

What problem(s) were you addressing?

The overarching problems we sought to address through our project in 2021-2022 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 three years of the project to broaden neighborhoods' understanding of and engagement with people living with dementia and their care partners.

Objectives and Outputs, selected due to space limitations:

Continuing objectives:

1. Continuing biweekly community advisory group meetings via Zoom (12 months/yr instead of the 10 months/yr prior to COVID. **Objective met, supplemented with the re-introduction of bi-weekly in-person meetings as COVID numbers and seasonal conditions permitted.**
2. Continuing to address technology needs of community members related to full engagement with and participation in the project. **Objective met, particularly with development of ARTZ in the Neighborhood-specific cell phone application.**
3. Continuing to develop online and in-person community-led programs piloted during 2020 and 2021. **Objective partially met, though process was somewhat disrupted by the time and organizational demands of our project with Mural Arts of Philadelphia.**

New objectives:

1. New efforts to introduce the project to faith communities within each neighborhood through connections facilitated by community advisory group members. **Objective partially met, due to broader outreach through our partnership project with Mural Arts of Philadelphia. Community advisory group members' involvement in increased outreach was not as robust as we had hoped.**

Arts-based initiatives (continuing and new):

1. Continuing co-creation of "community conversations"/adult coloring book modeled on the Hunting Park "flip book" created in 2018 and 2019. The timeline for this project was delayed during 2021 due to the need to carry it out exclusively online. **Objective met: we anticipate the presentation of the final draft of the book to community advisory group members at a special event at the end of September, with publication to take place by December 2022.**
2. Partnership with Mural Arts Philadelphia, continued from 2021. Delays resulting from challenges in project management on the part of Mural Arts (the project manager was finally replaced at our request in Spring 2022), and challenges in communications among Mural Arts, ARTZ, and Esperanza Health Center necessitated extending the project into 2022. **Objective largely met; the mural installation is currently scheduled for late September (rescheduled from August) and the dedication ceremony scheduled to take place in late October (rescheduled from September).**
3. Still to be defined: collaboration with Esperanza Arts Center, the Philadelphia region's premier center for Latino arts and culture, located just a few blocks from Esperanza Health Center (the two are not related except in the communities they serve). **Due to the experiences of community**

advisory group members and our staff around the challenges of the organizational partnership project with Mural Arts of Philadelphia, we decided to hold off with forging any new organizational partnerships beyond shoring up and focusing on our core partnerships with our community advisors and Esperanza Health Center.

Outputs:

1. Engage 20-30 additional participants through the completion of the community mural in Hunting Park. **Objective met, with the added benefit of introducing intergenerational collaboration through the engagement of high school students from Vocatio Career Prep School, also in Hunting Park.**
2. Engage 10-12 people in co-creating a second community conversation book (encompassing both neighborhoods). **Objective met.**
3. Engage 100-200 people through delivery of monthly “Music in the Neighborhood” programs online or in person. **Objective met.**
4. Engage 30-50 people in co-planning, co-designing, and co-creating a partnership project with Esperanza Arts Center. **Objective not met, due to decision to put off inaugurating this partnership.**
5. Engage additional 150-250 people through continuation of bi-monthly FaceBook Live programs and posts and discussions on “Life After Dementia” FB page. **Objective met.**

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

Outcomes were measured through project evaluator’s 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 prior to COVID***

As recorded in our project evaluator’s annual report, advisory group member R shared with the group during a meeting in May 2022 that “being around [other members of this group] is amazing to me because even though [my] house [is] full of people, I still feel low 'cause everybody [is] always either working or on the computer.” She also shared with the group at a meeting a month later that she had had her first experience of her own memory loss the week prior to the meeting, but was not scared by it “because I know because of this program that I will be okay, I am loved.” Advisory group member J, living with memory loss, commented “We comfort one another with love” at a meeting in May 2022. (J had attended only one of our online meetings during the prior two years, but as soon as we moved to in-person again, he was back, fully re-engaged.)

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, but with a smaller reach than anticipated pre-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, but with a smaller reach than anticipated pre-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, but with a smaller reach than anticipated pre-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, particularly in light of our shared challenges with Mural Arts. When both ARTZ Philadelphia and Esperanza staff were disappointed by the lack of community engagement provided by Mural Arts for community members, we at ARTZ offered to lead weekly hybrid workshops that would engage community members directly in creatively envisioning what the mural should prioritize in memorializing their neighborhood, generating drawings and paintings that spoke for each person to those priorities. Some of these images will be represented in the final version of the mural.

Unanticipated outcomes and barriers

We continued to encounter unanticipated barriers to our work with Mural Arts that have taught us lasting lessons about how crucial up-front, detailed discussions and documentation are: of partnership commitments, requirements, responsibilities and philosophies *prior* to entering into partnerships of any kind. As our process/project evaluator noted in his annual report:

The important takeaway here is that “ARTZ in the Neighborhood”'s mission and commitment to community member-driven programming and insistence on member-driven initiatives is not shared or understood the same way by other comparable organizations. The mural art project will be an important inspiration to many people in the larger Hunting Park community for a long time. However, it should also be a reminder that any ongoing or future partnership include space and time for partners, including advisory group members, to develop together a clear articulation and implementation plan for how to do community-based programming.

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. 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; in 2023, we plan to draft the first iteration of a manual of best practices for community-driven program development for people living with dementia and their care partners.

Project Financial Statement, Variances, and Sustainability

We have attached a project financial statement for the period of the grant, from January 2022 through December 2022 (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 2023 and beyond: 1) Our five-year plan foregrounds diversity/equity/inclusion/accessibility best practices. ARTZ in the Neighborhood will continue to be the centerpiece and a key driver of our DEIA efforts. 2) We are in conversation with a prospective long term care/senior housing partner based in Northwest Philadelphia that might provide substantial outreach support to community members who could benefit from engagement with our North Philadelphia programs, as well as potentially providing additional funding to support the expanded footprint of the project that such outreach would require.

Feedback on interactions with FFA

We have found it particularly valuable to receive both financial and strategic support from Friends Foundation for the Aging's Board and Executive Director, even when things are not going quite as we had hoped, because it is that continued support that enables us to acknowledge, scrutinize, and learn from missteps and to change course for the better while learning productive, lasting lessons.