



# FY 2017 NISC Annual Report



National Institute  
of Senior Centers

July 1, 2016 – June 30, 2017

# 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 seven 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, 2016-June 30, 2017 NISC Executive Committee

### **NISC Chair**

**NISC Chair-Elect**

**NISC Past-Chair**

Lynn Fields Harris, Pennsylvania

Elizabeth Bernat, South Carolina

Susan Getman, Delaware

### **Team Chairs**

Best Practices

Economic Security

Jill Hall, Maryland

Laura Cisneros, Texas

Beverly Ferry, Indiana

Improving Health

Standards & Accreditation

State Associations & Speakers Bureau

Elizabeth Bernat, South Carolina

Dianne Stone, Connecticut

Tracey Colagrossi, Illinois

### **NCOA Staff**

NISC Program Manager

NCOA Constituent Engagement Coordinator

NCOA Public Policy

Maureen O'Leary

Scott Harlow

Marci Phillips

Cover Picture: Twinkling (a quiet sign of enthusiastic agreement) made while listening to Jim Firman remarks at the 2017 NISC National Senior Center Conference in Illinois.

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## Letter from the NISC Chair

Lynn Fields Harris, Executive Director  
Center in the Park, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

During my first year as NISC Chair, I have been absolutely pleased to work with NISC Executive Committee members and NCOA staff who continue a long-standing commitment to expanding the NISC network and engaging senior center professionals in promoting and enhancing the outstanding work that is done at centers across the country. This year's National Senior Center Month theme: "Senior Centers: Masters of Aging" could not be more appropriate. Our mission is to collectively Empower, Enlighten, Engage and Enrich as senior centers continue to be innovative and impactful addressing greater need with fewer resources, we have no other choice than to be masterful!

As my term as Chair began, I could not have been more excited, than I was, to welcome nearly 300 senior center professionals from across the country, as far away as Alaska; and, also from Canada, to Philadelphia for the 2016 NISC "Life Liberty and the Pursuit of Excellence in Senior Centers" conference, which the Philadelphia Corporation for Aging graciously hosted. I was so happy that you, my colleagues, were favorably impressed with our city and left with very positive feelings about it and all that it has to offer. One colleague even said, "Lynn, now I understand why you love Philadelphia so much!"

This year provided an extra dose of networking opportunities for NISC members. As soon as we closed the books on the 2016 Conference, we went to work planning for the June, 2017 NISC Conference, partnering with NANASP. Held at McDonald's University in Oak Brook, Illinois, the Illinois State Association of Senior Centers and NANASP staff, especially, made us feel welcomed and excited for another opportunity to share with colleagues who engage with older adults through senior centers and nutrition services. We had an opportunity to hear from and dialogue with Ashton Applewhite, author of "This Chair Rocks", who had earlier presented a webinar for the NISC Network. Among the priorities of the NISC Executive Committee is to creatively and aggressively combat ageism at our centers and in our society.

We value older adults, recognizing that they represent multiple generations who want the opportunity to continue to share their diverse skills and talents beyond their years of work – whether in the job market or at home; and they want to stay healthy and independent.

Senior Centers provide outlets for learning and creative self-expression with opportunities to renew friendships or to make new friends. Senior Centers offers tools, resources, and opportunities to assist its participants in managing their health and finances in order to stay independent and active; and, to give back to our communities!

The NISC Executive Committee has worked over the past year to restructure teams and to be more inclusive in our work by encouraging more participation from the network. We are working collaboratively with the NCOA in its strategic planning effort in order to find ways to make your membership in NISC more valuable. Another priority I have, as Chair, is to expand our outreach and involvement in advocacy at the grassroots level through the use of the tools available through the NCOA. I ask and hope that this is the year that you will join us in our virtual network by getting involved on a NISC workgroup/team. I hope that as you read this annual report, you will be prompted to join us.

# Best Practices Team

## Overall Outcome

Share knowledge with senior centers gained through 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.



