

Spotlight on Aging

VOLUME XXXI, ISSUE 12

A newsletter for D.C. Seniors

December 2019



DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE

By Laura Newland, Director
D.C. Department of Aging and
Community Living

Happy holidays! We're looking forward to welcoming all of you to the Mayor's 21st Annual Senior Holiday Celebration on December 19th at the D.C. Armory. If you haven't gotten your ticket yet, you can reserve one online at www.dc-seniorholiday.splashthat.com, visit a senior site, or give us a call at 202-724-5626. Our theme this year is also our agency's new tagline: Live boldly!

Last month, I saw a news article about Ms. Willie Murphy, an 82-year-old bodybuilder who fought off a home intruder so hard that she sent him to the hospital! When police officers arrived, they asked to pose for a photo with her. When I read this story, I was glad that Ms. Murphy was unharmed, and I was a little irritated with the journalist and the police for perpetuating the stereotype that seniors are frail and helpless.

Ms. Murphy found herself in a circumstance that no one should have to face, much less our seniors, but the intruder got more than he bargained for. Just like so many people in our society, he underestimated how bold, energetic and determined seniors are.

What's so extraordinary about Ms. Murphy isn't just that she beat off a home intruder — although that's impressive! It's that she didn't let anyone tell her that she's too old to lift weights or too frail to lift so much. Her age didn't get in the way of her doing what she wanted to do every day.

Now, not everyone is a competitive weightlifter like Ms. Murphy. But in my time getting to know

our District seniors, I've thought a lot about what makes someone extraordinary — about what makes an extraordinary life. What I've learned from you is that choosing kindness, love and compassion — for yourselves and others — makes for an extraordinary life.

Being extraordinary doesn't always make front-page news. Whether you choose to be a bodybuilder, dancer, volunteer, advocate, friend, mom, grandma, neighbor, or the many other choices you make in your life, living boldly means treating each day as an opportunity to love more, learn more and laugh more.

During my time as director, I've met some extraordinary seniors. People like Mr. John Bassett, who has volunteered at Oasis Senior Center for many years, serving lunch daily to men experiencing homelessness. I've spoken to residents at senior buildings who take time to knock on doors to remind their neighbors that lunch is being served downstairs. This is extraordinary.

There are also people like Ms. Trayci Campbell, who spends her free time visiting with homebound seniors, running errands and checking in on them through her volunteer role with the Mary's Center Senior Peer Support Program. Or Ms. Olivia O'Neal, who works to create a safe space for LGBTQ seniors to openly talk about their unique challenges in her volunteer role as a peer facilitator. Then there's also Ms. Olivia Chase, a grandparent who is serving as the primary caregiver for

LGBTQ Programs Offered Through DACL



No matter how you identify, LGBTQ programs funded by the Department of Aging and Community Living (DACL) are designed to create a space for connection for LGBTQ older adults and adults with disabilities.

Through specialized wellness programs, community events, and peer-led support groups, our programs can help you navigate complex challenges and continue to live boldly while connecting with a community of peers.

The DC Center

Social and educational opportunities including weekly coffee and

conversation groups, social lunches and outings.

Intergenerational OUT (IOUT)

Support services and socializing to foster intergenerational mentoring, learning and social engagement.

Out & About

Wellness programs, cultural events and conversations around a meal.

Silver Circles

Peer-led support groups held twice a month.

For more information on how you can participate, call DACL at 202-724-5626.

her 11-year-old grandson. This, too, is extraordinary.

In D.C., we have the good fortune of having a vibrant senior community. We see it every day in you. You're extraordinary, and you exemplify what it means to live boldly at every age.

Our holiday celebration is for you. We're celebrating all the ex-

traordinary things that you accomplish every single day. You may not make front-page news, but we see you, we appreciate you, and we're grateful for the opportunity to celebrate you!

Thank you for showing us how to live boldly! I can't wait to see you on December 19th.

Aging is Living!

DC Census 2020: You Matter. Get Counted.



From left to right: Ms. Shelley Mack, Director Newland, Ms. Carolyn Williams, and Ms. Emily Best.

Department of Aging and Community Living Director Laura Newland joined AARP DC for a Senior Town Hall on the 2020 Census at the Congress Heights Senior Wellness Center. Melissa Bird, Executive Director of DC Census 2020, also joined the conversation, which also livestreamed over Facebook.

