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HHS Awards \$100 Million in Recovery Act Funding to Provide Approximately 14 Million Meals Through Senior Nutrition Programs \$3 Million for Native American Elders Released April 1.

On March 18 at an event for local officials from across the nation held at the White House, Vice President Joe Biden announced that the Department of Health and Human Services would be awarding \$100 million in Recovery Act funding to provide meals to tens of thousands of low-income older Americans in need. The funding is expected to provide nearly 14 million meals nationwide.

"Across the country, older Americans depend on senior centers and home delivery programs for regular, healthy meals. Today, more senior citizens are in need, but the programs they depend on are on the brink of reducing their services or closing down," said Vice President Biden. The Administration on Aging was present to witness the Vice President's announcement which was warmly welcomed by the attendees at the White House event.

The Recovery Act provides \$65 million for congregate nutrition services provided at senior centers and other community sites, \$32 million for home delivered nutrition services delivered to frail elders at home and \$3 million for Native American nutrition programs. The funding has been awarded to 56 states and territories and 246 tribes and Native Hawaiian organizations.

For more information about senior nutrition programs and to see a state-by-state breakdown of funding for senior nutrition programs, visit <http://www.hhs.gov/recovery/programs/aoa/arra.html/>.

To track the progress of HHS activities funded through ARRA, visit <http://www.hhs.gov/recovery/>.

To track all federal funds provided through the ARRA, visit <http://www.recovery.gov/>.

Share Your Recovery Act Nutrition Stories!

The White House wants to hear how the Recovery Act funds for nutrition programs for seniors are helping you, your loved ones, or those you serve. Please feel free to share your experiences by sending them to us at AoA (email to Moya.Thompson@aoa.hhs.gov), and we will pass them along or you can go to the following Recovery Act site: <http://www.recovery.gov/?q=content/share-your-experience>

U.S. Labor Department's Senior Community Service Employment Program Grantees to Receive More Than \$118 Million Under Recovery Act

The U.S. Department of Labor has issued policy guidance to grantees of the Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP) for the implementation of an additional \$118,800,000 under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (Recovery Act). This investment is designed to increase services and training for unemployed, low-income seniors, and to invigorate and advance prosperity in the communities where they live. For more details, click on

<http://www.dol.gov/opa/media/press/eta/ETA20090293.htm>.

AoA News

National Volunteer Week – AoA Encourages Americans to Volunteer & Share Volunteer Stories

The U.S. Administration on Aging joins our nation in celebrating National Volunteer Week, April 19-25, 2009. This year's theme, "Celebrating People in Action," is an opportunity to honor the ordinary people who accomplish extraordinary things by dedicating themselves to taking action and solving problems in their communities. Each day, across our great country, selfless people of all ages are performing countless acts of kindness on behalf of others -- lifting them up with simple gestures of friendship that exemplify the American spirit. In 2008, 61.8 million volunteers performed approximately 8.1 billion hours of service.

This is an exciting time to be a volunteer, as President Obama has issued a renewed call for service to all Americans. This call comes at a particularly challenging time for our nation, when more and more people are in urgent need of help. He has asked all Americans to reach into their hearts and minds to determine what we can do to help our neighbors. It is time for more of us to answer this call. Read more about what you can do to help others and share your story of volunteerism!

http://www.aoa.gov/AoARoot/AoA_Programs/Special_Projects/Civic_Engagemnt/National_Volunteer_2009.aspx

Staying Connected with the Title VI Native American Community

**“Growing the Roots Deeper in the Title VI Community: How the Administration on Aging Communicates with American Indian Grantees”
By Dr. Yvonne Jackson, Director, AoA Office for American Indian, Alaskan Native and Native Hawaiian Programs**

This year AoA's Office for American Indian, Alaska Native and Native Hawaiian Programs (OAIANNHP) implemented an exciting new communication strategy designed to reduce director turnover and keep grantees informed of training events. Assisted by their contractor, Kauffman and Associates, Inc., an 8(a)-designated business, AoA has forged new relationships with grantees.

