



## Information for Grant Communities - Spring 2015

You are being invited to participate in a grant opportunity to bring a Bridges Together intergenerational (IG) program to your community during the 2015-2016 academic year. If your community is selected to participate in this grant, we will assist you in establishing an IG Leadership Team with representatives from the senior organization and a local school. The deadline for applying is June 8, 2015.

We have three programs from which to choose. Each program involves seasoned adults collaborating with children but the ages of the children vary. The three programs target children in grades PreK-2, grades 3-5 or 6-8. The focus of the programs is to provide shared experiences that lead to collaborative learning for *all* involved.

If the grant is funded, your IG Leadership Team *must* attend a day-long training in the summer or early Fall, 2015. Bridges Together uses a train-the-trainer model where the leadership team then coordinates volunteers and teaches the Bridges program locally. The training will include team-building activities for your community, theories and best practices of effective IG programs, how to publicize the program and recruit senior volunteers as well as the nuts and bolts of the specific program you chose. Each team member will receive a comprehensive manual that supports national core educational standards. Lunch will also be provided at no cost. We have found over the past 20 years, that attendees walk away feeling empowered to easily create IG bridges. Moreover, we often hear that they are enjoying watching seasoned adults and children form magical friendships... and are awed at the myriad of benefits everyone reaps.

To help ensure your success, Bridges Together will provide you with a “coach” who will be at the training and support you as you implement the program of your choice in your own community.

Bridges Together is committed to educating professionals like *you* so that *you* are empowered to engage children and older adults through intergenerational programs that enrich families and enhance communities now and for future generations.

We are excited about the prospect of collaborating with you but want to make sure that you understand:

- You will be notified by June 15, 2015 if your community has been selected to participate in this grant opportunity. We can only select 5 communities. We will give priority to communities that have *Letters of Commitment* from both a senior center and school. Please know that if we are unable to include your organization in this grant proposal, we will keep your *Letter of Commitment* and stay in touch with you – with the expectation that we will keep you abreast of other grant opportunities in the coming months.
- If your community is selected to participate in this grant opportunity, when we notify you, we will give you a form to fill out with the contact information for each member of the IG Leadership Team. This form must be returned by June 30 before people leave for summer

vacation. This will allow us to get started in September, if the grant is funded. We will send reminders but if the IG Leadership Team form is not returned by June 30, you may be removed from this grant opportunity and an alternate community may be selected.

Your IG Leadership Team must include:

- A staff member from the seniors' organization.
- A lead senior volunteer who will *participate* in the program and be a spokesperson for the program.
- One or two staff members from the children's organization or teachers from a local school. (Often, it is these staff members who lead the Bridges Together sessions.)

Please note:

- One or two of these people must be identified as the educator or teacher(s) who will lead the Bridges Together sessions. You should have at least two teachers. Additional teachers may be included upon request and approval.
- In addition, one or two of these people must be identified as the Volunteer Coordinator, who will recruit, train and place the volunteers. This may be a staff member or lead senior volunteer.

In addition, the following people might be part of your IG Leadership Team:

- Administrators from the senior and the children's organization.
- A parent who will be a spokesperson and help as needed, which is often minimal.
- A maximum of 5 college or graduate students - if they plan to attend the program sessions.
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- You will be notified by June 15, 2015 if the grant is funded and we will work with you to schedule your training which must take place by early fall, 2015.
- The Bridges Together program in your community must include at least 15 students and six senior volunteers. The ideal ratio is five students for every two volunteers. The IG Leadership Team often waits until after the training to recruit these students and volunteers.
- By April 15, 2016, the Bridges Together program in your community must conclude.
- Please note: Part of this grant includes research on the efficacy of the program. As such, you will be expected to distribute and collect written research instruments before and after the program. We will provide you with these instruments at the training. All written data must be returned by April 30, 2016.
- You will also be expected to coordinate two focus groups for research purposes – one for children and one for seniors. They must take place within one month of conclusion of your program and be at a mutually convenient time with the researcher.
- There is the expectation that if the pilot goes well, you will offer the program again in the future.
- Each program normally sells for \$2,400 but will be provided for your community at no charge to your organization. This is a one-time cost with rights to continuously implement the program as long as every educator or teacher who leads the program as well as every volunteer coordinator is trained by Bridges Together. This helps ensure the integrity of the program and that the participants reap maximum benefits. As part of the start-up, at the training, we will supply you with any necessary books and music. You will be expected to provide nametags and art supplies such as markers, paper, etc.

