



NEWSLETTER

Special Addition featuring internships with the People Program New Orleans

Healthy Aging and the Brain

In the spring 2023 semester, Nwanyieze Jiakponnah, a dedicated PhD candidate, led a fifteen-week course titled "Healthy Aging and the Brain" at the esteemed People Program in New Orleans. This opportunity proved to be a transformative experience, allowing her to integrate her extensive background in medicine, health sciences, and public health to craft and facilitate an enriching learning environment for the participants.

The primary objective of the course was to equip the elderly attendees with the ability to differentiate between normal cognitive aging and pathological brain aging. Throughout the sessions, a wide array of topics were explored, encompassing age-related structural and functional brain changes, risk and protective factors in cognitive aging, cognitive impairment, and dementia. Additionally, strategies for promoting optimal cognitive well-being in older age were provided, along with an examination of the intricate relationship between aging and mental health. Thought-provoking discussions on the concept of successful aging further enriched the participants' learning journey.

One of the most rewarding aspects of teaching this class for Jiakponnah was the opportunity to engage with intellectually curious older adults, who brought a wealth of life experiences to the discussions. This teaching experience fostered a newfound appreciation for the aging process and a deeper understanding of the unique challenges faced by this rapidly growing population. Moreover, it allowed her to hone her communication skills and develop effective methods for presenting complex educational material in a manner that was accessible and engaging for older learners.

Reflecting on the experience, Jiakponnah expressed her gratitude for the invaluable opportunity to teach at the People Program. This pedagogical journey stands as a pivotal chapter in her professional growth within the field of aging. As an aspiring educator and researcher, Jiakponnah gained indispensable skills during this period, further fueling her passion for making a positive impact through her work. Jiakponnah looks forward to integrating the lessons learned from this pedagogy experience into her future endeavors, contributing meaningfully to the realm of aging research and education. The People Program, known for its commitment to lifelong learning and empowerment of older adults, continues to be a beacon of educational excellence, fostering a nurturing environment for both learners and educators alike.



Nwanyieze Jiakponnah
PhD Student
Interdisciplinary PhD in Aging Studies

CONVERSATIONS ON ELDER SCAMS AND FINANCIAL EXPLOITATION

In an effort to combine her qualifications and experience in finance and gerontology, Theodora A. Odonkor, a PhD student in the Tulane University Interdisciplinary PhD in Aging Studies program, took on the task of designing and leading a class titled "Conversations on Elder Scams and Financial Exploitation" at the People Program in New Orleans. Under the guidance of her primary adviser, Dr. Augustine Denteh, Odonkor developed a discussion-based class aimed at increasing awareness among seniors about the various forms of scams and exploitations they may encounter in their day-to-day lives. Her objective was not only to provide them with the necessary tools to avoid falling victim but also to empower them to share this information with their peers. The class covered topics such as scams related to government programs, financial institutions, sweepstakes, grandparent scams, and Internet of Things (IOT), among others, over a 15-week course period.

Teaching at the People Program has proven to be an invaluable experience for Odonkor, as it has enhanced her pedagogy and communication skills while aligning with the community engagement goals of Tulane University's Interdisciplinary Program in Aging. The interactive nature of her class allowed for valuable feedback and insights from seniors, enabling her to incorporate their experiences, challenges, and existing loopholes into the lessons in real-time. Additionally, Odonkor had the opportunity to provide relevant information about agencies that assist seniors and address issues related to elder scams and financial exploitation. With older individuals projected to outnumber children in the U.S. by 2034, the attention given to the challenges they face, including financial scams and exploitation, is of utmost importance.

The success of Odonkor's class is evident from the evaluation conducted by Ms. Myra M. Lewis, Preceptor of the People Program, as she praised the excellent and relevant content of the class, which effectively targeted the participants' needs. Odonkor's presentation encouraged lively discussions, and she provided valuable information on topics such as homeowner's insurance, including a program specific to Louisiana homeowners, which excited the participants. The class was highly informative, engaging, and concluded punctually, indicating Theodora's attention to detail and time management skills.

Overall, Theodora A. Odonkor's class at the People Program showcased her dedication to educating and empowering seniors about elder scams and financial exploitation. Her ability to incorporate real-time feedback and provide valuable resources exemplifies her commitment to addressing the challenges faced by older individuals. Through her teaching experience, Theodora has not only contributed to the community but also furthered the goals of the Tulane University Interdisciplinary Program in Aging Studies.



Theodora Odonkor
PhD Student
Interdisciplinary PhD in Aging Studies

Aging Interest Group

AIG MEETINGS

August 21, 2023

Dr. Hasan, Postdoctoral Researcher

<https://tulanehipaa.zoom.us/j/94905725560>

4:30-5:30PM

August 28, 2023

Dr. Rutkai, Research Assistant Professor

<https://tulanehipaa.zoom.us/j/96210209100>

4:30-5:30PM

September 11, 2023

May Chynces, student

<https://tulanehipaa.zoom.us/j/99092819400>

4:30-5:30PM

Contact us!

Please feel free to reach out about publications, grants, events, or other information you would like to share.

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