

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, Karen Fitzgerald, Madlyn Schneider
Event Name: Memories of Migration: Making a Talking Family Story Quilt: Workshop #5
Event Date: October 21, 2017
Event Description: Today's session was led by Karen with assistance from Natalie. The goals were to continue utilizing the techniques taught in the previous session to construct the quilts, and to begin attaching the LilyPad components. As was the case last week, our participants were at very different points in their progress, so Karen spent much of her time assisting each one individually. One member was almost done with her quilt, for example, and needed help to attach the pieces to a backing; others were still at the point of cutting out shapes to be applied. Karen also discussed how the electronic buttons could be incorporated and highlighted in the designs. During the session, Lori and Natalie tested the volume level of the clips on a mini SD card that Lori had amplified; the new level seemed sufficient for playback. They also gathered information from the participants on the projected dimensions of the quilts and measured how they might be hung in the library's lobby area. Karen advised on the types of dowels and hooks that could be employed. At the end of the session, we reminded participants that next week would be the last session, and that they should be ready to do the final sewing of the electronics into their completed quilts. The session ran two hours, from 2:30 to 4:30 pm.
Memories of Migration Activities: Participants continued to build on the themes of their migration stories, with designs including a great amount of detail from their personal lives. One quilt, for example, contains a fabric-printed photo of the quilter's family, while another incorporates tiny flowers and balls to represent her family's interests. Our group seems to be truly bonding and encouraging each other with advice and friendly conversation.
Number of Participants: 4 registered attendees, all adults
Comments and/or Concerns: One attendee -- probably the least experienced quilter -- was unable to come to this session, and we're concerned about his ability to finish the project. Lori obtained a sheet of Wonder Under for him and will make arrangements to meet him at Queens College during the week; Karen also offered to consult with him via phone. On the other hand, one of the more experienced participants has designed an extremely detailed quilt that will require a lot of outside work; we hope she will be able to complete hers as well. Every participant is doing many hours of work independently at home between sessions.
Analysis of Event: This session seemed less structured than the previous four, with most of the time spent on individual work and consultation. This was clearly helpful for the participants in terms of their quilt construction, but we are concerned about having enough time next week to complete the electronics work. It almost seems as though an additional session would be helpful, but getting people to commit to six weeks was difficult enough; we will have to evaluate the timeline once the project is complete.

