FY 2016 NISC Annual Report
The Work of NISC

The National Council on Aging (NCOA) National Institute of Senior Centers (NISC) supports a national network of over 3,000 senior center professionals dedicated to helping older adults remain active, engaged, and independent in their communities. NISC is setting the standard for the future of senior centers by promoting cutting-edge research, promising practices, professional development, and advocacy. NISC also offers the nation’s only National Senior Center Accreditation Program. Accreditation provides official recognition that a senior center meets nine national standards of senior center operations. The goals of NISC include:

- Strengthening senior centers to improve the lives of older adults
- Engaging NISC members in NCOA’s social impact goals of enhancing economic security, improving health, and advocating for older adults, especially those who are vulnerable and disadvantaged

Through conference calls, webinars, and the NCOA Crossroads online community, senior center professionals throughout the country have an opportunity to share their experiences and take action on policy and advocacy issues and community-based initiatives; participate in NISC Teams and other opportunities for engagement; and contribute their best practice knowledge to NCOA/NISC programs and initiatives.

The NISC Executive Committee coordinates the work of the six virtual teams. It is comprised of the Chair, Chair-Elect, and Chairs of each team. The NISC Program Manager is an ex-officio member of the Executive Committee. During monthly conference calls and an annual in-person meeting, teams provide progress reports, discuss integration of outcomes, and make decisions regarding leadership, strategy, and activities.

**July 1, 2015-June 30, 2016**

**NISC Executive Committee**

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<tr>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Name</th>
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<tr>
<td>NISC Chair</td>
<td>Susan Getman</td>
<td>Delaware</td>
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<td>NISC Chair-Elect</td>
<td>Lynn Fields Harris</td>
<td>Pennsylvania</td>
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<td>NISC Past-Chair</td>
<td>Carol Reagan</td>
<td>Illinois</td>
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**Team Chairs**

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<tr>
<th>Team Chairs</th>
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<tr>
<td>Best Practices</td>
<td>Mary Staackmann</td>
<td>Illinois</td>
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<tr>
<td>Economic Security</td>
<td>Laura Cisneros</td>
<td>Texas</td>
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<tr>
<td>Improving Health</td>
<td>Beverly Ferry</td>
<td>Indiana</td>
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<td>Standards &amp; Accreditation</td>
<td>Elizabeth Bernat</td>
<td>South Carolina</td>
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<td>State Associations &amp; Speakers Bureau</td>
<td>Dianne Stone</td>
<td>Connecticut</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Tracey Colagrossi</td>
<td>Illinois</td>
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**NCOA Staff**

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<tr>
<td>NISC Program Manager</td>
<td>Maureen O'Leary</td>
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<td>NCOA Constituent Engagement Coordinator</td>
<td>Scott Harlow</td>
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<td>NCOA Public Policy</td>
<td>Marci Phillips</td>
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Cover Picture, left to right: Maureen O’Leary, NCOA; Jean Williams, NISC Founders Award Winner; Sue Getman, Chair

Go to the online version of this document, with live links on [www.ncoa.org/nisc](http://www.ncoa.org/nisc).
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Letter from the NISC Chair

Sue Getman, Executive Director
Wilmington Senior Center
Wilmington, Delaware

During the past year the National Institute of Senior Centers has been devoted to enhancing communication and professional development for the NISC network through both in-person and virtual partnerships and learning opportunities. We have sought to understand what is going well and what is challenging for local senior centers and then respond with timely resources to expand the impact and collective reach of our important work.

Several of the opportunities offered in FY 2016 deserve to be highlighted.

- The July 2015 White House Conference on Aging provided the chance for local centers to host community watch parties and raise awareness of the issues facing Americans as they plan for retirement, care for older loved ones, and work to improve our quality of life as we age. And in 2016 NISC and NCOA advocates celebrated the long overdue reauthorization of the Older Americans Act by Congress.

- The Mill Race Center and Pitman Institute for Aging Well in Columbus, Indiana hosted SEEK 2015, a summit for senior center professionals that offered a variety of workshops and keynote speakers who inspired participants to facilitate healthy and purposeful longevity through their programs. The Founders Award was presented at the conference to K. Jean Williams, a senior center professional from Delaware dedicated to promoting NISC standards and accreditation, as well as volunteerism and cutting edge thinking.

