



SERVICE LEARNING AND CIVIC ENGAGEMENT THROUGH HIGHER EDUCATION

## **ANGELA GOINS & STEVEN VILLANO | UNIVERSITY OF HOUSTON DOWNTOWN**

### **NARROWING THE DIGITAL DIVIDE AMONG OLDER ADULTS THROUGH STUDENT ENGAGEMENT AND SERVICE-LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES**

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#### **ABSTRACT:**

This presentation explores how one service-learning initiative impacted students and communities through knowledge, engagement, and action via voluntary participation in a university-based digital literacy project in Fall 2023 with older adults 50 years and older. Using funding received from a community challenge grant through the American Association of Retired persons (AARP), this project financed the purchase of PC tablets for older adults, 50 and over, living in low-income apartment complexes in a major city in the U.S. Students from an urban university increased digital literacy among these seniors and built intergenerational bonds through trainings offered at on-site apartment locations. Not only did this initiative promote service-learning opportunities at this institution for students with older adults, it highlighted and supported the need for digital literacy among older adults and intergenerational connections with younger adults.

#### **THEMATIC FOCUS: SURPRISING COLLABORATIONS | DISSONANCE & RESILIENCE | LEARNING THE CHORDS**

#### **BIO(S):**

##### **ANGELA GOINS**

Angela M. Goins, DSW, LCSW, is currently an Assistant Professor of Social Work in the Bachelor of Social Work Program under the College of Public Service at the University of Houston-Downtown (UHD). She is the Founder and Director of the Service, Teaching, Aging, and Research (S.T.A.R.) Lab at UHD which promotes opportunities for students, faculty, and staff to

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work with older adults in the community/ Dr. Goins advocates for a trained workforce with basic skills and knowledge to work with older adults. Dr. Goins also promotes issues that are important to older adults in the community. She is a Licensed Clinical Social Worker. Dr. Goins' past clinical work experience includes over 19 years direct frontline experience as a supervisor and investigator under the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services with Adult Protective Services. Dr. Goins currently works as a part-time medical social worker with Home Health Care Network, and she does therapy part-time with older adults at the Monarch Community, both in Houston, Texas. Dr. Goins is a Director with the Alumni Association Board with the Graduate College of Social Work at the University of Houston Central Campus and she is on the Adult Protective Services Board, Houston District. Dr. Goins resides in Houston, Texas. Her academic Interest includes: gerontological studies, state government protective services with adults and individuals with disabilities, exploitation with elder adults, elder abuse, home health medical social work and case management

**STEVEN VILLANO**