Seniors from Congress Heights participated in the discussion and were joined by other residents across the city, participating by phone.

Every 10 years, a census count is conducted to count every resident in the country. This information is used to determine how federal funds are distributed to each state, including the District of Columbia, and will also impact local political representation.

Executive Director Bird explained that the Census will begin around mid-March, and each household will receive a card with information on how to fill out the census online. An option will also be available to take the census by phone or have a paper form mailed to the resident.

It will take about 15 to 20 minutes to complete, and will ask basic information such as name, age, sex, race and ethnicity, relationship of household members, and homeownership status.

She also emphasized that undocumented residents should not fear — information provided is only used for the census count and will not be shared with any law enforcement agency. Everyone is encouraged to respond as soon as possible and not wait for the follow-up knock on the door for households that do not respond.

Director Newland explained why Census 2020 is so important to D.C. residents. The District receives billions of dollars in federal funding, which goes towards programs that include Medicaid, SNAP (formerly known as food stamps), Housing Vouchers and education grants, based on census data. A complete count means the District receives the funding and services it is entitled to for residents in all eight wards.

Each resident that is not counted means the District will lose about \$4,000 annually. Census data is also how the District plans and creates policy and makes budgeting decisions.

For seniors who want to help make sure that everyone is counted, the 2020 Census is hiring! Apply online today at <https://2020census.gov/en/jobs.html>.

More information about the 2020 Census and DC can be found at: <https://dccensus2020.dc.gov/>.

Get Involved

Monday, December 2

11 a.m. – 2 p.m.

The (DACL) Department of Aging and Community Living displays information on our many resources and services
MedStar Washington Hospital Center
Physician's Office Building
106 Irving Street, NW – Ward 5

Tuesday, December 3

Noon – 3 p.m.

DC Senior Resource Group Meeting with light lunch
Washington Hebrew Congregation
3935 Macomb Street, NW – Ward 3

Tuesday, December 3

6 – 7 p.m.

The DACL will provide a presentation on our many resources and services
Park 7 Apartments
4020 Minnesota Avenue, NE – Ward 7

Wednesday, December 4

10 a.m. – 2 p.m.

The Senior Zone & Department of Parks and Recreation
2019 Senior Spa Day
Fort Stanton Recreation Center
1812 Erie Street, SE – Ward 8
Contact: Shawn Perry, 202-671-1040

Saturday, December 7

10 - 11 a.m.

The DACL will provide a presentation on our many resources and services
Exercise with William Yates & the YMCA
Fit & Well Senior Program
Nineteenth Street Baptist Church
4606 16th Street, NW – Ward 4

Friday, December 13

10 a.m. – 2 p.m.

Vida Senior Services Holiday Party
Nineteenth Street Baptist Church
4606 16th Street, NW – Ward 4
Contact: 202-483-5800, Ext. 106

Thursday, December 19

10 a.m. – 2 p.m.

Mayor's 21st Annual Senior Holiday Celebration
D.C. Armory
2001 East Capitol Street, SE – Ward 6
Event is free to all District seniors age 60 and older
Tickets are required for entry.
Call 202-535-1372 to reserve your ticket today.

DECEMBER 2019

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Mayor Muriel Bowser and the Department of Aging and Community Living invite you to

The Mayor's 21st Annual Senior Holiday Celebration!

WHEN:
December 19, 2019, 10am-2pm

WHERE:
The DC Armory, 2001 E Capitol Street SE
Washington, DC 20003

Open to DC residents, age 60 and older. Registration required.
Visit dcseiorholiday.splashthat.com or contact 202-535-1372 or your local Senior Site to register.

DACL LIVE BOLDLY

GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
MURIEL BOWSER, MAYOR

Spotlight on Aging

Spotlight On Aging is published by the Information Office of the D.C. Department of Aging and Community Living for D.C. senior residents. Advertising contained in the Beacon is not endorsed by the D.C. Department of Aging and Community Living or by the publisher.

500 K St. N.E., Washington, D.C. 20002
(202) 724-5626 | www.dcoa.dc.gov

Director
Laura Newland
Editor
Darlene Nowlin
Photographer
Richard Williams