- A Thought Leaders Webinar Series was launched following a survey of the NISC network. Popular webinars included activist Ashton Applewhite’s presentation about how to fight against ageism and LGBT Aging 101 offered by SAGE (Services and Advocacy for GLBT Elders).

NISC facilitated national and local partnerships that supported NCOA’s strategic vision of improving health and economic security for struggling older adults: examples include a Food Safety Food Safety Training pilot with the USDA Food Safety and Inspection Service; support for Jewish Federations of North America’s Advancing Person-centered, Trauma-Informed Supportive Services for Holocaust Survivors; and “Blaze a Trail” with the US Administration on Aging for Older Americans Month.

The NISC Teams sustained hallmark initiatives such as National Senior Center Month and Programs of Excellence and supported NCOA’s website redesign and creation of a NISC blog to be launched later this year. We also planned the national senior center conference that will take place in Philadelphia in September 2016: Life, Liberty and the Pursuit of Excellence.

I’ve been privileged to chair the NISC Executive Team for the past two years and proud to pass leadership to a new Chair, Lynn Fields Harris, and Chair-Elect, Elizabeth Bernat. And I also share much appreciation for all NISC members and your commitment to our country’s aging adults and to the senior centers you serve.

With gratitude for the work you do,
Sue Getman
Best Practices Team

Overall Outcome
Share knowledge with senior centers gained through research, program development, networking, and face-to-face contact, allowing NISC members and senior centers to remain in the forefront as the premiere resource for older adults and their families and to improve centers by bringing the newest and best ideas in easy-to-replicate, understandable formats.

2015/2016 Outcomes
- Announced, evaluated, and disseminated 2015 NISC Programs of Excellence Awards.
- Promoted 2015 Senior Center Month and Developed and reviewed the theme and materials for the 2016 National Senior Center Month celebration.
- Coordinated with the 2015/2016 National Senior Center Conferences

Programs of Excellence Awards
The NISC Programs of Excellence Awards are designed to honor and promote outstanding efforts made by senior centers throughout the nation to offer innovative, creative, and replicable programs for older adults. A seven-member NISC Committee selected the award winners from 69 nominations. Six award winners were chosen, along with six honorable mentions. The complete listing of the 69 submitted programs is a NISC member benefit. Jill Hall, Maryland, chaired this project.

National Senior Center Month
NISC’s national campaign to celebrate senior centers happens every September. In September 2015, team members promoted the 2015 toolkit materials. By June 2016, members chose the 2016 theme, Find Balance at Your Center, found poster photos, reviewed and disseminated toolkit material.

Senior Center 2015 & 2016 Conference
In 2015 we partnered with the Pitman Institute for Aging Well to hold the “Senior Centers 2015” Conference: Seek 2015: Engaging Our Communities to Age Well. The conference was held at the Mill Race Center in Columbus, Indiana from September 20-22, 2015. 230 attended the over 50 workshops and presentations, NISC National Accreditation Peer Reviewer Training and the Leo Laks Reception. View www.pitmaninstitute.org/seek for recordings and additional information.

Senior Centers 2016 is being held in Philadelphia, PA in partnership with the Philadelphia Corporation for Aging (PCA) and held in conjunction with their annual Regional Conference on Aging. Our conference theme, Life, Liberty and the Pursuit of Excellence in Senior Centers was chosen because of the historic location and the fact that Pennsylvania is home to 19 nationally accredited senior centers that have proven their adherence to the national senior center standards of excellence.

Over 45 sessions and networking events have been planned for the September 24-26 conference. The Pennsylvania Department of Aging has supported this national training event by sponsoring transportation to the conference site.

Mary Staackmann
Best Practices Chair
Director of Lifelong Learning
North Shore Senior Center
Northfield, IL
Diversity Team

Overall Outcome
Enrich NISC work groups and leadership by including individuals that differ from themselves in terms of race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, age, social economic status, religious affiliation, gender, and ability and share information with senior centers to further support diversity.

