

Governor Paterson's Priority Recognized

Civic Engagement Issues Advance

New York has been selected to participate in a National Governors Association (NGA) Center for Best Practices "Policy Academy on Civic Engagement of Older Adults." Funded by the Atlantic Philanthropies, the Academy's focus is on helping states improve the health and lives of older adults and strengthening communities statewide by developing strategies for training, retraining and retaining older adults who are in the workforce or retired and want to engage in a second career. The grant will also work to develop strategies to utilize more effectively the skills, knowledge and talents of older adults by enhancing meaningful volunteer activities that can help address many community problems.

Governor Paterson stated that, "I am very excited that New York was selected to receive this grant because it supports my priority on enhancing volunteerism and civic engagement in our great state. Having New York State selected to participate in this effort will advance our efforts to improve the lives and well-being of persons of all ages, will result in better and more efficient government through the collaboration of several state and community agencies and organizations and will

impact positively the number of retirees who choose to remain in the state in their retirement years rather than seek to retire elsewhere. The National Governors Association has a long track record in working with other states and these experiences will be shared with New York as we seek to implement this important initiative."

New York State's efforts to garner selection by the NGA were led by Michael Burgess, Director of the New York State Office for the Aging. Joining Burgess on New York's team of experts are: Lola Brabham Harder, Director of Human Services, Office of Governor Paterson; Greg Olsen, Deputy Director, NYS Office for the Aging; Patricia Hite, Executive Deputy Commissioner, New York State Department of Civil Service; Mario Musolino, Executive Deputy Commissioner, New York State Department of Labor; Jennifer McCormick, Vice President, Policy & Research, Empire State Development Corporation; Mark J. Walter, Executive Director, New York State Office of National and Community Service; Mark Kissinger, Deputy Commissioner, New York State Department of Health; Ann G. DiSarro, Consultant,

(See 'NGA' page 3)

New Laws Aimed at Helping Older New Yorkers

Governor Paterson has called for a Special Legislative Session on August 19 to address economic issues and has indicated that he will provide assistance to help older and poor New Yorkers meet the devastating rise in heating costs. Once the regular Legislative Session ended with the usual flurry of legislative action, hundreds of bills that passed both the Assembly and the Senate await Executive Action. At press time, a number of bills have become law that positively impact older New Yorkers, health care consumers and family caregivers. For updates on legislative

action, including the outcome of the Special Session, refer to our new web site at <http://www.aging.ny.gov>.

Consumer Rights

Chapter 279 - Strengthens New York State's identity theft laws and helps protect the State's residents from the fraudulent use of their personal information. Allows New York State residents who become victims of identity theft to seek assistance from the Consumer Protection Board's Identity Theft Prevention and Mitigation Program.

(See 'LAWS' page 8)



The olympic-sized pool at the Senior Games in Cortland.

Senior Games features thousands of athletes

95-year-old swimmer competes

The 26th New York State Senior Games were held in Cortland recently and thousands of seniors from across the state participated in a wide range of athletic competitions. But the Games aren't only about competition. There's much camaraderie and a few social events as well that make the few days in up-state New York a regular event for many participants. Thousands of athletes participated in over 20 competitive sports and recreational events. There are also instructional clinics, informational exhibits, and educational seminars. Each evening featured an informal social event planned specifically for Senior Games' participants. Anyone over the age of 50 qualifies for the Senior games, however the median age is about 65 years of age. This year's oldest participant was Irene Fiero of Middletown, New York who is 95 years old and competed in swimming. This year is special in that the top three ranked athletes in each age group and event can compete in the national games which will be held in the San Francisco Bay Area in 2009.

During this year's opening ceremony, Carol Deloff,

the Director of the Cortland County Office for the Aging, received a medal of recognition award for her tireless efforts to make the event a success. Carol and her staff work throughout the year to bring awareness to the games and to help the New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation, the lead state agency, make the event a success.

NYSOFA encourages all older New Yorkers who have their physicians' consent to increase their physical activity and consider now training for next year's Games. "These active and engaged older New Yorkers demonstrate that a healthy and involved lifestyle opens countless opportunities to live an enriched life in later years," said Director Michael Burgess. The results of this year's events can be found on the web site: [www. empirestategames.org](http://www.empirestategames.org).

November 12-13, 2008

Saratoga, NY

NYSOFA Conference:

*Empowering Communities for Successful Aging...
Housing, Neighborhood Supports and Services*

Call the Help Line at **1-800-342-9871** for more information

Director's Corner

Director Michael J. Burgess



As you have seen on the front page of this newsletter, the New York State Office for the Aging is leading a new state effort in the coming year to develop a strategic plan for tapping older volunteers and workers as resources. The state was one of six selected by the National Governors Association (NGA) to participate in a "policy academy" in which the NGA staff will assist us to develop policies and programs to better enlist the involvement of older workers and volunteers in addressing social needs.



