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### **“Everywhere We Go, There are Seniors that Need Assistance” – An NCEA Interview with Assistant Secretary for Aging Kathy Greenlee**

As a teen, U.S. Assistant Secretary for Aging Kathy Greenlee first became inspired to assist and empower abuse victims. During a keynote address at the 2009 National Adult Protective Services Association (NAPSA) conference, she told participants that she had become engrossed in a trial of a woman who had been accused of murdering her abusive husband. From her tenure as the Kansas State Long-Term Care Ombudsman, the state’s Secretary on Aging, and through her current appointment as the head of the Administration on Aging in the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, her commitment has not waned. In a recent interview, Ms. Greenlee shared some thoughts on the current and future state of elder abuse prevention and awareness.

The Assistant Secretary identified three areas where elder abuse prevention and response intersects with other program goals including health and wellness promotion, strengthened

community based services, and culture change in long-term care.

“Everywhere we go, there are seniors that need assistance. It is important to recognize the needs of individuals, and to provide a continuum of elder abuse services, from prevention, to intervention, to services after someone has been abused,” commented Ms. Greenlee. “There is a connection between elder abuse prevention and wellness.”

The Assistant Secretary elaborated that it is essential to expand the core programs established in the Older Americans Act, including community support services, tribal programs, and elder rights programs. She also believes in taking greater advantage of opportunities to educate individuals at various points of service, for example, physicians’ offices and other health care sites where elders are seen. Ever the advocate of a holistic and comprehensive approach, Ms. Greenlee feels that the most fruitful response is a “blend of services” customized to enhance the well-being of each individual elder. In particular, she notes that there is a significant gap in emergency services for victims of elder abuse.

In discussing the future of elder abuse prevention in long-term care facilities, the Assistant Secretary noted that a culture change is needed in terms of how society views nursing homes and residents.

“The fundamental challenge is that we in society have created an artificial distinction between individuals living in the nursing home and in the community, and that this type of artificial distinction can be detrimental to bringing all of a community’s resources to bear on elder abuse cases.” Ms. Greenlee emphasized the importance of the Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program, noting the centrality of utilizing volunteers to help prevent and alleviate abuse in nursing homes, in addition to paid staff. She further stressed the importance of enforcement of nursing home

regulations, and the need for coordination and cooperation among all agencies involved in long-term care. With a fully integrated response from government and citizens, the Assistant Secretary said, "Nursing home providers can be good partners in detection, intervention, and treatment."

During her tenure in aging services, the Assistant Secretary thinks there has been an increase in the recognition of elder abuse as a serious social problem, particularly in the area of financial abuse through power of attorney or other tools. "This recognition has brought new partners to the table, such as financial institutions, bankers, and others, who might not otherwise be involved." She notes that these professionals have been empowering in their efforts to educate seniors about their rights.

However, Assistant Secretary Greenlee thinks that a significant barrier to addressing elder abuse is the tendency to separate it into different types or categories, such as neglect, or physical abuse, instead of viewing the issue holistically. She indicated that the difficulties in defining specific types of elder abuse may confuse the public and lessen the impact of efforts to raise awareness.

"For example, when we talk about neglect, are we talking about institutional neglect, residents with bedsores; or are we talking about someone neglecting to pay an elder's bills? Trying to address the individual person, instead of the categories of abuse, is a better option."

Ms. Greenlee observed that academia and other researchers can advance the field significantly in various ways, such as documenting prevalence and incidence rates, and identifying the characteristics of abuse. Studies that identify promising interventions and preventive practices and measure their effectiveness would be also be tremendously valuable.

The Assistant Secretary spoke of the challenges ahead in providing services to ensure the safety and well-being of older Americans as more Baby Boomers age and life expectancy increases. With more and more seniors desiring to age in place, Ms. Greenlee is extremely concerned about isolated elders, particularly those who have been victimized, especially those who may continue to live in chronically abusive situations.

"Not only is it vital to support APS and other professionals, it is necessary to harness community support to fight against elder abuse. One of the greatest challenges is to make sure that we support the whole person."

Despite the inherent challenges, Ms. Greenlee stated that she was very optimistic about the elder abuse response network's potential to help seniors to be happy and healthy. She sees the NCEA as a resource to collaborate with different disciplines and to provide strategic training, outreach, and education. She has also been impressed with the quality and commitment of the APS and aging services professionals she has encountered since taking on this new role.

