

Building a Community Legacy Together (BCLT)

An Intergenerational program for youth and older adults

Program Overview

We would like to invite you to take part in an exciting new intergenerational program called Building a Community Legacy Together (BCLT)! The BCLT program provides a great opportunity for high school-aged youth to interview elders about their advice for living. During the process of learning to interview and then interviewing elders, youth develop respect for older adults and the wisdom that age can bring. Youth also develop specific skill sets that will be useful to them in the future (e.g., interviewing and research skills). By pairing an elder with a high school youth, the BCLT seeks to combat ageism, including youths' attitudes towards elders and elders' attitudes towards youth. The program also allows elders to make meaningful connections and pass on their knowledge to younger generations, which may decrease their sense of social isolation and increase their self-esteem and sense of purpose.



The BCLT program curriculum includes background on elder wisdom and training in interviewing. Each youth interviews an elder and then all the youth prepare a report to the community on their findings from those interviews. The program is designed to be completed within three months or less.

We generally recommend that you plan for a minimum of 10+ hours for training,

interviewing, and preparation of the community presentation. Some counties have conducted the BCLT from start to finish during a school break in an intensive fashion. Others have spread out the program over several months or longer. The BCLT Cornell team is available to provide you with support and consultation as you plan for implementation.

Basic Requirements

The BCLT program is relatively simple to initiate and run. We highly recommend that two people from your county work as a team to facilitate the program. In order to make the recruitment of participants as easy as possible, it is also recommended that one program leader is already *working with youth* and the other program leader is already *working with elders*.

Program leaders will be responsible for implementing the BCLT program in the following ways:

- Attend a (free) 1 day train-the-trainer workshop;
- Recruit youth and elders to participate in the BCLT program;
- Conduct the youth BCLT training in preparation for interviews with elder participants;
- Facilitate youth interviews with elders;
- Engage youth in summarizing their interviews and preparing a community report of their findings to be presented in a public setting.

Research Component

The BCLT program has been piloted and evaluated in 8 different NYS CCE counties. The goal of our rigorous evaluation design is to shed new light on the benefits of intergenerational programs and to provide useful experience in conducting controlled evaluations in partnership with Cornell researchers.

If you are interested in conducting the BCLT in your county, we may ask you for some assistance by collecting pre and posttest data from youth and elders via an online questionnaire. We would also like to conduct a telephone interview with each program leader to understand what worked well and what barriers there were to success.



Conclusion

We appreciate your consideration of running the BCLT program. We see this opportunity as an excellent way to enhance county-campus partnerships, as well as provide rewarding activities for youth and elders.

If you would like to run the BCLT program in your county or have any questions, please contact Leslie Schultz (ls30@cornell.edu).

