



Barry Students Reach Out! Spring 2013 Newsletter

“Service which is rendered without joy helps neither the servant nor the served. But all other pleasures and possessions pale into nothingness before service which is rendered in a spirit of joy.”
— Mahatma Gandhi

Community Outreach 2013:

Barry University’s core commitments include knowledge and truth, inclusive community, social justice, and collaborative services. Following these core commitments, HPA members have conducted a series of different community outreach programs during the 2013 Spring semester. The focus was to create and engage in meaningful efforts for positive social change.

Research has significantly supported that physical activity is not only good for our overall physical condition, but for our mental health and social values! HPA is making a concerted effort to get community members involved in physical activity as well as passing on information to enhance the quality of life. Some of the most recent activities included: introducing values and life skills to the youth, dancing with the elderly and discussing athletic career termination. The following are accounts of those experiences.

Water Break!!

“Water break” a kid yells out as his teammates echo his call. It is a BIG play date for all children involved...playing football (or soccer) with their friends every Friday and Sunday has become a tradition since last year. During these games, children learn new skills and values that will have an impact on their personality throughout their journey of life.

Learning new skills such as team work, communication, and paying attention are a tremendous asset for young kids. In addition, passing on values such as discipline, effort, and sportsmanship is something that we, adults, should emphasize more often. This will only enhance the “goodness” of future generations and make a better world for humans to live in.

I feel privileged to be one of the adults emphasizing core values to the new generations. Sport is not only a great way to stay active and healthy but it is

also a tool to learn life skills and adopt positive values at an early age. At the same time, it is also rewarding to see how children learn to cooperate and respect each other. For example, winning is not emphasized during our football games (although it is something most adults always strive for) and learning from losing becomes a priority. Moreover, thanking teammates for their efforts and congratulating the opponent for a well played game is a must at the end of the day.

In the end, these football games have become an essential time of the week where friends get to play together, learn how to respect each other, and have fun at the same time. How awesome is that! Seeing these kids grow up before my own eyes in both their football skills and life skills is an honor. I hope to hear the cry out for a “water break” for many years to come!



Dancing with the elderly

Our Human Performance Academy (HPA) was done at a community center with the elderly population. Our intervention consisted of a ballet and a Theraband class. We used the help of Carl Charles, a trained

professional, for the classes. Not only did we help run the class with the help of Carl, but also were able to have some fun and join in on the dances.

The Ballet and Theraband were chosen to give the elderly the benefit of regular exercise but also making it fun. The majority of this population once loved the art of ballet therefore, it will allow them to relive their past as well as get a great workout. The dances performed at the dance class were all modified for the elderly to avoid injury. For instance, if a dance originally incorporated a spin then it was altered to a stepping circle. Some of the dances were the Waltz, line dance, electric slide, and partner dancing. Benefits of dancing are posture, brain exercise, performing art, etc.



TheraBand is a form of exercise performed seated with a thick rubber band for resistance. The class consisted of men and women in their 70s, 80s, 90s, and 100s! TheraBand is a great form of exercise for this particular population because they can get a full body workout in a sitting position. Benefits of TheraBand are resistance and stretching training using the upper and lower body.

When speaking with participants before and after, they enjoyed not only the exercise but also the company of others. Participants of the Theraband class told us that the upside of the Theraband for them was that they are able to do the exercises sitting down and therefore they felt no pains in their joints. The benefits of each exercise cannot be estimated but the overall movement and rising HR is extremely beneficial. Many of the participants talked about how they really enjoyed the class and felt “young again.”

We really enjoyed doing this HPA because it incorporated exercise in a fun way for the elderly. In our classes we often forget about the elderly, mostly focusing on the youth to late adulthood, neglecting how beneficial

exercise is for them. This activity showed us how easy it is to exercise and that we do not always have to be moving around to exercise; stationary activities work just as well.

Land Mines and Parachutes

The Human Performance academy is our way to serve the community. These projects are aimed to teach human growth and development as well as an avenue for us to gain experience in working together to teach the benefits of physical activity. For our Human Performance Academy activity, we went to the Golden Gate after school program at Biscayne park in Miami shores, Florida and led two activities. The first activity was “land mines”, and the second activity was “parachutes”. Both activities required trust, communication, listening skills, and teamwork. About thirty children participated in our activities; ranging from ages 5-11.

For the “land mines” activity, we placed cones and other objects known as “land mines” in the field and the children had to walk through without stepping on a land mine. The children got into pairs; one wore a blindfold while his or her partner had to instruct them how to walk through the minefield without stepping on a “land mine”. Since the one walking through the minefield is blind folded, they must trust their partner to give them good directions. Once the pair reached the other side, they would switch roles. The children appeared to have a lot of fun during this activity.