Our office is seeking to retain and reintroduce older workers in the public and private work force. We are also promoting volunteer ideas such as a healthcare navigator program, which would pair volunteers with

persons being released from the hospital to ensure continuity of care and social connection. ReServe, a nonprofit organization in New York City, is successfully operating such a program now. SUNY Albany operates a health navigator program in a low income neighborhood in Albany. A key goal is to reduce repeat hospitalizations for older residents. Meanwhile, Mercy Care for the Adirondacks is using volunteers from faith based organizations to reach out to isolated rural seniors. Sometimes, government and private institutions underestimate the value of "social capital" to help address problems in health care or other public needs. Our office is paying particular attention to the role older persons are playing and how they can contribute in the future as we move forward with our planning. We recognize that a centralized approach to health care is not meeting all our needs, particularly when it comes to the role of caregivers and home and community based care. By harnessing the assets of our residents, we think that we can unleash other ways to address social problems. I am looking forward to this project with the National Governors Association and I will keep you posted on our work.

Michael J. Burgess

NGA *(continued from page 1)*

Aging Programs and Management; Lois Aronstein, New York State Director, AARP; Susan Stamler, Director of Policy & Advocacy, United Neighborhood Houses; Dennis Tracey, Executive Director, New York State Alliance for Retired Americans; Katherine Briar-Lawson, Dean, State University at Albany School of Social Welfare; Justin Cunningham, Executive Director, NY Statewide Senior Action Council; Margaret M. Moree, Director of Federal Affairs, The Business Council of New York State, Inc.

NYSOFA Director Burgess said, "Because of the collaborative relationships we have in place here in New York State, the Office for the Aging was able to pull together a team of committed agencies and experts that will be able to put into practice the ideas and strategies identified through the process that will be lead by the NGA."

Governor Paterson will receive periodic reports and recommendations throughout the next year on strategies and actions that will guide the implementation of civic engagement, volunteerism and workforce initiatives for older New Yorkers. New York's team will explore how

New York can link current efforts to assist informal caregivers with civic engagement efforts in order to support their efforts in communities across the state. The team will work to bolster the state's efforts to improve quality in nursing homes, adult homes and assisted living facilities by expanding monitoring through that State's volunteer Long Term Care Ombudsman program. The team will explore intergenerational opportunities that can utilize the skills of older adults to improve academic performance of school children through mentoring and other assistance. Another major focus of the year-long effort will be identifying a plan to coordinate and increase the state and private sector's efforts to increase employment and volunteer opportunities for older New Yorkers, in coordination with the new Mature Worker Task Force.

Additionally, the work product will include identifying opportunities for older New Yorkers to volunteer in communities throughout the state. If you know of a volunteer program in your community please share its contact information with us by email to nysofa@ofa.state.ny.us or call 1-800-342-9871.

FRESH IDEA: Mobile market brings produce to seniors

By **Maria Mahar**

*Coordinator of Nutrition Services
Onondaga County Dept. of Aging and Youth*

The Farm Fresh Mobile Market (FFMM) is a public/private partnership of residents, funders, educators, and farmers to help address the problem of food disparity in the South and Westside neighborhoods of Syracuse, where access to fresh fruits and vegetables is limited. The partners include the Rosamond Gifford Charitable Foundation, the Community Health Foundation of Western & Central New York, the Allyn Foundation, the Central New York Regional Market Authority, the Onondaga County Department of Aging and Youth and SUNY Morrisville College.

The Mobile Market was inspired by a project launched in Oakland, California by The People's Grocery.

The philosophy behind the Mobile Market project is to bring locally grown produce, fresh from local farmers, to the targeted community, and to provide educational information about healthy living to communities lacking the resources to live healthy lives. The FFMM is an initiative to combat food disparity issues by creating access to healthy food in communities that do not have grocery stores in close proximity. These neighborhoods are typically filled with fast food chains or corner stores that do not have fresh fruits and vegetables available. This food disparity contributes to greater problems such as health issues and increased medical costs that are associated with childhood and adult obesity, diabetes, heart disease and cancer.

On a typical Mobile Market day, Frank Recore, a CNY Regional Market Authority employee, arrives at the market at 5:00 am to purchase locally grown produce from Central New York farmers. Because of Frank's longstanding relationship with local farmers he knows what produce is available locally, and which farmers will be able to supply him with the produce that the



Pictured above, Nancy Schmid, Director of Nutrition Services (right) and Maria Mahar, Coordinator of Nutrition Services for Onondaga County Department of Aging & Youth. The pair are credited with implementing the Farm Fresh Mobile Market program in the county.

residents from various communities are requesting. The other employees that staff the Mobile Market truck reside in the community where the Mobile Market frequents and help identify which sites the Mobile Market should visit. Benjamin Vitale, the Executive Director of the CNY Regional Market Authority, teaches the Mobile Market employees how to purchase quality produce, negotiate prices with farmers, and how to display the produce so that it is appealing to the customers, thus sharing valuable job and entrepreneurial skills.

