

# Success Stories

## ***Building Collaborative Contracts With Health Care: ArtWorks and Arizona Health Care Cost Containment System/Department of Economic Security's Division of Developmental Disabilities***

Since 2016, The John A. Hartford Foundation and USAging's Aging and Disability Business Institute (Business Institute) have recognized and honored the achievements of community-based organizations (CBOs) that partner and contract with health care entities. The John A. Hartford Foundation Business Innovation Award<sup>1</sup> celebrates innovative and transformative initiatives designed to align health and community care and increase an organization's sustainability.

ArtWorks in Tucson, AZ, a runner-up for the 2024 award, is an art studio and gallery space that promotes the talents of local artists living with intellectual and/or developmental disabilities (IDD). ArtWorks was nominated for its person-centered scrapbook-making workshop, *Creative Café: Crafting Personal Stories*. The workshop brings together aging individuals with IDD and their caregivers to create a unique person-centered planning (PCP) document. This process is both creative and deeply personal.

This Success Story underscores the transformative potential of a community-based arts program to positively impact people with disabilities and their caregivers. The innovative programming at ArtWorks empowers participants to actively participate in the creative development of PCPs, benefiting individuals with IDD and their caregivers. It is a testament to the power of creativity and community in transforming lives.

### **About the Partners**

#### **ArtWorks**

ArtWorks<sup>2</sup>, an outreach program housed in the Sonoran Center for Excellence in Disabilities at the University of Arizona (UA), Department of Family & Community Medicine, is a vibrant community of learning and creativity. It fosters mutual learning through creative and expressive arts interactions between adults with IDD and UA students. The art studio and gallery space serve as a safe space for expression, connection and growth for the artists, students and the larger community. At the heart of every activity at ArtWorks is a spirit of mutual respect and learning, where all members are encouraged to practice their strengths and talents.

#### **Arizona Health Care Cost Containment System**

Founded in 1982, the Arizona Health Care Cost Containment System (AHCCCS)<sup>3</sup> is Arizona's Medicaid agency. AHCCCS operates under an integrated managed care model through an 1115 Research and Demonstration waiver. Contracted health plans coordinate and pay for physical and behavioral health care services delivered by more than 93,000 health care providers to more than 2.2 million Arizonans.

*"Often, day treatment programs for people with IDD were considered a last resort for those who cannot participate in the productive workforce. However, as aging segments of our population grow, including people with IDD, day treatment can provide a meaningful platform for continued learning, engagement and support opportunities for all. The Creative Café provides a great and easily accessible implementation structure."*

– **Dr. Yumi Shirai**, Director of ArtWorks and Associate Professor at the University of Arizona, Department of Family & Community Medicine

## Arizona Department of Economic Security's Division of Developmental Disabilities

The Arizona Department of Economic Security Division of Developmental Disabilities (DES-DDD)<sup>4</sup> empowers individuals with developmental disabilities to lead self-directed, healthy and meaningful lives. As of September 2024, more than 60,000 individuals diagnosed with autism, cerebral palsy, epilepsy, cognitive/intellectual disabilities and Down syndrome are receiving services from DES-DDD.

### About the Partnership

ArtWorks was founded in 1994 by Jeanne Carrigan and Mary T. Paulin through an AHCCCS/DES-DDD contract to provide adult day treatment. The gallery program, which employs artists with IDD as staff members, began in January 2015. The AHCCCS/DES-DDD contract was expanded in 2020 to include an additional group support employment component.

The person-centered scrapbook-making workshop, *Creative Café: Crafting Personal Stories*, brings together aging individuals with IDD and their caregivers to create a unique version of the PCP<sup>5</sup>, a required health care document for people with IDD who receive Medicare and Medicaid-funded services. The PCP documents their medical care information, goals and preferences. ArtWorks provides the tools and guidance in the arts-based workshop to create an additional outlet for participants to engage in self-exploration and expression and capture their life stories, essential for pursuing healthy community living. The document ensures that caregivers have the necessary information to provide person-centered services.

