

# Linking Intergenerational Networks in Communities



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## LINC Showcased at 1998 Generations Together Institute

The LINC Intergenerational Project was featured at the Generations Together Sixth International *Intergenerational Training Institute*, held June 10-12, 1998. This year's *Institute*, entitled "Excelling in the Intergenerational Field", featured three days of skill building, networking and sharing on the University of Pittsburgh campus. More than eighty intergenerational professionals from the U.S., Germany and the Netherlands shared their ideas, techniques and strategies.

According to Dr. Sally Newman, Executive Director of Generations Together, the 1998 *Institute* was the largest, most successful ever. "This year's participants reflected a high level of professionalism, a keen awareness of the importance of intergenerational programs and a serious commitment to excellence."

The LINC breakout session, entitled *A South Carolina Site Visit*, drew nearly fifty participants. The LINC session showcased the components which have helped make LINC a success and created national interest in this unique intergenerational model. During the *Site Visit*, the state LINC team and staff from the local sites took participants on a "virtual tour" of South Carolina and LINC, complete with "virtual" airline tickets, route maps and chauffeured automobile (a LINC'in Town & Country Car!).

Participants were taken through the entire LINC process, from the original concept to the present. Each of the seven LINC communities "visited" reflected its own unique qualities and resources which have contributed to building a strong program. During the *Site Visit*, the LINC team shared diverse experiences along the "road to success," as well as some of the "potholes" -- the unexpected challenges and solutions.

At the end of the fun and informative session, participants experienced some "southern hospitality" with a drawing for special South Carolina treasures and souvenirs.

The *Site Visit* feedback was enthusiastic and positive. Dr. Newman stated, "The spirit, energy, and cohesiveness of the LINC staff's presentation were quite impressive, and their warmth and friendliness had a real impact. We're proud of our LINC connection."

### ◆ Visit LINC On-Line ◆

Don't miss LINC's web page for updates on LINC activities, events, and more:

[www.strom.clemson.edu/risi/LINC](http://www.strom.clemson.edu/risi/LINC)

## LINC Welcomes New UWSC President



The LINC partnership and staff welcome Betti M. Sands, the newly-appointed President of United Way of South Carolina. She comes to us from her position as President of the New United Way in Fresno, California.

Betti has an enduring commitment to agency collaboration and coordination. She is nationally recognized for board and staff development and training, as well as community development activities. Betti will be a real asset to the LINC partnership.

### LINC Partnership News

The LINC partnership and staff welcome Linda Kerr O'Leary to our staff. Linda joined the LINC project January 1998 at SC DHHS Office on Aging and brings a background in education, gerontology and intergenerational programming. She is an asset to our team, and may be reached at 803-253-6177.

Since our last newsletter we have added an administrative assistant to the LINC team. Debbie Phillips is housed at the SC Department of Education, and is a key member of our staff. You may reach her at 803-734-9344.

Congratulations to Kevin Rice (our former Clemson LINC staff person) who has accepted a job with Liberty Corporation. Kevin was an integral part of our LINC team and we will miss him. However, we wish him the very best in his new career.

Welcome to Sherry Herring, a new member of the Clemson LINC team. Sherry is a graduate student at Clemson and will be assisting with project evaluation and related activities.



### Scouting for "Untapped" Older Volunteers

When looking for new senior citizen groups, your local Newcomers/Welcoming Club is a great volunteer resource. Most communities have a newcomers or welcoming social club whose phone number is available through the local Chamber of Commerce. Many people are choosing South Carolina for retirement, which means potential new volunteers to tap before they get too involved with other activities!

Often newcomers are anxious to develop a "sense of community". Maybe you can arrange to speak at a club luncheon or take some LINC brochures/ flyers which can be distributed. What better way for them to learn about the community and the richness of our educational system than through an intergenerational program?

### "We Appreciate our LINC Kids"

*written by Barbara Mays, LINC Senior Volunteer*

**L**istening and learning in various workshops given to LINC volunteers on how to successfully

**I**ntegrate with youth of today, has been extremely interesting. By remaining active it

**N**urtures the mind, thus stimulating growth physically as well as mentally. The most rewarding achievements

**C**hildren share when working with the elderly is their constant growth in behavior patterns.

**K**nowledge and fellowship are taught at random; also, self-worth, great values, high morals, and gracious self-esteem.

