

## *Ardmore Institute of Health*

### **Report Abstract for Awarded Grant**

#### Organization Name

Southwestern Adventist University

#### Project Title

Southwestern Adventist University Wellness Counts Community Enrichment Plan

#### Amount

\$62,039

#### Project Start Date

07/01/2017

#### Project End Date

06/29/2018

#### Anticipated Number of People Impacted

175

#### Actual Number of People Impacted

266

#### Project Overview

The objectives centered on responding to community needs as identified in prior community assessment research. This included community resident requests for nutritional health classes to emphasize healthy eating and activity. The Keene Community and Johnson County have limited resources for some aspects of healthy living and statistics indicate higher than acceptable incidences of chronic illness which can be addressed through lifestyle management. The project included implementing a major health education program and collaborating with other agencies to promote healthy living in our local area communities.

The primary focus was on implementing a Full Plate Living 90-day Wellness Challenge (FPL90-dWC) reversing diabetes program in two locations in partnership with local churches (Fall 2017, Spring 2018) while giving nursing students an opportunity to improve their community nursing skills. Additionally, a healthy nutrition, gardening, and activity program was implemented in two elementary schools in collaboration with a local Extension office agent. A Health Fair was implemented to raise awareness of health concerns and provide screenings, and a community survey was implemented focused on determining community resident interest in gardening and availability of fresh fruits and vegetables. Emphasis was placed on collaborating with local agencies invested in promoting health and well-being within Johnson County communities.

## Results

Both FPL90-dWC programs were successful, with statistically significant results for Weight, BMI, A1c, and Systolic Blood pressure (SBP) reduction. The food frequency questions were analyzed pre- and post- program. In most instances, attendees made positive improvements in the frequency of eating more nutritious plant-based foods and improving other health habits. Notably, there was increased intake of nuts and seeds, beans, fruits, and vegetables. According to responses on the post program evaluations and informal conversations, over all attendees appreciated the program and the various components utilized in helping them adopt healthier lifestyle habits. Post program survey responses indicate that between 19 and 20 of approximately 22 or 23 respondents, and similar numbers of staff and students tried new recipes and will continue to use them. Most increased their activity levels and improved their consumption of plant-based foods. Overall the program was effective and satisfying for attendees, staff and students.

### LGEG Program results

As many as 50 children participated in making a small garden at school and 37 students completed the programs. Students were observed enjoying themselves and made some improvements toward healthier eating. The teachers expressed appreciation for this opportunity further indicating the program was well received.

Positive interactions took place with adults and children while engaging in activities to promote health during the Health Fair.

## Use of Funds

Total Budgeted Project Cost: \$68,903.80 (includes in-kind funding)

Personnel: \$35,534

Contracted Services/Honorariums: \$1,950

Supplies: \$24,555

Total AIH: \$62,039.00

## Key Challenges

Anytime a project of this magnitude is launched, there is a huge draw on resources. This included the Full Plate Program and other components of community engagement. The foreknowledge of program management and lifestyle change expertise may be there, but there will always be challenges to managing one's time and coordinating the efforts of all of those involved.

Probably the biggest challenge overall was time management related to the PC keeping up with teaching responsibilities and managing the project. Much more time was spent than originally anticipated on planning and implementing the project as a whole and the Full Plate program in particular, including program development and the processing of paperwork. Broad categories of funding were adjusted from the originally proposed budget to complete the project. There were adjustments to be made between what was perceived would take place, and what developed in reality. It was also challenging at times to coordinate with the other personnel and entities involved to meet and plan the various project components.

It took time to compile and coordinate the resources for the program, including the involvement of the many volunteers that helped at the registration-welcome desk, provided the food, and helped the student nurses with data collection. Importance was placed on making this program "evidence-based" and thus into a research project, which added another layer of complexity. Managing nursing student preparation and then providing oversight while they were on duty and interacting with attendees took some careful scheduling and made recruitment of

quality mature volunteers a necessity. Yet, the programs were implemented, the attendees made improvements, the results are available for review, and the students and others associated with the project have all done well and reported health and practice improvements.

The value of this learning process and resulting professional growth is much appreciated!

## Key Learnings

One of the key things we learned in this endeavor is that we can engage the community in desiring and improving their health. We as a nursing department, with our students, with the support of AIH and SWAU Administration, are making a positive difference in the health of individuals in our community and promoting professional development at the same time. We can partner with other organizations, such as Texas Health Huguley Hospital, Cook Children's Hospital, Texas A&M Agrilife Extension office, Keene community leaders, and lay community leaders to let them know we have expertise and resources, and we are willing to share, learn, and work together. We can help address the burden of chronic health issues and find ways to synergistically improve the health of our community residents.

Recently a community coordinator from a local hospital asked to meet with the PC to work on collaborating in the provision of services to the community. When the question was asked about who to contact, the PC's name came up, prompting the phone call to meet. Having now met, we have plans to work on future programming for our community, together. It is gratifying to know that individuals in the area can see the results and appreciate what the SWAU Nursing Department and PC are trying to accomplish. We learned that community engagement and the provision of health education takes time. It takes resources. It cannot be done on our own. We enjoyed the benefits of supporting other organizations and relished the smiles and notes of appreciation that were sent our way. We know that we want to continue our endeavors to be engaged with our community, foster good will, and promote healthier lifestyles through programming and partnerships that address perceived needs. Through this grant implementation process, we have expanded and strengthened our ties with

community leaders and we anticipate ongoing collaboration and investment in our community and the surrounding areas in Johnson County.

## Recommendations for Future Projects

We would like to modify what we are doing, but plan to continue offering an adapted version of our Full Plate Challenge Program, and find a way to maintain contact with and support program alumni. Many contacts expressed interest in coming to a future program. According to the literature, there is a knowledge gap about how long people will maintain healthier habits. Being able to extend the research and develop longitudinal data regarding sustainability of healthy habits in community residents interests us.

It is evident that there is interest in AIH supporting a project to develop a whole person wellness and spiritual care certification and making this available to nursing students and nurses already in the workforce. We met with nursing professors from two SDA institutions and discussed how they are implementing lifestyle medicine and spiritual care values into their undergraduate nursing courses and what might be included in this certification. From review of current literature and conversations with health care leaders, it is evident that there is significant interest in improving how health care providers engage in spiritual assessment and care. We want to develop a certification curriculum that would include lifestyle medicine and spiritual care best practices for nurses into a usable format and disseminate this information. The ACLM work provides a great template. We hope AIH will help us collaborate with stakeholders to develop and test an approved curriculum.

### Project Lead Name

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