The Mobile Market is regularly scheduled to visit senior housing sites, senior centers, houses of wor-



ship, Head Start, and WIC centers. The Food Stamp Program Electronic Benefits Transfer (EBT) card, and the Senior and WIC Farmers' Market Nutrition Program coupons are accepted at the Mobile Market. The Onondaga County Department of Aging and Youth Nutrition Services Coordinator, Maria Mahar, RD, conducts outreach at various sites by helping seniors enroll in the Food Stamp Program and providing nutrition information in the form of recipes, produce fact sheets, and educational classes.

Customers often ask if the produce is locally grown and which farms the produce comes from. Seniors are especially concerned about wanting to support their local farmers. They often comment that the produce that they purchase from the Mobile Market is fresher and less expensive than the produce found in the local grocery stores. Seniors with limited mobility that reside in senior housing remark that they are thrilled to have easy access to fresh produce, without the worry of transportation. An additional benefit is the socialization that the Mobile Market provides for seniors, and many share recipes and preparation tips and ideas.

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

Contact the Onondaga Department of Aging and Youth at (315) 435-2362.



Collaboration, Community Key Themes at “Aging Concerns Unite Us” Conference

34 workshops focus on new ideas and cutting-edge technology

By Laura Cameron

Executive Director

NYS Association of Area Agencies on Aging

The 12th annual “Aging Concerns Unite Us” (ACUU) conference brought together over 400 professionals in the field of aging from all corners of the State at the Desmond Hotel in Albany, NY, on June 17th to 18th. The theme “Create Communities to Age in Place” was the touchstone for the general sessions and workshops. ACUU opened with a general session *Celebrating an Aging Society: Enhancing Community Options*. Robert Friedland, Ph.D., Director of the Center on an Aging Society at Georgetown University, underscored the challenges and opportunities, then identified how communities can prosper from the changing demographics. Sandy Markwood, CEO, National Association of Area Agencies on Aging, shared highlights of the recently launched “Project 2020: Fulfilling the Promise of the Older Americans Act,” a three-pronged program encompassing person-centered access to information, evidence-based disease prevention and health promotion activities, and enhanced nursing home diversion services.

ACUU offered 34 workshops on cutting-edge topics, including intensive tracks centered on Geriatric Mental Health, Community Empowerment, Health & Wellness, Long Term Care Continuum, and Emerging Aging Issues. ACUU also offered a pre-conference half-day session on Implementing Evidence-Based Health Programs, sponsored by the University at Albany’s Center for Excellence in Aging Services and the New York State Office for the Aging. Breakfast roundtables on Wednesday morning featured ten topics that sparked conversation and exchange of information among participants.

Aging Forums were a new concept introduced this year, designed as interactive sessions to debate challenges and opportunities on current issues facing the

Save the date:

The 13th Annual ACUU Conference will be held on June 2-3, 2009

Aging Network. Forums focused on The Modernization of the Expanded In-Home Services for the Elderly Program (EISEP) and Re-inventing Senior Centers. Attendees reported that the forums were an excellent alternative to lecture-style workshops, and overwhelmingly asked to continue the forums next year. The audience was mesmerized by the dedication and heart-warming stories shared by the panelists during the Wednesday morning general session, *Real People, Real Solutions: Innovation in Operation in Our Communities*. These individuals were featured on the national public television series “It’s an Age Thing.... Our Communities,” a partnership between WMHT and the Albany Guardian Society, which builds on their 2003 successful national public television series. Attendees were inspired and returned to their communities with a renewed sense of mission. Joining us to share how they made a positive impact in our communities:

Amy Klein - Capital District Community Gardens and the Veggie Mobile

Dawn Lamphere – Margaret Reaney Memorial Library in St. Johnsville, NY as a community focal point

Mary Santacroce - adult day services program in the Adirondacks, and

Claire Murphy - restaurant dining program in Washington County

Embedded throughout the conference were opportunities to participate in health and wellness activities, including a lively concert by legendary blues musician Ernie Williams, a morning walk organized by Marcus Harazin, Tai Chi class led by Gail Koser, and a chance to challenge your skills and improve cognitive vitality with Brain Games on the increasingly popular Wii.

