

Engaging University Students (Session A), Wilson Pavilion, Incubator

Session Host and Moderator – Linda Margolin, Gallery Guide, Nasher Museum of Art
Laura Voth, Artist and Educator, former developer of “Art Focus” at the Philbrook Museum of Art, Tulsa, OK

Brittany Halberstadt, Education Assistant for Reflections Program, Duke University student
Kaitlin Henderson, former Reflections Gallery Guide, Duke University alumna

Laura:

- Spent four years working on a program for people with dementia.
- Philbrook museum is not connected with a university, but she reached out to local community college: Tulsa Community College (TCC)
- The program, **“Art Focus,”** was funded by a grant from the Alzheimer’s Association.
- The program serves individuals living on their own, as well as local residential communities
- Programs are once a month
 - o 2 hours
 - o Gallery and studio time
 - o Studio goal – to create a piece that the person with dementia will be proud to bring home
- TCC – opened a center for creativity
 - o Strong supporters of arts in the community
 - o Had a service learning based curriculum

TCC class collaboration

- Laura partnered with English department professor
 - o First, students learned about dementia
 - They heard from an Alzheimer’s Association specialist on dementia (this expert came to their class)
 - o Then, students observed a program at the museum.
 - o Students who couldn’t make it to the museum did individual research projects.
- At the end of the class, a website was made by students: artfocustcc.com
 - o Student blogs – some made Laura realize that not everyone understood her goals (for ex. some thought she was trying to get the person with dementia to remember more)

“The Longest Day” program

- Did a program on the “Longest Day” Alzheimer’s Association awareness campaign day.
- Laura reached out to local artists and gave them stories created by person with dementia during “The Longest Day” celebration. Artists illustrated these stories, and an exhibit was created using all of the illustrated stories.
- Had an exhibit of the illustrated stories, curated by the TCC English students.
- Had a panel with students, family members, and some of the artists.

- One success – the first program was a small group, and each year “The Longest Day” program at the museum has become larger and larger.
- The number of community members who became aware of dementia related issues grew
- Allowed people to celebrate lives, not focus on the disease.
- Allowed outside individuals to hear the stories of those living with dementia

Brittany:

Education Assistant for the Reflections Program and rising junior

- Worked on symposium, writes and leads Reflections tours, outreach to other institutions (museums) and assisted living facilities/support groups, families, and the public.
- Sees University students as a great assets.
- Reflections Program currently includes 2 medical students and 2 undergrads.
 - o Medical students – by leading the tours and engaging with visitors, they are acquiring a new understanding about dementia, which they will hopefully carry into their formal training as physicians.
 - o They are able to see person with dementia in an everyday, rather than hospital, setting.

Kati:

Went to Duke for a masters in Liberal Studies

- Interested in how people learn and what they are curious about
- Began leading tours
- 1st did k-12 tours, then public tours and then became a Reflection Gallery Guide (did not start immediately working with visitors with dementia)
- Took a documentary video class
 - o made a video on the Reflections program, which can be found at nasher.duke.edu/reflections.

Questions and Answers:

Q: How does the Nasher train its Reflection guides?

- Most of them start out as regular Gallery Guides (giving K-12 and adult tours)
- They have 2 days of all-day training, observing tours, and then partially leading tours.
- Then they attend regular trainings (about 2 a month).
- All guides are expected to read catalogs, labels, and other material about each exhibition.
- For reflections guides, there is more information on dementia.
 - o Consider partnering with local hospitals or Alzhiemer’s Association for this part of the training.
- Reflections Gallery Guides attend an additional monthly meeting.
 - o Discussing past tours, issues ,etc and planning upcoming tours.

Q: How do you find students?

- Posting Gallery Guide openings on Nasher Website
- Jessica and Brittany talked to classes and labs about the program.
 - o Find faculty who might be interested in the program- they can let you speak during a class period, or can pass information along to their students.
- Get the medical community interested.

Q: What entices student guides other than payment?

- Class credit
- Fulfillment of service requirement
- Opportunity for experience – differentiate themselves from other students
- Opportunity to network (both other students and museum staff)
- **Judy Holstein** from Hilgos Foundation:
 - o Foundation gives 2 students (a year?) money for working with individuals with dementia
 - o Students can do art with the person with dementia, or take them to galleries, etc.

Q: If you're working with students:

1. how do you outline what's required?
2. how do you handle the transient nature of student population?
3. can you come up with useful projects that fit within a semester?