

# Imagine Mars



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## Project Gallery

### Project Information



#### **First Mars Community – August 8, 2007**

Beverly Towers Neighborhood Networks Center  
Montebello, CA 90640

Grade Level: Other

Time Spent on Project: 5-8 weeks

Number of Participants: < 5

Type of Project: Design Arts

### Project Description

Our involvement with the project is historic because our participation represents the first time senior citizens have been organized to be involved in the Imagine Mars Program. The seniors envisioned a community that was all encompassing and had all the comforts of Earth despite its Martian location. The participants discussed their vision for going to Mars, then listed what would be vital to live on Mars.

Essentials they chose included hospitals, schools, dormitories, a resource center, water, food, air and clothing. In addition, the group thought that satellite communication would be necessary between Mars and Earth. After the discussion phase was completed, the seniors laid out plans to build models of their community on Mars. They actually created their own flag to represent their community. The language of choice was Mandarin Chinese. They created a Mars chart, in Mandarin, which included basic facts about Mars. The group also learned about the Solar System, to gain an understanding about the position of Earth and Mars within it. They became familiar with Mars as a planet, learning about its atmosphere, and they conducted several experiments. One of the experiments involved helium filled balloons that demonstrated the weaker gravitational pull on Mars. Many of the participants felt that the knowledge they gained would be of use because they could pass the information on to their loved ones.



### Lessons Learned

- The seniors learned about Mars in a creative way, mixing science with science fiction, to spark the imagination. The course was based upon science with the participants being taught the realities of going to Mars, including the problems this would pose to the settlers.
- Discussion was a key element in the teaching of the course, because of the language barrier. Most of the students spoke Mandarin better than English thus creating misunderstanding, forcing them to reaffirm their understanding of the material through group discussion.
- The course was scheduled for only six weeks which posed a problem because many of the participants could not make it to every session. It would be more beneficial if the course lasted longer.
- Visual displays were especially useful in engaging the imagination of seniors and helped bridge the language problem.