



Be Your Mirror: Reducing Mental Health Stigma

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WHO

Who was involved?

The funded initiative, "Be Your Mirror", engaged:

- over 225 community members in direct, hands-on participatory art making
- at least 1000 community members in learning about mental health and participatory art through visual displays and accompanying narratives
- 16 Non-profit entities
- 4 Higher education entities
- 1 School district
- 4 Collaborating professionals
- 10 Local musicians
- 3 Local small businesses including an art supply store for almost all materials
- 12 volunteers
- 30 future-committed stakeholders including participants/collage creators, muralists, mental health providers, potential funders, and city leaders invested in a community
- mural concept based on this initiative.

Who was the target audience / participants of your work?

Specific collaborations were made with Wharton Elementary School, Arch Street Center, F&M Works in Lancaster, Lancaster Recreation Commission Senior Center, Lancaster PRIDE, LGBT Center of Central PA

WHAT

What were the goals?

- Reduce mental health stigma in Lancaster community
- Create opportunities for interpersonal connection using art and empathy-building activity
- Provide foundation for a permanent mural that incorporates mental health support hotlines and a station for the empathy-building activity
- Engage artists and community members in participatory art

What were the key activities completed?

- Empathy skill-building activities

- Collage making- individual and group projects
- Group reflections
- Community art exhibits
- Stakeholder charette to guide next steps

How was the grant money instrumental to your work?

Grant funding allowed me to stay focused on the art and project management, with security in knowing I could get the project off the ground and see the project to the end phase. Specifically, it allowed me to purchase art materials and supplies for the project. The grant money also allowed me to bring in other supporting visual and performing artists for collaboration and documentation of the project.

ACHIEVEMENTS AND NEXT STEPS

What were the main outcomes from the project?

The project culminated with a community exhibit in the Regitz Gallery, The Arts at Millersville University Ware Center in Lancaster that showcased all of the artwork and educated the public about mental health and the community partners that participated.

The other outcomes were stakeholder feedback from a post-project charette, and draft mural mock-ups to guide stakeholders in creating a permanent display.

What were the top ways the community was impacted?

The best is yet to come! When a large-scale mural is completed, the community will have access to hotline support as well as a permanent station to complete the mirror activity. The mural will serve to visually break the stigma of mental health challenges and promote mental health awareness.

Looking toward the future, what is the main goal?

Who can be involved?

The mural is the main goal. Ideally, this would be placed in Lancaster's Southeast to provide easy access to the project to these city residents. All are welcome to be involved. Residents who live in the Southeast will be primary agents in mural design, artistry, and execution. Funders and in-kind donors of paint and supplies, lift rental are needed and can be from anywhere in Lancaster County.