"During my first few months in this position, I have had the chance to meet and talk with many people throughout the country. Although talking about elder abuse can be a difficult, sobering conversation, we have wonderful providers, advocates, and professionals who are interested and eager to participate in ending the problem. I am very hopeful."

To read more about Assistant Secretary Kathy Greenlee, visit the AoA web site at: [http://www.aoa.gov/AoAroot/Press\\_Room/News/2009/06\\_26\\_09.aspx](http://www.aoa.gov/AoAroot/Press_Room/News/2009/06_26_09.aspx).

Special thanks to Dave Wihry of the University of Delaware Center for Community Research and Service for contributing to this article.

## The Gateway Project at the Harry and Jeanette Weinberg Center for Elder Abuse Prevention

Since its inception, the Harry and Jeanette Weinberg Center for Elder Abuse Prevention has continued to evolve to provide state of the art elder shelter services. The Center is a program at The Hebrew Home for the Aged in Riverdale, New York. In addition to providing assessment, referral, housing, legal, and other support services for seniors who have been abused, the Center's shelter serves as a promising model for replication. In recent months, the program initiated a new screening protocol, The Gateway Project.

According to Joy Solomon, director and managing attorney at The Weinberg Center, the Gateway Project began about a year and a half ago when the Hebrew Home increased the number of short term rehabilitation beds. Staff began to experience concerns that some of these elders may be likely victims of elder abuse returning to abusive or potentially abusive situations.

To perform a more thorough assessment of this risk, Ms. Solomon and Dr. Terry Fulmer, the Dean of New York University College of Nursing and esteemed researcher in elder abuse prevention and response, began discussing how a brief, practical screen could capture a more comprehensive social history as well as detect potential mistreatment. Dr. Fulmer, who had previously created the Elder Assessment Instrument (EAI), drafted a simple, six item tool to assess psychological and physical abuse, unmet needs, safety concerns, and financial exploitation. The goal of the protocol is not only to screen for mistreatment, but to provide the elder with immediate information on resources available and the opportunity to begin safety planning. Screening began with short-term rehabilitation residents in January and is currently being implemented in all

of the Weinberg Center/Hebrew Home portals, including long-term residential care, and short- and long-term home health care. Within the next three to six months, Ms. Solomon expects the protocol to be fully integrated into all aspects of its service continuum.

The Gateway Project also provides an opportunity to advance elder abuse research at the Center. Dr. Mildred Ramirez, a member of the Hebrew Home research division is the principal investigator on the project, under the supervision of Dr. Jeanne Teresi, director of the division. To date, approximately 4 percent of the elders have screened positive for abuse.

"I believe that screening is empowering. When asked these questions alone, the elder realizes he or she can always talk about this with someone. It serves two purposes: to screen for abuse, but also to raise awareness of elder abuse," observed Ms. Solomon.

Currently, the screen is administered by the short-term rehabilitation unit's social worker, Tova Perl, as part of the intake process, but depending upon the service setting it may be administered by a nurse or other trained service provider. "The tool has enabled me to gain a richer understanding of my short-term rehabilitation residents and to have a more in-depth insight into their living situation and relationships," said Ms. Perl "There are important findings we would not have had without this tool. It has been very effective in allowing us not to discharge victims of elder abuse back into the same environment where the abuse first occurred."

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## **NCPEA Announces Elder Justice Community Collaboration Awards**

In July 2009, the National Center on Elder Abuse (NCEA) awarded continuation grant funding to the National Committee for the Prevention of Elder Abuse (NCPEA) to conduct activities for a third year that support the development of local elder abuse prevention networks. The project provides on-site training and technical assistance to Area Agencies on Aging, Title VI Grantees, and/or community organizations interested in developing new elder justice coalitions. The Elder Justice Community Collaborations project is administered by NCPEA for the NCEA and is supported in part by a grant (No. 90AM3145) from the Administration on Aging, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. Including the new awardees, NCEA has funded 32 elder justice community networks since 2007.

A Request for Proposals was distributed by NCPEA in late July 2009 to all Area Agencies on Aging and Title VI Grantees, as well as to community organizations around the country via the elder abuse listserv. Seventy (70) proposals from all 10 Administration on Aging regions were received by the August 28, 2009 deadline and were evaluated by a review committee made up of NCPEA board members. The review committee selected 12 organizations to receive grants in the amount of \$10,000 each as seed money to assist in developing new local multi-disciplinary elder justice networks.

