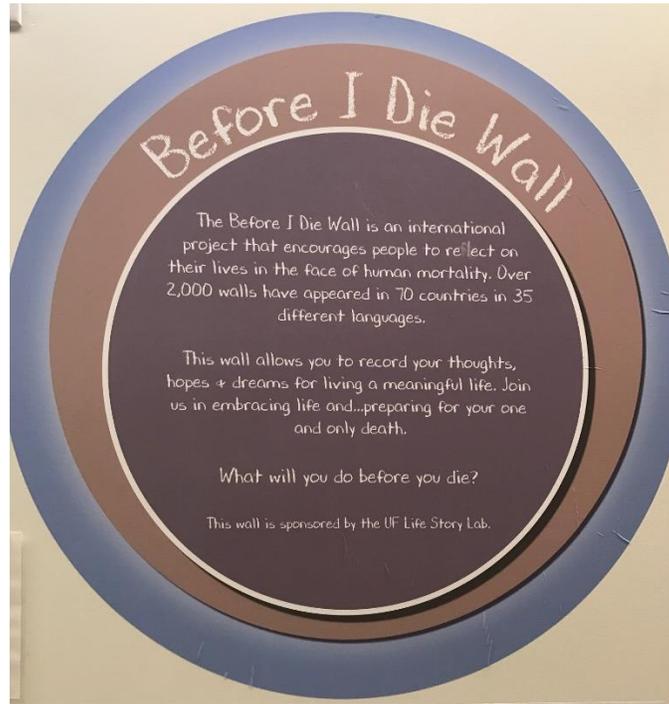
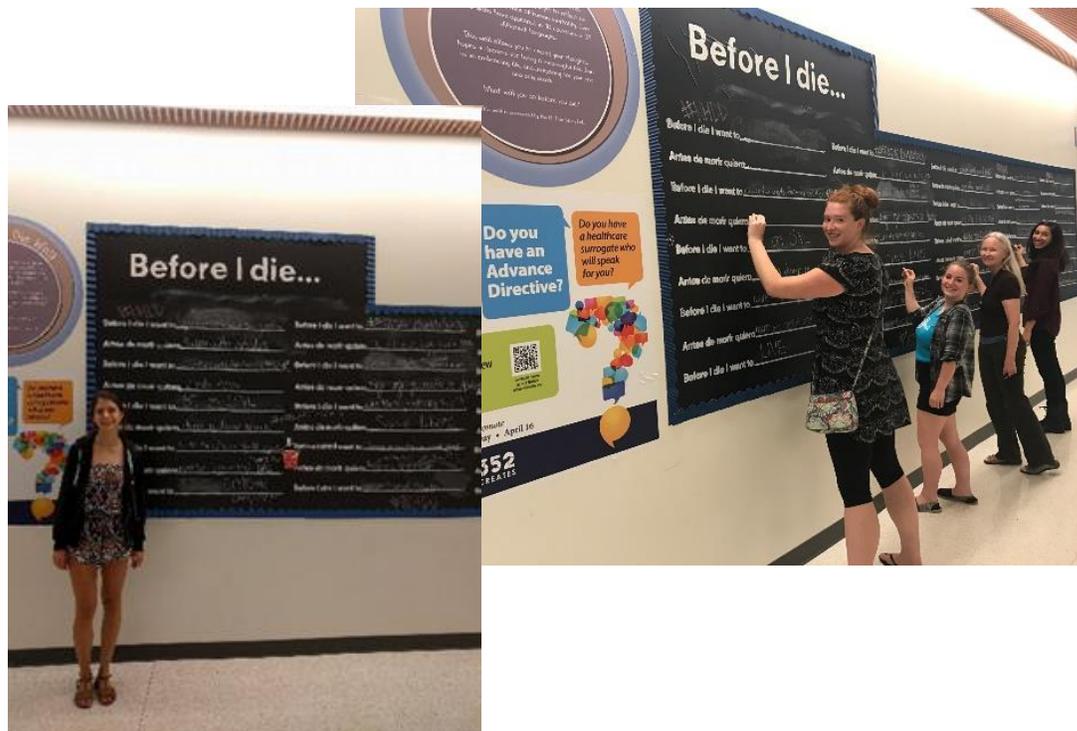


The Before I Die Wall 2017



The 2017 Before I Die Wall project in Gainesville was part of the national promotion of death education and awareness and completion of Advance Directives (Health Care Surrogate and Living Will) which are highlighted each year as part of National Health Care Decision Day. The UF Life Story Lab, Department of Psychology partnered with UF Health to engage college students through a Before I Die wall at the Reitz Union, March 26 – April 1, 2017.



The Alligator covered this event, as follows:

‘Before I Die’ walls invite students, residents to plan ahead

The purpose is to encourage people to make health care plans

By Jimena Tavel



Before he dies, Quoc Pham wants to tell his crush he likes her.

The 19-year-old UF criminology and theatre freshman wrote his goal Tuesday in chalk on a “Before I Die” wall inside Reitz Union. The wall is one of five placed throughout Gainesville as part of UF Health Shands Hospital’s annual celebration of National Health Care Decisions Day, said Wendy Resnick, the project manager.

“Oddly enough, it looks like a random wall, but it helps you see what you want to do with your life,” Pham said.

The “Before I Die” wall is an international art project encouraging people to write something they want to accomplish before they die, Resnick said. The annual National Health Care Decisions Day on April 16, which has been celebrated for six years at UF, is meant to encourage people to express their future health care plans to loved ones.

Future health care plans include filling out a surrogate form to designate who makes decisions for you if you're unable to; specifying which medical procedures you don't want to go through, like being fed through a tube; and sharing your wishes after you die, she said.

"The reality is, everybody's going to die at some point, so it's good to have people understand what you want to have happened," Resnick said.

Resnick said Shands puts together a group of doctors, nurses and social workers who are passionate about the topic to organize the celebration. Last year, Resnick said the group held focus groups with UF students to brainstorm ideas about how to publicize it further.

"We used to put up a table, but that was kind of boring, so we decided to talk to students and they came up with this idea," Resnick said.

The walls were stationed at the Alachua County Senior Recreation Center, the UF Health Science Center, the Reitz, the Haven Hospice Attic and Depot Park. All walls were installed Friday, except for the one inside the Reitz, which was installed Monday.

"People have been eager to write on the walls," Resnick said. "That's a good thing to have because the whole idea is to get people talking and setting goals."