

Goddard House Community Initiatives (GHCI)

ANNUAL REPORT 2023

Fostering Creativity, Building Community and
Enhancing Well-being for Older Adults



Growth and Development of Creative Programming



Symphony Towers resident engages in Arts Cafe program, new in 2023.

The vision of Goddard House Community Initiatives (GHCI) is to reduce social isolation and loneliness and enhance the well-being of older adults living in Greater Boston by engaging them in sustainable creative arts programs – encompassing visual arts, music, dance, ceramics and other forms of creative expression – that foster self-expression and new friendships. GHCI programs are tailored to the needs of older adults and promote inclusivity, consistency, and participant-driven programs, empowering them to shape their own experiences. Positive feedback from program participants, with over

95% rating programs as ‘excellent’ or ‘good’ and over half noting improved relationships, underscores our success this year.

In 2023, GHCI’s creative expression programs successfully reached program growth and development goals, collectively serving 1,300 older adults – more than double the participants from 2022 – through the Creative Aging Program (CAP) with Boston’s AgeStrong Commission and the Mayor’s Office of Arts and Culture, the MusicWorks program with FriendshipWorks, and four GHCI operated programs.

Four affordable housing communities were added to our overall portfolio of program locations with MusicWorks engaging with three Brookline Housing Authority buildings, and GHCI commencing two program pilots at Symphony Towers in the South End. The new program host sites brought the collective total in 2023 to 20 elder housing communities across Brighton, Brookline, Dorchester, Jamaica Plain, Roxbury, and the South End.

GHCI also began collaborating with Harvard Business School Community Action Partners to develop a business plan to further program development and expansion, focusing on creating an actionable, measurable plan that drives impact while enhancing the well-being of the older adults we serve in our communities. Final outcomes from the collaboration are expected in 2024.

New Endeavor for Arts Equity

Planning commenced for the GHCI Creative Aging Demonstration Project, which aims to demonstrate how arts-based creative practices can be leveraged to reduce older adult isolation and loneliness and enhance overall health and well-being. The first steps in this endeavor included a formal creative aging literature review and environmental scan in 2023 in collaboration with the LeadingAge LTSS Center at the University of Massachusetts, Boston.

Ongoing Commitment to Education, Health & Wellness

Now in the fourth year of a five-year, \$500,000 donation from Goddard House, the University of Massachusetts Boston (UMass Boston), Manning College of Nursing and Health Sciences, awarded 13 Goddard House–Doane (GHD) Scholarships during the 2022–2023 academic year, disbursing a total of \$100,000 in scholarship funds to deserving nursing students. Eleven of the 2022–2023 GHD Scholars were new to the program this year, and two were in their second year as GHD Scholarship recipients.

Looking Ahead to 2024

In 2024, GHCI plans to broaden and deepen its creative expression programs as a meaningful way to ease older adult isolation, build connections, and enhance overall well-being.

Our Doane Scholarship program will continue to provide critical scholarship support to UMass Boston nursing students, many of whom will care for vulnerable older adults at some point in their careers, and some of whom will enter the field of gerontology.

Additionally, planning for the new Goddard House multi-purpose creative aging center will continue. This center will be located on our assisted living community campus and will serve as a hub for residents, families, and community members to gather to experience and enjoy art, music, theater, film, lectures, and more. The new space will not only serve as the epicenter for these activities but as a thriving symbol of our mission and strategic directions – including stemming social isolation through innovative programs that support our need for purpose, engagement, autonomy, and choice as we age.

Creative Expression Programs Operated by Goddard House
2023 Snapshot

GHCI Operated Programs	
Community	Creative Expression Programs
Dorchester	
Four Corners, a Hearth Community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Farm to Table & Nutrition Program • Music in the Community
Olmsted Green, Hearth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Arts Cafe** • Farm to Table & Nutrition Program • Music in the Community
Jamaica Plain	
Mt. Pleasant Home	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Opening Minds through Art (OMA)
Roxbury	
Ruggles Assisted Living, Hearth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Opening Minds through Art (OMA)
South End	
Anna Bissonnette House, Hearth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Arts Cafe** • Opening Minds through Art (OMA)
Symphony Towers*	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Arts Cafe** • Farm to Table & Nutrition Program

*New program site in 2023

**New program in 2023

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More residents are coming together as a group, including individuals that don't normally participate in activities

–Host site staff member

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NEW! Arts Cafe
(Ceramics/Drawing/Painting/Printmaking/Storytelling):
Offering Exploration of Multiple Art Modalities in One Program



Anna Bissonnette House residents engage in ceramics program.