2015/2016 Outcomes
- Explored resources available on diversity issues and shared with senior centers.
- Held Webinar – LGBT Aging 101
- Held Ageism Webinar

SAGE
This was the sixth year of the NISC partnership with Services and Advocacy for GLBT Elders (SAGE) and training from the SAGE Resource Center on LGBT Aging.

On this year’s Senior Center Month poster we included an award winning photo from last year Healthy LGBT Aging Photo Contest, which highlighted the beauty of LGBT aging. The contest goal was to exemplify positive images of what it is like to be an aging lesbian, gay, bisexual and/or transgender person. Over 60 wonderful and dynamic photographs were entered from all over the world. Read the photographer’s story and see the award winners.

Through an introduction by SAGE’s staff, NISC and CenterLink, an umbrella organization of LGBT Centers, cosponsored two webinars that were available to both of our memberships.

The co-sponsored webinars were:
- **LGBT Aging 101** – 80 engaged attendees were able to:
  - Learn about the culture, needs, and concerns of LGBT older adults
  - Consider why LGBT older adults are less likely to access health and social services
  - Identify best practices and tools for helping LGBT older adults to feel more included
    - Link to schedule training at your senior center.
- **Respected and Whole: Preventing Anti-LGBT Bias between Constituents, Staff, and across Aging Services** - 50 engaged attendees on June 16, 2016 were able to:
  - Explore our 8 suggestions for preventing bias and creating inclusive services.
  - Discuss concrete programming ideas and policies to ensure staff and constituents feel respected and safe.
  - Learn how an inclusive environment can improve the health and happiness of both staff and constituents.
  - One attendee commented “FABULOUS TRAINING! Please continue to offer LGBT training. This is a huge help for us as we begin to make our LGBT seniors feel comfortable at” our senior center.

AGEISM
On March 16, 2016, 130 NISC members attended a thought-provoking webinar on how to fight ageism and change the dialogue on aging. The webinar *This Chair Rocks: No to Ageism, Yes to Aging* was led by Ashton Applewhite. Ms. Applewhite is an activist and author of the book, *This Chair Rocks: A Manifesto Against Ageism*. See the Webinar. Learn more about Ageism on Ashton's "This Chair Rocks" Website
Economic Security Team

Overall Outcome
Improve the economic status of older adults by providing access to a range of economic programs offered through senior centers.

2015/2016 Outcomes:
- Provided senior center professionals with easy access to information about current economic security and benefits programs and how to implement them.
- Offered Senior Centers and Farmers Markets survey and shared information.
- Provided economic security resources for senior center month program guide.

Survey: Senior centers and farmers' markets
NISC members told us how their senior centers partnered with local farmers' markets, and 88% of respondents said they issued Farmers' Market Nutrition Program Vouchers. The survey provided many great examples of how senior centers can connect older adults to fresh produce. See the results

NISC shared Resources for Hunger Action Month: Connect seniors to SNAP
During Hunger Action Month, NISC members received information and resources to promote the many good reasons for seniors to enroll in the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP): eating better, financial security, family. Members received the #getSNAP social media images and free customizable outreach materials to spread the word! Share #getSNAP images | Get outreach materials

State Association Team

Overall Outcome
Strengthen senior centers individually and collectively through strong state associations and strengthen state associations through cooperative and collaborative work with other state associations.

2015/2016 Outcomes
- Bi Annual nationwide conference calls conducted in October 2015 and May 2016.
- Analyzed data collected from survey of state senior center associations for future topics of interest:
  * Increase association membership
  * How to create and conduct webinars
  * Funding and fundraising opportunities
- Average response data collected determined that State Associations:
  * 33% have membership between 50-100
  * 98% communicate to their members through email
  * 45% meet quarterly, 23% every other month
  * Purpose to provide Professional development, Network, education
  * 100% of respondents work through NISC/NCOA for National Senior Center Month
Improving Health Team

**Overall Outcome**
Improve the health of senior center participants through excellence in senior center programming and service. Improving the health of older adults is a strategic focus of NCOA.