Congratulations to the new grantees. Network development trainings will run from November 2009 through January 2010, and will be conducted by the Area Agency on Aging, Region One, Phoenix, AZ.

Here is a summary of the recently funded community collaboration projects (in alphabetical order by state):

### **Asian & Pacific Islander Older Adults Task Force (APIOATF) (Los Angeles, CA)**

Asian & Pacific Islander Older Adults Task Force (APIOATF) serves older adults in Los Angeles County, including more than 45 distinct ethnic groups. Proposed activities include surveying and compiling educational materials to centralize existing resources and identify communities that lack adequate information; developing and disseminating additional linguistically and culturally appropriate materials to educate Asian and Pacific Islander (API) communities about elder abuse; engaging in dialogue to better understand the needs of API elders at risk of elder abuse and developing trainings tailored to specific groups; and producing a plan or white paper with recommendations and long-term suggestions to prevent elder abuse and help agencies better serve API older adults.

### **Alvin A. Dubin Alzheimer's Resource Center (Ft. Myers, FL)**

Alvin A. Dubin Alzheimer's Resource Center is a local United Way partner agency whose mission is to provide education, information, and support to individuals with memory impairment and their caregivers in Lee County. Proposed activities for the newly developed elder abuse prevention coalition include holding trainings for professionals and family caregivers; increasing the knowledge among professionals and family caregivers of warning signs/indicators of elder abuse, neglect, and exploitation as well as strategies to prevent elder abuse; and demonstrating an increase by victims of late-life domestic violence accessing resources to aid in achieving self-sufficiency.

[Continued on p. 10](#)

## Elder Abuse Research and Literature

The Clearinghouse on Abuse and Neglect of the Elderly at the University of Delaware (CANE, an NCEA grantee) maintains an annotated catalog of peer-reviewed literature on elder mistreatment and related issues. Read the highlights of six recently identified publications.

Baker, M., LaCroix, A., Wu, C., Cochrane, B.,  
Wallace, R. & Woods, N.

*Mortality Risk Associated with Physical and Verbal  
Abuse in Women Aged 50 to 79*

Journal of the American Geriatric Society  
Vol. 57(10); October 2009

This research article utilized data from 160,676 participants in the Women's Health Initiative to examine the relationship between physical and verbal abuse in older women and mortality risk. Prior research on the relationship between elder mistreatment and mortality risk is presented. The research design for the study examined comparisons of mortality rates among women between the ages of 50 and 79 who reported exposure to physical or verbal abuse in the prior year, as compared to women in the same age group who did not. Among findings, it was noted that "Abused women had poorer physical and mental health and physical and social function than nonabused women," as well as experiencing a greater mortality risk. Prevalence of self-reported abuse was found to be 11.3 percent and it was noted that after partially and fully adjusting for demographic variables, the hazard ratios for physical abuse and mortality were 1.54 and 1.40, respectively, with a 95 percent confidence interval. Possible study limitations, such as the ability to generalize the results to institutional populations, as well as to those over the age of 79, were raised.

Twomey, T. & Jurgens, R.

*Subprime Revisited: How Reverse Mortgage  
Lenders Put Older Homeowners at Risk*

National Consumer Law Center, October 2009

This report explains what a reverse mortgage is and describes the growing use of them within the mortgage industry. Reverse mortgages share some of the same characteristics as the riskiest subprime loans, and, as reverse mortgages are complex, opportunities for abuse are abundant. Seniors may be especially at risk if they lack experience with complex financial products, and they are vulnerable to other abuses associated with reverse mortgages like long term insurance care packages and annuity contracts. This report provides in-depth description of the abuses seniors may face with reverse mortgages and offers suggestions as to how to prevent these abuses. Read online: <http://www.consumerlaw.org/reports/content/ReverseMortgages1009.pdf>. The audio version of this report and the report itself can also be found online at <http://www.consumerlaw.org/>.

Campbell, K. & Taylor, B.