- The majority of communities that implement a Bridges Together program on a pilot basis decide to expand their efforts in the future. Please note: We do require that should you choose to expand, there will be additional costs for training teachers and volunteer coordinators.

**Your Letter of Commitment is due June 8, 2015 and should include:**

1. Your commitment to implementing a Bridges Together program on a pilot basis in the 2015-2016 academic year – **according to the *Information for Grant Communities – Spring 2015***.
2. Why you want to offer a Bridges Together program in your community.
3. Your relationship with your school / partner organization. Preference will be given to communities that have a *Letter of Commitment* from both the senior and children’s organizations – when appropriate. If your organization serves both groups, please clearly state that in your *Letter*.
4. How this program will benefit your constituents – with an emphasis on the older adults. If your population is older adults, please include how this program helps them age healthfully and be purposefully engaged. If you need some ideas on what to include, you may find information on the Bridges Together website at [www.BridgesTogether.org](http://www.BridgesTogether.org), in the *Impact* section.
5. That you expect the pilot will be successful and that you intend to offer the program again in the future.

Just a friendly reminder: please be sure to include that you have read and agree with all that is included in the ***Information for Grant Communities - Spring 2015***.

**The Letter of Commitment must:**

- Be on official letterhead
- Include the date
- Have the name and title of the organization’s representative in the signature space
- Be sent as an attachment to an email
- Have a subject line that states: “Grant Opportunity for [YOUR COMMUNITY’S NAME]”
- Be emailed to: [Melanie@BridgesTogether.org](mailto:Melanie@BridgesTogether.org) by June 8, 2015 at 5PM.

If you have **any questions or concerns**, please contact Melanie Schneider, Development Director at [Melanie@BridgesTogether.org](mailto:Melanie@BridgesTogether.org) or 978-440-0824 OR Andrea Weaver, Founder & Executive Director at [Andrea@BridgesTogether.org](mailto:Andrea@BridgesTogether.org) or 978-400-6813.

Please see below for details on the three Bridges programs.

## **The Bridges Program Curricula Suite**

The award-winning, evidence-based *Bridges Program Suite* unites older adults and children in their own communities for shared experiences and cooperative learning. Through the *Bridges* program, generations grow in mutual respect, understanding, and friendship. Classroom learning is enhanced through these relationships.

Adults volunteer in the children’s classroom, library, or community center over several weeks. Under the guidance of the teacher or trained staff member, the volunteers work in pairs to facilitate small groups of students. Together, the seniors and students share their own life experiences and those of their

families. These discussions are supplemented with creative, educational projects that promote shared perspectives.

The *Bridges* Program Suite curricula are innovative and have a proven track record. This unique intergenerational program model was first developed by Andrea Fonte Weaver in 1991 and has been successfully implemented in public schools, private schools, libraries, community centers, and senior centers, touching more than 10,000 lives.

### Goals for *Bridges*

The *Bridges* programs empower professionals to engage older adults and children in order to:

- Build relationships across generations in the community and in families
- Help all participants realize that as human beings, we have much many more similarities than differences
- Provide older adults with the opportunity to meet new friends (both “old” and “young”), review their lives and share their wisdom & experience
- Promote a positive attitude about aging and foster an inclination to spend time with older adults, as well as dispel fears of aging and ageist stereotypes
- Expand learning opportunities that support the national core educational standards.

In addition, implementing a *Bridges* program increases:

- Youth Development: With a focused discussion on what seniors have done and can do, students are provided valuable growth opportunities. *Bridges* promotes a positive attitude in children about aging and fosters an inclination to spend time with older adults, as well as dispels fears of aging and ageist stereotypes. In sessions and reunions, students often comment on the knowledge and active, well-rounded lifestyles of seniors.
- Opportunities for Older Adults: IG programs provide a dedicated opportunity for older adults to spend time with children, learning about them and their lives today. Because of many societal changes, there are fewer occasions for these generations to come together for meaningful experiences. With the BT Program Suite, older adults will reconnect with old friends, make new friends, reflect on their lives and share their experiences and enjoy the vibrancy of children.
- Community Building: *Bridges* brings together multiple generations within the community: students, teachers and staff, and senior volunteers. The contribution of each generation is valued and vital. Participants of all ages meet new friends (both ‘old’ and ‘young’) and discover that they have many more similarities than differences.

