



AOTF Sponsors Occupational Therapy Aging Experts To Assist with Innovative Design Workshop

August 31, 2012
Bethesda, Maryland

Seven occupational therapists sponsored by the American Occupational Therapy Foundation participated in a design-thinking workshop organized by The Evangelical Lutheran Good Samaritan Society's Vivo: Innovation for Well-being. The workshop, held in Omaha, Nebraska on August 28-30, 2012, involved nearly 60 individuals organized into four design teams who were challenged to imagine creative new ways for serving elders and their families. The American Occupational Therapy Foundation (AOTF) and AIGA - Nebraska were co-sponsors of the event.

During the three-day experience, design teams visited assisted-living and long-term care facilities, interviewed elders, and surveyed Pennant Place, a planned mixed-use development site in nearby Papillion, Nebraska. A twenty-acre parcel of land in this development, owned by the Good Samaritan Society, provided a real-life context for the design teams. Each design team created a vision for Pennant Place that addressed a specific age-related issue such as isolation, dementia, informal caregiving, and the environments and services that enable elders to flourish. The Good Samaritan Society intends to use novel concepts from the design workshop in developing senior services on this property and in its future projects.

AOTF was invited to sponsor participation by occupational therapy experts because of the profession's focus on everyday activities and its expertise in helping persons with age-related disabilities participate fully in life despite performance limitations. AOTF design team experts included Julie Bass, Charles Christiansen, Lisa Ann Fagan, Rene Padilla, Dory Sabata, Patricia Schaber, and Catherine Sullivan. Stacy Smallfield, an occupational therapist and innovation designer at the Good Samaritan Society, was one of the main organizers of the event. AOTF and the Good Samaritan Society are also exploring future collaborations including opportunities for research stemming from the work of the teams and at other Good Samaritan Society locations.

The American Occupational Therapy Foundation is a 501(c)3 charitable, scientific and educational organization established in 1965. Its mission is to advance research and education in the field of occupational therapy and to raise public awareness of the importance of enabling individuals to participate fully in life, regardless of their physical, social, mental, or developmental circumstances.

The Good Samaritan Society, headquartered in Sioux Falls, South Dakota, is the largest not-for-profit provider of senior care and services in the United States, serving over 27,000 residents and clients in 240 locations in 24 states. It has pursued its mission of sharing God's love in word and deed since 1922.

AIGA - Nebraska is a chapter of AIGA, a professional association originally founded in 1914 as the American Institute of Graphic Arts. AIGA is committed to stimulating thinking about design through the exchange of ideas and information, the encouragement of critical analysis and research and the advancement of education and ethical practice.