



UNIVERSITY CIRCLE INC

Introducing Videoconferencing to Seniors for Wellness in Active Aging Communities (2010)

Executive Summary of Laurel Lake & University Circle Interactive Cleveland

A Case Study on Interactive Educational Videoconferencing with Seniors to promote cognitive health & wellness

This pilot program could not have been accomplished without funding from *The Reinberger Foundation*. We are deeply grateful for their vision of successful aging in the region.

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Program Rationale

We are on the brink of an unprecedented time in American history. By the year 2030, 28 percent of America's population will be over the age of 60 and individuals over the age of 85 will have tripled. This *age wave* is influenced by three demographic trends of significance. A new paradigm for aging is being defined by seniors that expect to not only continue their learning, but also to share their cumulative experiences with their families, neighborhoods and communities.

- Baby boomers are aging – people over 65 will increase by 20 percent by the year 2030
- Americans are living longer lives than ever before – life expectancy has risen to 75 years
- We have shifted to an aging culture. By 2030, there will be twice as many older adults (70 million) as there are today (32 million)

Baby-boomers are beginning to retire and in the next 15 years this group of retirees will grow significantly. This group of seniors makes up a highly-educated and independent group of people. They will be searching for retirements that are filled with educational and leisure opportunities where they continue to learn and experience intellectual growth.

In recent research studies within the last decade on the benefits of older adults' participation in individual and collaborative cultural activities, there were significant overall health benefits for the adults participating in these programs over an extended period of time. The most in-depth study was conducted by The National Endowment for the Arts¹ and included both intervention and control groups. The study measured the impact of professionally conducted cultural programs on older adults for 3 years from 2001 – 2004. The over 65 intervention group participants were all involved in intensive community-based arts workshops led by professional artists. Groups met weekly for a minimum of 9 months and up to 2 years. Results compared the intervention and the control groups at the end of the three-year period. Results showed that the intervention groups reported better health, fewer doctor visits, and greater improvement in reporting less instances of depression and loneliness. Overall, the intervention groups increased their number of weekly activities during the 3 year study period, while the control groups decreased their weekly commitments. Other statistical significant evidence pointed out the consistency of attendance by the individuals in the intervention groups. They looked forward to coming to these weekly arts programs and even more impressive was that the activity was continued in their free time and after the program ended (i.e. painting or singing with a group). The positive gains were compounded and were highly engaging for participants and therefore, sustaining and of high-quality.

Other areas of research being conducted consider the effects of aging on creative learning in older adults.² The medical evidence shows that an older brain is every bit as capable as a younger brain when it comes to making new connections between nerve cells. As long as an individual's cognitive ability is not compromised, the connections between neurons, called dendrites are made at the same rate in older adults (aged 55+), then in younger adults (aged 20-30). Research has demonstrated that older brains are even capable of rewiring to compensate for loss of brain cells.³ The collective body of research clearly shows that creativity and learning has life-long potential and should be considered essential along with other services provided to older adults. Often, this is not the case with soaring healthcare costs. Attention has not been paid to the intellectual needs of the seniors aging successfully in northeast Ohio.

SENIOR CONNECTIONS is a pilot initiative designed to respond to the ongoing needs of seniors who are searching for stimulating learning opportunities in their own communities. This pilot program provides weekly interactive experiences and monthly on-site programs that could potentially support creative and successful aging in residential continuing care communities and neighborhood senior centers. With the arrival of affordable high-definition videoconferencing equipment, seniors can have ready access to the highest-quality programs available from University Circle organizations and other content providers. ***SENIOR CONNECTIONS*** provides an accessible and efficient, yet innovative way to provide stimulating programs on a weekly basis to seniors at their own sites by utilizing available technology over the Internet.

