

Healing Arts for First Generation Students

2023 / Grant Cycle

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Overview

As first generation (FG) to college students in our pursuit of higher education, financial constraints have limited our scope of exploring avenues of self-expression. This, along with imposter syndrome have left us ill-equipped with mental health and stress management skills. In collaboration with First Generation Support Services (FGSS), and Food services our proposal aimed to reclaim our mental health and community through art with our FG peers. By providing different supplies for different avenues of art such as painting, and clay handbuilding, we aimed to provide a distressing environment for our FG peers

Data Snapshot

With the help of 2023 Wellness Grant, and in collaboration with FGSS, our group was able to host one paint night early in the quarter followed by two clay hand-building activities nights for our FG peers. Each events were attended by around 30 people from all the UCSF grad programs.

Resources



Project Details

Our pilot project aimed to support UCSF's emotional, physical and social pillars of wellness by bringing first generation (FG) students from all UCSF programs to meet their peers and nurture their mental health through guided art practices. As many FG to college students can attest to, in our pursuit of higher education, our financial constraints along with our imposter syndrome have limited our scope of exploring avenues of mental health and stress management skills. Since many FG students come from disadvantaged backgrounds, and many of our exposure to art has been limited by financial constraints, we proposed to bring FG students together to enjoy these beneficial art practices and build connections across programs at UCSF. In collaboration with First Generation Support Services (FGSS), Food services, and the generous funding from the UCSF Wellness and Community grant, we were able to host our pilot art events during the Spring 2023 quarter. We hosted one video instruction guided paint night and two clay hand-building nights. Both events were received with great enthusiasm and requests for similar events. Many students mentioned that they hadn't considered art as a viable source of therapy before our event and were excited to continue their journey. The best part of these events was to witness students interacting with others from different programs and helping each other to create beautiful art pieces for themselves. Given the success of our events this year, we plan on continuing our journey by hosting new art events for students.

Project Challenges

With the help of our fellow teammates and Tiffany Lam from FGSS, we were able to conduct our three events night without many issues. The only issue we faced a few times during our event planning involved obtaining supplies from different vendor sources, which in the end was also resolved efficiently.

Lessons Learned

Throughout our planning and hosting of these events, we were able to witness the need for community and accessibility to stress management skills among the student population. Seeing the enthusiastic participation of students further solidified our resolve to host more workshops that can help with stress management and resilience. We plan to explore different modalities of art with our fellow students and provide a sense of community.