Yvonne Jackson, Director for the OAIANNHP, recently said to a group of grantees, "The Title VI community needs to have its own support group." To achieve this, directors are invited to participate monthly in telephone and web-based chat sessions. Topics in the past have included "How to Deal with Difficult Elders," "Coping with Rising Food and Fuel Costs," and "Preparing for Winter." These chats offer an ideal forum for directors from all corners of the country to share ideas and resources among themselves.

Another method of connecting directors to one another is the newly redesigned website for Title VI grantees, <http://www.olderindians.org>, or "Older Indians." Older Indians provides directors with constantly updated training information and funding announcements. Additionally, the site will soon feature a message board where grantees can network and receive support from each other just by logging on. And for new directors of Title VI programs or experienced directors looking to develop new skills, Older Indians is adding interactive tutorials on topics such as how to manage your grant and make the most of your program. Through the tutorials, directors will be able to reap all the benefits of training without having to use limited program resources to travel or rearrange their busy schedules.

Despite all the new technologies that allow grantees to train on their own time, OAIANNHP is still providing plenty of in-person training opportunities throughout the year and across the country. The 2009 National Title VI Forum will be held in April in Rockville, MD. Smaller "cluster" trainings are also scheduled for June and September. To learn more about any of the training events or the Title VI community, log onto <http://www.olderindians.org>.

AoA and CMS Participate in a Medicare Fraud Press Event in San Francisco

Self-Help for the Elderly, a non-profit organization serving 25,000 seniors each year in San Francisco, San Mateo, Santa Clara and Alameda counties hosted a press conference on Medicare Fraud and Scams on Friday, March 27, 2009.

Originally created as a "War On Poverty" program, Self-Help for the Elderly began serving seniors in San Francisco's Chinatown community in 1966. Today, Self-Help for the Elderly is a multi-service organization providing programs along a wellness continuum ranging from employment/training and social activities for those who are more independent to in-home assistance and residential board and care to those who are more frail.

At the press event, staff from AoA joined HHS' Inspector General's office, the Centers for Medicare & Medicare Services (CMS) and the California Health Advocates in presenting informational materials utilized by AoA's SMP program in Cantonese to Asian press. The SMP Program (formerly known as the Senior Medicare Patrol) recruits and trains retired professionals, such as doctors, nurses, teachers, lawyers, accountants, and others, to work with their peers in senior centers and other places where older persons gather to identify and combat fraud in Medicare and Medicaid.. Since 1997, the national SMP program has recovered \$4.5 million in Medicare funds, and reported over \$3.1 million in savings to beneficiaries. The California Health Advocates is an SMP that operates in California.

Materials presented at the March 27 press event focused on helping seniors to recognize identify theft and how to avoid or prevent it. Recent examples of frauds that have occurred were shared and tips on preventing and reporting scams were discussed. Media attendees included representatives from Sing Tao Daily Newspaper, World Journal, the Epoch Times and other Chinese print, TV and radio stations in the Bay area including KTSF Channel 26, KMTP Channel 32 and New Tang Dynasty TV.

For more information about AoA's SMP program, visit <http://www.smpresource.org//eSeries/AM/Template.cfm?Section=Home1>

For more information about Self Help for the Elderly, visit: <http://www.selfhelpelderly.org/index.php>

HHS News

New National Online Resource Provides Practical Advice and Hope for People Dealing with Emotional Health Issues Related to Financial Stress

A first-of-its-kind, online guide now provides crucial information and resource referrals for people dealing with emotional or other health problems associated with economic hard times. The "Getting Through Tough Economic Times" guide <http://www.samhsa.gov/economy/> provides practical advice on identifying health concerns, developing coping skills and finding help.

Developed by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) in collaboration with other government agencies and the Suicide Prevention Resource Center, which is administered by SAMHSA's grantee the Education Development Center, Inc., the guide outlines the risks that unemployment and other forms of economic distress (foreclosure, severe financial losses, etc.) can pose to health. For more information visit

<http://www.samhsa.gov/newsroom/advisories/090330SAMHSA%20Pre2442.aspx>

NIH Study Shows Use of Complementary and Alternative Medicine on the Rise for US Adults

In a recent government study conducted by the National Center for Complementary and Alternative Medicine (NCCAM) at the National Institute of Health (NIH), 41 percent of U.S. adults, age 60-69 indicated use of some form of Complementary & Alternative Medicine (CAM). According to the study, older adults are frequent users of CAM, which can include products such as vitamins and herbal supplements, and practices such as chiropractic manipulation, acupuncture, meditation and massage.

