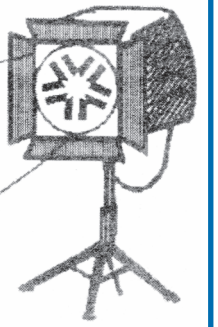


DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA OFFICE ON AGING

Spotlight On Aging



VOLUME XXVIII, ISSUE 1

A newsletter for D.C. Seniors

January 2017



EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE

By Laura Newland
Executive Director, D.C. Office on Aging

Happy New Year and welcome to 2017! It was great to see so many of you last month at the Mayor's Annual Senior Holiday Celebration. I hope everyone got some much-needed rest over the holidays, because it's a brand new year, and we have a lot of work to do!

You may have heard me say that in order for the Office on Aging to be the best in its class, we need your input. Last year, we asked you all to participate in our needs assessment study. I want to thank all of you who were willing to share your experiences with us. Your feedback is helping us shape our vision for an age-friendly D.C. and how DCOA can better meet you where you are.

One of the biggest themes that came out of the assessment was that seniors want more input on programs and the services they receive. This is something we knew, but it's reaffirming to have the data to back it up.

Over the past year, I've really focused on listening more. I experimented with a new town hall format where seniors had the opportunity to present to me. The town halls are a great forum for us to connect with you in the community, and this year we will continue to focus on more dialogue and more opportunities for you to lead the conversation. Check out our website at www.dcoa.gov or give us a call at 202-724-5626 to find out when the next town hall will be in your ward.

The needs assessment also highlighted a concern shared by so many seniors in our community — the risk of falls and other accidents. In fact, it was a top concern among all seniors surveyed. We know that healthy living and regular physical activity can help reduce falls risks, as well as being aware of physical hazards throughout your home and community. But there are so many more factors that contribute to falls, both individual and environmental.

Last year, we held falls prevention workshops in all eight wards, and we plan to build on this in the coming year. Mayor Muriel Bowser has been hard at work reducing hazards in the community through the Vision Zero initiative, which seeks to eliminate serious injuries and fatalities by making the city's streets and sidewalks safer for all commuters.

Continue to engage with us and keep us informed about the risks in your community, and let us know how we can work together to help keep you safe in your homes and in your neighborhood.

There was also some encouraging news — seniors in the District want to engage more with the Office on Aging! I take this as a compliment because I thought by now you'd be tired of hearing from me!

We know we need to do a better job getting the information you need to support you in taking charge of your long-term goals. My External Affairs team has been hard at work coming up with new and innovative ways to connect with you in the community to keep you engaged and informed. We want to make sure that we are amplifying your voices so that government, community organizations and service providers continue to work together to support healthy aging in D.C.

I invite you to review the needs assessment available on our website at www.dcoa.gov and share your thoughts with us. Do the results reflect your personal experience? What ideas do you have for us as we continue to move towards an age-friendly D.C. for all residents? You can email your feedback to askthedirector.dcoa@dc.gov or call us at 202-724-5626.

I'm excited for our future and looking forward to working with you to make D.C. the best place in the world to age!

The Mayor's Annual Senior Holiday Celebration

Mayor Muriel Bowser greeted more than 3,500 seniors at her annual Senior Holiday Celebration at the DC Armory on December 8, and reaffirmed her commitment to making Washington, D.C. an inclusive, age-friendly city for all residents.

Seniors from all eight wards of the city came together to celebrate the holiday season with Mayor Bowser and the D.C. Office on Aging, and were treated to live music, entertainment, free health screenings, immunizations, facials and manicures.

Lunch was served by more than 150 volunteers from the community, PEPCO, the Armed Forces, Jr. ROTCs from local schools, and DCOA sister agencies, the Department of Insurance, Securities and Banking and ServeDC.

Mayor Bowser shared news of some of her achievements over the past two years of her administration towards becoming a world-class, age-friendly city. These included:

Housing

- Invested \$100 million every year in the District's Housing Production Trust Fund to produce or preserve more than 1,200 affordable housing units, including senior apartments.

- Launched the Safe at Home program, providing up to \$10,000 for home adaptations allowing residents to remain safely in their homes.