The workshops are guided by two conceptual frameworks, Inclusive Arts Practice and Universal Design for Learning (UDL), resulting in a flexible and adaptive approach. Inclusive Arts Practice involves a mutually beneficial collaboration between artists with and without intellectual disabilities, allowing all artists to learn from one another.<sup>6</sup> UDL is a means of meeting the needs of different types of learners through a process that is accessible and purposeful, resulting in an authentic and author-driven product.<sup>7</sup>

Workshop sessions, ranging from 60 to 120 minutes, focus on eight topical themes: communication and learning, communities and connections, roles and leadership styles, strengths and challenges, good days and bad days, personal safety plans, routines, goals and celebrations. Ultimately, the workshop program aims to reframe the person-centered planning process through artistic expression, including drawings, logos, photographs and gestures.

The workshop goals are to:

- Empower individuals to become authors, tell their own detailed stories and compile them into a concrete book format.
- Help individuals navigate their daily lives and express their needs and preferences for building and expanding their relationships and connections using scrapbooking as a tool.



### Funding

The University of Arizona Innovation in Healthy Aging Research Fund supported the initial project development. ArtWorks has an annual budget with AHCCCS/DES-DDD of approximately \$260,000 for both day treatment and employment programs for adults with IDD. The AHCCCS/DES-DDD contract allows participants to attend ArtWorks free and provides transportation to and from the workshops when needed. Additional support from the Arizona Commission on the Arts Lifelong Learning Fund and the Arizona Caregiver Coalition AmeriCorps volunteer program allows ArtWorks to provide the same program to other AHCCCS/DES-DDD providers in the community.

## Impacts and Outcomes

The ArtWorks studio and gallery allow approximately 25 adults with IDD to expand their artistic potential while learning social and independent living skills. ArtWorks offers approximately 18,000 hours of direct contact per year.

Impacts include:

- Participants with IDD can better voice their personal stories that detail elements of their communities, individual strengths and needs.
- Caregivers have extensive information about participants' communities and cultural connections, allowing them to develop better relationships.
- Caregivers have information essential to the participants' personhood and medical and safety information, enabling caregivers to provide appropriate and practical support for daily activities.

Key outcomes of the workshops include:

- Participants improve their storytelling capacity, as indicated by narrative element analyses of semi-structured interview data.
- The development of a workshop structure and format that accommodates participants across a wide range of verbal and cognitive abilities, as demonstrated through quantitative and qualitative case study observations.
- The creation of a branded, standardized program that can be customized to provide workshops for different community partners.



## Lessons Learned

AHCCCS/DES-DDD funds are ideal for supporting general programming and can augment quality activities by providing essential resources to yield successful outcomes. The ArtWorks-health care provider relationship provides enhanced services to caregivers and individuals with IDD. Core services align with the health care provider's mandated regulations, embracing person-centered care. In this way, the workshops provide meaningful activities for all parties: individuals with IDD, family members and direct health care providers. The scrapbook curriculum offers a way to train volunteers and creates a fun and creative environment for them to participate. All parties have opportunities to engage and develop a social network by sharing interests and aspects of their lives with others.

## The Future

ArtWorks is working to codify and formalize the curriculum and materials to allow more volunteer training, a train-the-trainer program and expand partnerships with existing community networks. For instance, the organization hopes to collaborate with the Pima Council on Aging, the local Area Agency on Aging, to embed the workshop into their existing Memory Cafés for people with dementia. The program can also be implemented in day programs, group homes and more.

## Endnotes

- 1 The John A. Hartford Business Innovation Award
- 2 ArtWorks
- 3 About the Arizona Health Care Cost Containment System (AHCCCS)
- 4 Arizona Department of Economic Security, Developmental Disabilities
- 5 State Policies and Practices to Support Person-Centered Planning Across the Lifespan for Individuals with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities and Their Aging Caregivers
- 6 Fox, A. & Macpherson, H. (2015). *Inclusive Arts Practice and Research: A Critical Manifesto*. London: Routledge Taylor & Francis Group.
- 7 The UDL Guidelines

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## About the Aging and Disability Business Institute

The mission of the Aging and Disability Business Institute (Business Institute) is to build and strengthen partnerships between aging and disability community-based organizations (CBOs), CBO networks and the health care system. Led by USAging in partnership with the most experienced and respected organizations in the aging and disability networks, the Business Institute provides CBOs with the tools and resources to adapt to a changing health care environment, enhance their organizational capacity and capitalize on emerging opportunities to diversify funding. Funded by the U.S. Administration for Community Living, the Business Institute is the home of the Center of Excellence to Align Health and Social Care, which funds and supports community care hubs and the CBO networks that they lead. Learn more at [aginganddisabilitybusinessinstitute.org](http://aginganddisabilitybusinessinstitute.org).