

# ARTS ENGAGEMENT PROGRAM

## ***Program Overview & History***

The Arts Engagement Program (AEP) is an innovative model program that brings the benefits of the visual arts to adults with mild to moderate stage Alzheimer's disease (and various forms of dementia) and their care partners. Recent research suggests that involvement in arts and cultural activities contributes to overall quality of life by offering meaningful opportunities for companionship, social engagement, and community participation. Visual arts in the Museum offer a static collection of objects that can help trigger personal stories and experiences for participants, and tap into one's emotional, not visual, memory.

AEP was initiated as a grant-funded pilot program structured around the 2006 *Meet Me at MOMA* program launched by The Museum of Modern Art in New York City. The initial grant was written and administered by Maricopa Partnership for Arts & Culture and Banner Alzheimer's Institute. The pilot program took place in the 2008 and 2009 calendar years. After the pilot program ended, all involved partners integrated AEP into their regular educational offerings. Since 2010, Phoenix Art Museum has been self-supporting AEP through the generosity of the Shawn and Joe Lampe Fund.

## ***Program Goals:***

The goal of AEP at Phoenix Art Museum is to contribute to the participants' quality of life through engagement with original art objects and conversational gallery experiences. AEP tours are interactive, and encourage dyads to share personal stories and memories in a welcoming, safe, fun and social environment.

## ***Program Format:***

AEP is offered two times per year (Spring & Fall) every year. At the Museum, each group consists of a predetermined number of patient-care partner **dyads**. The group meets every other week for 16 weeks (eight meetings) per session. In fall 2013, AEP doubled enrollment, indefinitely adopting a two-group structure, accommodating up to 16 dyads (32 people) per session. This structure was adopted in response to increasing community demand. Currently, the program has 20 dyads (40 people) enrolled.

AEP consists of a 45 to 60-minute interactive tour of the Museum's collection (special exhibitions may be considered) facilitated by volunteer docents, specially trained for this program. As of fall 2015, teaching artist Tessa Windt joined the program as artist in residence, designing 2, full-day studio experiences for the dyads. Tours and activities are implemented by specially trained docents, with oversight provided by the Museum's Education Department.

The first session includes a welcome luncheon, where docents meet and greet with dyads over lunch, catered by the Museum's on-site café, Palette. The last meeting of each session is followed by a reception, gallery 'show,' and an evaluation questionnaire to elicit feedback to improve AEP. Registration fee AEP is \$50.00 total per dyad (one-time payment). Space is limited and registration is required. To learn more about AEP, and to register, please reach out to the Education Department using the information below.

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