**I**n this positive environment, the children absolutely enjoy learning and serving the community. Things that we've

**D**one, like making a wheelchair-accessible flower box, then planting the flowers for an adult day care center, was

**S**imply super. The kids went wild with the hammers and played in the soil before planting, but...got the job done with a smile! This is what keeps our hearts alive!

# LINC

## *Around the State*



### **Aiken LINC Covers Range of Activities**

*Alice Kirkland, Aiken LINC Project*

The LINC projects have already had an impact in Aiken County. At all LINC campuses, seniors and students, some with physical or mental challenges, have been having fun with beautification projects. At some locations, they have planted lovely garden spots; at others, the teams have been involved with making wetlands into a lovely asset to school and community.

The diversity of projects is also impressive. One school has an ongoing relationship with a group of retired seniors -- WOW (Wild Outrageous Women); together they recently visited a homeless shelter. Volunteers of all ages, including some of the children living in the shelter, planted a vegetable and flower garden, and spruced up the grounds. In addition, the youth and seniors did some minor repairs to the building.

At another school, the intergenerational teams of planners and writers are nearly finished with their community brochure. Inside will be valuable information relating to their area -- the history of the Indian settlements there, other historic aspects and points of interest, and a variety of other topics. Both students and seniors learned new and fascinating facts about their community when putting together this fact-filled piece.

Another location has been developing a combined outdoor classroom/amphitheater on their campus. Together, the youth and seniors have laid brick, planted flowers, painted stones with whimsical figures, and made seating areas so all can enjoy the attractive setting. Outdoor artistic performances, nature studies and class activities are just some of the planned uses for this unique area.

### **Belton Mentors Make a Difference**

*Judith Mancini, Belton LINC Project*

Looking around the room at the eager and not-so-eager faces, I wondered if I hadn't taken on more than I was able to deliver. The Ambassadors Social Studies Class is composed of nineteen students that are having difficulty adjusting to middle school. Here I stood poised on the brink of what I believed to be an impossible task -- finding each a senior to come at least one hour a week to be a helper, friend, and life-teacher for the school year and beyond. Findley Smith and I had speculated that if we had five mentors by the end of the nine-week period, we would be pleased and surprised.

How wrong two people can be! In the first phone call the lady said how anxious she was to be included in this activity, and how lonely she has been for contact with students. Her enthusiasm set me on fire. Of all the calls I made, only one person could not come to the training. We recruited fifteen seniors that day! We now had a senior mentor for each of "our kids."

The students and seniors had a great trip to Columbia and the Legislature with the help of Representative Ronny Townsend. There will soon be a project involving students and mentors that will increase the town's awareness of state government. Mentoring has allowed students to develop new personal dimensions.

The best example of a new-found dimension of the Ambassadors' behavior occurred the day one of the most defiant student's bus did not pick him up on mentoring day. Jay (not his real name) actually called the school to learn why the bus missed him. When he was told that the office was unable to help him, he hung up the phone with a sorrowful sigh. Mr. Smith and I had shifted another student to Jay's mentor, so the man's valuable volunteer time would not be wasted. As time for the bell came, I stopped at the office for any cancellations that may have come in late. When I opened the door, there stood Jay, who had arranged for a neighbor to bring him to school.

Mentoring for "our kids" is in its infancy. In the future we hope mentors and students can develop some community projects like a cleanup day and a painting project. We can see the look on the faces of "our kids" -- this is making a difference.

### **Seniors and Youth in Service to Florence**

*Shirley Anderson, Florence LINC Project*

Do you enjoy planting flowers? How about herb and vegetable gardening? Or making crafts and taking shopping trips? How does sharing your life skills and experiences with others sound? And everyone loves good food, fun, and fellowship!

These are only some of the activities that take place in a typical calendar year with the LINC program. In the past couple of years, our service projects included the building of a butterfly garden, participation in the Meals on Wheels program, and the planting of flower and vegetable gardens at a retirement home and in some of our neighborhoods here in Florence. There were also cook-outs, shopping trips, and a trip to Columbia's Riverbanks Zoo. This year LINC has planned a nature trail behind Carver Elementary, another butterfly garden at Southside Middle, and more vegetable and herb gardening. There will even be a re-enactment of the Civil War battle fought at Boykin, SC. Each year is more fun than the last!

