

Cultivating Connections:

Experiential Learning for Personal, Institutions, and Community Wellness

FY2023

Institute for Health & Aging and the Department of Social & Behavioral Sciences, School of Nursing

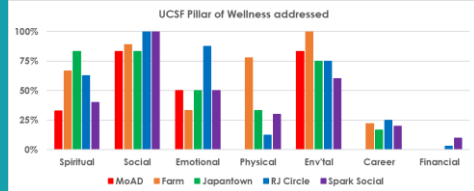
Overview

The Cultivating Connections project involved a series of experiential DEIA (diversity, equity, inclusion, anti-racism) activities and concluded with a collective meal to reflect on learnings. The activities blended fun with learning, affording opportunities for participants to get to know one another outside the usual institutional settings of school and work. DEIA activities included:

1. [Museum of the African Diaspora \(MoAD\)](#) docent-led tour
2. [Florence Fang Community Farm](#) volunteering
3. [National Japanese American Historical Society \(NJAHS\)](#) walking tour of Japantown
4. [Restorative Justice Practices](#) community circle
5. [Spark Social SE](#) collective meal

Data Snapshot

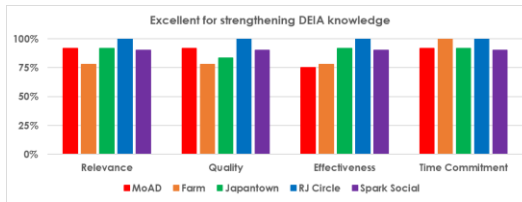
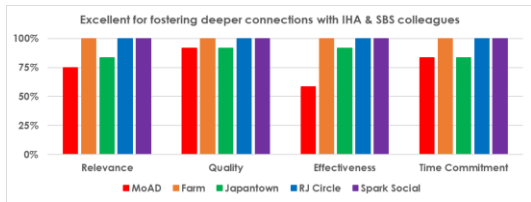
- 5 DEIA activities hosted
- 52 participants in total
- 100% of participants interested in more experiential activities between IHA & SBS in the future
- 7 Pillars of Wellness addressed across 5 DEIA activities



Project Details

The Cultivating Connections project emerged from a survey of IHA and SBS faculty, staff, and students who indicated a desire for opportunities to foster deeper connections with each other and strengthen our DEIA knowledge. We planned a series of experiential DEIA activities during FY2023 so participants could get to know one another outside the usual institutional settings of school and work. Our activities also inspired reflection of how UCSF may or can contribute to the wellbeing of the communities in which it is situated.

All activities were positively rated. Most participants felt the relevance, quality, effectiveness, and time commitment were excellent for fostering deeper connections with IHA & SBS colleagues and strengthening DEIA knowledge.



Project Challenges

Faculty, staff, and students had disparate schedules, including personal obligations, making it difficult to schedule activities on a day and time that was ideal for most people. Delaying work to participate in activities was a major concern. Parking deterred commuters. Outdoor activities were desired for health and safety reasons, but this year was uncharacteristically rainy.

Lessons Learned

"It was wonderful to get outside and meet some colleagues I hadn't met before. This activity was energizing and de-stressing and professionally useful at the same time."
-Farm participant

"Black History is everyday! We, as a society, have a lot to learn about others."
-MoAD participant

"Food and fun always help bring folks together! We need to do it more."
-Spark Social participant

"What unexpected but important history exists in our own neighborhoods."
-Japantown participant

"I enjoyed seeing everyone practice vulnerability in sharing their stories with one another."
-RJ Circle participant

