

Intergenerational Programs: An InterCultural Perspective

In 2004, Ragan Graf, a senior social work major as well as a history and education major, attended the American Society on Aging National Conference in Chicago. We attended an all day intensive session on intergenerational programs that are in progress across the United States. Upon her return, Ragan gave an extensive report on the intergenerational session at the American Society on Aging Conference. In her presentation, she discussed her intergenerational projects that she conducted in the South Bend area during her field placement at the Leighton Center for Senior Health. She gave particular attention to diversity in her analysis of the intergenerational programs that are being offered in this area. She reported that Leighton Center has encountered barriers in outreach to the Spanish-speaking community here in the area due to the language barrier because there was no staff fluent in Spanish in that setting. Moreover, the Spanish-speaking population does not have a trust-base with that organization because they have not worked together. Leighton Center is working with Memorial Health System to establish more extensive outreach efforts with this population.

Ragan was enthusiastic about intergenerational programs and hoped to continue with this approach in her student teaching experience in fall 2005. Traveling to the American Society on Aging Conference was a valuable learning experience for Ragan, and she shared this with her peers in the social work program.

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