- Broke ground on Plaza West, which will provide 223 units of affordable rental housing, including 50 units reserved for grandparents raising grandkids.

- Launched the Genesis intergenerational community — providing affordable residences to 27 young mothers aging out of foster care and seasoned residents.

- Plan and implement assistance housing vouchers for LGBTQ seniors.

Health and Public Safety

- Committed \$4 million towards capital improvements to Senior Wellness Centers.

- Conducted falls prevention workshops.

- Provided new options for community dining with the Restaurant Community



Mayor Muriel Bowser snaps a selfie with the crowd at the Annual Senior Holiday Celebration.

Dining Pilot program in Wards 7 and 8.

Inclusion

- Recognized 43 Age-Friendly local businesses, whose products, services and practices help make Washington, D.C. inclusive for older customers.

- Expanded affordable and accessible transportation through programs like the Seabury ConnectorCard and Transport-DC to include Metro Access customers, providing direct point-to-point transportation within the District.

- Signed the Caregiver Advise, Record and Enable Act (CARE Act) into law, providing 75,000 family caregivers with the tools and guidance to care for loved ones transitioning back into the community.

Economic Stability

- Increased the income limit for the Real Property Senior/Disabled tax deduction, reducing real property tax by 50 percent for more seniors ages 65+, who own at least 50 percent of the property.

- Launched the Alternative Pathways to Employment Program to refresh the job skills of DC residents, ages 50 and above.

- Launched LifeCents, providing approximately 1,300 seniors with financial literacy training and consumer protection information.

The annual holiday celebration highlights the efforts that the Bowser Administration will continue to make for Washington, D.C. to be a sustainable, age-friendly city for all Washingtonians.



D.C. OFFICE ON AGING NEWSLETTER

Community Calendar

January events

3rd, 17th and 31st • noon

Join the D.C. Caregivers Online Chat at Noon to discuss “Care Plan 101: Set Yourself Up for Success as a Caregiver” on Jan. 3, “Separating Long Term Care Insurance Myths from Realities” on Jan. 17, and “Lessen The Squeeze: Caregiver Coping Skills” on Jan. 31. Log on to <http://dcoa.dc.gov/page/caregiver-chat> at noon, or visit at your convenience and hit replay to see the chat. For more information, contact linda.irizarry@dc.gov or call 202-535-1442.

4th • 10:30 a.m. to 2 p.m.

The D.C. Office on Aging, in collaboration with the Hayes Senior Wellness Center, will hold a Community Health, Information and Wellness Fair at 500 K St. NE. For more information, contact Ms. S. Briscoe at 202-727-0357.

7th and 8th • 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.

The NBC4 Health & Fitness Expo will be held at the Washington Convention Center, 801 Mt. Vernon Pl. NW. The D.C. Office on Aging will be in booth 2744. For more information, see http://bit.ly/NBC4_health_and_fitness_expo.

10th • 10:30 a.m. to 2 p.m.

The D.C. Office on Aging, in collaboration with the G.W. Carver Senior Apartments, will hold a Community Health, Information and Wellness Fair at 4800 E. Capitol St. NE. To learn more, contact Ethel Hollins at 202-388-5252.

12th • 10:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.

Presentations will be made by the D.C. Office on Aging and collaborating partners at the Residences at Thomas Circle, 1330 Massachusetts Ave. NW. For more information, call Nancy Piness, Community Life Services Director, at 202-626-5774.

18th • 10:30 a.m. to 2 p.m.

A Community Health, Information and Wellness Fair will be held by the D.C. Office on Aging in collaboration with Colony House Senior Apartments at 930 Farragut St. NW. Contact Mr. Harris at 202-722-4048 for more information.

