Creativity Matters:
Arts and Aging in America

National Center for Creative Aging
Affiliated with The George Washington University
NCCA Mission

- NCCA is dedicated to
  - fostering the vital relationship between creative expression and healthy aging; and
  - developing programs that build on this understanding.
Aging in America
- People are living longer and healthier lives

Demographic shift by 2030
- Over 70 million people will be over 65
- The number of people over 85 will triple
Good News!

- Shift from seeing older people as a problem, to seeing older people for their potential
- Older people seeking meaning and purposeful engagement
- Quality of life matters
- New opportunities with the baby boomers on the scene
Abundant Opportunities for the Arts

- Cultivating Demand for the Arts
  - Arts Learning
  - Arts Engagement
  - Arts Policy

Research

- Two New Studies:
  - The Center for Aging Health and Humanities, The George Washington University
  - The Research Center for Arts and Culture, Columbia University Teachers College
Research: The Center for Aging Health and Humanities, GWU

- The Impact of Professionally Conducted Cultural Programs on Older Americans
- Principal Investigator: Gene Cohen, M.D. Ph.D.
  - Research Sites:
    - Elders Share the Arts, Brooklyn
    - Center for Youth and Elders in the Arts, San Francisco
    - Levine School of Music, Washington, DC
Creativity and Aging Research

Research Indicators:
- Social engagement
- Mastery

"One good thing about this class, and writing, is that it sharpens your memory."
- Edith, Writing from Life Experience (ESTA)
  Morningside Retirement Health Services
Creativity and Aging: Research Findings

- Better health
- Less doctor visits
- Less medication
- Increase in activities and social engagement
- Projected Health Care Costs Savings: $.08/day = $1 billion/year in Medicare D
Sample Quotes from 146 Participating Visual Artists

- “For me to retire from painting would be to retire from life.”
  --Robert Motherwell, age 71

- “Art is what makes me live.”
  --93 year old artist
Above Ground: Research Findings

- Promotes High Level of Community Life & Social Engagement
- Retains Social Networks
- Continues to Work Professionally
- Maintains Personal Income & Healthcare
- Rates Highly on Life Satisfaction Scale as a Person and as an Artist
Building Community & Leaving a Legacy

- **Erik Erikson**
  - Theory of Life Cycle (8 Stages)
  - Final Stage: “Integrity vs. Despair”

- **Robert Butler**
  - “Why Survive? Growing Old in America” (1975)
  - Linking Life Cycle & Aging Process
  - Importance of Reminiscence: Coming to terms with loss and celebrating life’s successes

- **Gene Cohen**
  - 3 Life Phases: Looking Forward as 3rd Phase
  - Focus on: Liberation, Exploration, Importance of Creativity
  - “Chocolate for the Brain”
Best Practice: Guiding Principals

- Follow Older Adult Learning Principles (Andragogy)
- Develop Sequential Programming
- Use Professional Artists as Educators
- Evaluate Programs
- Create and Maintain Sustainable Practices
Key Concerns for Programming

- Older People as Stereotype
- Cultural Sensitivity
- Cross Generational Development
- Accessibility
  - Cognitive
  - Physical
  - Transportation
  - Economics
Program Development: 3 Protocols

- Educational Programs: Lifelong Learning through the Arts
- Healthcare Programs: Clinical & Caring for the Caregiver (Professional & Family)
- Civic Engagement: Building Social Capital
Best Practices: Educational Programs

- National Guild of Community Schools of the Arts
  - Levine School of Music, Washington D.C.
- New Horizons Bands
- Osher Lifelong Learning Institutes
Best Practices: Healthcare Programs

- Society for Arts & Healthcare
- TimeSlips
- Kairos Dance Theater, Minneapolis, MN
- Meet Me at MoMA, Museum of Modern Art, New York City
Best Practices: Community Engagement

- Elders Share the Arts, New York City, NY
- Liz Lerman Dance Exchange, Takoma Park, MD
- Stagebridge Senior Theater Company, Oakland, CA
- Arts for the Aging, Washington D.C.
Program Funding 101

- 2008 National Endowment for the Arts – Creativity & Aging in America Grants Program
- 2008 New York City Department for the Aging designates $1 million to the Department of Cultural Affairs funding 57 Arts Organizations and 150 Senior Centers
- 2008 Leadership Summit Council on Foundations – Arts & Aging one of three key topics
Program Funding 101: Funding Resources

- Government Sources
  - Federal Administration on Aging
  - Local Area Offices on Aging
  - Local School Boards (Intergenerational Programs)

- Foundations
  - Atlantic Philanthropies
  - Weinberg Foundation
  - MetLife Foundation

- Corporate
  - Johnson & Johnson
  - Pfizer
  - GlaxoSmith Kline
  - CVS Caremark
  - Wal-Mart
The Time is Now!
Join the Longevity Revolution

- Research shows that arts create healthy aging through mastery and social engagement.
- People are living longer and healthier lives with meaning and purpose.
- Untapped demographic to increase demand for engagement in the arts.
NCCA Services:

- Information and Resources
  - Arts and Aging: Creativity Matters Toolkit
  - Arts and Aging Directory
  - Clearinghouse for best practice programs

- Education
  - Onsite and distance learning

- Research and development
  - Evidence based research studies

- Advocacy and Policy
  - Leadership symposia
  - News briefs
Arts and Aging: Creativity Matters Toolkit

- Available free online in English and Spanish [www.artsandaging.org](http://www.artsandaging.org)
- Hard Copy $35

Examples for this presentation were taken from the Toolkit
National Center for Creative Aging
Information and Resources

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