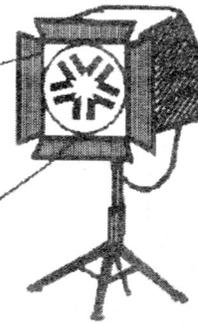


DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA OFFICE ON AGING

Spotlight On Aging



VOLUME XXVIII, ISSUE 4

A newsletter for D.C. Seniors

April 2012



EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE

By Dr. John M. Thompson

As April 15-21, 2012 is National Volunteer Week, "Celebrating People in Action," it is fitting that I take this opportunity to highlight the remarkable work that our volunteers provide to the District of Columbia Office on Aging and its Senior Service Network.

To help put the conversation into perspective, the D.C. Office on Aging (DCOA) is staffed with approximately 35 government employees and, through our Senior Service Network, 400 non-profit and community-based employees. This accounts for approximately 905,000 hours of labor. Additionally, DCOA works with a number of individuals and community-based organizations that coordinate volunteer programs for the District's seniors, persons with disabilities, and family caregivers.

I would like to salute our Commission on Aging, which is comprised of a group of District residents who are appointed by the Mayor to advise him, the Executive Director of the Office on Aging, the Council of the District of Columbia, and the public concerning the views and needs of the seniors in the District. The commissioners are volunteers who serve an integral role in ensuring that seniors access the much-needed programs and services offered through the DCOA.

Our volunteer base does not stop with the commissioners. In 2010, the Retired and Senior Volunteer Program, which is administered by Family Matters of Greater Washington, contributed 98,249 hours of volunteer services, which is approximately 10 percent of the total number of paid and volunteer hours produced through the DCOA's Senior Service Network. Moreover, based on the hourly rate of an independent source, the total value of these volunteer hours totaled over \$3.2 million.

Volunteers in RSVP are involved in tutoring and mentoring at-risk youth, assisting veterans 55 years of age and older in finding meaningful volunteer opportunities, caring for seniors, operating after-school programs, and developing and sustaining volunteer programs through partnerships with governmental and non-governmental organizations.

Without this major volunteer infrastructure for the Senior Service Network, the District's landscape would experience a huge void in bridging the gaps between the generations and meeting numerous unmet needs of our vulnerable seniors who often experience social isolation. I salute Ms. Gwendolyn Coleman, the program coordinator, and each RSVP volunteer for being a servant leader in your golden years of life.

I would also like to highlight the work of our newest cadre of volunteers, the DCOA Ambassadors. These individuals are tasked with referring seniors, persons with disabilities, and family caregivers to our office for services. They play an instrumental role in ensuring that no one goes without the much-needed services that they could receive from our agency. I salute our ambassadors for their advocacy and spirit of servanthip.

These are just a few examples of the wonderful work that our seniors are doing in the community. We have a host of other volunteers, such as the Armed Forces, PEPCO, and the Department of Insurance, Securities and Banking that volunteer their time at our annual events.

Despite the tremendous number of hours that our volunteers contribute to make community living more comfortable for our vulnerable seniors and persons with disabilities, it appears that we need more volunteers. Therefore, I encourage you to partner with us in serving our consumers. The opportunities are bountiful, and the possibilities are countless!

You can be a part of a volunteer program that you will find most rewarding as you help those who need us the most. If you are a working professional, a retiree or a student who is interested in volunteering for personal satisfaction or to meet school graduation requirements, I urge you to contact the D.C. Office on Aging at 202-724-5622 and express your interest in volunteering and the types of activities that interest you. This should be a win-win situation; therefore, I would like for you to contribute your talents in an area of passion.

Busy Volunteer Wins Awards

At 85 years old, Gertrude Lomax believes, "If you don't use them, you lose the use of your limbs. Since 1999, I walk 11 blocks each day to get to the bus. I enjoy walking."



Presidential Volunteer Service Awardee Gertrude Lomax is congratulated by Mayor Vincent C. Gray and Tonya Jackson Smallwood, CEO of Family Matters of Greater Washington.

A Retired and Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP) participant through Family Matters of Greater Washington, Lomax works in the RSVP office, where she makes phone calls and helps coordinate people for meetings and events. She also helps with set-up for meetings, including the Ms. Senior D.C.

Pageant and RSVP Advisory Council.

Her extended hours at Family Matters earned her the Presidential Volunteer Service Award for more than 1,600 hours of volunteer service and the William "Mack" Campbell Award. She contributed the most hours of any volunteer honored during the recognition event.

"Yes indeed, I was happy and excited to receive the awards," Lomax said. "I like the people here, and I like working with seniors. I love working with Ms. Coleman, and I have learned a lot from Ms. Coleman."

Lomax retired from the Government Printing Office in 1989 after 26 years of service. She worked as an attendance clerk and assisted with all three shifts. In addition to her volunteer work, the widowed mother of three works in her church, First Rising Mt. Zion, as a missionary, an usher and sings in three choirs. Lomax also has three grandchildren and one great grandchild.

Lomax gives the following advice to retirees: "Volunteer. Do something. Don't just sit down watching soap operas and eating doughnuts and stuff, because then you get fat. Walk around the block or something."