During the reflection, the kids talked about the importance of having fun, listening, being nice to each other, and how it felt when others were not good at communicating. We then dove a little deeper into these thoughts and they explained what they mean to everyone. The focus was pretty good and the group seemed to learn well as a group.

For the second activity, we provided a large parachute for the children. The parachute had over a dozen handles allowing the children to hold on to the parachute. While they held on to the parachute, we threw a ball into the center of the parachute. The objective was to work together in keeping the ball on top of the parachute without letting it pop out. After a few minutes, we threw another ball on to the parachute. They seemed to really enjoy that. They kept on wanting to throw more balls on to the parachute! Then, after another few minutes, we asked the children to run under the parachute at different times. First we let the girls run under while the boys held onto the parachute. Then it was the boys’ turn to run under. After we did that a couple times, we

asked the children to lower the parachute to the ground, pulling it towards them, and letting all the air out. We placed one ball in the center and instructed them (at the same time) to stand up and bring their arms over their heads to see how high we could fling the ball up in the air. You could hear the “whoas” and “awes” from the children when they saw how high the ball would go. They loved it! After we did this activity several times, we raised the parachute over our heads and behind our shoulders and we all went under the parachute and made a little tent. While we sat in the parachute, we discussed the purpose of the parachute activity. The majority of the kids talked about how much fun it was to do this activity and that life should always be fun. When I asked the children if there was anything else that they learned from this activity, one finally talked about teamwork. We continued to discuss how none of them would be able to do the parachute without the assistance of the others. The children had so much fun that they wanted us to come back the next day.

In conclusion, we had a good time playing with the children. It is important for children to get instructional outdoor activities as well as inside the classroom. It will help them develop quality motor skills that will help them now, as well as in the future.

Athletic Career Termination Planning

It is inevitable that the day will come when athletes will no longer be able to associate themselves as athletes within their sport. This is a realization that each athlete must face. Our HPA project focused on this transition, of how to best equip athletes with some helpful tips in order to ease the process, of athletic career termination. We did this by providing self-help information in congruence with interactive activities to help athletes better prepare for their career termination.

The causes for career termination of an athletic career are found most frequently to be a function of four factors: age, deselection, the consequences of an injury, and free choice. We wanted the athletes to be aware of the idea that career termination may not come by choice, but rather due to an injury or problems stemming from coaches or sports organizations. Based off the psychoeducational-developmental model we decided to emphasize continued growth and change. We chose this model because it was recommended for use with limited amounts of time, which we only had about 30 minutes to sit down with the athletes here at Barry.

When we first started the session with the athletes we gave them some brief information about athletic career termination. This information was not

initially covered in depth because each athlete was given a pamphlet that explained the information further. Due to the fact that we wanted the session to be more interactive, we walked the athletes through the goal setting process and helped them develop pre-retirement goals using the SMART method. Additionally, we asked them to identify skills learned in their sport that could transfer into life after sports. The goal throughout this process was to allow the athletes to gain knowledge through discussion by talking about their concerns; therefore, the majority of the session was them asking questions related to career termination.



A lot of athletes do not think about career termination and their transition out of athletic competition until it is too late. We wanted to provide tips about coping skills, social support, and preretirement planning that the athletes could use in order to make their transition a successful one. The main aspect that we wanted to stress about athletic career termination was the fact that they need to "Take Action Now," thus they should not wait until it is too late. It is important for them to be mindful of the options available and to not be afraid to ask for assistance. Also, preretirement planning has been found to broaden an athlete's self-identity, enhance perceptions of control, and diversify his or her social identity (Lavalley & Robinson, 2007). Therefore, we urged the athletes to take into consideration the application and maintenance of a preretirement plan so that a smooth career transition would be possible.

The HPA project helped us as budding professionals because career termination is an inevitable process in athletics and therefore an inevitable topic in which we will face with our future clients. Despite the daily occurrences, career termination is a topic that most

athletes aren't being exposed to in an effective manner. Many sports organizations are beginning to realize the importance of preretirement planning and are starting to offer classes as an option. We however feel that this is a topic of immediate importance and were extremely happy with the interaction from the athletes. During the seminar, the athletes were very engaged with our interactive activities. We had the opportunity of only working with a handful of athletes and used that to our benefit. Since there were only a few athletes, we were able to essentially build a preretirement plan for each individual athlete. We believe that the athletes in attendance are much more prepared for their career transition no matter how near or far it may be and for that we feel proud to have been able to make a huge impact on a small group of Barry collegiate athletes. We hope that these athletes share their newfound knowledge and stick with their preretirement planning in order to have a successful future.

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Please feel free to send us your comments, feedback, or suggestions.