

THE BUDDY PROGRAM™

The Buddy Program is supported by a grant from the Glen and Wendy Miller Family Foundation.

Program Objectives

- Educate medical students regarding Alzheimer's disease and related dementias (ADRD) at an early stage of illness by
 - 1) Heightening awareness of skills and strengths that remain in people with ADRD.
 - 2) Providing opportunities to see how someone with ADRD responds to his or her own changing abilities,
 - 3) Familiarizing students with issues of the daily care and support of persons with ADRD and their families and the most effective ways of communicating with persons with dementia.
- Introduce students to research and practice opportunities in related fields.

I. Time Commitment

Buddies are required to commit 4 hours per month to buddy activities, Students are required to attend an orientation and monthly program meetings with the Neurobehavior and Alzheimer's Disease Center clinicians, and support/guidance from the Buddy Program faculty.

The Buddy Program runs on annual intervals. Each buddy pair is asked to commit the entire academic year (September – May) to the program.

II. Institutional Review Board (IRB)

The Buddy Program is approved by the Northwestern University Institutional Review Board-Office for the Protection of Research Subjects. Both student and diagnosed individual must sign a consent form prior to their involvement in the Buddy Program. This consent allows information to be communicated between and among program staff and the buddy pair.

III. Activities

Meetings and appropriate activities will be determined by the diagnosed person, the family, the student, and the professional staff.

Appropriate activities might include: going to the movies, museums enjoying hobbies together, exercising, shopping, or just engaging in simple conversation.

IV. Activity Journal

Students are required to complete a brief journal entry at the end of each activity session. Journal forms will be provided to students. Completed activity journal forms should be e-mailed to Darby Morhardt, d-morhardt@northwestern.edu.

V. Transportation

Transportation to/from buddy visits is the responsibility of the student. Students should not be the passenger when the buddy or the buddy's caregiver is driving, nor should the student be in the position of transporting the person with Alzheimer's or their family member.

VI. Activity Expenses

Expenses for activities are the responsibility of the student at the time of the event. However, the CNADC will reimburse students on a monthly basis for any expenses they might have accrued. The CNADC is unable to reimburse tax. The CNADC will reimburse up to \$100 for the entire year. Students can request no more than \$50 at one time.

VII. Orientation

There will be an obligatory orientation for all students of three one-hour sessions conducted by the CNADC faculty. This orientation will cover the etiology, progression and treatment of dementia, as well as practical information on communication, caregiving, and the subjective experience of dementia via readings and video.

VIII. Matching

Matching is based on compatibility of interests, logistical concerns, and demographic preferences. The Program faculty meet with each student individually to facilitate the best match possible. The student and individual with Alzheimer's meet at the Match Day Party,

IX. Photographs

Photographs will be taken of you and your buddy at the Match Party. These photographs may be used for teaching, publications or presentations at clinical meetings. No other personal information about you will be included in the presentation.

X. Clinical Opportunities

If agreed upon by you and your family member, your student buddy will have the opportunity to accompany you to your scheduled Neurobehavior and Memory Health Service clinical appointment with your

doctor. These visits would give your buddy an opportunity to observe neurological, neuropsychological, and/or psychiatric assessments.

XI. Professional Guidance

The program faculty and staff will offer guidance throughout the program. We are available to answer any questions/concerns that might occur while engaging in an activity with your buddy.

XII. Certificate of Commendation

At the end of successfully completing the Buddy Program year (4 hours to the program per month coupled with the appropriate evaluation forms), each buddy is given a Certificate of Commendation from M.–Marsel Mesulam, M.D, Director of the CNADC.

Thank you for your participation in the Buddy Program. This program serves as a valuable volunteer experience for medical students and provides insight into how memory loss impacts diagnosed individuals and family members. Your participation greatly enriches their medical school education and your mentorship to them is greatly appreciated. We hope this is an invaluable experience for you as well.

Contact Information

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