

## **Offsite Programing (Session A), Community Classroom**

Session Host and Moderator – Sandy Beeman, Gallery Guide, Nasher Museum of Art  
Anthony Bowman, Education Outreach Coordinator, McLean County Museum of History,  
Bloomington IL

Celia Hughes, Executive Director, VSA Texas, Austin

Shannon Waldman, Adult Programs Intern, Asheville Art Museum

### **Anthony:**

- The program is offered in the museum, and it also travels to residential facilities, church groups, and organizations for folks over 60 at no cost to the facility. It is funded by endowments. The museum provides up to 4 programs a year per organization.
- If the facility is greater than 50 miles roundtrip, there is a mileage reimbursement charge. Personal vehicles are used.
- Handling of familiar artifacts such as clothing, books, tools, toys, games, kitchen gadgets, and enlarged photographs are used as catalysts to recall memories, thoughts, and feelings of past life experiences.
  - o The facilitator encourages participants to tell their stories about their connections to the artifacts and to connect with other participants through the storytelling.
- The museum also makes loan kits for schools (Museum in a Box) and this has been added for seniors.

### **Celia:**

- VSA Texas has been working with a small non-profit in Austin for 2 years called Mobile Art. In January, they assumed fiscal management and are gradually assuming control of all programs and services. Here is a link to the Mobile Art program <https://greatnonprofits.org/org/mobile-art-program>
- Mobile Art brings teaching artists to residential facilities to conduct arts activities with people over 65 who are underserved in the community. VSA works with the City of Austin Housing Authority and provide hands-on art activities once a month at the 8 residential facilities for low-income residents. Most of the classes are structured to teach about a certain artist or artistic technique, followed by an arts activity using that technique.
- They have a partnership with the Austin Alzheimer's Association, to provide respite art activities for individuals with Alzheimer's while their caregivers attend seminars and support group activities.
- VSA has also launched a program for individuals who cannot leave their homes. They use a book with three writing activities and 8 art making activities explained through words and pictures. They are partnering with a local guardianship organization to provide instruction over the phone to caregivers in the implementation of these activities. The caregivers are provided a copy of the book, as well as all of the supplies that they need to complete 6 of the activities. For six weeks, one lesson per

week, VSA Texas provide guidance and technical support via the phone as the caregivers work with their loved one to accomplish the art activities.

### **Shannon:**

- Shannon works with a group living with mild to moderate dementia at Club CarePartners. The program alternates between going to the Asheville Art Museum to visit the current exhibit and presenting a PowerPoint presentation of artworks from around the world at Club CarPartner's home base. The PowerPoint presentation is loosely based on the Meet Me at MoMA model.
- A representative from Dementia Friendly Western North Carolina works with Shannon in leading activities after the gallery or PowerPoint experience and is partnered with the Asheville Art Museum to develop their dementia friendly programming which will eventually take place onsite at the museum.

### **Discussion:**

Participant Evaluations:

- It was suggested that evaluation forms be simple with set questions. Also, that they are collected before participants leave.

Two types of caregiver partner approaches were discussed:

- In one, the focus was on creating a good experience together. This works well when there is regular attendance in the program.
- In the other, the partners are separated and the care partner observes his partner during the session.

Mention was made of two successful programs in England (can be googled):

- 1- Turnbridge Wells, which offers a dementia tool kit (free download)
- 2- House of Memories