**Jill P. Hall**  
**NISC Best Practices Chair**  
 Division Chief,  
 Senior Centers and  
 Community Services  
 Baltimore County  
 Department of Aging  
 Towson, MD

## 2016/2017 Outcomes

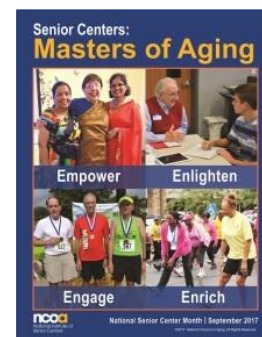
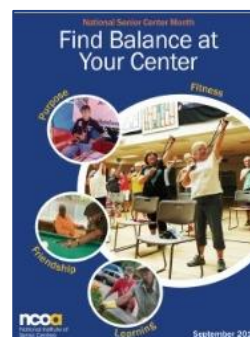
- Announced, evaluated, and disseminated 2016 NISC Programs of Excellence Awards.
- Revised the awards for 2017 to include 7 categories and one special feature area.
- Obtained funding to provide cash awards to category winners.
- Promoted 2016 Senior Center Month and developed and reviewed the theme and materials for the 2017 National Senior Center Month celebration.
- Assisted with the 2016 Pennsylvania Corporation for Aging Conference and 2017 NANASP and NCOA Joint Conference in Oak Brook, IL.
- Conducted Best Practices Team meetings using video conferencing to improve communication and networking amongst members.

## 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 panel of judges selected the award winners from 99 nominations (a 43% increase over the number of submissions in 2015). Six award winners were chosen, along with six honorable mentions. Awards were presented at the *Life, Liberty and the Pursuit of Excellence in Senior Centers* conference in Philadelphia, PA. The complete listing of the 99 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 2016, team members promoted the 2016 toolkit materials. By June 2017, members chose the 2017 theme, *Senior Centers: Masters of Aging*, provided input to the cover design, and reviewed and disseminated toolkit material.



## National Senior Center Conferences



**Senior Centers 2016** was held in Philadelphia, PA in partnership with the **Philadelphia Corporation for Aging (PCA)** and their annual Regional Conference on Aging. The 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. Almost 50 sessions and networking events were offered at the September 24-26 conference. The Pennsylvania Department of Aging supported this national training event by sponsoring transportation to the conference site.



2017 NANASP/NCOA Conference “Fostering Well-Centered Aging” occurred on June 14-17, 2017 in Oak Brook, IL. This was the first joint conference of these two associations and was so successful that the partnership will be continued in 2018 in Charleston, SC on June 6-8. The conference included 31 sessions, plenaries on policy & ageism, Accreditation Training, AMP Session, three networking events and tours of two nationally accredited Senior Centers.

## 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.

### 2016/2017 Outcomes

- Explored resources available on diversity issues and shared with senior centers.
- Held LGBT welcoming senior center sessions
- Held Ageism Presentation

### SAGE

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

### Creating LGBT Welcoming Senior Centers

Two workshops were presented on Creating LGBT Welcoming Senior Centers at the 2016 & 2017 Senior Center Conferences. Today approximately 3 million older adults openly identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) in the United States. Many LGBT older adults do not access social and support services at senior centers because of fear they will not be welcomed. Others do attend centers but hide their identity. At the presentations, attendees learned tools, programming ideas and held a discussion on what centers can do to let LGBT older adults know they are welcomed and valued members. To learn more go to [SAGE Resource Center on LGBT Aging](#).

Sadiya Abjani, is the Training Specialist at Services and Advocacy for GLBT Elders (SAGE), NY, presented in September 2016 and Sherrill Wayland, Manager, SAGE (Services & Advocacy for GLBT Elders), New York City, NY presented in June 2017.

### Ageism and This Chair Rocks

In June, 2017 at the NCOA/NANASP Conference one General Session was focused on Ageism. Ashton Applewhite’s keynote was titled: *This Chair Rocks: How Ageism Warps Our View of Long Life*. She explained that we may assume what lies ahead is a grim slide into depression, dementia, and dependence, but she said that’s just the party line, and she proceeded to debunk it in spades. Part monologue, part consciousness-raiser, she dispelled myth after myth about late life and proposes an alternative to worrying about getting old: wake up to the ageist messages that frame two thirds of our lives as decline, cheer up, and push back. Her message is it’s time to work together to make discrimination on the basis of age as unacceptable as any other prejudice.

## 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.

### 2016/2017 Outcomes:

- Provided senior center professionals with easy access to information about current economic security and benefits programs and how to implement them.
- Offered Economic Security Session at the 2017 NISC National Senior Center Conference, June 2017.
- Provided economic security resources for senior center month program guide.

