



## DIVISION OF SENIOR SERVICES/ LIFELONG MONTCLAIR

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### Accomplishments

#### Faces of Aging

In recognition of Older Americans Month, 2019, we launched Self Portraits: Faces of Aging. Thanks to funding from the Partners for Health Foundation and partnership support from the Montclair Art Museum, this initiative highlights self-portraits of older Montclair-area residents along with their reflections on what aging means to them. The goal of this project was to offset stereotypes around aging and highlight older residents from the Montclair area.

All the portraits and quotes are featured at [www.lifelongmontclair.org/facesofaging](http://www.lifelongmontclair.org/facesofaging). Some artists also shared their portraits at the Montclair Art Museum's Free First Thursday in May. Banners were displayed in the Montclair Center Business Improvement District and Montclair's South End Business District.



## Intergenerational Story Slam

Senior Citizens Coordinator Michelle DeWitt partnered with MFEE and Own the Room to produce the Lifelong Montclair Intergenerational Story Slam on in June 2019. 23 Montclair High School students and 12 older residents worked together for months to hone their 5-minute stories on the topic of “The American Dream.”

## Senior Activities at Edgemont Park House

During our third full year of operation of Senior Activities at Edgemont Park House, we fielded 1403 calls and welcomed 7915 walk-ins and program participants. Since opening, Edgemont’s participation levels have increased an average of 28% each year. Senior Citizens Coordinator Michelle DeWitt secured ongoing donations of meals and services to keep programming free, and most notably, she secured a donation of appliances for the kitchen renovation and an ongoing packaged food donation for food-insecure older residents to take home.

## Montclair Senior Bus

Through our partnership with EZ Ride to operate our Senior Bus, we averaged over 700 rides per month, which represents a 40% increase from the prior year and a 459% increase in ridership since the beginning of our partnership with EZ Ride. Cost per ride has also decreased by 67% since 2017.

In the spring of 2019, the Senior Bus Roundtable conducted a survey by mail to assess satisfaction of Meadowlink/EZ Ride’s operation of the Senior Bus. Over 40% of riders responded to the survey (n=93). Some notable findings are below:

- Over 25% of respondents reported that the Montclair Senior Bus is their primary form of transportation
- When asked what they would do if they did not have the Montclair Senior Bus for transportation, 40% of respondents reported that they would pay for transportation
- Notably, 10% of respondents reported that they would stay home
- In the same vein, over half of the respondents reported that the Montclair Senior Bus has improved their level of activity
- 95% of respondents favorably rated their overall satisfaction with the bus
- Of those who had ridden the Senior Bus prior to Meadowlink/EZ Ride’s operation of it, 92% reported an improvement in its performance



## The Montclair Institute for Lifelong Learning (MILL)

In 2019, there were **1522** registrations for the MILL, and there has been a **421%** growth in registrations since the MILL's launch in 2015. In the last semester of 2019, the first class filled **1 minute** after registration opened, and **7 classes filled in 10 minutes**.

In order to maximize access to classes, particularly for those without computer access/savvy, we launched a buddy program in 2019. MILL Buddies are MILL students who help fellow students register when registration opens. Buddies bring their own electronic devices to Edgemont Park House and assist walk ins. In return, the Buddies are guaranteed registration in the classes of their choice. We also created partnerships with the Yogi Berra Museum and Montclair Film to offer new and unique programs. Partners for Health Foundation continued their generous support of the MILL, launching a double match campaign at the end of 2019.

*In addition to learning and growing, I've met some wonderful women and enjoy their friendship both in and outside of class. Thank you for the MILL program.*

*MILL classes have made an enormous difference in my retirement years. I would be very isolated without these opportunities to socialize and learn.*

## Seminar on Universal Design: Seniorama 2019

Is your home ready

- if you break a leg?
- if you use a wheelchair or walker?
- if you sustain a sports injury?

These are the questions we posed as we promoted our Seminar on Universal Design: Seniorama 2019, highlighting that an environment might be disabling. Topics included an overview of the concept of Universal Design, architectural objectives in home design, and use of Universal Design in intentional community planning.

Featured speakers included:

- Steve Leone, AIA, LEEDap BD+C, Principal, Spiezle Architectural Group, Inc.
- Jack Carman, FASLA, RLA, President, Design for Generations, LLC
- Paul Sionas, AIA, ASLA, PP, Principal Architect, Sionas Architecture, P.C.
- Tom Toronto, President, Bergen County's United Way

The sessions can be viewed here: <https://youtu.be/-sKexoCtYNQ>.

## Age-Friendly Designation Requirements

A first draft of a progress update of the Lifelong Montclair Age-Friendly Action Plan was submitted to AARP at the close of 2019.

## Online Updates

We successfully migrated our online Directory of Senior Services to the Township website and continue working to streamline the website and reduce costs.

## Honors and Awards

- The MILL identified as a good practice by the Austrian Public Health Institute (Gesundheit Österreich GmbH), which was commissioned by the Austrian Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs Health and Consumer Protection and the Austrian Health Promotion Fund to collect good practices in health promotion with a focus on promoting social participation of older adults
- Submitted manuscript (co-authored with a professor and a graduate student from Montclair State University) on the impact of performing arts interventions (via the ChangingAging Tour and performances by Mental Health Players) to *Gerontology & Geriatrics Education*. Submitted proposal to New Jersey Foundation for Aging to present on the topic at their 2020 Annual Conference
- Facilitated and presented at the New Jersey Governor's Conference on Housing and Economic Development
- Presented at the New Jersey Foundation for Aging's 2019 Annual Conference
- Invited to present at the New Jersey Foundation for Aging's Senior Housing Forum
- Provided guidance and support to fellow communities pursuing age-friendly work, including New Providence, Robbinsville, and Elizabeth
- Invited to share our age-friendly work and experience with New Jersey Assemblyman Herb Conaway as he considered the concept of an age-friendly New Jersey
- Honored at EZ Ride's Annual Recognition Luncheon
- Senior Activities at Edgemont Park House visited by Robin Woods; to be featured in the Robin's Nest column in the Montclair Local
- Funding applications:
  - 5310 grant through NJ Transit, which would offset half of the cost of the Montclair Senior Bus and provide a \$50,000 grant to develop a robust program to address Senior Bus overflow (submitted)
  - 2-year case management funding from Partners for Health (awarded \$84,750)

- Montclair/Bloomfield Census Complete Count Committee grant funding from Partners for Health, through Toni's Kitchen, to cover Director Katie York's time spent on 2020 Census outreach (awarded \$3050.71)
- Faces of Aging support from Partners for Health (awarded \$2482.40)
- Seniorama grant funding from Partners for Health (awarded \$1320)

## 2020 Priorities

- Present at New Jersey Foundation for Aging's Annual Conference and Senior Housing Forum
- Launch case management program
- Finalize progress update of the Lifelong Montclair Age-Friendly Action Plan
- Conduct 2020 Census outreach