



## ENRICHING LIVES PROGRAM- VIRTUAL

Our Enriching Lives Program provides social, entertainment and educational opportunities for low-income individuals to attend theater, museums, professional sporting events, group lunches and dinners, visits to zoos and parks, river cruises, bowling, movies, etc. This program addresses the needs of low-resource older adults, Veterans and returning active military personnel, people with disabilities and caregivers. Our goal is to get people “out-of-the-house” for physical and mental stimulation, and to enjoy the sorts of things we all enjoy in our lives and on which we thrive. This program looks to improve mental and physical wellbeing for these disadvantaged individuals; leading to an overall better quality of life.



Photo by San Diego Zoo

### Why a Virtual Enriching Lives Program?

Loneliness and isolation can have serious negative health impacts, particularly for seniors. Physical health can be affected by feelings of loneliness and, in one study, “people who identified as lonely had a...59 percent greater risk of decline and ...a 45 percent greater risk of death.”<sup>1</sup> In addition to these physical affects, researchers have identified that mental health issues can arise in seniors that are lonely and isolated, especially amongst those seniors residing in residential care facilities.<sup>23</sup>



Photo by San Diego Zoo

During this pandemic, the vulnerable groups we serve have gone into self-quarantine and lockdowns—no visits, limited outside communication and other restrictions. The isolation that can arise, leading to other health issues, will be another major effect COVID-19. Unfortunately, loneliness and its deleterious effects were not getting much attention before this pandemic hit; and it is not on most people’s radars now. These effects of isolation have been enormous and they continue—even after more than three months, particularly in the groups we support.

<sup>1</sup> “Loneliness Linked to Serious Health Problems and Death Among Elderly.” *Loneliness Linked to Serious Health Problems and Death Among Elderly* | UC San Francisco, 15 Mar. 2020. [www.ucsf.edu/news/2012/06/98644/loneliness-linked-serious-health-problems-and-death-among-elderly](http://www.ucsf.edu/news/2012/06/98644/loneliness-linked-serious-health-problems-and-death-among-elderly).

<sup>2</sup> Holwerda, Tjalling & Deeg, Dorly & Beekman, Aartjan & van Tilburg, Theo & Stek, Max & Jonker, Cees & Schoevers, Robert. (2012). Feelings of loneliness, but not social isolation, predict dementia onset: Results from the Amsterdam Study of the Elderly (AMSTEL). *Journal of neurology, neurosurgery, and psychiatry*. 85. 10.1136/jnnp-2012-302755.

<sup>3</sup> “Depression Among Seniors in Residential Care.” *CMHA National*, [cmha.ca/documents/depression-among-seniors-in-residential-care](http://cmha.ca/documents/depression-among-seniors-in-residential-care).

Utilizing technology, we have created a wide range of virtual activities and “outings” – an innovative response to the pandemic and a creative utilization of technology to facilitate it. We curate online opportunities for our groups; bringing hundreds of online activities into one

*By improving mental health,  
we will also improve physical health, leading  
to a better quality of life and wellbeing*

central point for distribution and access to those we serve. In addition, we are expanding Fenwick sponsored events which would be presented specifically for our partner facilities and organizations.

These activities are able to have a broader reach than our typical Enriching Lives Activities since they are not limited by location; we can connect our groups with activities across the world.

This program is providing a vital need for individuals who cannot leave their facilities and it counteracts the negative effects of loneliness by providing access to online activities and events. These efforts can help break the disconnectedness and isolation that can sink in when one is quarantining, whether at home or in a long-term care facility. After the pandemic has abated, we will continue to offer these virtual opportunities to our groups, in an attempt to reach those who are unable to leave their facilities.

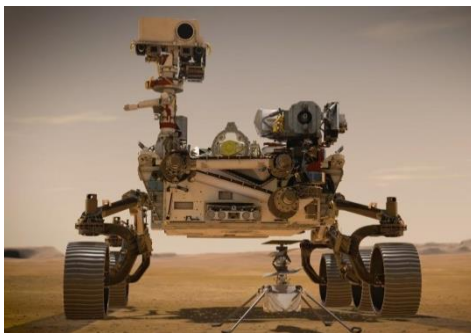


Photo by NASA



Photo by Met Opera



Photo by Vatican Museums

### **Arts and Entertainment Examples**

The Kennedy Center Digital Stage ~ Strathmore’s Live from the Living Room ~ Lincoln Center’s *Broadway Fridays* ~ National Theatre at Home ~ WolfTrap’s Opera UNTRAPPED ~ NY Metropolitan Opera ~ Picasso Museum ~ Teatro de la Luna Performances ~ Musee d’Orsay ~ Vatican Museums ~ Metropolitan Museum of Art ~ MOMA ~ Yo-Yo Ma Live Streamed Concert ~ The Uffizi Galleries ~ Theatre J—Yiddish Theater Lab ~ The Art & Music of Charlie Parker ~ The Kennedy Center Couch Concerts ~ New Orchestra of Washington Performances ~ Virginia Opera Performances ~ The Shows Must Go On Streams ~ Ballston Comedy Night

### **Educational Examples**

Science Museum of Virginia’s Lunch Break Science ~ National Underground Railroad Museum ~ Ford’s Theatre ~ Chicago History Museum ~ Science Museum of Boston ~ NASA Research Centers ~ Georgia Aquarium ~ San Diego Zoo ~ Colonial Williamsburg Virtual Tours ~ Monterey Bay Aquarium ~ Houston Zoo ~ American Museum of Natural History ~ Acropolis Museum ~ Road Scholar Virtual Learning Lectures ~ The Natural History Museum, London ~ George Washington’s Mount Vernon Tour ~ Minnesota Science Museum—OmniFest Films ~ Baltimore Center Stage Civil Dialogues ~ National Women’s History Museum ~ Tampa Bay History Museum ~ JFK Presidential Library ~ Smithsonian Institution Online Events