

New Jersey Age-Friendly Advisory Council: July 12, 2022

Topic: Toward an Age-Friendly Ecosystem in NJ: Insights from Bergen County

[View Official Recording Here](#)

Janet Sharma's Notes

Presentation:

Emily Greenfield, Ph.D., Professor of Social Work at Rutgers University, and leaders of age-friendly initiatives in Bergen County (Englewood, Garfield, Ridgewood, Teaneck, Westwood) provided information and insights gleaned over the past six years. [Slides can be found here.](#)

Best practices that emerged in every initiative

- Social planning model:
 - Engage & Understand, Plan, Act & Implement, Evaluate
 - Repeat
- Community coalition & partnership building
- Utilizing grant funding to enhance credibility through professional services
- Data-based advocacy
- Multi-faceted communications
- Embedding age-friendliness in local government & operations

Research Findings from Dr. Greenfield's Team at Rutgers: The Role of Age-Friendly Community Initiatives During the COVID-19 Pandemic.

- Findings based on Interviews with local leaders about the activities of eight age-friendly initiatives in northern New Jersey. [Publication can be found here.](#)
- **Key finding: Four roles**
 - *Creator* – address community need directly by developing a new event, program or service
 - *Good Community Partner* – provide time-limited financial, instrumental, or informational support for a community event, program or serve led by another community organization
 - *Advocate* – encourage community partners to be inclusive and consider the needs of older adults in their COVID-19 responses
 - *Communications Broker* – facilitate bi-directional and systematic exchanges of information across networks of community residents, partners, and state or regional entities
- **Key finding: Community capacity building**
 - Ability to mobilize human, social and tangible capital across individuals, organizations and networks