*Professional Decision Making on Elder Abuse  
Systematic Narrative Review*

Journal of Elder Abuse and Neglect  
Vol. 21(3); July 2009

Internationally, social work and health care professionals are increasingly recognizing the need to understand and respond to elder abuse. In this study, nine bibliographic databases were searched for studies concerning professional decision making regarding abuse of older people. Findings of the nineteen articles meeting the inclusion criteria were synthesized using a structured narrative approach which allowed the authors to discover key issues for the practice of responding to elder abuse and the gaps in the research literature. Common themes among the studies were abuse factors such as age, gender, and health status,

situational factors, and broader conceptual factors. It was found that adult protection workers were influenced by their perceived effectiveness of the intervention when deciding to respond to alleged or suspected abuse; that professionals experienced complex ethical dilemmas concerning elder abuse, especially when the victim did not want an investigation; and family and contextual factors also played into the difficulty professionals experienced when making objective judgments.

Paranjape, A., Rodriguez, M., Gaughan, J. & Kaslow, N.  
*Psychometric Properties of a New Scale to Assess Family Violence in Older African American Women: The Family Violence Against Older Women (FVOW) Scale*  
Violence Against Women  
Vol. 15(10); October 2009

This research article involved the evaluation of The Family Violence Against Older Women (FVOW) scale, which attempts to measure abuse and care giving failure as aspects of family violence among older African American women. The state of family violence research relevant to this group is discussed. The research design for the study involved using data gained from interviews with African American women over the age of 50 at an inner-city hospital with the FVOW scale. Data was analyzed to examine the quality of the scale. Among findings, "The FVOW was found to be reliable, with excellent internal consistency reliability and test-retest reliability. In addition, the scale demonstrated good construct validity when compared to other scales measuring similar constructs." Possible limitations raised included the validity of the tool for assessing individuals of other ethnicities.

Rovi, S., Chen, P., Vega, M., Johnson, M. & Mouton, C.  
*Mapping the Elder Mistreatment Iceberg: U.S. Hospitalizations with Elder Abuse and Neglect Diagnoses*  
Journal of Elder Abuse and Neglect  
Vol. 21(4); October 2009

This research article utilizes hospital codes to examine the nature of elder mistreatment hospitalizations by comparing elder mistreatment hospitalizations with those of a similar aged population. Analysis was conducted on data from the 2003 Nationwide Inpatient Sample (NIS) of the Healthcare Costs and Utilization Project. Among results, it was found that relatively few cases were coded as elder mistreatment hospitalizations. In addition, compared to other hospitalizations, the elder mistreatment cases involved more women and longer length of stays. Such patients were three to four times more likely to be discharged to nursing homes as compared to non elder mistreatment patients. Study limitations, such as issues arising from the administrative coding systems, are discussed.

Anisko, B.  
*Elder Abuse in American Indian Communities*  
American Indian Culture and Research Journal  
Vol. 33(3), pp. 43-51; 2009

This article examines prior research and considerations for the study of elder abuse among American Indians. Prevalence and characteristics of elder abuse among the general population are discussed, as well as the demographic changes in American Indian communities that will result in an increased elderly population. Special considerations for American Indians, such as the definition of "elder" and the role of the elder in Native societies are discussed. It is noted that relatively few prevalence studies of American Indian tribes have been conducted, although

among the Cheyenne and Navajo, 19 percent and 16 percent rates of reported physical abuse have been estimated. The impact of abuse, such as increased mortality risk, is discussed as well as some potential risk factors for abuse such as caregiver burden and psychological issues among abusers. Finally, a description of responses to elder abuse by American Indian communities and the Federal Government are provided.

Special thanks to Katie Wolinski of the Center for Community Research and Service at the University of Delaware for providing this update. To search for additional literature on elder abuse and related topics visit [CANE](#) online.

### Editorial Note:

The NCEA E-News includes the following updates on a quarterly basis: Elder Abuse Research and Literature; State News; and the Federal Legislative Update. The next E-News will feature State News.

## Promising Practices that Address Elder Abuse: Use of Evaluation in Evidence-Based Practice

This is the first article in a bi-monthly series featuring evidence-based promising practices that address elder abuse. Highlighting projects that incorporate elements of evidence-based practices holds the potential for enhanced and targeted prevention and intervention efforts drawing. This series will feature examples from program entries in the Promising Practice Clearinghouse data base on the NCEA website, which includes self-reporting promising practices from organizations and agencies all across America. Practices for this series will be featured because of their value in

evaluation of evidence-based practice. In addition, programs will be selected to represent geographic diversity. This month, we highlight three programs: the Curtailing Abuse Related to the Elderly Program (California), the Elder Abuse Training Team (Illinois), and the Elder Response Team (Connecticut).