¹ National Endowment for the Arts (2001-2004); Gene Cohen, M.D.(primary investigator) Creativity and Aging Study, Washington, D.C (2005)

² Creativity in Adulthood, ERIC Digest No. 204; Kerk, Sandra (1999)

³ Gray Matters: Aging and the Creative Brain; Bickhardt, Craig (2003)

Background for beginning this work

University Circle Interactive Cleveland (UCIC) is an educational videoconferencing initiative involving Circle institutions. The consortium of museums, educational and cultural institutions is a content-provider collaborative promoting education and life-long learning using the instructional resources and collections of their organizations. We have worked together for over 9 years to envision and produce unique learning opportunities via interactive, real-time video-conferencing. The consortium offers 200+ lessons and learning experiences. Collectively, the members of the consortium currently serve close to 50,000 students annually from all over the country and internationally. UCIC has been working primarily with K-12 schools. Two years ago we envisioned opportunities and benefits by extending these learning experiences to senior adults in retirement communities and senior centers in northeast Ohio. We began to lay the groundwork necessary to begin this work in 2010 with a pilot program for Laurel Lake, located in Hudson, Ohio.

Finding the partners

In March of 2009, our consortium held an informational session on videoconferencing at the Cleveland Museum of Art for senior centers and retirement communities in Northeast Ohio. This gathering brought together close to twenty facilities to experience videoconferencing and tour the studios at the art museum. From this gathering, Laurel Lake came forward to begin program planning for a 2010 pilot program. Laurel Lake is a highly progressive continuing care community located in Summit county, approximately 30 miles from University Circle in Cleveland. This provided the opportunity for both an active videoconferencing program, as well as opportunities for extension activities, either on-site or at the museums and cultural institutions at University Circle. These blended activities provided the basis and the inspiration for the program model for **SENIOR CONNECTIONS**. Residents are able to travel the globe with programs that are engaging and promote cognitive health and wellness among the residents. Most importantly, residents who are not as ambulatory or comfortable leaving their familiar surroundings at Laurel Lake can actively participate in this weekly program.

Some of the Circle partners engaged in this initiative include: The Cleveland Museum of Art; Cleveland Museum of Natural History; Cleveland Institute of Music; Cleveland Institute of Art; The Temple-Tifereth Israel; The Western Reserve Historical Society and the multi-media PBS non-profit, WVIZ *ideastream*.

Content & Program Structure

The program model for **SENIOR CONNECTIONS** was based on scheduling weekly connections at a time selected by the wellness or activity staff. One Circle content provider or another organization will connect with senior partners for a weekly videoconference. Once a month, a paired videoconference and on-site program was planned to take place at a Circle partner institution. This could be an introductory videoconference, followed by a visit to an exhibition or attendance at a concert or play. It was essential to create packages of interest to seniors by adapting developed content for school audiences. Content providers simply did not have the staff capacity to develop new programs for seniors. By linking videoconferences that were themed, it was possible to create linked programs and adapt readings supporting life-long learning for the seniors. This direction proved feasible for the pilot program.

Appropriate teaching or support/reading materials adapted for seniors were intended to be provided for most videoconferences and on-site programs. These materials were quite important to the overall experience as we were joyfully working with a population of readers. Through our experiences working with school communities, we often discovered that the thorough teacher packets and other pre-post materials that are distributed are often not utilized. We felt there was a wonderful opportunity for prepared readings working with the seniors. The readings were customized with the residents first & foremost in mind.

Planning & Preparation

To determine the general interest areas for the Laurel Lake seniors, meetings took place with the wellness and activity staff; a Survey Monkey instrument was developed and meetings were held with the Residents' Program Committee to present the survey results. While the survey results were tabulated and analyzed electronically, it was distributed as a paper & pencil survey, which was easier for the residents to complete (the survey instrument is an addendum to this case study).

Once the survey results were tabulated and analyzed, a format of 2-3 programs per theme was established for both structure & promotional purposes and UCI education staff began to evaluate appropriate programs fitting the seniors' interest choices. Expectations of these educated adults, are different than student groups, and we wanted to be able to offer programs that were accessible, but still challenging for our senior audience. For UCI staff, this meant vetting program offerings to ensure that these programs could be adapted for senior adults. In some cases, this meant substituting program staff at the partnering institutions and working with a museum curator or research librarian, rather than a museum educator. In most cases, as long as advance planning was accomplished, this change was achieved for excellent and customized programs.