**Short term outcome**
Increase the number of educational opportunities for senior center professionals about evidence-based health promotion interventions and other quality programs/service designed to promote the health of older adults.

**2015/2016 Outcomes**

- Conducted a survey of senior centers to determine the scope of evidence-based programs and other programs that improve the health of older adults currently available within senior centers and major challenges with implementing evidence-based programs.
- Analyzed the data results, identify trends/gaps/needs, and develop recommendations and an action plan for improvements or enhancements.
- Promoted the availability of health programs through Senior Center Voice, emails, and on www.ncoa.org. Developed senior center month material and future web material.
- Reviewed Food Safety 101.

**Reports on Improving Health Survey**
From October through November 2015, we asked 950 NISC member organizations about their role in improving health at senior centers. We divided our final report into two articles which appeared in two issues of the Senior Center Voice.

Part 1: This section focused on the evidence-based programs that NISC senior centers offer. It covers the successes, challenges, and the resources available to senior centers that offer evidence-based programming.

  - [Part 1 of the report - Evidence based programs](#)

Part 2: This section of the final report focuses on the relationships that senior centers have with hospitals and insurance providers, Medicare and Medicaid reimbursement, and health programming offered through senior centers.

  - [Part 2 of the report - Health Relationships](#)

**Food Safety 101**
The NISC team reviewed the program and its training prior to implementing a pilot program.

Eight sites were chosen to host a special food safety pilot program. The **Food Safety 101** program empowers seniors to take steps to prevent food-borne illness. Each site was provided with a one-hour training program given by a qualified presenter. It featured a PowerPoint presentation highlighting basic food safety behaviors, specific safe-handling practices for immunocompromised persons, instructional videos, and a variety of resources for your participants. The chosen centers offer diverse programming and are located within 50 miles of selected FSIS District Offices. If your state has a participating office, click on the link to see if you could host a similar session, or send this to another eligible center. [Learn more about the program and selected sites](#).
Public Policy Team

Chair
Lynn Fields Harris, Executive Director, Center in the Park, Philadelphia, PA

Overall Outcome
- Support public policy issues on which senior centers can contribute unique expertise.
- Quickly mobilize targeted responses to pressing advocacy needs.

2015/2016 Outcomes

NISC members participated in the White House Conference On Aging (WHCOA). NISC promoted the July 13, 2015 White House Conference on Aging activities in the newsletters and in the Senior Center Month Material. NISC conducted outreach to senior centers for involvement and presence at meetings and Watch Parties.

57 NISC Members signed up to hold Watch Parties. After the event, we reviewed issues addressed at WHCOA and how senior centers can participate in programs and partnerships.

On Dec. 29, the White House released the final report for the 2015 White House Conference on Aging. It summarizes key themes from the dialogues held throughout the country, as well as policies announced during and following the July 13 convening.

- In August 2015, we connected NISC members to resources to educate their members of Congress as they returned to their home districts. We've provided key messages and tips to make it easy. See our Recess 2015 Advocacy Toolkit.
- Conducted outreach for senior centers to organize watch parties and provided kits for the February 17, 2016, Leadership Council of Aging Organization’s Seniors Decide 2016 Event. A forum to provide a fair and unbiased platform for sharing the views of candidates for President of the United States on policies and programs affecting older Americans.
- Responding to NCOA alerts on budget mark-ups eliminating funding for SHIPs and SCSEP
- During FY16, some senior center advocates were deeply engaged in advocating for budgets especially in PA and IL. Senior Center professionals also advocated for state plans at the state level
  - Coordinated NCOA staff public policy updates with NISC leadership
  - Included senior center network in advocacy for reauthorization of the OAA. NISC kept the network informed, engaged and urged to follow-up with thank you notes
    - The Older American’s Act Reauthorization bill was signed into law by the President April 19, 2016. Learn more
  - NISC team members participated in planning a plenary session focused on advocacy for the September 2016 Senior Center Conference in Philadelphia, PA.