### Curtailing Abuse Related to the Elderly (C.A.R.E.)

Created in 1997 and located in Riverside, California, the Curtailing Abuse Related to the Elderly Program (C.A.R.E.) is a response to the growing needs of elder victims of abuse and consumer crimes. C.A.R.E. falls under the area's Offices of Adult Protective Services and works with approximately 45 other agencies creating "...multidisciplinary teams made up of representatives from Public Health, Community Care Licensing, the District Attorney, etc. Teams improve coordination and cooperation among the human service providers and public safety organizations in order to better investigate elder abuse and provide coordinated services to elders and dependent adults." (Visit the [CARE Website](#)).

C.A.R.E. includes direct consumer advocacy, community anti-fraud education, gatekeeper training, and coordination of three multidisciplinary elder abuse teams. C.A.R.E. maintains careful statistics on financial recoveries and saves case numbers and types of abuse, as well as data on reporting. C.A.R.E. was a finalist for the "Innovations in American Government" award from the Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University.

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## Call for Workshop Proposals: Florida Coalition Against Domestic Violence

The Florida Coalition Against Domestic Violence (FCADV) is seeking workshop proposals for the 13th Annual Rural Training Institute, "Behind Closed Doors - Breaking the Silence in Rural Communities." The event will be held on April 28 and 29, 2010 at Chipola College in Marianna, Florida.

The 2010 theme will focus on abuse that continues or escalates when the batterer and survivor no longer live together. "Advocacy for Older Survivors in Rural Communities" is one of a number of topics for which the Institute is seeking workshop proposals.

To download the Call for Proposals, [Click Here](#).

**Deadline for submission: December 18, 2009**

For more information please contact the Rural Program Coordinator at 850-425-2749.

### ***Gateway Project, continued from p. 3***

The Weinberg team is evaluating whether or not to continue to screen at intake, to screen at discharge, or at both points. Certain settings will require more extensive training for prospective screeners. Ms. Solomon thinks that use of the screen and the requisite cross training will help to enhance the level of care to older individuals, as many professionals will learn about safety planning, what is and isn't a natural part of aging, and available resources.

"These challenges will strengthen the quality of care. It's raising the bar of professional ethics."

Ms. Solomon is equally excited about wider applications for the screen, which is currently being

adapted for use by attorneys. Ultimately, the team hopes to roll out the instrument for wide scale use in emergency rooms, hospitals, and other health care settings. They are also interested in developing a mental health screen, which appears essential as undetected, untreated mental health issues among the elderly represent a critical service gap.

## History of the Harry and Jeanette Weinberg Center for Elder Abuse Prevention

In 2003, creating a shelter for elder abuse victims became a priority for Ms. Solomon. Previously, she had worked on domestic violence, child abuse, and elder abuse cases when she served in the Manhattan Prosecutor's office (the same office that successfully prosecuted the Astor trial this year.) From there, she went on to specialize in elder abuse and related issues at the Pace Women's Justice Center. She realized that emergency housing for elder abuse victims was a significant service gap, and discussed this with the CEO of the Hebrew Home, Dan Reingold, after a chance meeting. Mr. Reingold said that such a shelter could be created at the Hebrew Home, and one year later the program launched.

The Weinberg Center serves individuals aged 60 and over who have been emotionally, physically, and/or financially abused. The shelter is based within an existing long-term care residential facility so it can provide health care services. However, the model allows for a complex multidisciplinary approach to treat the elder holistically. Staff attorneys provide legal assistance for a spectrum of issues, such as guardianship, orders of protection, and banking and housing needs. Social services, psychological counseling, and other resources are available to support and enhance the recovery of the victim. Services are provided regardless of the victim's ability to pay.



“When you raise the level of awareness of elder abuse among health care workers, essentially you are raising their awareness and deepening their understanding about many things. It’s such a win-win situation. The staff feels better about the work they are doing. The victim’s are coming to a safe and loving place. These elements accelerate the healing process,” said Ms. Solomon.

Following recovery, discharge planning incorporates safety planning. For those clients who cannot return home safely with support services, they may transition to an apartment in the Hebrew Home's senior housing community, or may continue in the long-term care residential facility. At times, alternative arrangements within the community are made.

Ms. Solomon notes that elders are encouraged to utilize a full range of services in making decisions and discharge plans. Empowerment is always the goal. The Weinberg approach borrows heavily from the domestic violence model in terms of offering assistance and services to enhance safety; to the extent that a senior has decision-making capacity, he or she maintains the right to self-determination.