Don't know where to turn?

Do you need help taking care of a love one?

Is that loved one 60+?

Respite Aide

Are you a DC resident?



For 4 hours a day, up to 5 days per week, the UDC Respite Aide Program will provide a Respite Aide volunteer at no charge to spend quality time with your loved one.



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GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

VINCENT C. GRAY, MAYOR

Community Calendar

April events

**5th • 11:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.
11 a.m. to noon**

Learn about aging in place and safety in your home at a program at the Washington Seniors Wellness Center, 3001 Alabama Ave., SE. For more information, call 202-581-9355.

5th • 12:30 to 4 p.m.

Health insurance counseling sessions are offered by appointment at Iona Senior Services, 4125 Albe-marle St, NW., on the first Thursday of the month. Michael Knipmeyer, of the George Washington University Health Insurance Counseling Project, is available to answer questions about Medicare prescription benefits, long-term care insurance and paying medical bills for seniors. Counseling is free to D.C. residents who are 60 or older. To make an appointment, call 202-895-9448.

10th • 8:30 a.m.

Make your voice heard in the debate about Medicare and Social Security. Speak out at the event

“You’ve Earned a Say,” sponsored by AARP at the Congress Heights Senior Wellness Center, 3500 Martin Luther King, Jr. Ave. SE. Register for the event by calling AARP’s DC State Office at 202-434-7700.

10th • 11 a.m.

Learn about elder abuse at a seminar at Fort Lincoln 1 Senior Nutrition Center, 2855 Bladensburg Rd. NE. For more information, call Vivian Grayton at 202-529-8701.

11th • 11:30 a.m. to noon

Attend a talk about personal and sexual assault at the Washington Seniors Wellness Center, 3001 Alabama Ave., SE. For more information, call 202-581-9355.

19th • 10 a.m. to noon

Learn how to assist seniors and persons with disabilities age 18 and older access services. The next training to become a DCOA Ambassador will be held on April 19 by the District of Columbia Office on Aging. For more information, call 202-724-5622.

24th • 10 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.

Hear D.C. Councilwoman Muriel Bowser’s State of the Ward address for seniors at the Riggs-LaSalle

Recreation Center, 501 Riggs Rd. NE. Call Ebonne Price at 202-724-8052 for more information

May events

17th • 4 to 8 p.m.

Keen Seniors Program presents East River Swing, a Ward 7 prom for seniors. Enjoy dinner, dancing and more with music by DJ Ron V. Tickets are \$15 if purchased by May 8 and \$20 after that. The event will be held at St. Luke’s Center, 4923 E. Capitol St., SE. For more information, call Robin Gantt at 202-534-4880, ext. 110.

18th • 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

In honor of Older Americans Month, Barney Neighborhood House, in partnership with the Brookland Senior Center, is sponsoring a fashion/talent show and luncheon. Enter the essay contest by bringing along a typed essay (500-word maximum) that answers the question, “What does your senior center mean to you?” Three winners will be chosen and crowned during the event. To sign up, call James Thompson, activity coordinator, at 202-939-9031.

GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA Child and Family Services Agency



D.C. Grandparent Caregivers Program

Are you raising your Grandchild, Great-Grandchild, Great-Niece or Great-Nephew?

The Grandparent Caregivers Program is designed to help older District residents with low incomes who are raising children under age 18. District residents who qualify may get money every month to help care for children living with them.

Is this program for you?

You must meet ALL these conditions.

- Your grandchild, great-grandchild, great-niece, and/or great-nephew under age 18 lives with you.
- The child has lived with you for the past six months or more.
- You have been the child’s primary caretaker for the past six months.
- The child’s parent has not lived with you in the past six months. (This doesn’t count if a court has given you standby guardianship of the child, or if the parent is a minor enrolled in school or a minor with a medically verifiable disability which prevents them from caring for the child)
- You live in the District.
- The total of all money coming into your household is below 200 percent of the Federal poverty level (see box at right).
- You have applied for Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) for the child.
- All adults living in your home must submit the results for national and local criminal background checks and a Child Protection Registry check (to rule out child abuse).

Please call our offices at (202) 442-6009 for more information!

Total number of people in your home is:	Total yearly household income is less than:
2	\$29,420
3	\$37,060
4	\$44,700
5	\$52,340
6	\$59,980
7 or more	\$67,620

Headquarters: 400 6th Street, SW Washington, D.C. 20024-2753 202-442-6009

www.cfsa.dc.gov <http://dc.mandatedreporter.org> www.adoptdckids.org

Wellness Center Employee Wins Volunteer Award

A senior who is a participant with the Department of Labor-funded National Association for Hispanic Elderly program was awarded the Volunteer of the Year award at the Retired and Senior Volunteer Recognition Program.



Volunteer of the Year Award recipient David Washington is pictured with Office on Aging Executive Director John M. Thompson at the Retired and Senior Volunteer Luncheon.

"I was really surprised," said David Washington. "I was so pleased and I was honored to receive the award."