Program Highlights

- Opportunity to sample different creative arts modalities before selecting a focused concentration
- Taught in English and Spanish
- Facilitated by an internationally recognized visual and teaching artist

Introduced in 2023, our Arts Cafe program launched across three communities, providing older adults with the opportunity to explore different art forms before choosing a specific focus. This skill-building program, backed with educational videos on various art techniques, fosters personal development and well-being through skill diversification, heightened creativity, increased artistic confidence, and community connections.

“

I didn't think I was capable of making art. The program has helped me progress, express myself, and feel more confident

–Arts Cafe participant

”

Opening Minds through Art (OMA) Program Strengthening Multi-Community Ties Through Artful Connections



Ruggles Assisted Living Resident with Interns, Jessica and Bri.

Program Highlights

- Expanded from one to two OMA programs at three program sites
- Engaged 50 program participants
- Increased intern program from two to four local universities, recruiting eight interns
- More than 500 pieces of artwork created and represented at seven exhibitions
- Facilitated by three teaching artists, all with graduate degrees in Expressive Therapies and Clinical Mental Health Counseling, and one internationally recognized, bilingual visual artist. All have previous experience working with Goddard House residents through the OMA program

Forging connections between older adults from four diverse elder housing communities through the OMA program's joint exhibitions stood out as a poignant highlight for GHCI in 2023.

Goddard House's *Gallery M* was transformed into an inspirational and lively showcase for the first-ever combined exhibition, 'Building Community through Art', last spring, which featured 40 pieces of artwork created in OMA programs by residents from Goddard House alongside OMA artwork from residents at Anna Bissonnette House (South End); Ruggles Assisted Living (Roxbury); and Mount Pleasant Home (Jamaica Plain). During the exhibition event, OMA program participants from all four communities discovered new connections and spoke movingly about the impact of the OMA program on them.

The collective synergy and mutual admiration sparked at the 'Building Community through Art' exhibition inspired additional opportunities for uniting the communities. Subsequent summer events at Goddard House included lunches over Bingo and educational garden tours with Anna Bissonnette House and Mt. Pleasant Home residents. The residents at Ruggles Assisted Living were thrilled to welcome residents from sister community, Anna Bissonnette, and staff from our new host site, Symphony Towers, to their vibrant and spirited OMA exhibition last fall.

OMA is an evidence-based, intergenerational, abstract art-making program designed to help build connections between neurodiverse older adults and volunteers/student interns through artmaking.

Last year, our intern program expanded to include an enthusiastic and diverse group of interns, several of whom are the first in their families to attend college. Schools represented included Lesley University, Massachusetts College of Pharmacy, Simmons University, and Emmanuel College.

“
**My thoughts about older adults
have changed a lot participating
in this program...I formed strong
bonds with the participants...and
learned a lot from them.**

—GHCI program student intern

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The OMA program was first introduced at Goddard House in 2016 and subsequently won a LeadingAge Innovation Award in 2017. Drawing on the program's success at Goddard House, OMA was piloted in 2021 at Mt. Pleasant Home and introduced in 2022 at Anna Bissonnette House and Ruggles Assisted Living.

Farm-to-Table & Nutrition Program

Planting Seeds of Success through Creative Collaborations



Olmsted Green residents with Green City Growers Farmer, Mattie.

“We’ve had the pleasure of co-creating with GHCI... a new and innovative program ...that not only connects older adults with vegetables but fosters meaningful relationships with each other.”

– Anna Mutch,
Business Development
Manager,
Green City Growers

Program Highlights

- Engaged 27 program participants
- Facilitated by urban farming organization, Green City Growers, who specialize in installing sustainable, organic gardens and offering educational gardening and cooking programs

Farm-to-Table & Nutrition program participants at Four Corners and Olmsted Green each planted and harvested 33 different varieties (impressive for one 4’ x 8’ raised garden bed!) of vegetables and herbs.

In the non-growing and harvesting months, at participants’ request, the program turns from organic gardening to cooking and nutrition. The groups made 21 vegetable-based recipes and explored 20 different nutritional and practical topics. Notably, some of the program participants had never tasted many of the vegetables offered – and most were pleasantly surprised at how much they enjoyed the new flavors!

Based on the farming program offered at Goddard House since 2014, this program evolved to include a cooking and nutrition component based on residents’ preferences at Four Corners and Olmsted Green.

Guided interaction with nature is healing, instructive and rejuvenating.

–Farm-to-Table & Nutrition participant

Music Pilot Program

Crafting Soulful Narratives Through Music and Storytelling



Hearth’s Four Corners resident participates in recording music.

