

## LICENSING TESTIMONIAL:

# Mike Prudhom

Mike Prudhom is a technology expert and systems analyst with over 40 years of experience. Deeply committed to his community and improving the lives of young people, Prudhom now has a new passion—working with older adults as a project manager and trainer for Serving Older Adults in SE Wisconsin (SOA), a nonprofit and licensed partner of Senior Planet from AARP.

“I love working with older adults,” he said. “Students show so much appreciation because they really want to be there and learn. They don’t have to be there, like some youth, so they’re super attentive.”

SOA operates five senior centers in the Milwaukee area that offer a wide variety of activities and programs including quilting, painting, woodworking, kilns, gyms, pool tables, concerts, and lapidary equipment (for making jewelry). Over 5,200 people aged 50+ have been served at the centers.

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During the pandemic, SOA started a program called Tech Connect to stay in touch with the community. A grant allowed the nonprofit to distribute 50 iPads and set up a lending library with limited tech training. When the lockdown was lifted SOA began offering a weekly “Bring Your Own Device” day for tech support, which saw people bring in not just iPads but routers, blood pressure cuffs and other devices - highlighting again the need

for tech training for older adults.

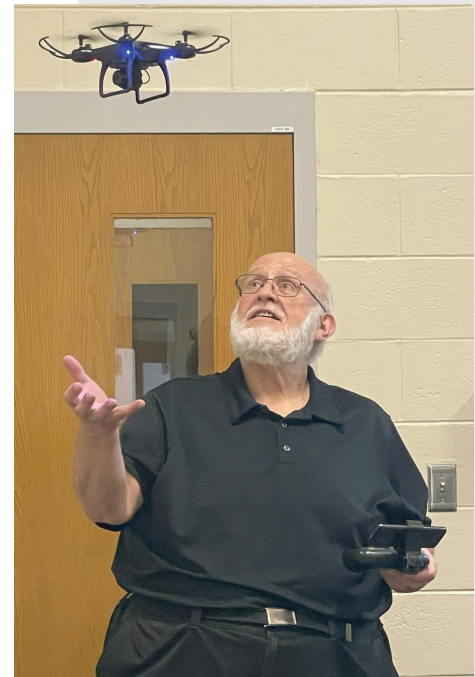
Prudhom joined SOA in 2021 to manage its tech programs. Seeing that older adults served by SOA faced similar challenges as those living in rural areas, including digital disconnection, he began seeking out rural-serving organizations as potential partners. He attended a Senior Planet licensing informational session and was accepted to the program soon after.

Prudhom appreciates the Senior Planet Train-the-Trainer program. “For the people I brought in, it was a good

new experience. I liked the fact that everyone had to do a test presentation, and that Senior Planet provided feedback, which is really important.”

Train-the-Trainer reinforces the idea that each older adult is a unique individual with their own interests, abilities, and ways of learning. “They all have own agendas and ways of doing things, so as a trainer you have to relate on a personal level.”

Prior to the licensing arrangement Prudhom, created some classes in PC, smartphone use, and how to buy devices. But with only three trainers on staff and a growing community of older adults to serve, he lacked the time, resources, and capacity to design classes at scale. That’s where the value



# OF LOCAL TRAINERS TRAINED:

**5** currently active

# OF SENIOR PLANET CLASSES OFFERED:

**88** programs

# OF LOCAL OLDER ADULTS SERVED:

**365** unique engagements

**1432** total engagements

# OF SITES:

**7** sites

of the Senior Planet curriculum really shined through.

“I love the materials, which are clear, concise and direct,” Prudhom said.

“All the books for different courses, the layout of courses materials, and the workshops and lectures are all really good and well thought out. I like that trainers are directed, not scripted, so I can take the materials and teach them in my language.

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Prudhom has seen plenty of some inspiring moments at Senior Planet trainings, such as when an 84-year-old woman from Russia sent her first-ever email. The drone class was a big hit, with a Tomzon D28 mini drone, flown by class participants, sending papers flying. One of his favorite moments was when a man



who recently learned how to use the internet found a woman online who he had met in Germany in the 1950s. He still hasn't gotten up the nerve to email her.

Prudhom is a busy man, but he admits there are moments when he wishes he could give up everything else and just teach older adults. “I love being with those folks,” he said.



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The Senior Planet licensing program serves as an open-ended framework for administrators like Barnett to develop programs and activities based on unique needs of their community. You can learn more about the free program at [www.oats.org/licensing](http://www.oats.org/licensing)

