From Classroom to Community: Integrating Education, Service-Learning, and Community

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Purpose Statement: This student-led community wellness event was designed to integrate service-learning into an undergraduate nursing curriculum and to promote wellness through evidence-based activities while enhancing students' patient education skills.

Background:

- Service-learning, a collaborative educational approach, enables nursing students to identify community needs, develop and implement strategies to address them, and reflect on their experiences.
- Abundant research shows how mental well-being among college students impacts their academic performance, the correlation of which provided the underpinning of this teaching innovation (Barbayannis et al., 2022).
- Education about positive coping mechanisms, combined with access to mental health resources, provides a proven strategy to reduce stress among college-age students (Barbayannis et al., 2022).

Methodology:

Design: Quantitative
Tool: Open-ended questionnaire that allowed participants to provide feedback on each activity/session offered
Participants:
Convenience sample of approximately 200 participants from the campus and community
Aim:
focus on connecting campus and community members with wellness strategies and to meet representatives from within the community that provide resources related to mental and physical health.













Discussion:

- Interventions included yoga, massage therapy, aerobic dance, homemade stress balls, watercolor paintings of positive affirmations, pet therapy, and information provision on wellness related apps that can be accessed on participants' smartphones.
- Community partners included members of mental health rehab facilities, the university's wellness center staff, yoga instructors, pet therapists, and massage therapists, as well as occupational therapists.
- Interventions such as these are endorsed by the CDC as important techniques for improving mental and physical health and wellness among adults of all ages (CDC, 2025).
- Based upon survey results regarding the above activities, participants who responded to the survey had positive perceptions of the event overall.
- With minimal overhead costs, such an event is sustainable, replicable, and, in the future, expandable to include increased resources and activities

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