- Engaged 12 program participants
- Produced two original CDs by participants
- Music created in English and Spanish
- Facilitated by Berklee music production faculty member and New England Emmy Award-winning recording artist/producer

In 2023, to their amazement and delight, residents from Four Corners and Olmsted Green proudly created

two original CDs featuring songs in both English and Spanish. Originally introduced as a weekly sing-along program, the music program evolved – with exuberant prompting from the participants – into an original music-making and songwriting program, guided by a multi-talented Berklee music production faculty member and recording artist/producer.

“It’s so fun to get together and make music. This (album) is one of the best things I’ve ever done.”

–Making Music program participant

Participants, including experienced musicians and those new to music making, received instruction on music theory, writing, and performing original pieces independently and collaboratively. This approach nurtured individual creativity, teamwork, and community spirit among the residents such that the group would often practice together independently from the program class.

2023 Snapshot

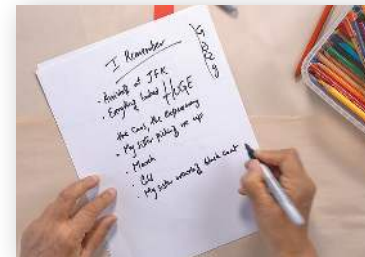
GHCI Sponsored Programs	
AgeStrong Creative Aging Programs (CAP)	
Community	Predominant Programming
Greater Boston via Cable TV and YouTube	3-Part Creative Aging TV Series Dance, Drawing, Storytelling through Art
MusicWorks Programs	
Community	Predominant Programming
Brighton	
Patricia White Brighton	Music/Zumba
Brookline	
Longwood* Brookline	Zumba
Park Street* Brookline	Sing-a-long
Pleasant Street* Brookline	Music/Zumba
Dorchester	
Holgate Apartments Dorchester	Music/Karaoke/Sing-a-longs/ Storytime/Bingo
Jamaica Plain	
Amory St. Apartments	Drum Circle
Back of the Hill	Music/Karaoke/Singalongs/ Storytime/Bingo
Julia Martin House	Zumba
Nate Smith House	Zumba
Roxbury	
Council Towers	Music/Bingo/Drum Circle
Doris Bunte Apartments	Music Bingo
Spencer/Cooper	Music Bingo/Pet Pals
South End	
IBA	Music Bingo
Torre Unidad	Music/Talent Show
Strategic Initiatives	
Program	Program Description
Creative Aging Demonstration Project	To demonstrate at scale how art-based and creative practices can be leveraged to reduce older adult isolation and loneliness and enhance overall health and well-being.
Doane Scholarship Program	Provides scholarship aid to under-resourced UMass Boston MCNHS nursing students, many of whom will serve vulnerable older adults, with some specializing in gerontology.

*New program site in 2023

Creative Aging Programs (CAP) with AgeStrong Reach Broader Audience Through Virtual Programs

GHCI and AgeStrong unveiled a 3-part creative aging program (CAP) TV series on Boston City TV, the City's YouTube Channel, and other outlets. These pre-recorded evergreen sessions expanded and deepened the impact of CAP by reaching a much broader audience, including those older adults who are homebound and those who may not have access to technology or virtual programs.

Each series includes eight educational and engaging episodes, 30-45 minutes each, and takes viewers through the process of building skills in a particular art form. The three featured teaching artists and their workshops are as follows:



- Krina Patel: In her series, "Memories are Stories: Making a Visual Memory Album," Patel guides older adults in sharing their memories and stories while learning and understanding the elements of visual art.



- J. Michael Winward: In his series, "Steps in Time," Michael showcases exercises that support ballroom dance practice in 9 different styles. He also provides seated stretches, standing exercises, and includes slides with historical information, acknowledging the origin of each dance style.



- Silvina Ibanez: In her "Silver Line Series," students focus on learning the basics of drawing with a twist. Every session starts with a quick drawing warm-up and then students.

MusicWorks Engages Nearly 700 Older Adults, Boosting Diversity and Increasing Reach by 17%



Resident participates in recording music.

- 694 older adults engaged in a total of 238 group programs in 15 buildings in Boston and Brookline – 100 additional participants and three more buildings than in 2022
- Expanded geographic location to three Brookline Housing Authority buildings
- Expansion added new cultural and linguistic communities including Mandarin, Cantonese and Russian speakers
- Added culturally appropriate elements to music and movement activities to fit each community
- New activity elements include music bingo, drum circles, karaoke, sing-a-longs and music talent show

- Facilitated by a musician, singer/song-writer Program Manager, who hires, manages and performs with other community-oriented musicians

GHCI is the founding sponsor of MusicWorks, and 2023 marks the sixth year as the sole supporter of the program, which engages residents of affordable elder housing communities in Boston – and now Brookline – to reduce social isolation among older adults through the shared experience of music. MusicWorks programs were held from one to three times monthly, offering a welcoming and inclusive atmosphere for residents to participate as little or as often as they prefer.

