

# Memories of Migration

## Event Report

Partner: Queens Library: Queens Memory, Fresh Meadows Community Library, Children’s Learning and Discovery Center, and the Older Adults Program
Staff Name: Lori Wallach, Natalie Milbrodt, Richard Lee, Madlyn Schneider, Lynn Cole, Kevon Ajodhia
Event Name: Memories of Migration: Making a Talking Family Story Quilt: Workshop #1
Event Date: September 16, 2017
Event Description: This was the opening session of our workshop series. Natalie began with a brief account of her own migration story from Detroit to New York City in 2005 as a way to set expectations for the personal sharing participants should anticipate during the workshop. She also provided an overview of the activities we planned to undertake – recording short interviews about each participant’s family migration story; creating a quilt square that visually represents that story; and programming audio clips from the interviews into LilyPads, electronic devices that will be sewn into the quilts and enable playback of the clips. She then had participants introduce themselves and explain what they hoped to learn in the workshop. Afterwards, Lori showed a simple quilt square she had created as an example, and Lynn and Kevon demonstrated the LilyPad and its components. In the second half of the session, Natalie explained the interview format and had participants pair off to choose questions for their interviews the following week. Before the afternoon ended, Lori briefly described the fabric types and sizes they should start gathering for the later quilting sessions. The session ran for two hours, from 2:30 to 4:30 pm.
Memories of Migration Activities: Participants received a handout with suggested questions to focus their interviews on topics of migration, such as, “What is your first visual memory of the United States?” and “What cultural traditions from your birth or ancestral country does your family preserve?” They were also asked to sign our consent form to have their interviews and photographs preserved and made accessible as part of the Queens Memory collection.
Number of Participants: 6 registered attendees: 4 adults and 2 older adults
Comments and/or Concerns: We were initially disappointed with what we considered a low turnout. Approximately 25 people had signed up for the workshop but only six attended the first session. Although all six attendees stayed the full time and participated in the activities, we were concerned that the two older participants seemed hesitant about the technology portion; one clearly stated that she was only interested in having her story recorded and didn’t want to sew a quilt square.
Analysis of Event: Although we had a smaller group than we expected, we were pleased with the level of engagement of all the participants. Several of them had prior quilting experience, and most seemed eager to record their stories and learn more about the technology. This first session covered a lot of ground, and we felt we got off to a good start.