



# The Mosaic

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Cover Story

You Are What You Speak

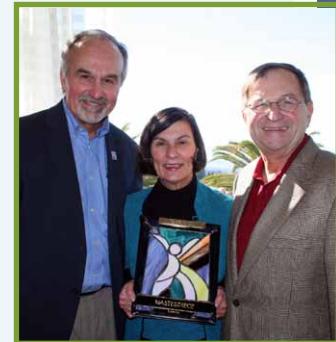
Building Your Village

Lyceum Photo Album

## Lyceum 2011: Building Bridges to Successful Aging

By Teresa Amaral Beshwate, MPH

Lyceum 2011 was an experience to remember. Attendees were immersed in innovative ideas and non-traditional thought. They learned, questioned, hiked, mingled and danced the night away with like-minded professionals and thought leaders in the aging field. They traveled home with renewed energy, global perspectives and actionable next steps. And perhaps most important, they returned having been tasked with the complex challenge of building bridges to the future - to shape the aging experience of tomorrow.



Achieving greater meaning and purpose emerged as a common theme - among residents, employees, and for the network as leaders in the aging field. Keynote speaker Colin Milner, CEO of the International Council on Active Aging, suggested that increased civic opportunity for older adults is a key strategy in preparing for the realities of global aging. Keynote speaker Katie Smith Sloan, COO of Leading Aging (formerly AAHSA), challenged her audience to embrace our uncertain future by creating community through innovation and partnership; to consider consumers our partners in planning, setting the stage for "free-flowing, creative conversations about their aspirations and fears, because what we learn will define our success in future years." Co-principle Investigator of the MacArthur Foundation research on aging and Masterpiece Alliance Foundation board member Dr. Robert Kahn echoed the challenge for greater meaning and purpose, noting the dramatic changes that occur during the life course. Dr. Kahn encouraged increased emphasis on meaningful, productive activities, "...especially with regard to linking to the greater community. It should be a visible and easily exercised option." Drs. Landry and Gobble, known to Lyceum veterans as The Doctor Duo, continued the emphasis on meaning and purpose as they further explored the importance of building a village in which every person, regardless of impairments, makes a vital contribution.

Sloan suggested that President Kennedy said it best: "This increase in lifespan in the number of our senior citizens presents this Nation with increased opportunities: the opportunity to draw upon their skill and sagacity and the opportunity to provide the respect and recognition they have earned. It is not enough for a great nation merely to have added new years to life, our objective must also be to add new life to those years."

Dr. Kahn highlighted the Masterpiece Network's exceptional ability to measure, then challenged the network to achieve greater meaning and purpose through follow up. "Masterpiece Living is unique in that our research is integral with our actions. Yet the data give only a faint reflection of what all of you are doing," he explained. Dr. Kahn encouraged the group to strengthen our measurability through increased follow-up, by encouraging residents to participate in follow-up reviews and increasing the immediate usefulness of the reviews through prompt feedback reports and prompt, constructive feedback group discussions.

Dr. Toni Antonucci, Professor of Psychology and Senior Research Scientist at University of Michigan, was presented the 2011 Robert L. Kahn award, which recognizes leaders in the field of aging who have made exceptional contributions to the propagation and application of successful aging principles. Dr. Antonucci serves as a Masterpiece Alliance Foundation board member.

The thought-provoking presentation, The Power of Language, proved a favorite among attendees (Editor's note: more on this in the following article). Dr. Kate Lorig, Professor Emeriti at Stanford University School of Medicine, and Director of the Stanford Patient Education Research Center, presented the thought-provoking and informative Chronic Disease Self-Management Program, an evidence-based program that has proven to reduce healthcare costs and improve quality of life for those with chronic disease.

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# You Are What You Speak

Exploring the Power of Language

By Kelly Steinke, MSW



What do the words you speak say about you? What do the words used in senior living say about the industry? More importantly, what impact do those words have on others and the culture around you?

In thinking about the words we use, we come to appreciate that words matter. Words can have a positive or a negative impact on others. Think about this...if you could only say one word or one sentence to communicate your thoughts, would it matter to you which words were used? Of course it would!

In reality, we are typically afforded the opportunity to use many, many words to describe ourselves or communicate our thoughts. Because of this, we've overlooked the importance of the individual words we use. We've also come to underestimate the power of our words in impacting others.