### **A Tradition of Networking and Outreach**

The Hebrew Home has a rich tradition of community partnerships. Replication, outreach, and technical assistance are a vital component of the Center’s mission. Therefore, Ms. Solomon spends a considerable amount of time in outreach efforts, including public speaking, training, and providing assistance to other organizations interested in adapting the model for use with their unique resources.

“An important part of the Weinberg mission is replication of our shelter model as far and wide as possible. We believe the model really works and our goal is that all non-profit long term care

facilities become shelters as part of their mission. We provide all our materials free of charge, as well as on-going assistance in the planning, implementation, and problem solving of opening new shelters.”

To date, the model has been replicated by three other communities: The Jewish Home in Fairfield, Connecticut; The Eddy Haven in Albany, New York; and Saint Elizabeth Community in Rhode Island. Each of the organizations optimizes its unique characteristics to enhance shelter services. For example, the Saint Elizabeth Community will have shelter beds in different regions, as the Community has long-term care and assisted living facilities in East Greenwich, Bristol, and Providence. The Rhode Island replication is the newest, having opened this fall. The Eddy Haven features a hospital component. Like the Weinberg Center, these programs network extensively with community-based services including APS, law enforcement, aging, health, and social services, among other entities, to pool resources and generate referrals.

“Through the Weinberg Center, The Hebrew Home has put nursing homes on the map in a very different way. The nursing home is now championing the issue of elder abuse awareness.”

For more information on The Hebrew Home for the Aged at Riverdale, visit: [www.hebrewhome.org](http://www.hebrewhome.org) . To learn more about the Harry and Jeanette Weinberg Center for Elder Abuse Prevention, visit: [www.hebrewhome.org/abusercovery.asp](http://www.hebrewhome.org/abusercovery.asp)

For questions on the Gateway Project or on training and replication of the Weinberg shelter model, please contact Ms. Solomon at: [jsolomon@hebrewhome.org](mailto:jsolomon@hebrewhome.org) .

***Elder Justice Coalitions, continued from p. 4***

**Mid-Florida Area Agency on Aging d/b/a Elder Options (Gainesville, FL)**

Mid-Florida Area Agency on Aging d/b/a Elder Options serves the Citrus County area above Tampa Bay. Proposed activities by their new local elder abuse prevention coalition include educating community stakeholders about legal issues related to elder abuse; holding a public event to bring information, resources, and training to 200-300 seniors; developing a clear message and public information materials for the public and media outlets; creating a network of assistance for older adults in crisis under the concept of "Safe Places" for elders at sites sustained by qualified agencies, trained volunteers and businesses; and increasing the number of community members who understand how to identify, intervene and prevent elder abuse, neglect and exploitation.

**St. Tammany SALT Council (Mandeville, LA)**

St. Tammany SALT Council is on the north shore of Lake Pontchartrain, 24 miles from New Orleans. The area received a large number of seniors who relocated from New Orleans following Hurricane Katrina. Proposed activities include expanding support in justice-based components through improved communications and cooperation of financial institutions, law enforcement, medical and social work professionals; establishing a Financial Abuse Advisory Board to supports EPS investigators, an Elder Abuse Support Group to provide information and materials to senior groups and programs, a Training Team to provide continuing education for professionals, an Event Planning Board to present educational programs, and a Media Liaison Group to develop local media contacts.

**Baltimore County Department of Aging (Towson, MD)**

Baltimore County Department of Aging is the Area Agency on Aging for Baltimore County residents.

Their goal in establishing a local elder abuse prevention coalition is to ensure that a consumer will receive the proper response to their issues regardless of which coalition member they contact initially. Proposed project outcomes include increasing the number of reported cases of elder abuse; developing a Memorandum of Understanding to be signed by all agencies involved in the investigation of abuse; increasing prosecutable cases through coordination of agency responses; enhancing the registry of offenders and the triggers of information and needed referrals; and enhancing the community presence of coordinated agencies' education and platform.

**Maryland Crime Victim Resource Center (Upper Marlboro, MD)**

Maryland Crime Victim Resource Center is a private non-profit 501(c)(3) organization providing advocacy and services to victims of all crimes. Proposed activities for their newly formed coalition include designing a collaborative model of education and outreach; developing and distributing educational and outreach materials to health professionals, home-delivered meals providers, mail deliverers, financial industry professionals and others who interact with seniors; and gathering and documenting promising practices for dissemination through presentations and website postings.

