of that meeting, we all agreed that Mural Arts would work with Esperanza’s staff to obtain permission to use the wall that had been identified during our meeting as a good site for the community mural we planned to co-create as part of ARTZ in the Neighborhood. We inadvertently discovered a year later that Mural Arts had gone directly to the owner of the wall – without consulting or collaborating with Esperanza staff as agreed – to obtain that permission. In the intervening months, staff at Esperanza and a wide range of community members and organizations had begun to envision together a completely separate use for the same wall. We were unaware of this, and unfortunately, they were unaware of how far our work with Mural Arts had progressed; neither of our organizations (ARTZ or Esperanza) thought to inform the other, assuming a level of transparency that apparently didn’t exist. When this unfortunate series of miscommunications came to a head in August 2021, we had to redress our substantial missteps. The project is currently on hold, as described earlier in this report, but there is consensus that we wish to move forward together.

### ***Sharing and replicating results***

The documentation of the project compiled by our project evaluator will be vital to our sharing of our process and its results. We continue to share our experiences and learnings formally and informally with colleagues through conferences and conversations. Our project evaluator, an ethnographer by training, has expressed the hope that the insights from this project might ultimately be published in a co-authored book.

### ***Project Financial Statement, Variances, and Sustainability***

We have attached a project financial statement for the period of the grant, from January 2021 through December 2021 (final three months projected). We have included notes describing the reasons for variances from the original budget. The following actions will ensure the project’s sustainability for 2022 and beyond: 1) The Board has approved the 5-year strategic plan described in our last report to FFA, to which the mission and outcomes of ARTZ in the Neighborhood are central. 2) The Board has elected new members who represent the Latinx/Hispanic and African American communities at the heart of ARTZ in the Neighborhood. 3) The strategic plan foregrounds diversity/equity/inclusion best practices. ARTZ in the Neighborhood will continue to be the centerpiece and a key driver of our DEI efforts.

### ***Feedback on interactions with FFA***

Friends Foundation for the Aging continues to be an extraordinarily helpful and sensitive partner in ensuring that we have the flexibility and the support we need to sustain our mission and work in North Philadelphia.