

Spring 2009

Mission

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On-going programs at the LIU Health & Wellness Institute

Our Mission

The mission of the Long Island University Health and Wellness Institute is to provide health promotion activities and encourage wellness behaviors with the purpose of reducing health disparities and improving quality of life in the University and the community. This will be accomplished by offering education, therapeutic services, skill development, and by promoting new approaches for the study and delivery of health care

The Platinum Sneakers program

The Platinum Sneakers program was introduced in the fall of 2007, to offer senior citizens, free of charge, the opportunity to participate in physical activities through socially oriented aquatic and exercise programs. The activities are designed to improve flexibility, increase physical strength, stimulate mental awareness and support overall general health.

This program was initiated by Bryna Gutner, Director of Wellness and Aquatics and by Nantesha Chen, NSCA-CPT, NASM-CPT, and is currently overseen by the LIU fitness and aquatics staff. The workouts are presented in a state of the art facility, equipped with the latest cardiovascular equipment, strength machines, free weights and cutting edge research.

Taught in a group setting, Platinum Sneakers is a six week program, with sessions taking place three times a week. Each class offers yoga, aqua aerobics, cardio and resistance/strength training, and is supervised by highly qualified instructors who have extensive experience in working with the senior population. Past enrollments include local residents, members of assisted living facilities and participants of senior citizens activity centers.

We encourage everyone 65 or older, who is looking to maintain a healthy and independent lifestyle, to avail themselves of this program.



The Adapted Aquatics Program for people with Multiple Sclerosis

Program Coordinators:

Dr. Scott

Dr. Salem

Prof. Spatz

NYC Chapter of the National Multiple Sclerosis Society

The Adapted Aquatics Program for people with Multiple Sclerosis is a collaborative community partnership for wellness, originally piloted in Summer 2008. The Aquatics Program is co-hosting this aquatic therapy program in the accessible eight lane swimming pool at Long Island University's Wellness, Recreation and Athletic Center (WRAC). An interdisciplinary educational approach links faculty and students from Occupational Therapy, Physical Therapy, Sports Sciences and the WRAC Aquatics staff, who provide the necessary support both in and outside of the pool. The program targets individuals living with MS, who are already strongly engaged with the NYC MS Chapter, and who require more assistance than the chapter's community based aquatics programs provide.

The program is called SWEAT-Swimming for Wellness, Exercise and Aquatic Therapy and the participants will be able to receive the benefits of an individualized water-based therapy program to support their physical, social and emotional well-being.

The program was conceived and coordinated by Dr. Anne Scott of LIU's Division of Occupational Therapy with JoEllen Zembruski-Ruple, CTRS, program director of Recreation and Rehabilitation Services of the New York City Chapter of the National Multiple Sclerosis Society and Fran Clifford, aquatics director from the NYC Chinatown YMCA .

The team is rounded out with Dr. Yasser Salem of LIU's Division of Physical Therapy and Professor Eugene Spatz, from the Division of Sports Sciences. Initial funding was obtained through a Wellness Grant from LIU Brooklyn Provost Haynes with matching funds from the NYC Chapter of the MS Society. Subsequent funding has been received from the Christopher Reeves Paralysis Foundation, Quality of Life Grants to continue ongoing programming and support for specialized equipment.

The grant links faculty and staff from LIU, piloting an accessible adaptive aquatics demonstration program for people with MS.

The WRAC Aquatics Director, Bryna Gutner is coordinating the facility resources with Professor Spatz, who has developed a new class SPS 102 Adapted Aquatics offered in Spring 2009.

Students enrolled in SPS 102 will assist clients with MS on a one to one basis, as they learn principles of therapeutic aquatics programming with instructor Fran Clifford, who brings many years experience in specialized aquatics.

Occupational therapy students are providing program evaluation to review the efficacy of the program, in conjunction with their capstone research course. In the initial Summer 2008 pilot, the clients with MS reported an increased level of life satisfaction and enhanced functional ability to engage in their daily activities.



LIU/Brooklyn Parkinson's Group (BPG): Fitness Program for People with Parkinson's Disease

Program Coordinators:

Dr. Spierer

Dr. States

Dr. Salem

Brooklyn
Parkinson's
Group

People with Parkinson's Disease (PD) suffer from a wide range of neurologic and movement symptoms including tremors, impaired balance and gait, a kind of freezing and slowness of movements, marked "on" and "off" responses to medications, along with many other limitations. Exercise programs have been shown to help people with PD enhance strength, balance, gait, overall physical functioning, and health related quality of life. Since June 2008, Drs. Spierer, States & Salem from the School of Health Professions have teamed up with the Brooklyn Parkinson Group (BPG) to offer a community-based fitness class for people with Parkinson's Disease (PD) at the LIU WRAC & at the LIU Health and Wellness Institute. The program is unique in integrating exercise for people with PD into a community rather a clinical facility.