“CAM covers a wide range of therapies and practices not currently considered part of conventional medicine. Thus, it’s important to be well informed if you are considering using any,” says Josephine P. Briggs, M.D., director of NCCAM, which developed the topic. She added “It’s also important to inform your health care provider about any CAM therapies you may use.”

To find easy-to-understand information on the basics of CAM, as well as useful tips on how to be an informed consumer, choose a CAM practitioner and talking candidly with your doctor about CAM visit the NIH website <http://nihseniorhealth.gov/cam/toc.html>.

NIH Study Finds Black Americans at Higher Risk of Heart Failure Before Age 50

Researchers report in the March 19, 2009 *New England Journal of Medicine* that 1 in 100 black men and women could develop heart failure before age 50—a strikingly higher rate than for white people. This conclusion was based on analyzed data from the Coronary Artery Risk Development in Young Adults (CARDIA) study, which is funded by NIH’s National Heart, Lung and Blood Institute (NHLBI). CARDIA includes 5,115 black and white men and women (52% black, 55% women) who were 18 to 30 years old at the start of the study in 1985 and 1986.

"Through this long-term study, we saw the clear links between the development of risk factors and the onset of disease one to two decades later," said study co-author Dr. Kirsten Bibbins-Domingo of the University of California, San Francisco. "Targeting these risk factors for screening and treatment during young adulthood could be important for heart failure prevention."

For more information on the study go to http://www.nih.gov/news/research_matters/march2009/03232009heartfailure.htm.

Federal Funding Opportunities

The Administration on Aging to Fund National Resource Centers on Older Indians, Alaska Natives and Native Hawaiians

In response to the increased demands placed on service delivery systems created by the continuing longevity in American Indian, Alaska Native and Native Hawaiian communities, the Administration on Aging (AoA) will fund two (2) to four (4) Resource Centers that will focus on issues and concerns affecting individuals who are older Indians, Alaska Natives and Native Hawaiians. The mandate for the Centers was put forth by Congress in the Older Americans Act Amendments of 2006.

The primary goal of these Centers is to enhance knowledge about older Native Americans and thereby to increase and improve the delivery of services to them. With this goal in mind, the Centers will concentrate on the development and provision of technical information and expertise and best practices to Indian tribal organizations, Native American communities, educational institutions including Tribal Colleges and Universities, and professionals and paraprofessionals in the field. Each Center must have a national focus and direct its resources to address at least two of the primary areas of concern specified in the announcement.

Total funding for the Resource Centers will be approximately \$672,041 per year for a period up to three (3) years with a start date in July 2009. The deadline date for submission of applications is **April 30, 2009**. For complete program details, please see the full announcement at <http://www07.grants.gov/search/search.do;jsessionid=vNdmJCqP8WzpKFy91LgXftvyxfrQRy8gGJTLP8zPk7QJJxfrQnRX!161260983?oppId=46020&flag2006=false&mode=VIEW>.

NIH to Fund Grants to Improve Palliative Care

This Funding Opportunity Announcement (FOA), sponsored by the National Institute of Nursing Research, National Institutes of Health (NIH), solicits grant applications from institutions and organizations to develop and test interdisciplinary interventions to improve palliative care and enhance the quality of life for dying patients and their informal caregivers. Empirical and theoretically based interdisciplinary interventions focusing on diverse patient populations, across different illness trajectories and across the continuum of illness, as well as those which translate efficacious interventions into diverse settings to enhance EOL outcomes are of interest. Interventions capitalizing on bio-behavioral variables are particularly encouraged, as are applications from new investigators and multiple PIs.

