



The Bronstein Center for Healthy Aging and Wellness

Annual Report

July 1, 2023–June 30, 2024



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Visionaries—Sol and Arlene Bronstein

Introduction

The University of Southern Indiana (USI) Bronstein Center for Healthy Aging and Wellness is dedicated to advancing the understanding of aging and promoting the wellbeing of older adults through interdisciplinary education, research and engaged partnerships. On July 5, 2022, USI announced that it was the recipient of the generous one-million-dollar leadership gift from the Sol and Arlene Bronstein Foundation, established by the Bronsteins, to expand programs of excellence in dementia care and advance care planning education. The following report summarizes program progress from July 1, 2023, to June 30, 2024. It outlines the five initiatives of the Bronstein gift agreement.

1 Conduct evidence-based training and certifications for dementia care and advance care planning education for USI students, USI faculty, regional healthcare professionals and community members.

Five education programs took place to deepen knowledge and advance skills related to dementia and advance care planning.

First Educational Program – Online Care Partner Support Group



Teepa Snow and a participant at an educational program at USI

The Bronstein Center offered a care partner support group to informal (family) caregivers in the southwest Indiana region in collaboration with Teepa Snow, an internationally recognized dementia care educator. The group offered one session weekly over five weeks. Each session focused on one of the five topics: a) understanding and accepting dementia, b) common brain changes and supportive techniques, c) sensory changes—increasing awareness and understanding impact, d) person-centered problem solving, and e) techniques to reduce distress. These sessions were conducted via Zoom on April 25, May 2, May 9, May 16

and May 23. Carolyn Lukert, a member of Teepa Snow’s team, facilitated all five sessions. A total of nine participants attended, occupying 45 seats across the sessions. Marketing efforts leveraged the Dementia Friendly Communities to focus recruitment in rural areas. Participants attended from the following Indiana counties: Warrick County (2), Vanderburgh County (5), Johnson County (1) and Pike County (1). They reported that the course “was valuable and worth the time commitment,” “exceeded [their] expectations,” and has “a lot of potential to transform [participants] into better caregivers.” Positive feedback and attendance will allow the Bronstein Center to continue programming in the fiscal year 2024–2025.

Second Educational Program – Advance Care Planning Certification Course, Fall 2023

Respecting Choices (RC) First Steps Advance Care Planning is an evidence-based model of Advance Care Planning (ACP) that seeks to create a culture of person-centered care. The course was offered by Dr. Kevin Valadares, Professor of Health Administration, to students in GERO 317, *Healthcare Continuum and Communication Services*, and IPH 356, *Ethics & Healthcare in a Pluralistic Society*. Two sessions were offered to become Respecting Choices First Steps ACP Facilitators. Upon completion of both sessions, participants received their certification. Part I of the training was offered virtually through a series of online modules. Part II was held in person at USI on November 16 and 17 as a hands-on, interactive experience. All 20 students simulated Advance Care Planning conversations during the course and received their certifications.

Third Educational Program – Advance Care Planning Certification Course, Spring 2024

Dr. Kevin Valadares offered a second Advance Care Planning Course on May 15 to USI social work faculty members, Dr. Junghee Han and Dr. Quentin Maynard, who are now certified to offer the course to their students. Students who participate in Dr. Maynard and Dr. Han’s future courses will receive their own ACP certifications. Social work faculty plan to teach Respecting Choices material in future courses.

Fourth Educational Program – Dementia Friendly Community Programming



Participants at the Dementia Friendly celebration

On May 15, 2024, the Bronstein Center hosted a celebration in honor of local Dementia Friendly America chapters. Dementia Friendly America is an organization that focuses on dementia and caregiving support and education. Twenty-three participants attended the celebration to define new collaborations, reflect on past work and network with other groups. In addition to the celebration, two local communities, Dementia Friendly Evansville Northside and Dementia Friendly USI Community, combined with support from the Bronstein Center. The liaisons of both groups met

on April 29 to discuss next steps and notify their communities. The first combined Dementia Friendly USI/Evansville meeting took place on June 25, with seven participants in attendance.

Fifth Educational Program – Nursing Home Dementia Orientation

In 2022, The Bronstein Center created, in partnership with Positive Approach to Care, the dementia orientation curriculum for use in nursing facilities. The curriculum trains staff members to provide evidence-based care for people living with dementia. In 2023–2024, the dementia orientation curriculum was distributed to 17 additional participants across 14 unique facilities. Since its beginning in 2021, 284 participants across 217 unique facilities have received the Bronstein Center’s dementia orientation.

2 Develop and/or enhance artificial intelligence and/or smart home technology to support people living with dementia.

Minka Honors Projects

Grace Range, a GERO 215 undergraduate student, participated in an honors project in the Minka. Her project included an online presentation to 23 fellow students in the GERO 215 class, and a second presentation to five community members of the Minka Advisory Board. Grace spent roughly 20 hours researching and presenting technology to support aging in place. Her presentation provided a literature review on developing technologies and applications of technologies currently housed in the Minka. Grace also provided evidence-based recommendations such as the introduction of technological interventions only when paired with clear instructions.