Equipment & Technology Specifications

Organizations should have internet capacity to upload 1.2 megabits over their networks and the ability to work with their IT departments to configure their networks around firewalls. The newest high-definition videoconferencing CODEC compresses video to run in tandem with an existing network with robust bandwidth. Here is the link to the POLYCOM equipment that makes it possible to participate in delivery of the highest-quality video and audio, interactive videoconferencing programs.

For more information about the equipment installed at Laurel Lake, go to:

http://www.polycom.com/products/telepresence_video/telepresence_solutions/room_telepresence/hdx9000.html

Planning & Scheduling Programs

Weekly videoconferencing programs began in March 2010 and were scheduled and promoted quarterly. Paired programming was offered monthly and included plays, concerts and museum exhibitions. A good example of paired programming includes a videoconference on Monday with *Young Artists & Musicians* attending The Cleveland Institute of Music and on Wednesday of the same week, attending their recital on site in Mixon Hall at University Circle. The facility providing their own transportation is essential to the success of the on-site programs held at University Circle.

In Year One, 42 distance learning programs were delivered and there were two on-site extension programs. There were six field trips scheduled to University Circle institutions for concerts and exhibitions. Participating Circle institutions included The Cleveland Museum of Art; The Western Reserve Historical Society; The Cleveland Institute of Music; The Rock and Roll Hall of Fame & Museum, The Cleveland Museum of Natural History, WVIZ *ideastream* and The Temple-Tifereth Israel. Other partnering organizations included Playhouse Square, The Cleveland Town Hall Series and The Cleveland Council on World Affairs. Content providers from across the country included Mote Marine Lab in Sarasota, Florida; NASA's Johnson Space Center in Houston, Texas and the International Wolf Center in northern Minnesota.

There were 2,790 residents served from March 2010 – February 2011 through distance learning and on-site events in University Circle. Attendance at each program is typically 50-70. While most of these are Laurel Lake residents, it is important to point out this program also draws community members on a regular and ongoing basis and fulfills marketing goals. We estimate that a third of the audience consistently attends every program. With the initial investment of \$10,000 contracted with University Circle's community education department, the cost per resident for programming was \$ 4.00.

Program Evaluation

A second Survey Monkey instrument was developed to assess **SENIOR CONNECTIONS**. Evaluations indicated that the residents enjoy videoconferencing and feel it has become a significant part of their overall educational enrichment experience at Laurel Lake. In the Year One evaluation survey, 87% enjoyed the experience and 97% loved the convenience of having these programs delivered to Laurel Lake. 87% of residents felt the program format of 2-3 topical or theme-based programs was successful. 100% indicated that they liked having this partnership with University Circle Inc. and want to continue the field trips to events, or have on-site extension activities at Laurel Lake (a summary of the survey document has been attached).

Conclusion & Next Steps

University Circle Inc. is the only organization offering this comprehensive program in the country & will continue to develop this program in partnership with retirement communities in northeastern Ohio throughout 2011. *University Circle Interactive Cleveland* is positioned to offer excellent programming in cooperation with world-class institutions, along with technical support & training in videoconferencing solutions for its cultural education programs. Affordability of technology and increased bandwidth & makes this program realistic for most independent retirement communities. Our goal is to expand to 5 additional sites in 2011. This will be the way that educational & cultural programs are delivered in the future offering variety, choice & customization to residents. **SENIOR CONNECTIONS** can potentially expand into a dynamic educational regional consortium serving retirement communities across northeastern Ohio. Once the videoconference network is established, this equipment can also be used to facilitate meetings, business presentations and staff professional training, while preserving institutional budgets and saving on travel time & expenses.

Over this past year, we have learned that this program experiences success where there is an educated resident audience interested in life-long learning. Consistent weekly offerings are important to introduce this programming into the institutional culture, as well as constant communication with staff. The residents that have been especially grateful at Laurel Lake are ones who have difficulty being ambulatory, but continue to be engaged by learning. We hope to build an outstanding and unique program at an affordable price point serving both educational and marketing goals for retirement communities.

