

CSU, partners crowdfund study on music and Alzheimer's

by CSU External Relations Staff | March 9, 2016 2:33 PM

Organizers of a program that brings individuals with dementia and their caregivers to Fort Collins Symphony concerts have created a crowdfunding campaign to help pay for a Colorado State University study of its impact on the participants.



[1]

B Sharp participant Stephen Jablonsky, holding hands with his wife Lynn, answers questions from Kyu Rim Kang, a first-year Ph.D. student in CSU's occupational and rehabilitation science program, prior to the Nov. 7 Fort Collins Symphony concert. Stephen has been diagnosed with a condition called Fragile X Syndrome.

The B Sharp program is a collaborative effort of CSU, Banner Health, Kaiser Permanente, Fort Collins Symphony, Alzheimer's Association, the Larimer County Office on Aging and a local certified dementia practitioner. An arts engagement program modeled after similar programs at the Museum of Modern Art in New York and the Banner Alzheimer's Institute in Phoenix, B Sharp provides 30 people with mild to moderate dementia and their caregivers the opportunity to attend five Fort Collins Symphony concerts during the 2015-16 season.

Kaiser Permanente, Home State Bank and Banner Health provided the initial funding for the B Sharp study; the university needs an additional \$25,000 to complete the research. The crowdfunding campaign goal is \$7,000, which could increase depending on the success of the campaign. The campaign ends May 17.

Donations

Community members can donate online^[2] or by contacting Mary Kopco, Fort Collins Symphony executive director, at (970) 482-4823. They can also mail contributions designated to B Sharp to Kopco's attention at the Fort Collins Symphony, 223 Linden St., Suite 202, Fort Collins, CO 80524.

"Our study will explore a number of factors, including the impact of the music on the cognitive ability of participants with dementia, the social connections between the caregiver and person with dementia, and the degree to which study participants feel supported by the community," said Jeni Cross, associate professor in the CSU Department of Sociology. "We know music has a unique ability to affect people in a variety of ways, and we look forward to seeing the results of this study."

B Sharp is already having a significant positive impact on participants in northern Colorado.

'Engaging social experience'

"It's an opportunity for us to do something different than we normally do and to meet others in the same situation we are," said participant Sue Squier, a Loveland resident whose husband, Hal, was diagnosed with Alzheimer's disease in 2008. "We think it's important to raise awareness about Alzheimer's disease and its impact not only on the person, but on the caregivers as well. B Sharp provides an opportunity for us both to get out of the home and have an engaging social experience. That has been really positive for both of us."

B Sharp is midway through its first season, which ends with a concert on May 14. Depending on the outcome of the program, organizers hope it will serve as a catalyst for other dementia-focused programs in northern Colorado.

"As our population continues to age, we must ensure that we are providing resources and a lifestyle that add to the quality of life for all our citizens of every age," said Angel Hoffman, program manager for Banner Health's Stepping Stones Adult Day Program in Loveland and leader of the B Sharp project. "We hope our success with the B Sharp program will lead to other ideas and programs that will make northern Colorado a leader in this regard."

The Department of Sociology is in CSU's College of Liberal Arts.

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Endnotes:

1. [Image]: <http://source.colostate.edu/wp-content/uploads/2016/03/B-Sharp-cover.jpg>
2. online: <http://giving.colostate.edu/charge/>

Source URL: <http://source.colostate.edu/csu-partners-crowdfund-musical-alzheimers-study/>

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