### The NISC Economic Team shared 3 ways senior centers can promote economic security on the [NISC Economic Security web page](#):

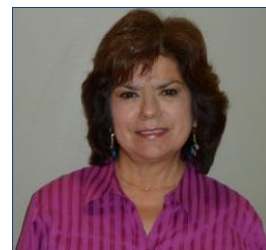
1. Present the following programs: [Next Steps to Better Nutrition](#); [Savvy Saving Seniors® Programs](#)
2. Provide jobs and training opportunities: [SCSEP Program](#); [Senior Employment Resources on EconomicCheckUp®](#)
3. Share resources with senior center personnel that offer financial and benefits counseling thru SNAP, Benefits Access, Staff Training and more.

### **Economic Security at Your Senior Center presented at the 2017 NISC Senior Center Conference**

On Wednesday, June 14, 2017 a panel of presenters gave mini-presentations on their economic security programs. Participants found new programs to help connect older adults experiencing economic hardship to services, benefits, and other support. They found a holistic approach by offering NCOA's Savvy, Saving Senior® programs and toolkits, tips on running a successful partner led Health and Financial Wellness Fair and how to help older adults by offering a durable medical equipment loan closet. Presenters discussed resources, recruiting, training, team building and utilizing the economic resources and toolkits. Presenters: Laura Cisneros, Wellmed, San Antonio TX; Erin Kee, Senior Program Manager, National Council on Aging, Arlington, VA; Jill Kranz, Senior Services Director, Middleton Senior Center, Middleton, WI; Beverly Ferry, CEO Living Well in Wabash County, Wabash IN

### **Senior center sustainability webinar with Dr. Joyce Weil**

On September 22, 2016, Dr. Joyce Weil presented on how senior centers can use social capital to effect policy change to create sustained growth. This webinar presented some practical steps centers can take including being counted, sharing evidence-based practices, diversifying funding plans, having strength in numbers, using advocacy, having a broad (not just health) focus, including businesses, and reclaiming the senior-center name. [View the webinar](#).



**Laura Cisneros**  
Economic Security Team  
Co-Chair  
Manager Community  
Relations  
WellMed Charitable  
Foundation  
San Antonio, TX



**Beverly Ferry**  
Economic Security  
Team Co-Chair  
CEO, Living Well in  
Wabash County, Inc.  
Wabash, IN

## 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.

- Average response data collected determined that State Senior Center Associations:
  - 33% have memberships between 50-100 individuals
  - 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



**Tracey Colagrossi**  
**State Association**  
**Chair**  
Program Manager  
Hanover Township  
Senior Services,  
Bartlett, Illinois

### 2016/2017 Projected Outcomes

- Create and conduct conference event for State Associations to share best practices in state associations.
- Conduct conference call/meeting to address topics focusing on increasing membership and fundraising.
- Conduct outreach to state associations to connect them to NCOA programming.

### State Association Outreach

Advertised the Flu + You Challenge. This competition increased the level of annual influenza vaccination rates among their seniors through education and awareness.

Advertised the two Senior Center National Conferences held in Fall of 2016 and Spring 2017.

Advertised NCOA distribution of Malnutrition placemats to be used during Malnutrition Awareness Week that was scheduled for Sept. 26-30

In September, 2017, the State Association Team shared **NCOA's Advocacy Toolkit: Election 2016** with State Association contacts for use by their membership as local Senior Centers invite and interview candidates.

### NISC State Association Breakfast

The NISC State Association Breakfast was held at the June 2017 NISC/NANASP Conference. During the breakfast, Maureen O'Leary gave an overview of NISC outcomes this past year. Then Tracey Colagrossi, NISC Chair of the State Associations Team facilitated the presentation on *Recruitment and Member Retention Strategies*. The program was aimed at members of state associations and for those looking to start a state senior center association. The session addressed the challenges associations face such as recruitment, member retention, marketing, technology, collaboration with other aging associations and events to address the relevance of Senior Centers. A toolkit of resources will be available in FY18.



# 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.

## 2016/2017 Outcomes

- Conducted a webinar to disseminate report of the FY 16 senior centers survey 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. The webinar included the data results, identified trends/gaps/needs, and developed recommendations to improve the implementation of evidence-based programs.
- Promoted the availability of health programs through Senior Center Voice, emails, and on the NISC pages of [www.ncoa.org](http://www.ncoa.org).