Addendum

Survey Instrument & Results
Program Schedule March 2010 – February 2011
Sample Program Reading
Sample Promotional Material



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About the Author

Sandy Kreisman received her BFA in from University of Maryland and her MA in Arts Management from University of Illinois, Springfield. She began working at University Circle Inc. in January, 2001. Her previous position was as Director of *The McDonough Museum of Art* at Youngstown State University where she began working with artists using technology. This led to her interest in videoconferencing, which she believes unites all people as a teaching and learning tool.

Ms. Kreisman currently coordinates University Circle Interactive Cleveland (UCIC), the educational videoconferencing initiative involving Circle institutions. The museums, educational and cultural institutions in the consortium promote education and life-long learning using their instructional resources and world-class collections. UCIC produces interdisciplinary programs aligned to K-12 academic standards and high-quality programs for seniors engaged in life-long learning. This initiative delivers interactive programs to thousands of students & seniors annually in northeast Ohio and across the country.

For more information, contact Sandy at skreisman@universitycircle.org or by phone at 216-707-5021.

About University Circle Inc.

UCI is the development, service, and advocacy organization responsible for the growth of University Circle as a premier urban district and world-class center of innovation in health care, education, and arts & culture.

UCI's Community Education Department promotes University Circle as a center of lifelong learning by connecting the resources of its world-class institutions to students of all ages and backgrounds. In doing so, the department delivers four distinct and unique programs: (ELI) Early Learning Initiative; (LEAD) Linking Education & Discovery; Future Connections; (UCIC) University Circle Interactive Cleveland.

Further information on University Circle Inc. can be found at www.universitycircle.org.



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SENIOR CONNECTIONS Videoconference Program Schedule March - June 2011

3:30 - 4:30 pm - Monday, March 7th

EXTREME MAMMALS MEET EXTREME INVERTEBRATES

The Cleveland Museum of Natural History

Meet Joe Hannibal, Ph.D., Curator of Invertebrate Paleontology and specialist in Extreme Arthropods! Hannibal specializes in researching some of the gigantic invertebrates that crept and crawled around our world before the reptiles and mammals got around to trying out extreme body sizes. Tracks of an 8-foot myriapod from New Mexico? He's studied them.

Join us as Dr. Hannibal describes his research and leads us through the phases of gigantism seen in multiple species.

2 pm - 4 pm Special Program on Wednesday, March 9th

Afternoon trip to The Cleveland Museum of Natural History

The Cleveland Museum of Natural History has been making headlines recently with new discoveries and work by curators. If you think that all you see in a Museum is what is on display, think again, only about 10% of our collections is what you see in our galleries! Our Museum is a place of active, ground-breaking research and our collections help us understand our place in the world.

You will have the opportunity to visit some of our curatorial laboratory areas behind the scenes. We will visit collections from Botany, Cultural Anthropology, Invertebrate Zoology, guided by Museum staff and Docents. In addition to the behind the scenes tour, you will have a highlight tour around the galleries, visiting the *Extreme Mammals* exhibit.

Put on your comfortable walking shoes and be prepared for an experience that few have the opportunity to experience. All areas will be accessible.

1:00 - 2:00 pm - Monday, March 14th

**Town Hall of Cleveland - Speaker - Op-Ed Columnist for the New York Times,
David Brooks**

"The Social Animal: Hidden Sources of Love, Character, and Achievement"

Each day's news brings new findings from the world of brain research, behavioral economics, psychology and the study of the human mind. They add up to a new view of human nature and a new vision of how people succeed. Scientists in many academic silos are shining their flashlight into this rich unconscious realm. Brooks has synthesized their findings in the field of neuroanthropology and pinpoints the attributes leading to character, accomplishment and success in his new book.

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1:00 - 2:00 pm - Monday, March 15th

**Cleveland Council on World Affairs- Speaker - Senior Policy Analyst, Peter Doran
“The Big Triangle: Russia, EU & the US”**

Peter B. Doran is Senior Policy Analyst at the Center for European Policy Analysis (CEPA) in Washington D.C. He specializes in the geopolitics of energy and security and conducts original research and writing on transatlantic relations and the U.S.-Europe-Russia triangle.