Center in the Park, Philadelphia, PA promoted their WHCOA Watch Party, a Live Streaming event at their center.
NISC Senior Center Accreditation Team

2015/2016 Outcomes:

The team continued to review program policies and procedures to ensure NISC has an efficient, effective, and professional program.

NISC Accreditation Board: Sandi Johnson & Jean Williams, Co-Chairs, Dianne Stone, Sharon Lally, Jay Morgan, Rick Eldridge, Pat Branson & Denise Niese

- Eighteen senior centers received National Senior Center Accreditation in FY2016. 119 senior centers are currently accredited.
- Standards and Review Team continued ongoing process to update the national senior center standards to ensure that they are relevant and reflect best practices.
- Learn more about the National Senior Center Standards and the process to achieve National Senior Center Accreditation at www.ncoa.org/nisc

Senior Centers that Achieved National Accreditation in FY2016

Anchorage Senior Activity Center  Anchorage  AK  
Center for Active Seniors, Inc.  Davenport  IA  
City of Rocky Mount Senior Center  Rocky Mount  NC  
Derby Senior Center  Derby  KS  
Fort Collins Senior Center  Fort Collins  CO  
Granby Senior Center  Granby  CT  
Jewish Community Center-AgeWell at the JCC  Pittsburgh  PA  
Lowcountry Senior Center  Charleston  SC  
Midvale Senior Center  Midvale  UT  
Nash County Senior Center  Nashville  NC  
Old Bridge Senior Center/George Bush Senior Center  Old Bridge  NJ  
O'Neill Senior Center, Inc.  Marietta  OH  
Senator Isadore E. Lourie Center  Columbia  SC  
The Horizon Center - Shelby Senior Services  Shelbyville  IN  
The Peak Center  Lansdale  PA  
United Seniors of Athens County Inc  Athens  OH  
Vintage Senior Community Center  Pittsburgh  PA  
Winona Friendship Center  Winona  MN
Aging Mastery Program® (AMP)

The Aging Mastery Program® (AMP) is a comprehensive and fun approach to aging well that encourages people to take actions to enhance their health, financial well-being, social connectedness, and overall quality of life. Central to the AMP philosophy is the belief that modest lifestyle changes can produce big results and that people can be empowered and supported to cultivate health and longevity. Equally important, the program encourages mastery—developing sustainable behaviors over time. Participants in AMP go through a 10-week core program followed by optional elective classes and activities.

Five nationally selected senior centers piloted this exciting new program in fiscal year 2013. They include Center in the Park, Philadelphia, PA, Duxbury Senior Center, Duxbury, MA, Lowcountry Senior Center, Charleston, SC, The Mill Race Center, Columbus, IN, Newington Senior and Disabled Center, Newington, CT. In FY 15 in Massachusetts, 35 Centers are offering the Aging Mastery Program pilot to residents of 46 communities.

AMP is currently being offered nationwide via both grants and direct sales. For example, in FY16, NCOA offered grants to run the Aging Mastery Program® in 39 small towns and rural areas in Minnesota, Washington, and Wisconsin. Each grantee received $12,000 in funding plus an in-kind donation of $4,800 of program materials. NCOA and its state leads (Minnesota Recreation and Parks Association, Minnesota Association of Senior Services, Washington Association of Area Agencies on Aging, and Greater Wisconsin Area Aging Resources) provided extensive technical assistance to grantees.

By the end of June 2016, there were 150+ community partners across the country that had embarked on a joyful, creative journey to help millions of baby boomers and older adults make the most of their gift of longevity through the Aging Mastery Program®.

Become a part of our playbook for aging well

Today's older adults have an incredible gift of longevity - but how can they make the most of it? NCOA's unique Aging Mastery Program® (AMP) offers an exciting playbook - complete with classes, peer support, and rewards. Your center can now enroll to become a host site for this innovative program that has already received excellent feedback from senior centers. Learn more

The class offering was actually profound for me. I am 70 years old and if I’m ‘lucky’ I may have 10 more ‘good’ years. The classes offered ways to make the years happier, healthier, and more worry free.

