



APRIL NEWSLETTER

Innovations Community Center is a peer-staffed mental health program that supports the wellness and recovery of individuals from underserved communities. The Center promotes collaborative relationships between recipients of mental health services and mental health and wellness practitioners throughout Napa County.

FOREWORD

Its April Fool's Day, but this newsletter ain't no joke. It seems like with each Newsletter that we release, we keep trying to make it better and better with more features, more flair, and just more in general. We challenge ourselves creatively each time a newsletter approaches, such as with the "Foreword" and the inclusion of a 3rd page. The foreword will allow the team to speak directly to you, providing you with additional insight on topics during the making of the newsletter, among other fun things.

We hope you all enjoy reading this installment, and learn something new!

- The Newsletter Team

LAST MONTH'S HIGHLIGHTS

Another month bites the dust, and they just keep on coming. We had a pretty fun March even with no holidays celebrated. We had two new groups start this month and the reception so far has been amazing. We also had a few birthdays celebrated here at the center that everyone got to be a part of.

Age & Wisdom has had a great start, and we are glad to see a diverse population of participants come in for each of the different activities that rotate every week. We even had a guest speaker, Frank Santos from Napa County System Navigators, come in during the last week to speak about important topics around aging and how it affects mental health. Overall, great work from participants and from our senior leaders for facilitating the groups so well!

Boardgame Time also had quite the start, with so many participants excited to play their favorite boardgames or learn something new. It was a beautiful thing to see a lot of different groups play games together. We've also had people play boardgames when there isn't a class happening, just during free time so it is cool to see that as well.

Our monthly gathering was a blast, as always. It was nice to see all the people enjoy karaoke now that it has replaced Bingo as the main activity. Karaoke was already a popular group before being moved to end of the month gatherings, but it was definitely more people than usual. We had a delicious spaghetti lunch and caught up with our friends in the community, what more can you ask for?



GROUPS/ACTIVITIES

We are glad that there is an interest for the boardgame group! We've noticed participants who stay for Bingo on Fridays are also likely to stay for boardgames, an overlap we are glad to see. We are also excited to see the varying skills levels among players here, as one person who knows how to play a game can teach other participants. It's a wonderful thing to see and overall it lends itself to truly being a peer-led group. Later down the line, we hope to get more boardgames to keep up with the folks.

Starting in the month of March, our Age & Wisdom group has been well accepted and well attended. Week 1 kicked off with topic and discussion, sharing thoughts on what it's like to age and discussing our inner child that we all possess. Our second week was brain teasers, and how our brain changes as we age. Week three was lively exercise and understanding how our bodies need movement no matter at what age. To finish the month off, we had a guest speaker, sharing resources that the county provides. All our groups are being facilitated by our senior participants involved in encouraging others to join and explore the possibilities.

Overall quite the successful launch, and we are happy that these are groups that you all are actively enjoying and participating in.



UPCOMING EVENTS

April will have two days where the center will close early, and no monthly gathering this month either. The first day of closing early will fall on April 12th, and the second will be the following Thursday, 18th. We will be open from 8am to 10am, so you will still be able to come in for your morning coffee and check-in, we may even have some bag lunches prepared for participants who regularly have lunch here. And lastly, no Monthly Gathering, we will have just a normal bingo and boardgame day on the last Friday.

MENTAL HEALTH

Now that spring is here, we can finally go out and smell the roses, or maybe even plant some ourselves! Many many studies have been made on the benefits of gardening but none is as important to us than how it can improve our mental health. In fact, studies have been made about all the studies made, reinforcing the positive impact that even a moderate amount of gardening can have on our health. Studies show reductions in mood disruptions, depression and anxiety, and even lowering the risk of dementia. That being said, what can we do to get started? Well, we don't need to do anything fancy to get some flowers growing.

For starters, if you are a fan of avocados, here is a trick you might have heard about. After making yourself some guacamole, you can take the pit of the avocado and stick long wooden picks into the sides of it and half submerge it in water. The wooden picks would hold up the upper half of the pit above water and the bottom side, where the roots will come out, will be submerged in the water. After a few weeks, you should be able to see it start to sprout. you can then transfer it into a pot with some soil and watch it grow from there.

There are many videos on practicing this method at home, if this project sounds fun to you. You are certain to start growing some avocados after a few years if you do so! But whatever plants you like, gardening is a very beneficial hobby to have and a fun way to challenge yourself, all in the comfort of your home.

FINAL THOUGHTS

We are a fourth of the way through 2024 already, but that's not going to stop us from what we want to accomplish this year. What plans you have made for this year, we hope they are progressing along well. You will continue to see what we here at ICC have planned out, not only for our programs, but for our participants too. Thank you all for your continued support and love for the center, and have an awesome April!

CO-LOCATED SERVICES

Department of Rehabilitation

(707) 253-4924 | Bilingual Services

- Employment search
- Resume assistance
- Career growth

Mentis: Healthy Minds Healthy Aging

(781) 932-6300 | Bilingual Services

- Prevention & Intervention Programs
- Health & Nutrition

Napa County System Navigators

(707) 253-4963 | Bilingual Services

- Referrals made:
 - MediCal, Food stamps, housing
 - Physical/Mental Health Care

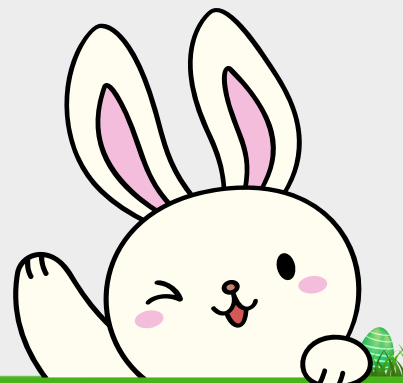
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