3:30 - 4:30 pm - Monday, March 28th

MEET THE YOUNG ARTISTS - The Cleveland Institute of Music

Join musicians from CIM as they introduce us to the music they will be playing in concert. They will also discuss their training, backgrounds and aspirations for their future careers.

4:00 pm - 5:30 pm - On-site Special Concert Program on Saturday, April 2nd

Madeline Lucas, flute - First Master of Music Recital

Afternoon field trip to The Cleveland Institute of Music’s MIXON HALL

Madeline Lucas is one of the rising stars of CIM. Experience her musical talents in beautiful Mixon Hall at University Circle.

3:30 - 4:30 pm - Monday, April 11th

**LEGACY OF LIGHT - Discussion of the play with Laura Kepley,
Associate Artistic Director of The Cleveland Play House**

This ingenious and sweet time-traveling comedy contrasts two female scientists in their forties. One, living in the age of Enlightenment, races to complete her research before her child is born. The other, living in the present and unable to conceive, arranges for a surrogate to carry her child. Their legacies collide in this "entertaining new comedy" (*Variety*) about the search for self-discovery, knowledge and love.

Have a discussion about the play with Laura Kepley, Associate Artistic Director, - then attend the play on **FRIDAY, APRIL 15th**.

10:30 am - Friday, April 15th

**LEGACY OF LIGHT - Friday Matinee at The Cleveland Play House
Showstopper tickets \$10.00**

After hearing about the play from Laura Kepley, attend the performance the same week. Sign up with Laurel Lake Activity staff.

11:00 am - 12:30 pm - Monday, April 18th

**THE MOST DANGEROUS MAN IN AMERICA - Daniel Ellsberg & the Pentagon Papers
A Panel Discussion with Daniel Ellsberg, Jonathan Entin, CWRU Law Professor & Douglas Brattebo, Director of the Center for Engaged Ethics, Hiram College
Moderated by Rick Jackson of WCPN**

"The Most Dangerous Man in America" is the story of what happens when a former Pentagon insider, armed only with his conscience, steadfast determination, and a file cabinet full of classified documents, decides to challenge the Presidency. In 1971, Daniel Ellsberg shook America to its foundations when he smuggled a

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top-secret Pentagon study to the New York Times that showed how five Presidents consistently lied to the American people about the Vietnam War that was tearing America apart.

On Site Lecture at Laurel Lake

3:30 - 4:30 pm - Monday, April 18th

PART I - ENGLISH GARDENS OF KENT & SUSSEX - Cleveland Botanical Garden

Cynthia Druckenbrod - Director of Horticulture & Conservation

Visit a special selection of the finest English gardens in the Kent and Sussex regions of southern England. Gardens will be shared for their timeless statements of fine design and wonderful planting schemes. This talk about English garden design styles will be given by Cynthia Druckenbrod, Director of Horticulture & Conservation at Cleveland Botanical Garden.

3:30 - 4:30 pm - Monday, April 25th

LOVE AFFAIRS from FAMOUS ENGLISH POETS - Touch the Sky, West Sussex, UK

This is the Story of how wonderful poetry was created by very famous English poets whose love affairs were their "Reason for Being." Their life stories show how Love can be the Influence that keeps the Heart strong in adversity and can be the main push to keep the creative spirit alive in words.

We will explore the true life stories of Elizabeth Barrett Browning and Robert Browning, the poetry of Hillaire Belloc and his love for Elodie Hogan who came from America. We will also explore the life of Queen Victoria and her passionate love for Prince Albert who adored her until his death.

3:30 - 4:30 pm - Monday, May 9th

ELLIOT NESS' CLEVELAND: PROHIBITION, BEER & THE TORSO MURDERS

The Western Reserve Historical Society

Travel back to the time when Cleveland had bootleggers, speakeasies and unsolved crimes. Out of Chicago came Eliot Ness to save our city. As prohibition ended, the beer industry bubbled up. Enjoy a trip to the rip-roarin' 1930s in our own hometown.