**Big Sky Senior Services, Inc. (Billings, MT)**

Big Sky Senior Services, Inc. serves the more urban Montana counties of Billings and Yellowstone and the more rural counties of Carbon and Stillwater. Proposed activities include holding 12 educational sessions in 2010 focusing on elder abuse, reporting, and prevention in the community; producing and distributing educational materials about elder abuse to seniors and their families via the web and in paper format; and advocating for increased efforts within the judicial system to address elder abuse.

**High Country Area Agency on Aging (Boone, NC)**

High Country Area Agency on Aging serves two contiguous counties in northwestern North Carolina: Mitchell and Yancey Counties. Both counties are small, rural, and mountainous, and have common challenges within the existing elder protection services system. Outcomes and activities they foresee for their new coalition include increasing awareness of and knowledge about elder abuse, neglect and exploitation among the aging network and the public; developing and/or improving the range and effectiveness of resources and services; increasing the reporting of abuse, neglect and exploitation cases; conducting case reviews; developing a 2-year strategic plan; holding a community forum on elder abuse; and implementing cross training by coalition members.

**Montgomery County Department of Job and Family Services (Dayton, OH)**

Montgomery County Department of Job and Family Services, along with other agency and community partners, have developed an elder abuse protocol which includes the creation of an elder justice local network to increase the lines of communication and shared knowledge to better serve their clients. Proposed outcomes during the grant period include increasing referrals from local agencies and tracking them once the grant begins; surveying participating organizations and having an 85 percent increase in community-wide communication; having 85 percent of MDT members indicate having a better understanding of each agency’s roles and responsibilities and reporting better communication and cooperation between agencies; and showing on pre and post tests that 85 percent of MDT members will gain a better understanding of APS.

**Advocates for Basic Legal Equality (Toledo, OH)**

Advocates for Basic Legal Equality serves residents in Lucas County in Northwestern Ohio. Proposed project activities include creating a multi-disciplinary network of representatives from

agencies and organizations providing elder justice services to seniors in Toledo and Lucas County, OH; developing a strategic planning process to address elder abuse and neglect; collaborating on individual cases to increase the outcomes for 10 older adults during the grant period; and identifying one systemic issue to address through community advocacy and other efforts.

**Skagit Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault Services (Mount Vernon, WA)**

Skagit Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault Services serves Skagit County, a primarily rural, agricultural community in the northwest Puget Sound region of Washington State with a highly diverse population of elderly including Latinos and Native Americans. Activities they foresee for their new elder abuse prevention coalition include sponsoring local/regional training conferences for law enforcement and social service providers; recruiting at least 20 agencies to send representatives to coalition meetings; sponsoring a community outreach and education event; sponsoring a training for law enforcement and social service agencies; and developing a task force to seek sustainable funding for a Geriatric Peer Counseling Program.

**Lac Courte Oreilles Tribe (Hayward, WI)**

Lac Courte Oreilles (LCO) Tribe is one of six bands of the Lake Superior Chippewa Indians, and numbers about 7,000 people. About 50 percent of the tribe live on or near the reservation, and 18 percent are aged 55 and older. Proposed project activities include addressing tribal law and implementation of a restorative justice system that reflects traditional tribal law; presenting an educational program within the local school system, at the Boys and Girls Club, and within tribal offices; seeking endorsement of the new coalition’s Strategic Plan by the LCO Elders Association and Tribal Governing Board; and completion of a plan to create and maintain a healthy community for LCO elders.

For further information about this project, or to read summaries of previously awarded community collaborations, [Click Here](#), or email Dr. Pamela Teaster: [pteaster@email.uky.edu](mailto:pteaster@email.uky.edu).

[Click Here](#) to access a recent webcast that provides an overview of the training and development process of the Elder Justice Coalitions.

Special thanks to Dr. Teaster for contributing this announcement.

*Promising Practices, continued from p. 7*

### **The Elder Abuse Training Team**

The second program featured is the Elder Abuse Training Team, created by the Thirteenth Judicial Circuit Family Violence Prevention Council in Illinois. The program is a partnership among the 13th Judicial Circuit Court, the Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault Program, Alternatives for the Older Adult, the Department of Justice Office on Violence Against Women, the LaSalle County Sheriff's Office, and the LaSalle County State's Attorney.