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

Visit www.nysaaaa.org/acuu

ACUU Conference Venue for Annual NY Connects Award

The “Excellence in Leadership” award is presented annually by Michael J. Burgess, Director of the New York State Office for the Aging and Stephen Acquario, Executive Director of the New York State Association of Counties, to an elected official responsible for supporting the implementation of **NY Connects**. The award is jointly sponsored by the Office for the Aging and the New York State Association of Counties because the program is county-based. Without the support and coordination by county leaders, programs and services for the elderly and disabled would continue to be difficult to navigate and access. County offices for the aging and social services across the state are working together to establish **NY Connects** programs.

Abers honored

The award was presented to Crystal J. Abers, Chairperson of the Cattaraugus County Legislature. In presenting the award, Director Burgess noted that because of the initiative and leadership of Legislator Abers, Cattaraugus County is well on its way to having a premier program in place to serve the elderly and disabled residents within the county.

“Given the special difficulties of providing help and services in rural areas, we need to focus more on how the rural areas of the state get things done,” said Director Burgess.

As County Chairwoman, Ms. Abers has led the county legislature through various resolutions that have had full support and allowed the lead agencies to establish an effective and cost efficient local **NY Connects** office.

Under her leadership, the county legislature has strongly supported co-locating staff from three agencies in a newly established office location that provides unbiased information on service options. The arrangement works best for those needing help because there is now one program to contact in the county, instead of four or five.



Michael J. Burgess (right), Director of the New York State Office for the Aging and Stephen Acquario, Executive Director of the New York State Association of Counties present Crystal J. Abers, Chairperson of the Cattaraugus County Legislature with the “NY Connects Excellence in Leadership Award” at the 12th Annual “Aging Concerns Us Conference” in Albany.



The ACUU conference provided ample opportunities for networking and many connections were made. Pictured, staff from the Westchester County Dept. of Senior Programs & Services, Collette Phipps (left) and Dozene Guishard (right) met Karen Taylor, Director of Advocacy & Training for SAGE -Services & Advocacy for GLBT Elders to collaborate on programming for upcoming conferences. The Westchester AAA is spearheading plans for the NY Southern Area Aging Network September 18 conference in NYC “Sizing up the Workforce for the Elderboom.” SAGE is coordinating efforts for the October 12-14 National Conference in Brooklyn, “It’s About Time: LGBT Aging in a Changing World.”

Visit NYSOFA’s new web site at www.aging.ny.gov

LAW *(continued from page 1)*

Caregiver Issues

Chapter 210 - Provides for a simplified advance health care directive form for persons receiving mental retardation and developmental disabilities services.

Chapter 389 - Includes children who currently do not qualify for services solely because home care would be more expensive than institutional care in the Care at Home I/II waiver program. The program serves children under 18 with physical disabilities, providing case management, home/vehicle adaptations, and respite.

Patient Rights

Chapter 477 - strengthens the physician discipline process, to make more timely public information on disciplinary actions and to enhance infection control training and practices.

To further protect patients, agreement has been reached to prohibit hospital and nursing home employers from mandating that nurses work beyond their scheduled shifts.

Chapter 197 – Promotes patients’ ability to have their wishes honored in settings outside of hospitals and nursing homes, through expanded use of proven alternatives to the “do-not-resuscitate” form and orders not to intubate.

Chapter 203 – Expands the scope of the interagency geriatric mental health planning council to include chemical

dependence and veterans issues.

Chapter 225 – Improves access to health care by allowing for volunteer health clinics throughout the state.

Elder Abuse

Chapter 68 - Increases from a misdemeanor to a class D violent felony the crime of assault on a person sixty-five years of age or older when the perpetrator is more than ten years younger than the victim.

Chapter 184 - Directs the State Police, Office for the Aging and Office for Children and Family Services to provide educational and other material related to elder abuse, to enhancing State Police procedures when abuse is encountered by officers.

Chapter 291 – Crimes against elderly can be prosecuted as a class E felony rather than a class A misdemeanor if a fraudulent scheme victimizes more than one vulnerable person who is 60 years of age or older.

Calendar OF EVENTS

Su	M	T	W	Th	F	Sa

September 4

Albany - Planning and Zoning Initiative

September 18

New York City - NY Southern Area Aging Network Conference; *Sizing up the Workforce for the Elderboom*

September 25

Albany - NYS Family Caregivers Council meeting

September 26

Albany - Geriatric Mental Health Planning Council

October 8

Albany - Most Integrated Setting Coordinating Council

October 29

Long Term Care Advisory Council (Upstate)

October 30

Long Term Care Advisory Council (Downstate)

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Our sole purpose is to improve communications between all components of the aging network within New York State and to work toward improving the lives of older persons everywhere. Feel free to copy and distribute this publication.

David A. Paterson
Governor

Michael J. Burgess
Director

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