NIH expects to commit up to \$2 Million to fund three (3) to four (4) projects. The total amount awarded and the number of awards will depend upon the quality, duration, and costs of the projects that are proposed. **The current closing date is May 18, 2009.** For the full announcement, click on the following link: <http://grants.nih.gov/grants/guide/rfa-files/RFA-NR-09-004.html>.

USDA's Agricultural Marketing Service Targets \$5 Million to Fund Farmers' Market Promotion Programs

This fiscal year the USDA Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS) will provide \$5 million in competitive grant funds to expand its Farmers' Market Promotion Programs. The grants are to be used to help improve and grow domestic farmers markets, roadside stands, community-supported agriculture programs, agri-tourism activities, and other direct producer-to-consumer market opportunities. AMS anticipates funding 100 projects each with a funding ceiling of \$100,000.00. **The application deadline is April 28, 2009.** For the full announcement go to <http://www07.grants.gov/search/search.do;jsessionid=hNjSJCQTfN16TWdnfpfv74Qsy9s7X3GmzvpSx7MVbcW3TRHQHZ2X!161260983?oppId=46141&flag2006=false&mode=VIEW>.

More Aging News

NCOA Survey Highlights Need for National Chronic Care Reform

A recent survey commissioned by the National Council on Aging (NCOA), with support from The Atlantic Philanthropies and the California HealthCare Foundation (CHCF), reveals challenges in health care for millions of Americans suffering from a variety of chronic conditions. The results of the *Re-Forming Health Care: Americans Speak Out about Chronic Conditions and the Pursuit of Healthier Lives* survey shows many chronic disease sufferers are delaying health care due to cost, living in pain and feeling abandoned by their health care providers.

To read the complete survey report, visit <http://www.ncoa.org/healthierlives/>.

AARP Report on Chronically Ill

A new AARP Public Policy Institute survey of chronically ill patients and their caregivers finds health care poses significant challenges for the more than 70 million Americans age 50 and older who have at least one chronic condition. The survey is part of a larger report "*Chronic Care: a Call to Action on Health Reform.*" The full report is available at <http://www.aarp.org/beyond50>.

Treasury Department Offers New Electronic Payment Options to Federal Payment Recipients

With its *Go Direct* and *Direct Express*® Card campaigns, the Treasury Department hopes the more than 10 million Americans currently receiving Social Security and Supplemental Security Income (SSI) benefit payments by paper check will switch to one of the new electronic payment options. According to Treasury Department officials, the *Go Direct* direct deposit plan and the *Direct Express*® prepaid debit card are more safe, convenient, and user-friendly.

The *Go Direct* campaign is designed for beneficiaries with a bank account while the *Direct Express*® *Debit MasterCard*® is a prepaid debit card intended for Social Security and SSI recipients who do not have a bank account.

For more information on the *Go Direct* campaign, visit <http://www.godirect.org>.

For more information on the *Direct Express*® *Debit MasterCard*®, visit <https://www.usdirectexpress.com/edcfdtclient/docs/faq.html>.

Financial Abuse Costs Older Americans Billions Annually

Study findings recently reported in the MetLife Mature Market Institute report, *Broken Trust: Elders, Family and Finances*, indicate that elder financial abuse costs older Americans more than \$2.6 billion per year and in 55% of cases, family members and caregivers are the culprits. The report notes that while one million older Americans may be targeted yearly, for each case of abuse reported, there are an estimated four or more than go unreported. The full report can be accessed at http://www.businesswire.com/portal/site/google/?ndmViewId=news_view&newsId=20090317005205&newsLang=en.

National Public Health Week: Building the Foundation for a Healthier America

With the theme *Building the Foundation for a Healthier America*, National Public Health Week (NPHW) is April 6-12.

This theme will guide efforts during NPHW and throughout the year to focus on ensuring that core public health principles such as preventing disease and promoting health are the foundation upon which our nation's current dialogue about health reform is built.

To learn more about celebrating National Public Health Week 2009 visit <http://www.nphw.org/nphw09/default.htm>.

Conferences

Stay up to date with the latest aging meetings and conferences by visiting the AoA events calendar at:

http://www.aoa.gov/AoARoot/Press_Room/events/events_List_Day.aspx#title.

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