



2013-2014 Policy Forum

A Community of Caregiving: For the Silver Tsunami

Friday May, 9, 2014

Moderator

- Maureen Reed, Executive Director of the Nobel Peace Prize Forum; Adjunct Faculty, University of Minnesota School of Public Health and the School of Medicine
 - Opening Remarks:
 - Took sabbatical from HP some time ago, visiting mother (in mid-90s) and realized that she would also live to the same age- (had 2-20year careers left)!
 - Now mother is 103 and sharp as a tack, still looks at mother and realizes that she has many years to live left
 - Went to Barnes and Noble, picked up “The Economist” for A Billion Shades of Grey article which highlighted how will have fewer people in workforce worldwide. More older people in workforce, but the divide of skilled and unskilled people in workforce will be a future challenge. For example, if skilled and can use a computer will do better when older, vs. unskilled (manual labor) and don’t have computer skills- what will they do when they are 65?

Panel:

- Lou Burdick, incoming chair of Mill City Commons Board of Directors
- Julie Pfab, Director of Home-and Community-Based Services for Lyngblomsten
- Mark Skeie, volunteer Executive Director of the Vital Aging Network

Opening Remarks by Panelists:

Lou Burdick

- Community Village Models around the United States- Chicago=5, San Francisco=7 neighborhoods

- Mill City Commons
 - o Neighborhood of 65+ who choose to live along Downtown Riverfront. 139 by 2010, now at 170.
 - o Residents are caring for each other. Not aging in place, aging in a community together. They focus on leading good lives instead of physical aspects of aging.
 - o Body, Mind and Soul. Educational programs, Cultural activities, Physical- walks around river, monthly potlucks, volunteer projects, 18-month course- to work on how to navigate aspects of aging (Advanced Care Directives, etc.)
 - o Director is resource for problems, does not do anything hands-on
 - o Having a difficult time attracting the 55-65 age group.
- Beacon Hill in Boston was first, now many have arisen across the US. Each is different

Julie Pfab

- Lyngblomsten- began with 11 Norwegian women who really wanted to make a difference in the community
- Campus includes senior housing and community center
- Unique programs in the community- work with faith communities to give resources and tools to help them care for older individuals in their neighborhood
- The Gathering- build dementia-friendly communities
- Act on Alzheimer's statewide volunteer statewide collaboration:
 - o Strive to become dementia-friendly
- What does it take to be Dementia friendly?
 - o Toolkit and process available
 - o Special trainings to learn about

Mark Skeie

- Vital Aging Network: founded 12 years ago and came out of UMN as a volunteer-based organization
- As father was dying he asked his father what he was most proud of in his life. His answer was "you kids". He also asked his father what his 1 regret was. His answer was that he "would have planned his retirement- when he could have given away more"
- Had opportunity to take early retirement from 3M, which he took and then he found Vital Aging Network
 - o Focus on wellness for individuals 50+, include 4 communities in MN
 - o Examples of programs: "Evolve", "Reignite", "Aging with Gusto": with Ramsey Co Health- community discussion on aging

Q & A

Question 1: Importance of Volunteerism- How do we direct people who are retired/close to retirement to become involved?

- Lou: Competitive Analysis. Individuals at this age have a lot to bring a lot to table because they have been volunteering in community in the past, and some might still continue. Have to keep in mind that an individual who is 85 does not have the same

energy as a 75 year old. Another problem that has been encountered is that many of the women in community spend time taking care of their grandchildren and therefore don't have time to help volunteer.

- Mark: Volunteerism is going to change. It is no longer the traditional view of volunteerism (stuffing envelope), now is more about engaging in community in meaningful way. There is a need to connect possible volunteers with interests and passions to get them to engage. Overall, 1/3 of people don't get volunteerism and never will, 1/3 trying to find way to fit time in, and 1/3 really just have to connect them with the right resources.
- Julie: In her position she sees more of the side where volunteers allow older individuals to stay in their houses longer. There is a need to go into communities and find their passions. Have to find people who have been affected by aging and help them find their gifts and get their training.

Question 2: Need for intergenerational interaction. From organizational perspectives, what are you doing/what do you see as way to include intergenerational?

- Lou: There are villages in FL that have locked gates so young people can't get in there. Individuals in Mill City Commons live in the city so they have the opportunity to work alongside people who are excited about what's going on in downtown. Get to raise awareness of needs for aging population. There is a sense of energy and understanding that comes when engage with people of all ages.

Question 3: The Mill City Commons is a group of individuals coming together as friends and are beginning to see people with early stages of dementia. How do you approach the conversation? Especially when the spouse might self-segregate when not getting support they need.

- Julie: The odds are that everyone knows someone who is affected with it. There are approximately 70% of individuals with dementia who live in homes in MN
 - o Dementia Champions Training- how to be a friend to someone with dementia, how to take away the stigma. Is a 3 hour free training, then asked to do 1 hour friends training after finish.

Question 4: Planning for retirement

- Mark: It is human nature to deny aging. An individual really has to understand the aging process and come to a self-actualization.

Websites of Interest:

Mill City Commons: <http://www.millcitycommons.org/>

Vital Aging Network: <http://www.vital-aging-network.org/>

ACT on Alzheimer's: <http://www.actonalz.org/>

Lyngblomsten: <http://www.lyngblomsten.org/>