

Assisted Living INNOVATIONS in Quality Award

MG ACHIEVE PROGRAM

Merrill Gardens

program description

The MG Achieve Program was developed by the Lifestyles Manager and the Regional Active Living Director at Merrill Gardens. The purpose of this goal-oriented, activity-based program is to provide a flexible and enjoyable means for residents to earn “degrees” in topics and activities suited to their interests. Offering measurable steps or activities along the way, residents have added impetus to participate and complete each task in order to earn their degree. Qualified staff or residents serve as the “professors” and, depending on residents’ interests, as well as skill sets of prospective instructors, communities have the framework to build meaningful resident engagement programs.

goals

- ▶ Provide activities that promote an engaging lifestyle suited to residents’ interests
- ▶ Offer the added incentive of earning individual or community “degrees”
- ▶ Invite participation of family members, prospective residents and the greater community

benefits

- ▶ Encourages staff and residents to share their passions and talents while teaching others
- ▶ Increases likelihood of ongoing participation in order to achieve completion of a “degree”
- ▶ Offers an adaptable, customizable framework driven by residents’ interests

examples of “degree” programs offered

- ▶ Civic Engagement
- ▶ Home Economics
- ▶ Cultural Studies
- ▶ Sports Enthusiasts
- ▶ Health and Wellness
- ▶ Technology



advice to those wanting to incorporate a similar program

- ▶ Explore residents’ interests and expertise, and identify ways to maximize their utilization
- ▶ Engage staff and invite use of their talents, even if outside their usual job description
- ▶ Allow yourself to think outside of and beyond the activities calendar

testimonials

We had raised money for causes before, but we never had a defined goal. This way everyone was focused on the goal from the beginning and we really got into it. We did everything from bake sales to car washes to raise money for such a great cause. We even included the team members at the community by having them help at the event, and they walked with us too!”

~ Graduate, College of Civic Engagement

“I love teaching other seniors about technology. I tell them if I can do it at 96, then they can too. You can have the whole world in your hands with a smart phone and it is exciting to see their faces light up when they get their first email or open a picture of their grandchild. We have many residents who are embracing technology now after attending my classes!”

~ Resident Instructor, College of Technology