Washington, 75, is an employee at Model Cities Senior Wellness Center. His position is maintenance aide, and he assists with keeping the building clean, as well as setting up for events and activities at the center.

In addition to his regular duties, he helps wherever he is needed.

"I enjoy doing what I do, I worked for SOME [So Others May Eat] for two years with no pay, for free," he added. "Some people sit at home with nothing to do, and they die in a few

years. I am not going to do that, I come every day, and I know that certain things need to be done after I leave, so I stay," Washington said.

Born in Charlotte, N.C., Washington moved around a lot because his father was in the military. He went to school in New York, North Carolina and in D.C.

Washington began his career in the military and after his discharge, worked as a painter for 50 years. He is the father of two children, a son and a daughter, and has two grandchildren and two great grandchildren.

"Mr. Washington is your ideal volunteer," said Stacie Thweatt, director, Model Cities Senior Wellness Center. Once you tell him what is expected, he simply follows through with the task. You never have to remind him of what needs to be done."

His service to Model Cities outside of his regular hours is why Thweatt nominated him as an outstanding volunteer. Like most senior volunteers, he is dedicated and reliable.

"He is a gentleman. He will carry your bag and assist you through the front door to your seat. He answers the telephone with professionalism, greets new members with attention, and steps in wherever he is needed.

Model Cities is a senior wellness center in Ward 5 with more than 650 active seniors. Model Cities promotes wellness as an optimum state of health and wellbeing achieved through disease prevention and health promotion. Education, fitness and nutrition programs are designed to assist members to improve and maintain their health. Model Cities is one of several wellness centers in the Office on Aging Senior Service Network.

SPOTLIGHT ON AGING

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Sexual harassment is a form of sex discrimination which is prohibited by the Act. In addition, harassment based on any of the above protected categories is prohibited by the Act. Discrimination in violation of the Act will not be tolerated. Violators will be subjected to disciplinary action.

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

Register for the D.C. Senior Games

Registration for the D.C. Department of Parks and Recreation's "Fit 4 Life," the 29th Annual D.C. Senior Games, is open through April 27. The D.C. Senior Games is scheduled for May 7 to 11 at various locations throughout the District of Columbia.

The annual competition, hosted by the Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR) in partnership with the District of Columbia Office on Aging, brings together seniors from across the District to participate in athletic activities that promote healthy living for a longer, more robust life. Each year, the D.C. Senior Games features activities like swimming, basketball, bowling, tennis, track and field, horseshoe toss, archery and softball. More than 160 athletes competed in the 2011 D.C. Senior Games.

Athletes who participate in the D.C. Senior Games can qualify to compete in the National Senior Games, which are held every odd numbered year. In 2011, over 50 seniors represented the District of Columbia at the National Senior Games in Houston, Texas. Next year's D.C. Senior Games will be a

qualifying year for the 2013 National Senior Games, which are scheduled for July 21 – August 5, 2013 in Cleveland, Ohio.

The D.C. Senior Games opening ceremony will take place on Monday, May 7, 2012 at 10 a.m. at the Deanwood Recreation Center, located at 1350 49th St., NE.

There is a \$25 registration fee per athlete. The registration fee includes entrance fees and a T-shirt. Registration closes at 5 p.m. on Friday, April 27, 2012, though early registration is highly recommended.

You can register for the D.C. Senior Games at the DPR website, <http://dpr.dc.gov/DC/DPR>, submit an entry application in person at one of DPR's 21 senior centers, or call 202-664-7153 for a form you can mail in.

DPR also offers training programs for seniors to prepare for the D.C. Senior Olympics. Seniors can visit one of the 21 DPR senior centers to find out how to register for training programs. For additional information about the D.C. Senior Games, including how to volunteer, call 202-664-7153.

Ambassador Program Will Reach More in Need

The D.C. Office on Aging recently launched an Ambassador Program to make residents more aware of the services available to senior citizens and persons age 18 and older with disabilities. More than 50 persons enrolled in the program and were trained as D.C. Office on Aging Ambassadors. Ambassadors received a comprehensive training on the services available to residents that will assist them in referring persons to the agency for service.

"We are pleased that so many persons were interested in partnering with us to help the residents of the District with resources for the disabled aged 18 and older and senior citizens, their families and caregivers with services to assist them," said John M. Thompson, Ph.D., executive director, D.C. Office on Aging.

This is the first of many training sessions that will be held to train persons interested in becoming Ambassadors. This partnership will help the Office on Aging ensure that more residents in need of assistance know how the Office on Aging can help them.

"There are nearly 100,000 seniors who reside in the District of Columbia, and right now we are only reaching less than half of those persons. We would like to make sure that we provide services for more seniors annually," Thompson added.

The next training for the Ambassador Program will be held on April 19, from 10 a.m. to noon. If you are interested in becoming a member of the next Ambassador Program training, please contact the Office on Aging at 202-724-5622.



We are looking for Ms. Senior D.C. 2012. If you know a District woman who is age 60 or older, active in her community, elegant, poised and talented, please make sure she is entered as a contestant in the next Ms. Senior D.C. Pageant. Call 202-724-5626 for an application or go to our website at www.dcoa.dc.gov.