

Abstracts

GSA Annual Scientific Meeting 2020

Abstracts are arranged numerically by session and in the order of presentation within each session.

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SESSION 2801 (PAPER)

INNOVATIONS IN GERIATRICS AND GERONTOLOGY EDUCATION: NOTES FROM THE FIELD

ENHANCING BEHAVIORAL HEALTH COMPETENCIES FOR SENIOR CENTER STAFF: LESSONS LEARNED FROM WORKFORCE TRAINING EFFORTS

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Increases in the numbers of older adults with mental health and substance use concerns compel us to identify best practices in training to address these issues. Senior Centers are an ideal location for behavioral health education programs as they are the go-to place for many older adults. This session will describe a program funded by The Retirement Research Foundation and offered in collaboration with Center for Aging and Disability Education and Research at Boston University and NCOA to increase senior center staff knowledge and skills. Approximately 250 senior center staff in Illinois, Florida, and Wisconsin completed an online certificate in Behavioral Health and Aging. Results show that 100% of respondents felt that the training was useful for their job; 93% felt that they will be a more effective worker as a result of the training; and 97% felt that the information they learned in the training will make a difference with the people they serve. We held key informant interviews to assess the impact of training and participants stated that their knowledge, skills, and behaviors were influenced by the program. At the organizational level, leaders reported new programming related to behavioral health and revised practices and protocols. This presentation will cover: (1) the extent to which training participants mastered the competencies needed for effective practice; (2) knowledge and skills gained from the training program; (3) Senior Centers' capacity to identify and refer older adults to mental health services; and (4) organizational changes related to behavioral health programming with older adults.

MY HEART HAS ALWAYS BEEN SET ON PEDIATRICS, AND OTHER INSIGHTS FROM FIRST-YEAR MEDICAL STUDENTS

Jennifer Inker, Sarah Marrs, Madeline McIntyre, Leland Waters, and Tracey Gendron, *Virginia Commonwealth University, Richmond, Virginia, United States*

Senior mentoring programs provide medical students exposure to a community-dwelling older adult mentor

with whom they meet multiple times throughout the program. The goal of these programs is to expose students to healthy older adults, increase their knowledge of topics in geriatrics and aging, and increase the likelihood that students will pursue geriatric specialties. Though research findings show that senior mentoring programs have the potential to increase medical students' attitudes towards older adults (Samra et al., 2013) and their willingness to consider working with older patients in the future (McManus et al., 2017), a critical shortage of doctors who specialize in geriatrics still exists. Moreover, the demand for geriatrically-trained physicians is expected to continue to increase (American Geriatrics Society, 2018). In order to develop avenues for successfully fostering interest in and pursuit of geriatrics specialties, we need to fully understand students' perceptions of working with older adults. The purpose of this qualitative content analysis was to explore first-year medical students' (n = 216) perceptions of working with older adults. We asked students to respond to the following reflection at the beginning and end of their Senior Mentoring program: How do you feel about working with older patients after you complete your training? Our findings suggest that while students feel more comfortable with and open to caring for older adults, they do not feel compelled to pursue geriatrics. Themes and sub-categories emerging from the data provide insight into why students continue to dismiss pursuing geriatrics.

PROFESSIONAL TRAINING AND PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT: LESSONS FROM 10 YEARS OF INTERGENERATIONAL LEARNING

David Steitz, *Nazareth College, Rochester, New York, United States*

This presentation will highlight a ten-year collaboration between the Nazareth College Gerontology Program and St. John's Senior Services – the St. John's Collaborative for Intergenerational Learning (SCIL). Specifically, semester-long intergenerational coursework (Adulthood & Late Life, Issues in Aging, Aging & Community Service) and community-based service projects will be showcased with a focus on design, implementation, assessment, and impact. Emphasis will be placed on the reciprocity of these collaborations, the personal and professional benefits of these exchanges for our students, and the subsequent impact on the community partners and the individuals they serve. Various models of intergenerational learning as well as our new intergenerational residency program will also be discussed.