It is time to rethink this approach to language. The challenge is to become sensitive to language and carefully consider the words we use. We are challenged to do this because ultimately, the words we use reflect a choice we've made. Choosing to use one word over another reflects that choice. With such a choice, we communicate more than simply the words we speak. By selecting some words over others, we are also communicating information about our beliefs, attitudes, and values at the same time. So, if we fully consider the power of language, the words we choose to use quickly become immensely important.

By becoming sensitive to language and making purposeful word choices, we then create an opportunity to impact people and our environment in a positive and meaningful way. Therefore, it is with thoughtful consideration that we must choose our words.

Become sensitive to language and seize this opportunity to positively impact others by following these steps...

**Step 1) Discover language opportunities**

- For one week, take an inventory of commonly used words & phrases

**Step 2) Consider the impact of the commonly used words by asking yourself and/or your team:**

- Do these words promote successful aging?
- Do these words empower and encourage others?
- Do these words convey a strength?
- Do these words promote a positive culture?

**Step 3) Brainstorm alternative, enriched words**

- Involve residents
- Involve multidisciplinary team

**Step 4) Select and implement use of alternate words**

**Step 5) Consider the impact of the newly implemented words**

**Step 6) Continue to evolve by repeating steps as appropriate**



## Lyceum 2011: Building Bridges to Successful Aging

By Teresa Amaral Beshwate, MPH

- Continued -

A focus on employee wellness and engagement generated ideas, and the presentation Reinvent, Recharge, Remodel proved inspirational in maintaining momentum in veteran Masterpiece communities. Dr. Landry co-presented on dealing with resistance, which garnered top praises among attendees. Stagebridge, an Oakland-based older adult theatre company entertained and educated the group, with emphasis on improvisation with real-world application.

New partnerships were unveiled. Masterpiece communities now have the added value of being ICAA members for the next year, and Masterpiece has partnered with Anti-Aging Games, which will result in brain games being added to Neurobics by Masterpiece, as well as discounted membership with Anti-Aging Games.

"I am reenergized, re-motivated and re-educated," stated one attendee. "Great information, a supportive environment and plenty of laughter!" expressed another.

"Congratulations for what you've already done," said Dr. Kahn in closing. "You've started a social movement - the invention, development and improvement of what it means to have a meaningful old age. I wish you good luck in your good work."

# Building Your Village to Support Successful Aging

By Dr. David Gobble



Most people feel the need to be connected to those around them. Knowing a name, family stories, and sharing experiences are keys to feeling “at home.” The third annual Masterpiece Living Lyceum explored this need for connections in a joint presentation by Drs. Roger Landry and David Gobble. The theme of the presentation was building a village environment in each of our communities. The metaphor of the village was used to highlight how important the environment is in supporting healthy aging. When we interact regularly, and feel connected with others, we have fewer diseases, our immune system works better, our stress levels go down, and we feel more motivated to participate in a wider range of stimulating activities. We need both very close friends, new and old, and more casual friends to share the joys and pains of life.

Building your village of connections is not always easy, and certainly not a passive activity. Drs. Landry and Gobble challenged the attendees at the 3rd annual Lyceum to think about how they could stimulate the village concept in their lives and in their own worksites. Lyceum attendees completed an evaluation, indicating their Lyceum-inspired next steps and plans for building the village in their communities. The following responses indicate a bright year ahead in Masterpiece communities, with new programs, revitalized staff and a supportive environment as we all journey toward successful aging.

Incorporate growth and potential concepts into my own life	86%
Empower the older adults I work with	80%
Apply knowledge gained upon return to my community	80%
Communicate Masterpiece Living message better	80%
Adapt or update an existing program	77%
Advance culture change at my community	71%
Bridge the research I've learned with practice at my community	69%
Incorporate Masterpiece Living message in new way	60%
Work more effectively with coworkers in other departments	57%



Residents, when these reenergized staff offer more opportunities to participate in programs, or ask for your ideas and interests, take advantage of these opportunities to participate and share. After all, it is your village, and you are responsible for both its growth and your growth. According to Dr. Dean Ornish (reversal of Heart Disease fame), in testimony at a National Institute’s of Health hearing in March, 2009, “illness begins with “I” and wellness with “We.”

So, be well by joining fully in building your village, working with your energized staff to create the best culture possible for successful aging.



# Lyceum 2011 Photo Album