–AMP Participant, Fort Collins, CO
Opportunities for NISC members

Two New Member Benefits in FY16:

- **NCOA Program Map.** Individuals can find a nearby NISC senior centers and Nationally Accredited Senior Centers on our new map of NCOA partners and programs! [View the map]
- **PurchasingPoint®** NISC member could save money on daily senior center needs by can enrolling in [Learn more]

Grant Funding Opportunities

**SNAP Program RFP:** The third phase of NCOA’s initiative to help seniors enroll in the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) was advertised to NISC member. Community-based organizations were encouraged to apply to receive $50,000 to help 1,250 seniors submit SNAP applications. [Learn more]

**NFESH Grant:** Thanks to generous support from the Walmart Foundation, the National Foundation to End Senior Hunger (NFESH) offered in August 2015 a grant application for organizations to implement the What a Waste program at senior nutrition sites. NFESH will provide grants of services and materials valued at approximately $35,000. [Learn about What a Waste Program]

NCOA/NISC Opportunities

**Flu + You** NCOA offered an easy-to-use education program about the seriousness of the flu, the importance of prevention, and available vaccine options for older adults. Flu + You materials were distributed to senior centers. As part of our Flu + You education program, we launched a Flu Shot Challenge, in collaboration with Sanofi Pasteur. We challenged NISC member centers to compete against one another for monetary prizes. This friendly competition aimed to increase the annual influenza vaccination rates among seniors through education and activation. [Learn More]

**NCOA Caregiver Resources**
In November, Family Caregivers Month, NISC supported caregivers at Senior Centers by sharing NCOA's free tools and information. [Share our resources for caregivers]

**Older Adults and Debt Report released**
NCOA undertook a survey of professionals in aging for an in-depth look at the kinds of debt seniors are dealing with. It found that 15% of respondents regularly encountered seniors who skipped social engagements to save on transportation and registration fees. Read the report for more insights on how older adults are affected by debt. [Learn more]

**Opportunity to operate an older worker program** NCOA sought qualified public or private nonprofit agencies interested in operating the Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP) in specified states. SCSEP provides part-time community service employment for unemployed, low-income residents aged 55+.

500 Free live music performances at senior centers. NISC partnered with the Music Performance Trust Fund and Film Fund for a second year to provide grants for over 500 live music performances at senior centers in select cities across the U.S.
Dr. Rita Chow’s Research Corner highlighted research relevant to senior centers in our newsletter:

- **Older Workers** - control strategies for positive mental health when facing high job demands
- Get tips to reduce work stress
- **MIND Diet to reduce Alzheimer's disease**
- Research on evidence-based programs for older adults
- **Productivity & Engagement in Aging America—The Role of Volunteerism** - positive health benefits of volunteering at your center
- **Advance care planning** - Dr. Chow celebrated CMS’ decision to provide Medicare reimbursement for advance care planning by sharing a few advance directive resources.
  - Eldercare Locator Resources
  - Five Wishes Program
  - Caring Connections
- This report from the World Health Organization examines the future of aging around the world, and recommends extensive changes to how health services to seniors worldwide. Read the report

**New NCOA Crossroads guide**

- NCOA Crossroads is our online community for senior center professionals. Since 2009 there have been 22,218 interactions on the Senior Center Group of Crossroads. This past year we developed a new guide that all senior center professionals can use to learn how to sign up and navigate the site, so you can join the discussion! View the guide Join Crossroads

**Programming Connections**

**NCOA Nutrition & chronic conditions: Tools to stay healthy** - Tools to teach seniors the warning signs of poor nutrition and make sure they’re getting the right nutrients. Find tools to educate seniors

**NCOA’s Next Steps to Better Nutrition program**, developed by the National Council on Aging and the American Heart Association, provides an opportunity for you to promote better nutrition habits at your center. This program teaches older adults how they can afford, purchase, and cook more nutritious foods. Review

**Free Training to Support Senior Caregivers Plan Ahead for the Future**

NISC worked with the **ARC** to connect senior center professionals with a future planning training session for caregivers 65 and older who live with a son or daughter with a disability and need help planning for the future? The Arc free training was available in North Carolina and Tennessee! Learn More

In November 2015, we shared the **National Institute on Aging’s** webinar, **Talking with Your Doctor: Everything You Need to Know to Lead a Lively Workshop** which discussed how senior centers can use the National Institute on Aging’s new Talking With Your Doctor presentation toolkit to lead an engaging and interactive workshop with seniors and prepare them with the skills necessary to share health concerns, make collaborative decisions about care, and more,

We shared the opportunity from **The Jewish Federations of North America’s Center for Advancing Holocaust Survivor Care** for a grant for the expansion of person-centered, trauma-informed supportive services for Holocaust survivors throughout the U.S.

