



Looking At The ISSUES Stark Education Partnership

February 14, 2020



Stark's Middle School Entrepreneurs

Throughout the school year, teams of 6th, 7th and 8th grade students attended sessions (all held at local colleges) exploring entrepreneurship. They focused on idea generation, design development, business planning, resourcing and pitch development.

On Thursday, February 13th, teams made their final pitch and presentation to a panel of judges. Ideas included a chore completion app, food waste compost, plastic bag recycling, a vaping detector and senior/student community game nights. Six teams were awarded prizes: 4th place winners were Louisville, Plain Local (Team 1) and North Canton (Team 2); 3rd place was Sandy Valley; 2nd place went to Fairless; and Osnaburg was announced as the 1st place winner. Congratulations!



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Intergenerational Program Connects Preschoolers and Seniors

"Two generations at opposite ends of the life cycle can inspire each other to be the best they can be." - Karen Shackelford, JRC Director of Development

JRC, comprised of two not for profit Canton organizations - JRC Learning Center and JRC Adult Day Center - has a mission to enrich lives by educating children, engaging seniors and strengthening community. *Children are inspired and empowered as they receive the early education they need to be kindergarten ready for success in school and beyond. Seniors are inspired and empowered as they receive purposeful and engaging activities during the day[1]...*

The Intergenerational Connections (IG) program at JRC shouldn't be unusual - on its face it is a "no brainer." You JUST put some senior adults and some preschool kids together, and they will enjoy each other. Easy - right? Tom Thompson, Executive Director of JRCares, elaborated: the program which began three years ago with visits to Columbus and research by the Eisner Foundation, has undergone adjustments and tweaks along the way. *"We were determined to be intentional about the way we brought the 'grands' and the preschoolers together...we wanted to create rich experiences..."*

With the support of ArtsinStark, two elements are part of the IG program: Artful Living and Learning provides a teaching artist in music and dance; and an interactive storyteller visits the combined groups. In addition, the IG participants are exposed to yoga, and watercolor painting. LeeAnn Chievitz, IG Director, has additional creative plans including field trips.

Each weekly encounter begins with the children and their teachers preparing to meet the seniors with a "welcome train" into the large meeting space filled with a circle of senior adults. Some have walkers, some have canes, all have challenges that the children become familiar with over time. *"This experience offers an opportunity for preschoolers to respect and be comfortable with older adults, to lose any fear of the equipment and to see how they may help those less able."*

On a recent Friday, storyteller, Lindsay Bonilla, enraptured the children with the story of "How the Kangaroo Got Its Pouch." Enlisting volunteers from the seniors and the children, Lindsay provided hats and props to enact each of the animals and humans in the story and invited the audience to create the sounds and movements of the animals. Lindsay responded to the children carefully, accepting all responses and encouraging creativity. "You can act out any story," she told the children at the end of the hour-long engagement.

For more information, a [report about Intergenerational Connections \[2\]](#) is available on the JRC website.

[1] <https://www.jrc cares.org/who-we-are/>
[2] https://www.jrc cares.org/file_download/inline/48751bd4-cd6f-4a57-b43e-c13d83d83448



About The Partnership
The Stark Education Partnership - a 501(c)3 non-profit organization in Stark County, Ohio - is a catalyst, engaging and collaborating with education, business, civic and community stakeholders to drive sustainable improvement and innovation to provide all students with education and career success.
Questions or comments? Email septpurses@gmail.com or call 330-452-0829. Visit our website at <http://www.edpartner.org>