Designed to improve overall physical function and reduce the burden of PD symptoms, the fitness program offers a comprehensive array of aerobics, weight training, flexibility and balance exercises. A certified fitness instructor with experience working with special populations, Ms. Janice Mason, leads the class through a lively, vigorous, and varied program of activities twice weekly. LIU students offer support during exercise classes by assisting clients with difficult exercises and recording data for a related research study. Ten week sessions completed is the summer and fall of 2008 show that the program is low cost, safe, benefits PD symptoms, and is very much appreciated by participants.

One client remarked, "This program has impacted my every action ... it increases my hope and confidence that I can lead a productive and contributing life." A new 10-week session continues this spring and we are seeking funding to make this a lifelong opportunity for people with PD. For more information, contact Dr. David Spierer at 718-488-1542.



Healthy Lifestyles

Program Coordinators:

Dr. Hagins

Mr. Asare

Dr. Hayes

Dr. Jelin

With support provided by the Brooklyn Campus Provost, Gale Haynes, a "Healthy Lifestyles for Middle School Students" program was launched this summer within the Wellness Center of the WRAC.

The program provided nutritional education and physical activities to approximately 20 members of the Boys and Girls Club of Brooklyn (~11-14 years of age) two days per week for 6 weeks.

The program was a collaboration between physicians in the Department of Pediatrics at The Brooklyn Hospital Center (Leslie Hayes, MD, Chief of Adolescent Medicine, and Abraham Jelin, MD, Chief of Pediatric Gastroenterology) and faculty at LIU (Marshall Hagins PT, PhD, Associate Professor Division of Physical Therapy; and Nana Asare, Associate Director of the WRAC).

The sessions were led by students from the Division of Sports Science and the Division of Physical Therapy (Jolene Gemara and Adam Goldberg, respectively).

The program appeared to be a great success with interactive instruction on various topics such as the beneficial effects of healthy food choices and exercise, the reading of nutritional labels, healthful cooking techniques and the influence of the media on food choices. Boys and Girls Club members also enjoyed activities such as basketball, swimming and dodge ball.



The HPV and Cervical Cancer Connection: Exploring the Knowledge, Attitudes, and Beliefs among African American and Caribbean American Women

Program Coordinators:

Dr. Kudadjie-Gyamfi

Mrs. Pierre-Louis

This project is an exploratory work to examine and gather information regarding the differences in HPV and cervical cancer knowledge, attitudes and beliefs among African American subpopulations, including African Caribbean's.

The study focuses on issues such as reproductive and gynecological health, knowledge of risk factors for HPV and cervical cancer, usage of pap smears, coping styles and cancer concern among African American and Caribbean women.

Hence, the project will advance knowledge in health prevention and wellness techniques that will help to identify ways for effective outreach efforts to ethnically diverse women who are at risk for cervical cancer

The study will be conducted among African American and Caribbean women at Long Island University-Brooklyn Campus. A total of 150 women will be recruited starting February 2009. We expect to have data collection and entry completed by August 2009

Enhancing functionality, access to community facilities, and parenting skills in custodial grandparents

Program Coordinators:

Dr. Dimitropoulou

Dr. Scott

Grandparent caregiver families are growing in numbers. To date, more than two million grandparents provide custodial care for over six million children nationwide (US Census Bureau, 2000). In New York, 6.3% of all the children are living in grandparent-headed households. Thirty four percent of these grandparents are African American; 26% are Hispanic/Latino; 5% are Asian; and 31% are White. Sixty six percent of the grandparents are under the age of 60 and 23% live in poverty.

Research has well documented that grandparents struggle with their daily activities and the responsibilities mandated by their role.

Many report being overwhelmed with additional social, legal and financial burdens related to their own children.

And this can have a negative impact on their physical and emotional well-being.

The purpose of this program is to develop an outreach program to access grandparents in the communities of Brooklyn and Manhattan, to evaluate and consult individual grandparents on issues of functionality, community access, and parenting, and to create a website that provides access to related resources and educational information.

Starting in February 2009 we will carry out 10 educational sessions (5 topics in 2 sessions each).

The topics will include:

1. Learning what to expect from your grandchildren (2 sessions)
2. Organizing, choosing and selecting the time to participate in community activities (2 sessions)
3. Elimination fall and trip hazards at home (2 sessions)
4. Meal planning on a budget (2 sessions)
5. Incorporating exercise in your busy life (2 sessions)

All sessions will be held at the Health and Wellness Center at Long Island University (161 Ashland Avenue, Brooklyn) and will be completed by August 2009.

For Additional information Please call Dr. Katherine Dimitropoulou at **718-488-3403** or email at Katherine.dimitropoulou@liu.edu or kad2534@gmail.com