### The *Bridges* Program Curricula

Three unique and innovative *Bridges* programs are available. Each is focused on a different student population, and were developed to be age and grade appropriate. These curricula overlap as different school systems are organized in different ways.

### **Bridges: Our Stories (Prekindergarten through Grade 3)**

In *Bridges: Our Stories*, picture books provide the theme. Components of each session typically include:

- a movement activity;
- interactive book discussion;
- sharing family stories; and
- a related art project.

Participants will:

- experience how a book can 'come to life';
- learn about their family histories; and
- enjoy 'classic' activities such as making newspaper hats and playing musical chairs.

Specific books, along with their themes, include:

- *The Story of Ferdinand* (by Munro Leaf, Drawings by Robert Lawson) with the theme of each person is special;
- *Mike Mulligan and the Steam Shovel* (by Virginia Lee Burton) with the theme that each of us works hard to accomplish a goal;
- *Alexander and the Terrible, Horrible, No Good, Very Bad Day* (by Judith Viorst) with the theme that sometimes we experience difficult days but we also have wonderful days;
- *A Chair for My Mother* (by Vera B. Williams) with the theme of saving money and also there are always 'helpers' should a crisis occur;
- *Miss Rumphius* (by Barbara Cooney) with the theme that each of us can make the world a more beautiful place;
- *A Wonderful World* (by George David Weiss and Bob Thiele, Illustrated by Ashley Bryan) with the theme of identifying the wonderful things in our world;
- *The Family Tree* (by David McPhail) with the theme of exploring our family trees and favorite trees.

### **Bridges: Growing Together (Grades 3 through 6)**

In *Bridges: Growing Together*, participants explore different aspects of their own life stories along with those of their families and the greater community through:

- interactive discussions; and
- a variety of projects utilizing the different multiple intelligences, including: creating graphic organizers, drawing, and activities with movement. Favorite activities include sharing about an heirloom, a student-led tour of the school and/or community center, and teaching about a favorite topic.

Participants will:

- learn about their family histories;
- have the opportunity to lead and teach and
- discuss changes in our world over time, such as the way we celebrate holidays.
- recognize the way people are the same and different regardless of our ages

Session titles include:

- Learning About Older Adults;

- Getting to Know You;
- Schools Then & Now;
- Ethnicities, Heirlooms and Traditions;
- Learning from Each Other;
- Introduction to The Multiple Intelligence ‘Smarts’ Theory;
- How Old is Old?;
- Celebrations.

### **Bridges: Our Smarts (Grades 5 through 8)**

In *Bridges: Our Smarts*, tweens and teens along with older adult volunteers will explore Gardner’s Multiple Intelligences “How We Are Smart” Theory using different aspects of nature as the theme for each session. This theory states that people have eight different types of intelligences, or “smarts”: body, logic, music, nature, people, picture, self, and word. This theory and how we use our smarts will come alive through:

- hands-on art, music, and science projects;
- interactive discussions; and
- a variety of nature activities.

Participants will:

- recognize how they are smart and how their ‘intelligences’ can shape their hobbies, careers, and volunteerism;
- learn about their family histories and cultivate the character trait of resilience; and
- Increase their knowledge of nature and nutrition.

Sessions include:

- Learning About Our Smarts (assessment – logic and picture smarts);
- Family and Favorite Trees (visual art project – picture smarts);
- Seasons (taking a walk outside and writing poetry – body, nature, and word smarts);
- Resilience (creating a movement to music – body, music, and nature smarts);
- Using Our Hands (hand sculptures – body and picture smarts);
- Field Trip to a Farm (nature smarts);
- Rainbow Plates (planning healthful meals – logic smarts);
- Our Garden (planting a tree or garden – body, logic, and nature smarts);
- Using Our Smarts (in our free time, careers and communities – logic, people, and self-smarts);
- Celebrating Our Smarts (party – people smarts).

With all of the lessons, participants interview loved ones at home and to share in the sessions (people smarts).