19th • 10 a.m. to noon

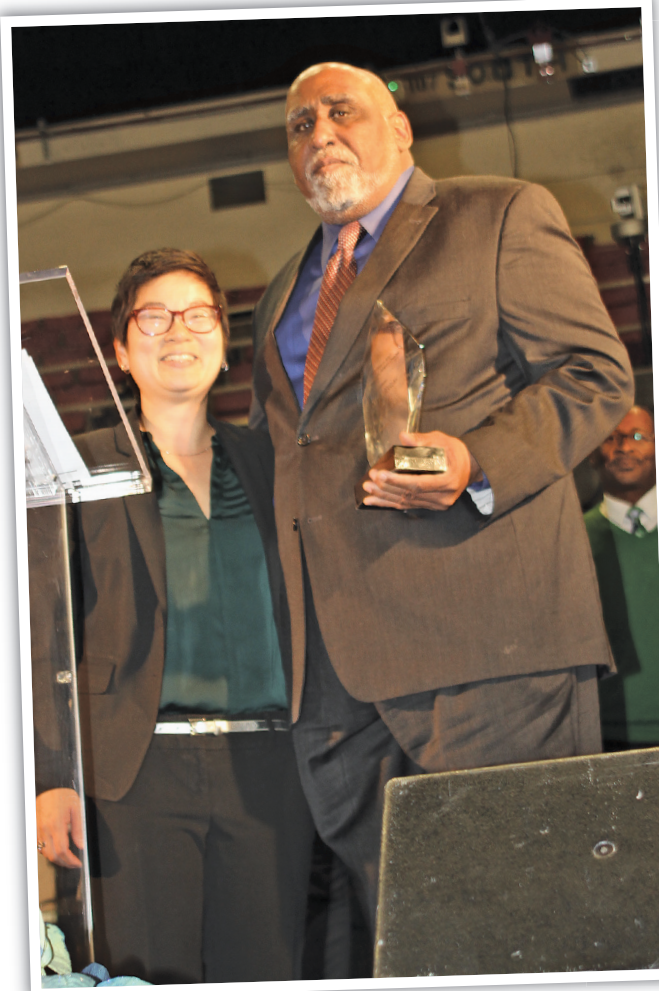
Train to become a DCOA Ambassador. Learn information about DCOA programs and services, and help us connect to D.C. residents who are age 60+, people with disabilities who are 18+, and their caregivers. Call 202-724-5626 to register for this or future training classes.

22nd • 4 to 6 p.m.

Iona presents a free panel and discussion on group houses from the 1960s to '80s and alternative living in cities. The event features guest artist James Landry's “In Bed” photography series. Former group house members and others will join the panel to discuss intentional communities, villages, and other alternative housing options for the future. Panelists include: Anne Becker, former Iona poet in residence, and Leslie Marks, Montgomery County Senior Housing. There will be a pay-your-way dinner after the event at a restaurant in the area. Iona is located at 4125 Albemarle St. NW. To register, call Patricia Dubroof at 202-895-9407.

25th • 10:30 a.m. to 2 p.m.

A Community Health, Wellness and Informational Fair will be held by the D.C. Office on Aging in collaboration with NCBA Estates at 2801 14th St. NW. To learn more, contact Dwight Mays at 202-387-4367.



Idriys Abdullah, consumer protection advocate for the Department of Insurance, Securities and Banking, and member of the Elder Abuse Prevention Committee, receives an award for exemplary service for his commitment to educating District seniors on how to protect themselves against financial exploitation.

In one year, Abdullah trained more than 700 seniors in all eight wards through the Money Smart for Older Adults workshops. The Money Smart program provides awareness among older adults and their caregivers on how to prevent elder financial exploitation and to encourage advance planning and informed financial decision-making.

A Celebration for Children

The D.C. Seniors Cameo Club and Ms. Senior D.C. Billie LaVerne Smith hosted more than 200 children from the community for the Children of Promise Holiday Celebration.

The children and their families made gingerbread houses, wrote letters to Santa, and wrote notes to explain what the annual event has meant to them over the years.

The children received gifts that included toys, coats, hats and gloves, as well as stockings and gift cards. Participating children are currently being impacted by the prison system.

Special thanks to the Trinity AME Church for hosting the event, the Awesome Foundation, the D.C. Office on Aging, Marshalls, and Family Matters for their support.



Ms. Senior D.C. Billie LaVerne Smith and D.C. Seniors Cameo Club members serve as Santa's helpers at the Children of Promise Holiday Celebration.

SPOTLIGHT ON AGING

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The Office on Aging is in partnership with the District of Columbia Recycling Program.