Our LINC volunteers include a retired principal, retired business people, and many retired parents and

grandparents. This year, our students are from Florence School District One. "LINC kids" both young and old, work together to build not just partnerships, but to forge friendships that will last a lifetime.

Congratulations to Alexander Wilson, who was named adult winner of the J.C. Penney Volunteer Award for his work with the Florence County Senior Citizens Association and with the LINC project. In addition to his many roles with the Association, he has been involved with the Florence LINC project for the past three years. Mr. Wilson has been a volunteer, mentor, and friend to students at Timrod and Carver Elementary Schools and at Southside Middle School.

### **Greenwood 's Volunteers Make an Impact**

*Dawn Puderbaugh, Greenwood LINC Project*

The LINC program in Greenwood is spreading its wings to new heights. The program, which only began a few months ago, is already establishing meaningful relationships between senior adults and youth through community service projects.

For example, a core group of seniors and youth has been working together on a variety of community service projects. These meetings have been fundamental in breaking the 'fear' barrier between youth and older adults. Through the smiles and willingness to help one another, each one now sees the importance of the other.

Throughout the rest of this year, Greenwood's LINC will focus on three major projects: a community garden; a history quilt; and a continuous community clean-up/renovation project.

Each of these projects creates opportunities for the development of academic skills, personal skills, and community pride. By year's end, Greenwood LINC will be soaring -- a place where friendships transcend ages, and a place where community is UNITY.

### **Irmo Project Wins State Recognition**

*Joyce Hall, Irmo LINC Project*

Congratulations to the students, teachers, and seniors in the Irmo LINC Project for receiving the "Champions of the Environment" recognition award. This award, sponsored by the South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control (DHEC), Union Camp, DuPont, and WIS-TV, honors projects and activities that promote environmental awareness.

This project includes a variety of current and planned components which make it unique, educational and successful -- vegetable gardens, composting sites, an earthworm garden, a butterfly garden, bog/aquatic garden, and more. This gardening "showcase" is becoming a tourist attraction as well!

One special bonus has been how the young people have learned that the older adults care enough to take time with them. Witnessing good examples makes better citizens for the future.

## **We're Growing in Kershaw!**

*Frank Harrison, Kershaw County LINC Project*

Kershaw County's LINC teams are exploring the exciting worlds of butterflies, South Carolina culture and history, science exploration and landscape design through a series of community gardening projects. Six of the seven Kershaw County LINC elementary schools are teaming students and senior volunteers to create gardens which reflect the curriculum of each school.

At two sites, seniors and students are creating "Butterfly Gardens" for the community while raising butterflies together in the classroom. At another, the school's "South Carolina" theme is being complemented by the creation of a "South Carolina Garden" which will feature plants that have played roles in the history, culture, and folklore of South Carolina. Other projects include a "Care Garden" planted in honor of local nursing home residents, community walking path, and outdoor science lab. At all of these sites, seniors and students are planning, planting, and building relationships.

Other happenings in Kershaw County include a "LINC Letter" which seniors and students create together to advertise local goods and services. The LINC publishing teams are excited about "linking" people in the community who need things with those who have them.

Finally, Kershaw County's One-on-One Mentoring program is taking off as community volunteers begin special relationships with third graders. Activities have included museum trips, lunch at school, home visits, academic support, and sculpting lessons.

### **Sumter LINC Addresses Seniors' Safety**

*Barbara Brown, Sumter LINC Project*

Exciting things are happening in Sumter. Sumter has twenty-seven LINC school projects either currently operating or in different stages of development, at fifteen schools, four community centers and two other locations. However, one project in particular is a reflection of teens and seniors working together to improve the lives and safety of their older neighbors.