The program began in October 2006 with the mission of increasing awareness of elder abuse and finding legal remedies to support an increase in reports, referrals, and appropriate dispositions. The program includes a 16 hour elder abuse curriculum taught to law enforcement, prosecutors, and judges in a tri-county area. The team developed a training booklet for attendees and multi-disciplinary protocols regarding elder abuse.

Along with the training teams, funding for the program allowed creating the booklet, [Abuse Against The Elderly, Potential Legal Remedies In Illinois](#). The Elder Abuse Training Team demonstrates how members of law enforcement

can work together to promote awareness of and optimal outcomes for cases of elder abuse. Training evaluations and anecdotal information is sent to the Federal Law Enforcement Training Center for analysis and reporting. The team is also conducting a community assessment, which includes surveying older adults served in order to develop a strategic plan of action and bring more services to older victims.

### **The Elder Response Team (ERT)**

The third program highlighted is the Elder Response Team (ERT) located in Connecticut. In 1995, ERT was born out of Birmingham Group Health Services, Inc., as part of a domestic violence program. "The Elder Response Team is a collaboration of social service and private agencies from across the Lower Naugatuck Valley of Connecticut, working together to heighten awareness of issues affecting the elderly, such as elder abuse, domestic violence, neglect, fraud, and exploitation...to promote early detection and reporting, timely intervention and prevention through education of professionals and the general public" (Visit the [ERT Website](#)). ERT has participated in senior fairs, produced a short video, provided presentations to Senior Centers and housing programs, held major workshops for professionals, and facilitated presentations geared for senior citizens. ERT has created a client care fund with proceeds from conferences and presentations.

Recent efforts include creating a website and CHERISH (Caring Home for Elderly Receiving Insight, Safety, and Healing). CHERISH offers counseling services and facilitates access to relevant supportive services. CHERISH partners with assisted living communities to provide a safe environment where late life victims in crisis can stay temporarily and receive nourishing meals,

medication management, and assistance with activities of daily living.

ERT continuously evaluates itself. After each presentation or workshop, attendees receive an evaluation, which is reviewed for information that will help improve subsequent presentations. Also, following presentations, ERT team members discuss their own observations along with participant feedback to assess the elder population they serve and those who serve them. Current and previous attention to evaluations and assessments has increased both the demand for and attendance of ERT functions.

For more information on any of these programs, please visit the [NCEA Promising Practices Clearinghouse](#) or their individual websites: [C.A.R.E. Program](#), [The Elder Abuse Training Team](#), and [The Elder Response Team](#).

Special thanks to Frances Vorsky of the Graduate Center for Gerontology at the University of Kentucky for submitting this article.

## Calendar of Events

### **December 7-10, 2009**

2009 National Triad Conference  
Double Tree Resort  
Orlando, FL  
Web site: <http://www.nationaltriad.org/Orlando09>

### **January 1 - 31, 2010**

Stalking Resource Center  
*National Stalking Awareness Month*  
National Observance  
Web site:  
<http://www.stalkingawarenessmonth.org/>

### **March 15 – 19, 2010**

Aging in America Conference  
National Council on Aging – American Society on Aging Conference  
Hyatt Regency Chicago  
Chicago, IL  
Web site:  
<http://www.agingconference.org/AiA10/index.cfm>

### **March 18 - 21, 2010**

MaleSurvivor 2010 International Conference:  
*Healing and Hope for Male Survivors*  
John Jay College of Criminal Justice  
New York, NY  
Email: [YTAMassa@aol.com](mailto:YTAMassa@aol.com)

### **July 17 – 21, 2010**

N4a 35<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference and Trade Show  
Hyatt Regency St. Louis at The Arch  
St. Louis, MO  
Web site: <http://n4a.org/training-events/annual-conference/>

## Thank You!

As we turn the page on another calendar year it is important to recognize the dedication of all who fight to end elder abuse. The NCEA wishes to extend its gratitude for your continued efforts to advocate for the health, safety, well-being, and independence of our older citizens. We are honored to support you in this cause.

Throughout the year, many of you have shared news on what your community is doing to combat elder abuse. Some of you contributed story ideas or provided comments on issues and current events. We are very grateful for these perspectives and promising ideas. By sharing this input, you strengthen and inform the practice of others working in the field.

We invite you to continue to inform us of your new and ongoing efforts and we look forward to working alongside you in 2010.

Together, we have the power to prevent elder abuse.

***Best wishes for the coming New Year.***

## Credits and Contact Information

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