Initiative Three

Initiative Two (continued)

Technology Purchases

In collaboration with Dr. Ryan Integlia, USI Associate Professor of Electrical and Computer Engineering, the Bronstein Center purchased nonperishable hardware parts such as development boards, biometric sensor modules and magnetometers. These parts were disbursed to four community members with technical expertise, who became technical mentors in the special topics class described in the Affiliate Faculty role for the Bronstein Center. They built programs such as automatic fall detectors and virtual maps. The technical mentors presented their findings in relation to geriatric care to 13 students and community members. This demonstration illustrated real-world applications to participants. The mentors will continue building and presenting technical programs in the special topics class to be offered in the Spring of 2025.

iMotions Collaboration

Graduate Assistants Yaw Bredwa-Mensah and Clara Boarman collaborated with the Romain College of Business to pilot biometric research in the Minka using iMotions glasses. Faculty members Chad Milewicz, USI Chair of Economics and Marketing Department, and Sabinah Wanjugu, Assistant Professor of Marketing, offered their expertise to guide student training and development of a research plan. Implementation of the research plan will require participants to step into the Minka while their eye movements are tracked with the glasses. They will also test in-home artificial intelligence and other technologies. After completing the eye-tracking research, the participants will respond to a survey with questions such as, “Are the instructions for Josh AI user-friendly?” Data collection will begin in the 2024–2025 fiscal year and will offer suggestions for further instruction and marketing of the Minka. The Bronstein Center for Healthy Aging and Wellness is growing expertise in iMotions technology with the hope to expand this knowledge into applied technology to support people living with dementia.

3 Bronstein Faculty Research and/or Innovation Award to support excellence in dementia care and/or advance care planning education.



Dr. Urska Dobersek, PhD, CMPC, has been selected as the second recipient of the Bronstein Faculty Research and/or Innovation Award for the 2023–2024 award cycle. She is an Associate Professor of Psychology at USI and is conducting a cross-sectional research study to provide a wider explanation and understanding of diet-health and diet-disease relations among older individuals. Up to 1,300 participants will be recruited using Qualtrics panels to ensure that the sample is representative of the U.S. population. She will report this data in fiscal years 2024–2025, 2025–2026 and 2026–2027.



Dr. Junghee Han, MSW, PhD, was the 2022–2023 recipient of the Bronstein Faculty Research and/or Innovation Award. She is an Assistant Professor in Social Work at USI and conducted an exploratory mixed-method study to identify potential factors affecting advance care planning and end-of-life care decisions among older Korean Americans in the Tri-State area, including Indiana, Tennessee and Missouri. She presented her findings at the 22nd Annual Spring Social Work Conference to 10 participants. Dr. Han will continue to present this research in the fiscal years 2024–2025 and 2025–2026.

Initiative Four

4 Launch the Bronstein Affiliate Visiting Faculty position in the USI Bronstein Center for Healthy Aging and Wellness with a focus on dementia and/or advance care planning.



Faculty in-service with Dr. Ryan Integlia, PhD, Dr. Integlia is the first Affiliate Visiting Faculty in the Bronstein Center. He is an Associate Professor of Electrical and Computer Engineering at USI. Dr. Integlia presented on Gerontechnology to 70 faculty and staff members of the Kinney College of Nursing and Health Professions at the faculty in-service on May 23, 2024. Those in attendance received credit for Continuing Education (CEs).



Dr. Integlia also piloted a new class in the Summer I semester titled **HP 490: Introduction to Artificial Intelligence/Machine Learning in Healthcare**. He explored modern technology concepts to increase communication, participation and accessibility among patients and residents. The class was offered as a two-day intensive on June 6 and June 7 to 13 students and community members. Student participants received one credit hour for the course, while community members received 12.1 Continuing Educations (CEs). Upon enrollment, students were connected to a private online forum that lets them further their interests outside of the course with guidance from technical mentors. Participants “found real value in the work [they] did” and thought the information was “especially revolutionary for those motivated by education.” This class is designed to be expanded upon in the spring of 2025 as a 3-credit hour, student-only course.

Initiative Five

5 International/national speakers as the Bronstein Keynote at the Mid-America Institute on Aging and Wellness (MAIA), an annual conference.



The Bronstein Keynote: The Bronstein Center funded the Bronstein Keynote address at the Mid-America Institute on Aging and Wellness (MAIA) conference in 2023. **Susan Hickman, PhD,** is a geropsychologist and professor at the Indiana University Center for Aging Research at Regenstreif Institute, Inc., as well as Co-director of the Research in Palliative and End-of-Life Communication and Training (RESPECT) Center. Dr. Hickman is nationally recognized for her work to help ensure that patients’ end-of-life treatment preferences are known and honored. She is a founding member of the National Physician Orders for Life-Sustaining Treatment (POLST) Paradigm and led the successful campaign to pass legislation authorizing the creation of Indiana’s version of the POLST form. The title of her keynote presentation at the MAIA conference on August 11, 2023, was *The Care Planning Umbrella: The Evolution of Advance Care Planning*. Two-hundred forty-eight people attended her keynote presentation and attested that it was “very informative,” “well-presented” and “provided a lot of resources.”