**Elizabeth Bernat**  
**Improving Health Chair**  
Director of Senior Services, Roper St. Francis Healthcare Lowcountry Senior Center  
Charleston, SC

## Six Ways to Promote Healthy Aging at Your Senior Center

In December of 2016, NCOA staff in coordination with the NISC Improving Health team created a new page to easily connect senior center professionals with many helpful, healthy aging resources [View the page to find 6 ways to improve the health of your participants.](#)

## Strategies for Implementation of Evidence-Based Programs in Senior Centers

A webinar focused on evidence-based programs was held on April 20, 2017. This webinar provided an overview of the number of senior centers implementing evidence-based programs and the important role centers play in providing centralized community-based locations for programming. Speakers from two centers shared common benefits and challenges to implementing evidence-based programs. Helpful resources and successful strategies between senior centers and state and local partners were also featured. [View the webinar.](#)

## Food Safety 101

The NISC Improving Health Team reviewed the initial Food Safety 101 program and its training prior to implementing a pilot program in FY16. Eighteen sites were chosen in year two of the program. They hosted the food safety program piloted in FY16. 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 participants. The chosen centers offered diverse programming and were located within 50 miles of selected FSIS District Offices. The program will continue in FY18. [Learn more about the program and selected sites.](#)

## Shared information to encourage chronic disease self-management for older adults

About half of all adults in the United States have at least one chronic condition. This article from Kaiser Health News was shared with NISC members; it highlights how managing one's own chronic condition(s) is essential. [Read the article](#)

# 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.

## 2016/2017 Outcomes

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

- **NISC team members** participated in planning a plenary session focused on advocacy for the September 2016 Senior Center Conference in Philadelphia, PA and in the FY 17 Conference in Illinois.
- **Developed Senior Center Advocacy Day 2017**, to be held on September 15.



Left to Right: Marci Phillips, NCOA; Bob Madonna, Surrey Services for Seniors; Lynn Fields Harris, Center in the Park; Kathy Cubit Center for Advocacy for the Rights and Interests of the Elderly (CARIE); Holly Lange, Philadelphia Corporation for Aging (PCA); Senator Art Haywood.

## Your Voice Matters: How Senior Centers Can Change Local, State, and National Policy

In September 2016, NCOA staff and NISC leaders worked together to present a plenary session on advocacy. Pennsylvania Senator Art Haywood and Pennsylvania leaders shared their views on the importance of advocacy and the various approaches it can take.

Pennsylvania Senator Art Haywood explained why the perspectives of those directly serving seniors are important to his work as Democratic Chair of the Committee on Aging & Youth. Pennsylvania leaders shared how local aging leaders sought to influence the state budget impasse and the Pennsylvania “2020 State

Plan on Aging.” Marci Phillips, NCOA staff explained the importance of sharing senior center professionals expertise to affect national policymaking, and gave information and encouragement to partner on advocacy for aging services and benefits.

In June 2017, at the Senior Centers 2017 Conference, Marci Phillips, presented on **The New Washington: What it Means for Seniors and Those Who Serve Them**. The new Administration and the 115th Congress that convened in 2017 have outlined policy proposals that will have significant impacts on the programs and benefits on which many vulnerable Americans rely. Attendees heard about the threats to senior nutrition, transportation, healthy aging, and elder justice programs, and to Medicare, Medicaid, and SNAP benefits. She shared how seniors’ stories can make a difference in these debates and how local organizations can ensure these voices are heard.

**Friday, Sept. 15, 2017 was designated as National Senior Center Advocacy Day!** This opportunity to focus attention on public policy issues that affect senior centers was announced in June 2017. We encouraged senior center professionals to schedule events that: Educate participants, elected officials, and their community about how their center is funded; Discuss how local, state, and federal legislation affect their center and participants and Empower older adults to advocate for their senior center with their elected officials.

# NISC Senior Center Accreditation Team

## 2016/2017 Outcomes:

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

**NISC Accreditation Board:** At the December 2016 Accreditation Board meeting a new slate of officers was appointed. We thanked outgoing board members Co-Chair, Sandi Johnson, IL, and Sharon Lally, MA for a job well done, We are very grateful for their diligence, professionalism, and passion for senior center accreditation. We also welcomed several new accreditation board members and new Chair Christine Beatty.