We connected member to the generous gift of the **American Society on Aging** for sharing their Fall 2015 issue of **Generations** free of charge. It focused on reframing the issues and impacts of ageism in America. The issue’s focus on ageism was inspired by a new study that provides powerful insights into how the public views older adults. Read the issue Download the Gauging Aging Study
**Sept 2015 Webinar: Suicide prevention and older adults - Prevention** is key to reducing suicide risk among older adults, who die by suicide at a higher rate than the national average. See the Sept. 17 webinar to learn risk factors for suicide, successful prevention strategies, and ways senior centers can make a difference. [Access the Recording](#) - [See the Slides](#)

**Start a mall walking program** Inclement weather, poor sidewalk conditions, and heavy traffic can make it harder for older adults walk in their neighborhood, but mall walking addresses these barriers. Read this guide from the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)](#) to see how you can partner with your community to start a mall walking program. [Download the guide](#)

**Shared Survey explores America's attitudes on aging** What matters most—health or finances? The 4th annual United States of Aging Survey, conducted by NCOA, n4a, and United Healthcare, found that older Americans’ concerns about their later years differ from those of the professionals who support them. [See the full results](#)

**Encourage mental health this May for Mental Health Month** Mental illness can affect anyone, but is especially prevalent in older adults. During May, Mental Health Month, we shared an excellent opportunity for your center to make a difference in the lives of older adults living with mental illnesses. [Mental Health America](#) free, anonymous and confidential mental health screening tools that anyone can use, and can be included in your health fair this spring! [Learn more](#)

**Mental health and suicide** are serious issues among older adults. Last year, NISC encouraged the use of [Promoting Emotional Health and Preventing Suicide](#), a toolkit from SAMSHA (Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration) that provides strategies for dealing with mental health and suicide prevention at senior centers. [View the Toolkit Here](#). Or go to [samhsa.gov](http://samhsa.gov)

**The RISE Program connects older adults with climate change education and training** The Retirees in Service to the Environment (RISE) Program is an environmental education and leadership training program for retirees and other adults over 60. It includes 30 hours of training over an eight-week period, culminating in a capstone volunteer project. The RISE Program responds to the intersection of two critical trends - mounting concern about environmental sustainability and the growing aging population. America’s retirees have the time, talent, and skills to help address issues like climate change, air and water pollution, and protection of natural areas. Start a RISE program at your center! [Learn more](#) or go to [http://citra.human.cornell.edu/rise/](http://citra.human.cornell.edu/rise/)

**We shared two inspiring videos this past year.**

- NISC member Carlye Teel, director of the Ballard NW Senior Center in Seattle, WA, was featured in a moving video demonstrating the value of senior centers and explaining the need for continued investment in aging services. [Press Link to Watch the Video](http://www.equalvoiceforfamilies.org/the-dignity-of-living-lifelines-for-elders-seek-to-thrive/) or go to [http://www.equalvoiceforfamilies.org/the-dignity-of-living-lifelines-for-elders-seek-to-thrive/](http://www.equalvoiceforfamilies.org/the-dignity-of-living-lifelines-for-elders-seek-to-thrive/)

- **Short film: Preventing isolation among seniors** Please share this short film with your staff, governance, and community and thank them for the important work they do to prevent social isolation among the oldest-old (85+), an age group which is projected to grow from 5.9 million to 18 million by 2050. [Press Link to Watch the Video](https://vimeo.com/142997373) or go to: [https://vimeo.com/142997373](https://vimeo.com/142997373)
FY16 NISC Founders Award Recipient – Jean Williams

Jean Williams received the National Institute of Senior Center’s (NISC) 2015 Founders Award recipient. This award recognizes outstanding professional leadership in the senior center field and is given to enhance the senior center profession and NISC.