This project originated in the mind of an elderly disabled woman, Ms. Nero, who shared her idea with others. Ms. Nero recently died, but the project is carrying her vision, and her name, into her Sumter neighborhood. LINC's Project NERO had an initial meeting to plan for their project and to get input from the community. The results were positive, with good community response. Project NERO is coordinated by two C.O.P. officers (Community Oriented Police). A team of five teens and five senior adults from the neighborhood assisted living homes will go door-to-door to share safety information and try to alleviate the fears of the seniors, particularly the homebound. NERO aims to restore a sense of community, and break down stereotypes of both youth and seniors.

## A Chance to Showcase your Project

The Points of Light Foundation in Washington, D.C. has recently instituted the Daily Points of Light Awards program. These awards are designed to honor volunteer organizations and volunteers of all ages who demonstrate unique and innovative approaches to volunteering and citizen action.

Awards are made in six related areas:

- 1) ongoing relationships with caring persons
- 2) safe communities
- 3) a healthy start for a healthy future
- 4) quality education for all
- 5) opportunities for young people to serve
- 6) community mobilization

The awards are given 5 days per week, Monday-Friday, including holidays. The SC Department of Education's Public Information Office (803-734-8815) has nomination forms. Information about the awards, recipients and their commitment to service can be found on The Points of Light Foundation website:  
[www.PointsofLight.org](http://www.PointsofLight.org)

## Don't Miss...

### Intergenerational Institute: Building Blocks to Success August 3, 1998

Monday, August 3, 1998 has been designated "Intergenerational Day" at the South Carolina *Summer School of Gerontology*. On August 3, the SC Office on Aging and the SC Department of Education will sponsor a one-day **Intergenerational Institute: Building Blocks to Success**, at the *Summer School of Gerontology*, held this year at Winthrop University, Rock Hill, South Carolina. The Intergenerational Institute is part of the Office on Aging's annual week-long *School*, which is open to anyone, and offers a wide range of courses related to older adult issues.

More than ever, today's elementary and high school students are becoming active, concerned members of their communities. Today's senior citizens, no matter their age, health, living arrangements, and income, are also a viable resource. Both groups have special gifts; both have special needs. Connecting these two groups effectively and to the enrichment of both, is the challenge and the reward of intergenerational programming.

The **Intergenerational Institute: Building Blocks to Success** will feature regionally and nationally-recognized intergenerational and Service Learning leaders. These experts will offer valuable information, tools, insights, and resources to both new and "veteran" intergenerational planners. For additional information about the Intergenerational Institute, please contact Linda Kerr O'Leary at the DHHS Office on Aging at 803-253-6177.

## Intergenerational Lesson Plans To Be Published

A unique intergenerational Service Learning course was offered at Clemson University June 22-26, 1998. This course, taught by Dr. Jessyna McDonald and Susie Turbeville, focused on the development of intergenerational Service Learning lesson plans. The lesson plans will be published in a Service Learning intergenerational lesson plan manual to be distributed nationally through the SC Department of Education. For more information, please contact Dr. McDonald at (864) 656-2791.



## Five Ways to Keep Volunteers Feeling Special

- 1) **Show an interest in each as an individual** -- not just as part of a group
- 2) **Make a conscious effort to greet them with a smile** -- even on those days when you are pulling your hair out!
- 3) **Clearly define their role, responsibilities, and how they fit into the overall picture** -- and if that picture changes, make sure your volunteers are kept updated
- 4) **Ask them why they volunteer** -- their answers may surprise you, and may open new opportunities to utilize their skills and interests
- 5) **Don't save recognitions for once a year** -- little things (a verbal "thank you", a quick note, a flower from your garden) can have a big impact

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## Upcoming Dates to Note...

<b>August 3</b>	Intergenerational Day SC Summer School of Gerontology Rock Hill, SC	<b>October 9-12</b>	LINC presentation at SC Recreation & Park Assn. Conference Springmaid Beach, SC
<b>August 3-7</b>	SC Summer School of Gerontology Rock Hill, SC	<b>October 17</b>	Servathon
<b>Sept. 23-25</b>	LINC presentation at National Recreation & Park Assn. Conference Miami, FL	<b>October 24</b>	National "Make a Difference Day"

**...mark your calendars!!**

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### Visit LINC On-Line

Visit LINC's web page and keep updated on statewide LINC activities, events, and more:

**[www.strom.clemson.edu/ris/LINC](http://www.strom.clemson.edu/ris/LINC)**

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