

Celebration of Seniors' Achievements (CSA)

Background

Funded by the Ward Fund of the City of Calgary, the Celebration of Seniors' Achievements (CSA) marks an opportunity to show appreciation for older adults and their many contributions to our communities through volunteerism and mentorship. Following a theme of "Aging is More...." as the City of Calgary declared, the CRESS Centre's Celebration of Seniors' Achievements (CSA) event brings volunteer seniors and older adults to a fun-filled platform. It celebrates their contribution through education, engagement, and acknowledgment.

The event aims to enhance social connections and community support for seniors, promoting feeling good, having fun, staying healthy, and continuing to live an entire and happy life.

The community facilitator and expert, who thoroughly understood community needs and the seniors' contribution in the past couple of years, was engaged in facilitating the event. An event planning committee involving five active volunteer seniors was formed, and they planned the event's details. The facilitator followed the plan prepared by the planning committee.

Objectives of the Event

The overall goal of the event was to acknowledge the contribution of seniors in promoting volunteerism and addressing the social isolation of seniors. Specifically,

- To engage seniors in a fun-filled environment.
- To appreciate and acknowledge seniors through certificates and appreciation.
- To promote a volunteerism culture by engaging seniors in the planning and execution of the event.

Results

Led by the CRESS Centre, the CSA event was hosted on Nov 2, 2024, in collaboration with other senior-serving organizations. 39 participants attended the session (35 seniors and four non-seniors, 25 males and 14 females). A planning meeting was hosted with all collaborating organizations on Oct 12, following an Event Planning Team meeting on Oct 5, 2024. After the introduction, most of the participants played board games, which was instrumental in building strong rapport among the participants. The board game was followed by appreciating 15 seniors through appreciation certificates and the remaining participants through acknowledgment by the CRESS Centre and other collaborating organizations. The appreciation was followed by sharing stories, a question-and-answer session, and a celebration dinner.

Verbatims

I feel honored to be part of the event steering committee. I have learned a lot about planning and executing events while making strong connections with the event planning committee members. I have also met more seniors from my community.

Many thanks to the CRESS Centre and other collaborative partners for making this event happen and, more importantly, for appreciating my contributions to the community.

I would like to see this kind of event/activity in which seniors are given opportunities to partake and share their lived experiences. This helps build stronger relationships, which will strengthen the community.

Thanks to the CRESS Centre for collaborating with the Senior Society on a senior appreciation event. Organizing events and activities with multiple collaborative partners is important to achieve collective outcomes.

As an event facilitator, I learned much from the seniors while sharing my knowledge and skills to make the event happen. I knew the event was funded through the City of Calgary's Ward Funding component. I want to acknowledge the funding support that helped execute the event.

I have seen only a small number of activities that focus on senior women in the community. Today, I can see a large number of senior women. Thanks to the organizers for bringing more women to the activities and acknowledging their contribution to the community.

As a retired senior, I find myself confined in the household. You guys approached me and my wife. You can't imagine how happy we were when we got a phone call from the CRESS Centre. Truly amazing job, and keep it up.

Some glimpse of the event