3:30 - 4:30 pm - Monday, May 16th

COMPOSER SPOTLIGHT - LUDWIG VAN BEETHOVEN - Cleveland Institute of Music

This session examines the life and music of Ludwig von Beethoven, one of classical music's most famous composers and icons. Particular attention will be focused upon Beethoven's Symphony No. 8, as residents will be able to attend a Friday matinee at the Cleveland Orchestra featuring pianist Emanuel Ax where he plays this piece.

11:00 am - Friday, May 20th

CLEVELAND ORCHESTRA CONCERT featuring Emanuel Ax - Severance Hall

Showstopper tickets \$10.00

Travel to University Circle where you will attend the May 20th Friday Matinee concert featuring pianist Emanuel Ax. The program will be conducted by Franz Welser-Möst. The program features Beethoven's Symphony No. 8; Haydn's Piano Concerto in D major and Adams' Guide to Strange Places.

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3:30 - 4:30 pm - Monday, May 23rd

CLEVELAND HITS THE NATIONAL SCENE: 1930's EVENTS BRING THE CROWDS!

The Western Reserve Historical Society

The National Air Races, the Great Lakes Exposition, the opening of Severance Hall and Municipal Stadium all brought crowds to Cleveland. They could travel by train and arrive in the new Union Terminal Station in Terminal Tower! Revisit these great events and add your own memories.

NO programs on Monday, May 30th due to the Memorial Day holiday

On Site Lecture at Laurel Lake

3:30 - 4:30 pm - Monday, June 6th

PART II - ENGLISH GARDENS OF KENT & SUSSEX - Cleveland Botanical Garden

Cynthia Druckenbrod - Director of Horticulture & Conservation

Visit a special selection of the finest English gardens in the Kent and Sussex regions of southern England. Gardens will be shared for their timeless statements of fine design and wonderful planting schemes. This talk about English garden design styles will be given by Cynthia Druckenbrod, Director of Horticulture & Conservation at Cleveland Botanical Garden.

Field Trip to The Cleveland Botanical Garden

2:00 - 4:00 pm - Friday, June 10th

We'll visit the Cleveland Botanical Garden and take in all the delights of spring.

Sign up for the trip with the activity staff.

Distance Learning & a Play
The Cleveland Play House
Monday, April 11 & Friday, April 15

Distance Learning Program on April 11th

3:30 to 4:30 pm

Laurel Lake Community Room

See the play LEGACY of LIGHT on April 15th

10:30 am at The Cleveland Play House



This ingenious and sweet time-traveling comedy contrasts two female scientists in their forties. One, living in the age of Enlightenment, races to complete her research before her child is born. The other, living in the present and unable to conceive, arranges for a surrogate to carry her child. Their legacies collide in this "entertaining new comedy" (*Variety*) about the search for self-discovery, knowledge and love.

Have a discussion about the play with Laura Kepley, Associate Artistic Director, - then attend the play on **FRIDAY, APRIL 15th**.

This program is sponsored by The Laurel Lake Foundation with assistance from University Circle Interactive Cleveland, a videoconference initiative of University Circle, Inc. serving K-12 schools and seniors in retirement communities in Ohio and across the country.

Distance Learning & a Concert The Cleveland Orchestra

Monday, May 16 & Friday, May 20

**Distance Learning Program with
The Cleveland Institute of Music on May 16th
3:30 to 4:30 pm
Laurel Lake Community Room**

**Attend the concert with The Cleveland Orchestra on May 20th
11:00 am at Severance Hall**



The distance learning session examines the life and music of Ludwig von Beethoven, one of classical music's most famous composers and icons. Particular attention will be focused upon Beethoven's Symphony No. 8, as residents will be able to attend a Friday matinee at the Cleveland Orchestra featuring pianist Emanuel Ax where he plays this piece.

Emanuel Ax performs stylish piano concertos by Haydn and Beethoven. Franz Welser-Möst leads the Orchestra in classic works from yesterday and today – Beethoven's delightful Eighth Symphony and the energetic, compelling *Guide to Strange Places* by John Adams.

This program is sponsored by The Laurel Lake Foundation with assistance from University Circle Interactive Cleveland, a videoconference initiative of University Circle, Inc. serving K-12 schools and seniors in retirement communities in Ohio and across the country.

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