Jean Williams was the Executive Director of the Newark Senior Center for nine years (1997-2006); during her tenure she led her organization through self-assessment to become the first accredited senior center in Delaware. Under her leadership membership increased to the point where a 7,000 sq. ft. addition was added in the 21,000 sq. ft. building in 2000. With a grant from NCOA a Wisdom Works program was established at the center, which is still operating.

Working with Wilmington Senior Center and the State of Delaware, she helped create first Caregiver Resource Centers in Delaware. Jean helped establish the Delaware Aging Network, which operates as Delaware’s state association for senior centers and other older adult providers.

Through Jean’s leadership of the National Accreditation Program she impacts the senior center field. Since joining the NISC Council’s Standard Committee in 1999, she has passionately promoted accreditation and is a (cheer)leader, as she promotes, guides and trains peer reviewers. In 2004 she worked with the Standards Committee to do the second revision of the standards. Jean helps on the national level as a NISC Peer Reviewer for 13 years and is currently the co-chair of Accreditation Board, her second stint in that position. She is a trainer and workshop facilitator for senior centers, promoting innovative programming, volunteer engagement focusing on recruiting and retaining people over 50, understanding of generational characteristics, interests and needs, especially those of Boomers as seen through her work with Temple University’s Coming of Age program.

For the past seven years, she has presented workshops throughout Pennsylvania through a contract with Pennsylvania Department of the Aging and Disabilities, as well as at various ASA and NCOA conferences and other state association conferences to promote image change of senior centers, volunteer engagement and understanding of generational characteristics. She also took a leadership role and helped plan the Senior Center Summit held at the ASA Conference in March 2015. Her leadership role continued throughout FY16 with the planning of the NISC Senior Centers 2016 Conference. Her continued dedication is deeply appreciated.
Join Us as We Move Forward!

Get Involved with the NISC Teams
1. Connect your professional passion to the appropriate team.
2. Contact the Chair of that team.
3. Complete the Interest and Expertise Survey: https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/NISCExpertsandInterests

Best Practices Team
- Connects senior center professionals nationally to promote and disseminate new ideas and research.
- Reviews and selects winners for the annual NISC Programs of Excellence Awards.
- Chair: Mary Staackmann, mstaackmann@nssc.org

Diversity Team
- Enriches NISC work groups and leadership by including individuals who differ from themselves in terms of race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, age, social economic status, religious affiliation, gender, and ability and shares information with senior centers to support diversity.
- Chair Position available for someone passionate about diversity. If interested, contact Sue Getman at srgetman@wilmingtonseniorcenter.org.

Economic Security Team
- Connects senior centers with information about economic security and benefits programs, tools to implement programs, and professionals with expertise.
- Co-Chairs: Laura Cisneros, LCisneros@wellmed.net & Beverly Ferry, BeverlyF@livingwellinwabashcounty.org

Improving Health Team
- Provides easy access to information on implementation of evidence-based programs.
- Reviews and assesses selected national health-related programs.
- Chair: Elizabeth Bernat, elizabeth.bernat@rsfh.com

Public Policy Team
- Educates and engages all senior centers and provides information on long-term advocacy issues.
- Develops a list of committed senior centers for fast response to pressing advocacy issues on behalf of older adults.
- Chair: Lynn Fields Harris, lharris@centerinthepark.org

Standards & Accreditation Team
- Builds capacity and advances the quality of senior centers nationwide through National Senior Center Standards and Accreditation.
- Chair: Dianne Stone, dstone@newingtonct.gov

State Association & Speakers Bureau Team
- Supports state associations by providing information and sharing best practices.
- Provides access to affordable professional expertise for presentations, conferences, workshops, and trainings.
- Chair: Tracey Colagrossi, TColagrossi@hanover-township.org

Questions? Contact NISC Chair Lynn Fields Harris lharris@centerinthepark.org
- See the online version of this document, with live links on www.ncoa.org/nisc.