

The Setting

For this assignment, I am using UCSD's Gilman library. The library's primary users are students, staff, and faculty. The service area is academic and highly populated, serving 36,400 undergraduate students (Campus profile). The library has many events, workshops, and classes (Library blog), however most are focused on specific, niche, interests, and few cater to the population on the whole. A large-scale program could be a way to bring the community together and provide service to larger groups of people at the same time.

The Goal

UCSD's community could benefit from an outdoor activity primarily being in nature is shown to reduce stress (University of Minnesota), and stress is a serious issue for many college students (Simon, 2017). Students at UCSD in particular "report stress as the number one impediment to academic performance" (Student Health Services). The goal for my "Unwrap & Unwind" program would be to reduce student stress, encourage students to take care of their emotional well-being, and demonstrate that the university cares about these issues as well.

The Partnerships

I would primarily like to partner with other organizations on campus.

First, I would partner with the school's Counseling and Psychological Services department (CAPS). They are dedicated to helping the mental health of students, and have resources such as book lists and wellness peer educators who would be very helpful in this program. Also, their headquarters is located on the outskirts of the 1,200 acre campus (Campus profile), whereas the library is located in the center of campus; thus, this partnership might help expose them to students who are not familiar with their services.

Second, I would partner with multiple food organizations on campus. I would like to have a student run cooking club or recreational cooking class work alongside an on-campus cafe. The inclusion of students in food preparation is particularly important, as cooking is shown to improve mental health and well-being (Andrews, 2015). In this way, the program might encourage attending students to cook or visit a cooking club, and that would help improve their wellness.

The third partnership would be with the Theater department. They could contribute knowledge about staging, lighting, and large-scale visuals. They could also study the design theme Hygge, which celebrates coziness, contentment, and community (Altman,

2016). This would benefit the theater students by aiding their education and contributing to their knowledge of wellness.

The Program

If UCSD's Gilman library got this grant, I would host an "Unwrap & Unwind" pop-up library. I would create an outdoor environment of comfortable couches, coffee, and book tables on the roof of the 2nd floor of the library. Healthy pastries, plush rugs, and cozy lighting would contribute to the feeling of Hygge, or coziness, which can help lower stress. The books, fiction and non, would focus on wellness, yet each would be wrapped in brown paper with descriptive words like "Growth," "Health," or "Recharge" written outside. All of these elements would create feelings both of surprise and coziness. The underlying focus of the program would be to support the mental health and emotional well-being of students at UCSD.

The Outcomes

The goal is to help students be their best, which includes prioritizing their mental health. This event would help start that conversation, and introduce them to resources that they might not know about, in a novel way.

The Details

In order for this program to be a success, I would need \$2,000 to fund food, furniture staging, and materials for wrapping books. As this would be a surprise event, the attendance is likely to be low in comparison to the entire community, so I would expect around 350 attendees over a two-hour lunch period. I would cover staffing through collaboration with CAPS, food organizations, and the theater department, as well as library volunteers.

Knowledge-Base

The textbook was particularly helpful in determining the difference between a service and an program (Evans, Saponaro, Christie, & Sinwell, 2015, 224-7), and I am glad to have read it before Daniel Aguilar's interview on library program. However, in Aguilar's discussion, he touched on the importance of having programs that were not focused on books (Cunningham, 2017), and it made me start to think differently about them. I remembered a successful program I saw at UCSD, where dogs were brought in front of the library for students to pet during finals week, in order to lower their stress levels. All of this made me think about creating a program designed to lower stress levels for students.

Indeed, the research that I did for student stress was alarming (Simon, 2017). However, the resources available for combatting that stress are plentiful. From being in nature (University of Minnesota), to cooking (Andrews, 2015), to getting cozy (Altman, 2016), the options are endless to de-stress. It just takes time and investment. And while students may not prioritize mental well-being during a tough semester, libraries are ideally suited to take leadership positions in starting conversations and bridging community on issues like these (Evans et al., 2015, 223).

It was serendipitous Aguilar mentioned was getting ideas from social media sites like Instagram and Pinterest (Cunningham, 2017), because I first came across the Danish concept of Hygge on Pinterest. I also first saw wrapped books on BuzzFeed, where they were called “mystery books.” Thus, it was encouraging to hear Aguilar suggest using social media for ideas, because I might have thought the ideas too trendy and not professional enough before. All of this came together for me in the “Unwrap & Unwind” library program idea, where a cozy, outdoor pop-up library would feature wellness books wrapped up as surprise gifts.

References

- Altman, A. (2016, December 18). The Year of Hygge, the Danish Obsession with Getting Cozy. *The New Yorker*. Retrieved from <https://www.newyorker.com/culture/culture-desk/the-year-of-hygge-the-danish-obsession-with-getting-cozy>
- Andrews, L. W. (2015). Kitchen Therapy: Cooking Up Mental Well-Being. Retrieved November 9, 2017, from <https://www.psychologytoday.com/blog/minding-the-body/201505/kitchen-therapy-cooking-mental-well-being>
- Campus Profile | University Communications and Public Affairs, UC San Diego. (n.d.). Retrieved November 9, 2017, from

http://ucpa.ucsd.edu/resources/campus-profile/?_ga=2.24331194.1449896213.1510163840-3806156913.1420484233

CAPS Homepage. (n.d.). Retrieved November 9, 2017, from <https://caps.ucsd.edu/>

Cunningham, A., & Aguilar, D. (2017, November 6). Interview. Retrieved November 8, 2017 from

<http://www.cccconfer.org/GoToArchive?SeriesID=43f04e06-0695-46d5-b99a-58f80109033f>

Evans, G. E., Saponaro, M. Z., Sinwell, C., & Christie, H. (2015). *Library programs and services: the fundamentals* (Eighth edition). Santa Barbara, CA: Libraries Unlimited.

Library Blog - The Library. (n.d.). Retrieved November 9, 2017, from

<https://libraries.ucsd.edu/blogs/>

Simon, C. (2017, May 4). More and more students need mental health services. But colleges struggle to keep up. Retrieved November 9, 2017, from

<http://college.usatoday.com/2017/05/04/more-and-more-students-need-mental-health-services-but-colleges-struggle-to-keep-up/>

Student Health Services - Stress. (n.d.). Retrieved November 9, 2017, from

https://wellness.ucsd.edu/studenthealth/resources/health-topics/Pages/stress.aspx?_ga=2.24331194.1449896213.1510163840-3806156913.1420484233

University of Minnesota (n.d.) How does nature impact our wellbeing? Retrieved November 8, 2017, from

[https://www.takingcharge.csh.umn.edu/enhance-your-wellbeing/environment/nature-and-us/how-does-nature-impact-our-wellbeing.](https://www.takingcharge.csh.umn.edu/enhance-your-wellbeing/environment/nature-and-us/how-does-nature-impact-our-wellbeing)