

# Bears for Elder Welfare Fall 2017 Newsletter

## **Introduction**

Bears for Elder Welfare is proud to showcase all that its members have taken part in this fall. It reflects our goals to form a community that cultivates an awareness and compassion for seniors, where we not only go out as volunteers to interface with the seniors of Berkeley, but we also bring the insight we obtain through those interactions back to reach the student population. This newsletter gives you a peek at what we've done so far with Chaparral House and Helios Corner, two senior housing developments in Berkeley. We also have an educational blurb about the effect of the rising senior population on healthcare, which is a pertinent topic our education team usually presents at monthly club meetings. Lastly, you'll hear about the bonds forming at our member socials from our Public Relations Intern!

This is a snapshot of B4EW (conveniently pronounced "be for you")-- *you* are invited to join us to discover more!

## **Volunteer Events Reflection**

Chaparral House - Michael Zhou

Chaparral House had a number of exciting events during October and November. We had two tea parties with residents, one during October and one during November. First, set-up was done by volunteers and then the residents joined the volunteers with tea and treats. The interactions between volunteers and residents created a relaxing, sociable atmosphere that allowed everyone to connect on a personal level and enjoy the time that they had with each other. This activity is important because it gives residents the opportunity to chat with new volunteers or people they have not met before, getting to know new faces while enjoying tea and treats. Chaparral House's monthly outing in October was canceled due to the recent fires, but we still had a Halloween Party at which volunteers and residents enjoyed food and fun activities in festive costumes. Finally, a Day of Remembrance was held at the beginning of November, during which people came together to celebrate and remember fellow residents, friends, and family members who have passed away. There was silent time, a memory tree, poetry reading, sharing memories, and music. Overall, Chaparral House had a number of activities these past two months that have successfully brought volunteers together with residents.

Helios Corner (SAHA) - Katrina Songco

There is a unique health-focused volunteer program at Helios Corner, an affordable housing facility for seniors, located on Sacramento Street and University Avenue. The program, Berkeley Health Coaching, was started by Bears For Elder Welfare alumni. In this program, we are partnered with an elder whom we meet with each week to plan health curricula. Our objective is to motivate them to be proactive and autonomous in maintaining their health by both educating themselves and achieving any health goals they may have. This month, I was able to meet with my elders and followed up on their goals. One of them started using easy core exercises that we provided to the facility during one of our workshops and remarked at how much her stamina has improved. We helped another elder create a list of questions to ask her physician so that she can come in to her appointment more prepared. Overall, volunteering with Helios Corner under Berkeley Health Coaching has been a rewarding experience and I recommend everyone to apply next semester.

### **Member Highlight**

**Name:** Annie Chen our wonderful Public Relations Intern!

**Year:** Freshman

**Major:** English and Social Welfare

**Favorite Dessert:** Froyo

**Why did you join B4EW?**

I joined because I was raised

by my grandparents. I lived

with them until I was five,

and I genuinely always

wanted to do elder service, but did not have the opportunity to in my old school.

I went to the SAHA meeting and got a one on one mentorship with an elder



named Emelda. On Fridays, I go to her place and we just chat. It's really cute and I like hearing about her days.

**What are some socials you hosted so far?**

As public relations intern, I host socials, set up events on Facebook and invite people to come. When we have general meetings, I brainstorm icebreakers. I help people bond. We had a social at Uji Time. That one was really fun because about ten people showed up. We got snacks and played board games. The next one was Sliver. At that one, not as much people came, but we talked a lot so we got to know each other better. That was really fun too.

**What would you like to see out of B4EW?**

I definitely want to see more involvement since our presidents say we got a lot more members this year and I think it would be nice to see everyone get closer to each other.

*We're so lucky and glad to have you here with us Annie! Thanks for joining our team!*

**Education Blurb**

Did you know that by 2050, the elder population is expected to rise to 83 million people? As a comparison, currently there are around 43 million elders in the United States. That means in only 30 years, the elder population will almost double! The rise in elderly population poses many issues going forward in terms

of future elderly health care. Currently, there is a shortage of gerontologists (a doctor that specializes in the health care of elders) as the ratio of elder to gerontologist sits at 4000:1. In comparison, the ratio of adults to primary care physicians is about 2500:1. This results in many elders not receiving adequate health care. With the elder population projected to rise quickly, increasing the number of gerontologists will be vital to future elderly health care.

Link:

<https://www.nytimes.com/2016/01/26/health/where-are-the-geriatricians.html>