



Department of
Aging and Adult Services

Seniors' Agenda Workshop Executive Summary 5/23/2013

On May 23, 2013, seventy-five participants gathered at the Department of Aging and Adult Services (DAAS) to: 1) share 6-month accomplishments and 2) begin mapping out steps for the remainder of 2013. What follows is a summary of the event's highlights.

The event opened with a slideshow from Marie Slater of Peninsula Family Services entitled "I Believe Older Adults..." which launched the group into identifying things they believe about seniors. Their beliefs were posted on a sticky wall for all to see.

Meeting in their respective teams, Seniors' Agenda participants identified accomplishments of each team. The teams included:

1. Transportation
2. Information and Assistance
3. Education and Outreach
4. Volunteerism and Civic Engagement
5. Policy and Funding
6. Leadership

Their accomplishments more than filled an entire sticky wall. Here are the highlights.

Backed by OUTREACH, VTA, and PACT, **Transportation** led the teams in the number of accomplishments. These included increased senior access to lower taxi fares and wheelchair accessible vehicles; expanded use of tricycles and gas cards as alternative means of transportation in underserved areas; commitment of public officials to support the extension of paratransit routes beyond the $\frac{3}{4}$ mile limit; expanded travel training programs provided by Valley Transportation Authority; Eastside Neighborhood Center pedestrian safety improvements; the development of several publications including OUTREACH's Senior Mobility Guide available in English, Spanish, Vietnamese and Chinese and Valley Transportation Authority mobility guide.

Under the auspices of AGents for Change, the **Information and Assistance Team** researched and developed, "A Good Place to Start" a basic information and assistance brochure. Council on Aging Silicon Valley, 211 and OUTREACH are improving communication with regard to their respective community resources databases. The team's emphasis on the need for more case managers was factored into the county RFP process, resulting in increased funding for case managers.

Education and Outreach studied the demographic data of the County's senior population. The Public Health Department budgeted the hiring of an older adults health education specialist and launched falls prevention programs in Santa Clara County.

Volunteerism and Civic Engagement made progress in the development of several volunteer programs. The Health Trust received funding for its Senior Peer Advocate program from the City of San Jose, with which they hired a part time program coordinator, trained 20 new Senior Peer Advocates and expanded to five new senior centers. The Health Trust also secured funding to sustain AGents for Change through 2013. The Community Volunteer Network (CVN) hired a new program coordinator. Senior employment through Title V placed 86 older adults in the San Jose area, several of whom are serving at senior centers. Drucker Center for Innovation is piloting the Linkages Time Bank program in Mountain View.

Policy and Funding had the highest number of participants on the day of the event. Advocacy efforts of their members helped to restore the 25% Social Service Agency funding cuts of \$277,000 to the community grants program. Their emphasis on priority funding for safety net programs was utilized by the county in its RFP process. One of its members, Catholic Charities, obtained 3 grants in order to provide subsidized for in home care.

The leadership accomplishments were reported by Lee Pullen, Director of Aging and Adult Services. He reported that DAAS has received approval to assemble a Seniors Policy Council to champion the needs of seniors and implement recommendations from the Seniors' Agenda work teams. The County's FY13/14 budget includes \$50,000 earmarked for a marketing campaign and additional funding to continue the newly hired program coordinator's position to guide Seniors' Agenda implementation.

After recognizing their accomplishments, the participants began considering next steps. These will be further refined at their individual team meetings. However, here are a few of the identified directions and upcoming events:

1. **Transportation** will host a Senior Transportation Summit with Jim Beall on September 19, 2013; conduct a second survey of senior transportation providers; and advocate for a portion of Measure A funds to be used for senior transportation.
2. **Information and Assistance** will translate and broadcast its new I&A Brochure electronically and distribute hardcopies.
3. **Education and Outreach** will recruit partners to target isolated seniors and use the media to increase public awareness.
4. **Volunteer and Civic Engagement** members will assist with finding an organization to apply for RSVP funding to serve additional areas of Santa Clara County; The Health Trust will conduct another SPA training in September; Love Inc will launch its Seniors On Call (SOS) program in July, 2013; and Title V will expand into Campbell locations.

5. **Policy and Funding** will continue its research for expanding in-home care to serve the non Medi-Cal seniors, advocate to the Seniors Policy Council for coordinated funding.
6. **Leadership Team** will assemble the first meeting of the Senior Policy Council in September and will provide ongoing staffing to guide the Seniors' Agenda process.
7. Finally, ten people knowledgeable about senior housing formed a new **Senior Housing Work Team** that will launch a white paper on affordable housing being developed by DAAS and will support the development of an effective Housing work team.

These are a few of the highlights from the workshop. Each team will enhance its work plan at their subsequent team meeting. The next update meeting will be on January 29, 2014.

The collaborative spirit of the sixty-three organizations present exemplified the theme of the workshop: *"Alone we can do so little; together we can do so much."* - Helen Keller