

**Final Report – Professional Development Grant
Qualitative Report 7th Annual Conference – 2016**

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RESTATEMENT OF PROBLEM

This grant helped to fund my attendance to the Qualitative Report 7th Annual Conference in Ft. Lauderdale, Florida.

REVIEW OF THE WORK / PROCEDURE

I presented research entitled “Senior Companion Program Volunteers: Exploring Experiences, Transformative Rituals, and Recruitment/Retention Issues.” Attending the conference enhanced my understanding of research trends in qualitative research, especially those focusing on social psychological issues and currents associated with moving beyond “mirrored-based” research. It also allowed me to expose my scholarship to a variety of social scientists with solid backgrounds in the area of qualitative studies and interests in volunteer studies.

OUTCOMES

I attended the conference and presented my research. Specifically, I met with many other scholars carrying out research related to identity shifts and organizational dynamics. Conversations with those contacts will allow me to construct subsequent projects based on this research and use aspects of it in my teaching and mentoring.

CONCLUSIONS

This grant allowed me to attend a conference and make beneficial contacts in the field. I might not have been able to make the contacts without extra funding. I feel that I have built a lasting network with scholars from across the country working on projects related to qualitative studies. This will prove beneficial as I move one of my research areas toward a better understanding of the link between structural ritualization dynamics and volunteerism. Aside from research, I plan to use the information gathered from sessions I attended in several of the classes I am responsible for teaching. I am specifically excited about sharing information related to a methodological congruence tool I learned about at the conference. I think it will help my students better understand the history, types, and quality of non-quantitative methodologies.