

BeeHive Homes of Starkville Project Executive Summary 1

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PROJECT EXECUTIVE ITEM 1: Summary

BeeHive Homes is a retirement home that assists and serves the elderly and their families. There are many needs of this community partner that could be addressed; but the main two we have seen this far are companionship and communication. As a team, we assist our community partner by interacting with the residents, creating relationships, and playing games. The BeeHive Home's mission is to create a welcoming home for the elderly and serve their needs in personal ways. The BeeHive not only care for them physically, but they also discover who they are on a personal level.

The greatest strength that the BeeHive Homes has is the way they make it feel like home. There is a lot of community involvement within the facility; an example is the residents have hair salon days. One of the residents said, "It's not home but it is the greatest closest thing to home." One of the most significant needs within the BeeHive is outside interaction. They need a way to connect the residents to the world outside of the home. Our team can make sure that we provide meaningful service by providing interactions for the residents each time we volunteer.

Our team's goal was to create meaningful connections with the residents of BeeHive by interacting with them, such as playing games and making friendships. The close-knit nature of the home allows for a lot of interaction between the residents, but not as much outside interaction, which our team hopes to create. We wanted to hold a Fall Festival for the residents to help fulfill our goal. During the Fall Festival our team wanted to create stations with different fall-themed activities such as pumpkin painting, door decorations, card writing, and a photo

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booth. Our team wanted to also bring fall themed snacks such as candy corn and cookies. The goal of the activity was to create a fun environment for the residents, foster friendships among them, and get them out of their day-to-day routine.

Our team has actually accomplished all of our original goals. Our final project, the Fall Festival was very successful. The residents responded positively to our stations and interacted with enthusiasm. Also, during the course of our involvement with our community partner, we have encouraged friendships among the residents of BeeHive. Our overall goal, to create meaningful connections with the residents, was achieved through the many hours of service that our action team has contributed. Our accomplishments are important because it shows the progress we made throughout the semester. It got everyone out of their rooms and they enjoyed their time with each other. It also got everyone out of his or her day-to-day routine.

In total, our action team has completed 80 hours at our community partner over the semester, traveled 240 miles, and served most of the 15 residents at BeeHive. We accomplished all of our project goals and benefitted greatly from working with them. The residents greatly appreciated the Fall Festival and thanked us many times.

PROJECT EXECUTIVE ITEM 2: Leadership Lessons Learned

As a team, we have faced a few challenges within our community partner, as well as within our group itself. Our problems have included time management, scheduling, activities, transportation, and patience.

Making time to visit our community partner has been a struggle for us. It can be extremely difficult for our team to carve time out of our busy lives to consistently visit. Because of this challenge, our team has learned better time management skills and how to visit consistently while still keeping up with our other obligations.

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Another issue we have had is scheduling conflicts. There have been times where our team members have arrived at BeeHive when the residents are still sleeping or taking their afternoon nap. This challenge has taught us to be more flexible in terms of scheduling. Transportation has also been a problem for our group. Finding days to carpool with each other has been difficult due to our schedules. Because of this, we are more flexible in terms of scheduling and getting around our transportation problems. We overcame the challenge of transportation by finding times in which team members could carpool to Beehive in order to get volunteer hours.

Finding activities to do with the residents has sometimes presented problems. While there are sometimes activities already planned for them to do, some days we have had to come up with our own activities. Another challenge we had while creating activities has been the residents' limited abilities. Some of them do not have good use of their hands or cannot see well enough to do some of the crafts we had planned. This challenge has caused us to be more creative and better at planning, as well as more considerate of the resident's abilities.

Our final problem has been staying patient with the residents. Problems with hearing and differing personalities can sometimes cause frustration, and through this, we have learned to be understanding and the importance of patience. Patience is a key character trait that we can use in school, work, and everyday life.