Data Visualization

The following two figures provide descriptive data by participant classification and by initiative for the first two years of project implementation. Figure 1 illustrates distribution of participant engagement since the Bronstein Center’s work began in the Fall 2022 among four participant classifications: USI students, USI faculty, healthcare professionals and community members. In the last two years, the Bronstein funding has supported 754 participants in total.

Figure 1: Cumulative Distribution in Years 1 and 2

Note: The Bronstein Center has worked to diversify our participant pool over the last two years. Engagement has grown over the last two years across three of four participant classifications.

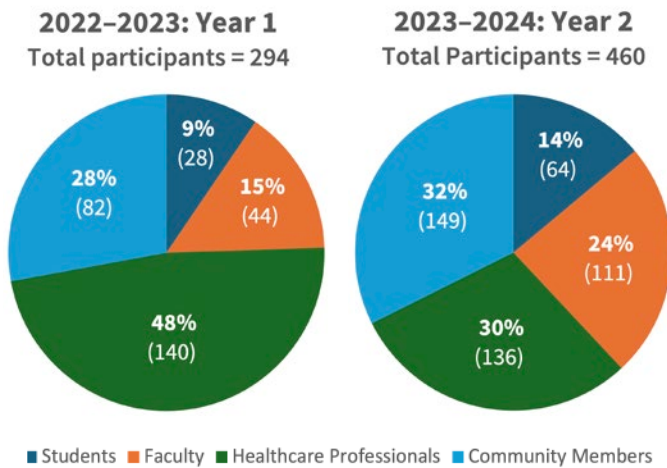
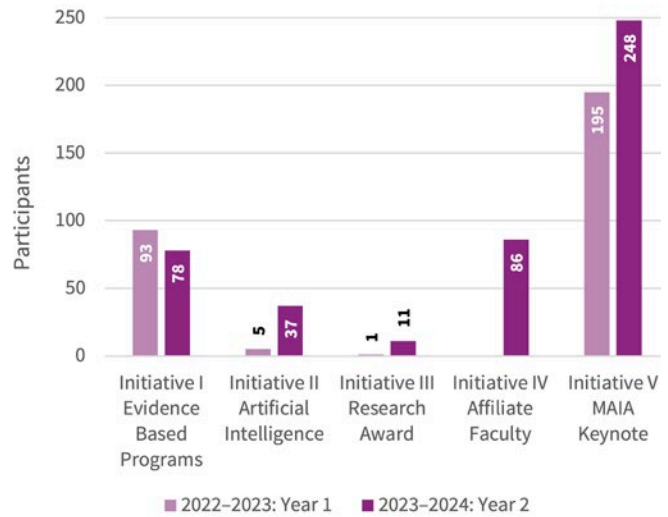


Figure 2: Initiative Engagement by Year

Note: Work in Initiative IV did not begin until 2023-2024 (Year 2).



Financial Report

During the reporting period from July 1, 2023, through June 30, 2024, the Bronstein Center utilized its \$50,000 annual disbursement, spending a total of \$26,834.35. Faculty/administrator salaries and benefits, graduate assistant wages and institutional aid accounted for \$21,086.34. Program expenses, including materials and supplies for evidence-based program costs and AI/Smart Home Technology, amounted to \$4,277.11. The Bronstein Keynote featured Dr. Susan Hickman for MAIA in 2023, with associated costs of \$1,470.90. (Note: Dr. Dobersek’s award will be expended in the 2024-2025 fiscal year.)

| Bronstein Proposed Budget and Expenses | Proposed | Actual |
|---|-----------------|--------------------|
| Personnel & Benefits Affiliate Faculty, Employee Salary and Benefits, Graduate Assistant | \$24,000 | \$21,086.34 |
| Materials and Supplies Evidence-based Program Costs & AI/Smart Home Technology | 14,000 | 4,277.11 |
| Bronstein Keynote for MAIA | 7,000 | 1,470.90 |
| Total: | \$50,000 | \$26,834.35 |



In the heart of USI's vibrant campus stands the Minka Learning Lab for Living Well, a federal and Bronstein Foundation funded initiative of USI's Bronstein Center for Healthy Aging and Wellness, a USI Foundation initiative. Minka is Japanese for "house of the people" and it's a model for what homes can be for those seeking to age in place. Equipped with smart technology controlled by artificial intelligence (AI), it's designed to support multiple ages and abilities.



**Bronstein Center for Healthy
Aging and Wellness**

Dedicated to the well-being of older adults.

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