



EASING THE BURDEN OF LIFE WITH ALZHEIMER'S

The hardest part of Ines' day is in the early evening. When most people are heading home to relax after their 9 to 5 jobs, Ines is on edge, nervous. Her husband, Herbert, is often confused at night. Some evenings, he does not even recognize Ines, his wife of more than thirty years.



Herbert has Alzheimer's. For the past three years, Ines has been his primary caretaker, ensuring he is dressed in the morning, helping him get daily exercise, testing his blood sugar, and making sure he rests. Herbert loves watching soccer, listening to music from his native country of Uruguay, and eating a healthy meal—but like so many people with Alzheimer's or other forms of dementia, evenings are difficult for him.

Caretaking is such a difficult job; whether you are caring for a young child, a loved one with a serious illness or an older adult like a parent or grandparent. But for caregivers like Ines, the difficulties are even greater because Alzheimer's and dementia rob their loved ones of their memories, leading to confusion, even anger. For caregivers, it is an excruciating process.

This is why, says Sheila Williams of Sunnyside Community Services, caregivers often become overwhelmed and isolated. The labor is both physical and emotional, which takes a toll on their health and well-being.

Luckily, there are programs throughout New York City that can help, including Sunnyside Community Services' CARE NYC program. Programs like these help caregivers learn more about Alzheimer's and memory loss diseases, find help with caring for their loved one, and get resources to assist with long-term care planning. Unfortunately, Ms. Williams says, caregivers often wait until a moment of crisis to reach out. "Our goal is to make sure we reach caregivers before the crisis," she says.

One of the most challenging things Ines realized as she continued to care for her husband was that she could not do it alone: It was a 24-hour-a-day job, and Ines was only one person. So, Ines reached out to organizations around the city. At Sunnyside Community Services, she found staff who could speak with her in Spanish and assist her in finding a part-time home health aide who could lessen her burden. Today, Ines attends a bimonthly support group at our senior center, learns more about Alzheimer's at free workshops, and works with her home health aide to prepare healthy meals, manage housework, and ensure Herbert takes his medication. "These programs were like a life preserver," she says, "I felt like I was up to my neck in water. I hung on, thanks to the help I received."

At Sunnyside Community Services, the CARE NYC program helps those caring for someone with Alzheimer's or other forms of dementia. You can call 877-577-9337 to connect with CARE NYC's free services throughout the five boroughs.

Black history seen at Queens College



Among the Black History events at Queens College, Dr. Jessica B. Harris — author of more than a dozen books on food and culture and a longtime professor of English there — reflects on her exceptional career.

Courtesy of Kristy May

BY NAEISHA ROSE

Queens College was to kick off its Black History Month celebration this past Thursday with an interactive exhibition titled "Waging Peace: 100 Years of Action," which was organized by the American Friends Service Committee at the school's Godwin-Ternbach Museum.

The American Friends Service Committee is a non-profit organization committed to social justice, according to its website.

Through the use of interactive media and artifacts, the exhibition is intended to explore themes about building peace, ending discrimination, and addressing prison issues, just economies, immigration rights and calls to action.

The museum will expand on the exhibition by including historical posters, photographs and documents from its collection of Queens College Civil Rights Archives, according to the school.

The materials from Godwin-Ternbach are firsthand accounts of the fight for social justice by Queens College students and faculty, according to the institution.

A panel about the origins of Black History Month will be held Monday from 10:45 a.m. to 12:05 a.m. to kickoff week two celebrations. It will be at the Muyskens Conference Room at the school's Summit apartments. The school is at 65-30 Kissena Blvd. in Flushing.

Jessica Harris, a culinary historian, cookbook author, journalist and Queens

College faculty member, will present "My Soul Looks Back: Reflections on My 50-Year Career at Queens College" on Tuesday from 3 to 6 p.m. in the Student Union's fourth-floor ballroom.

Dr. Patrice Fenton, Babajimi Famus-esan and Jason Rosario will round out Week 3 of the celebration on Feb. 13 at a "What is Blackness: A Discourse on Identity, Ethnicity and Race" panel at the Benjamin Rosenthal Library at the President's Conference Room.

The emergence of contemporary blackness will be discussed, along with the panelists' own experiences and understanding of ethnicity, race, and identity, as well as social and political forces that have shaped them.

The panel will start at 4:40 p.m. and end at 6 p.m.

For Week 4, there will be guest lectures by author Vanessa Valdes and Katrina Adams, the chairwoman of the board of the United States Tennis Association, on Feb. 20 and Feb. 21 at Rosenthal Library. Both lectures will be from 12:15 to 1:30 p.m.

The fifth week of Black History Month will have students who went civil rights sites in Georgia and Alabama reflect on their experiences at the Student Union Ballroom West on Feb. 26 from 12:15 to 2 p.m.

The final event will be a panel discussion, "Black Women and the Vote: Suffrage to the Era of Trump," scheduled at the Patio Room at the school's dining hall for Feb. 28 from 6 to 8 p.m.