“
MusicWorks has been a blessing in my life. I look forward to it like I look forward to Sunday dinner.
 –MusicWorks program participant
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Doane Scholarship Program \$100,000 in Goddard House–Doane Scholarships awarded to 13 UMass Boston Nursing Students



Goddard House board members present Doane scholarship check.

In May 2023, the University of Massachusetts Boston (UMass Boston), Manning College of Nursing & Health Sciences (MCNHS), completed the fourth year of the current five-year, \$500,000 Goddard House–Doane Scholarship grant. As in prior years, the Goddard House–Doane Scholarship recipients were chosen from an applicant pool of UMass Boston nursing students with at least 10 years of experience working as nurses or nursing assistants in the City of Boston. Finalists were selected through an application process assessing their credentials, professional experiences, and level of interest in elder care.

MCNHS awarded 13 Goddard House–Doane (GHD) Scholarships during the 2022–2023 academic year, disbursing a total of \$100,000 in scholarship funds. Eleven of the 2022-2023 GHD Scholars were new to the program this year; two were in their second year as GHD Scholarship recipients. Of these Scholars, three are pursuing PhDs in nursing, conducting population-level research to improve nursing practice and quality. Seven Scholars are working toward master’s degrees in nursing, qualifying them for certification and licensure as family nurse practitioners or adult-gerontological nurse practitioners. The remaining three scholars are earning bachelor’s degrees through UMass Boston’s Nursing for RNs degree program, an important credential for career advancement.

GHCI Demonstration Project: Arts Equity = Health Equity



Anna Bissonnette House resident with Goddard House resident at GHCI lunch and Bingo event.

The results of GHCI creative programs, along with the consistent outcomes of similar small-scale programs worldwide, indicate that arts participation translates to longevity, improved physical and mental health, and happiness. Therefore, arts equity means health and well-being equity.

In collaboration with Boston’s AgeStrong Commission and other strategic partners,

GHCI now wishes to leverage the learnings and outcomes of our programs and demonstrate specific life and health outcomes more rigorously. The desire is to generate measurable outcomes for participants at scale, create a playbook for others to replicate program results, and develop the foundation for sustainability by creating return on investment opportunities for reducing healthcare costs. The first steps in this endeavor included a formal literature review and environmental scan in 2023 in collaboration with the LeadingAge LTSS Center at the University of Massachusetts. The report will be completed in early 2024 and will inform the next steps of the project.

Strengthening Collaborations, Measuring Impact and Creating Sustainability



Mt. Pleasant Home resident pointing out her artwork displayed in the community exhibition.

Our strategic priority of enhancing and expanding creative aging initiatives to ease social isolation and foster meaningful connections for older adults living in greater Boston and residents at Goddard House includes establishing a creative aging hub on the campus of our assisted living community, launching a demonstration project measuring the impact of creative aging on the health and well-being of older adults, and continued support of the wellness field.

Fostering inclusivity, consistency, and participant-driven programs is the foundation upon which GHCI seeks to cultivate a culture for older adults to build meaningful relationships by engaging through arts programming.

In 2024, our goal is to build on this foundation by adding new host sites and enhancing and diversifying programs at existing sites – through increased collaboration with the residents, staff, management, and teaching artists.

GHCI’s collaboration on a 2-3 year business plan with the Harvard Business School Community Action Partners will guide the next phase of sustainable program development and expansion, focusing on easing isolation and enhancing the overall well-being of underserved older adults living in Greater Boston. In addition, GHCI’s support of UMass Boston MCNHS nursing students, now entering its fifth year, signifies our ongoing commitment to bolster community health and well-being.

As GHCI expands its initiatives to address social isolation and wellness among older adults, sustainability remains at the forefront of our mission. Through partnerships, collaboration, and impact measurement, we aim for a lasting, positive impact on community well-being to help ensure a sustainable future where all individuals can age with dignity and purpose.



"Farm in the Forest"
by Eddie A., Dora B., Barbara B. and
Frida H. Ruggles Assisted Living
Opening Minds through Art (OMA) program



To learn more about Goddard House Community Initiatives,
call Christine Nagle, Director of Community Partnerships
at **617-731-8500** x 143 or go to **www.GoddardHouse.org**