[Meet the 2017 Board](#)

- Standards and Review Team continued ongoing process to update the national senior center standards to ensure that they are relevant and reflect best practices.
- Twelve senior centers received National Senior Center Accreditation in calendar year 2016 and two in calendar year 2017. 115 senior centers are currently accredited.
- Learn more about the National Senior Center Standards and the process to achieve National Senior Center Accreditation at <http://www.ncoa.org/NISC>



**Dianne Stone,**  
Standards &  
Accreditation Chair  
Director, Newington  
Senior and Disabled  
Center, Newington,  
Connecticut

2016 Senior Centers	City	State
Anchorage Senior Activity Center	Anchorage	AK
Callahan Senior Center	Framingham	MA
Center for Active Seniors, Inc.	Davenport	IA
Derby Senior Center	Derby	KS
Fort Collins Senior Center	Fort Collins	CO
Jerry M. Passmore Center	Hillsborough	NC
Lexington Senior Center	Lexington	NC
Raleigh County Senior Center / Raleigh County Commission on Aging, Inc.	Beckley	WV
Seymour Center	Chapel Hill	NC
The Horizon Center - Shelby Senior Services	Shelbyville	IN
Thomasville Senior Center	Thomasville	NC
Winona Friendship Center	Winona	MN
2017 Senior Centers	City	State
Rocky River Senior Center	Rocky River	OH
Enfield Senior Center	Enfield	CT

## Aging Mastery Program®



*National Council on Aging*

For most older adults, it's not enough to recommend that they "exercise daily," "eat well," or "save more." They need specific, engaging opportunities that motivate and support them to take these actions.

NCOA's proven Aging Mastery Program® (AMP) offers just such an innovative approach to guide individuals through this phase of life and help them achieve autonomy, mastery, and meaning in their later years.

Senior centers have played a central role in the development and expansion of the program. From an original five pilot sites, the program has grown to serve over 6,000 participants in 200+ organizations nationwide (most of them senior centers). Most importantly, the program has been proven to help older adults take positive actions and make measurable improvements to their health, financial fitness, and overall well-being.

Evaluation results have shown that older adults in the program increased their:

- Social connectedness
- Physical activity levels
- Healthy eating habits
- Use of advanced planning
- Participation in evidence-based programs
- Adoption of several other healthy behaviors

Program graduation and satisfaction data have also been strong and validate that the program resonates with older adults; 92% of participants graduate (complete at least 7 of 10 classes). The program has recently finished a rigorous evaluation with positive results due to be published soon. These results include measurable improvements in physical activity, as well as taking actions related to advance care planning.

NCOA expects that AMP will qualify as an evidence-based program eligible for Title III-D funding by late 2017. AMP differs from other wellness programs in that it is expansive and holistic—looking at a wide range of behaviors that include nutrition and fitness, but also extends to sleeping patterns, relationships, economic health, civic engagement, advance care planning, and other vital topics. At its core, AMP is a fun and inspirational program that reframes aging and motivates people to action.

Over the course of 10 classes (for the traditional program) or 12 classes (for the Caregiver version of the program) participants take key steps to change behaviors and strengthen their ties to communities. They accomplish this by creating their own personal pathways for aging well via actionable goals, sustainable behaviors, clear incentives, and peer support.

Most importantly, the program encourages mastery—developing sustainable behaviors across many dimensions to support holistic and positive aging. The advantage of changing habits is that once behaviors become automatic, people no longer have to use any energy or willpower to maintain healthy decisions. Research shows that approximately 40% of what we do every day, we do in pretty much the same way and in the same context. So if we can change a range of important habits for an aging population, they're much more likely to be happier, healthier, and more productive.

Would you like to bring AMP to your center? Visit [ncoa.org/AMP](http://ncoa.org/AMP) to learn more and email us at [AMP@ncoa.org](mailto:AMP@ncoa.org) to get started.

## FY17 Opportunities for NISC members

### New Member Benefit developed in 2017

Developed in 2017 in partnership with the Massachusetts Association of Councils on Aging and writer, **Barrie Atkin**, is a new NISC member benefit offering over 500 marketing ideas and resources to help you promote your senior center. Go to the Member Library for your copy of [Marketing for Any Senior Center](#).

### New NISC blog features helpful hints from senior center experts

NISC features useful content for senior center professionals on our new blog

- [3 Reasons to Love Senior Center Month](#) - Maureen O'Leary
- [4 Top Takeaways from Senior Centers 2016](#) - Maureen O'Leary
- [5 Strategies to Fight Senior Center Funding Cuts](#) - Maureen O'Leary
- [5 Ways for Senior Centers to Improve Outreach to LGBT Older Adults](#) - Sherrill Wayland
- [It's Time to Change the Story of Aging](#) - Jean Van Ryzin
- [Draining the Swamp of Ageism](#) - Jean Van Ryzin
- [Senior Centers Masters of Aging](#) - Maureen O'Leary

### Over 400 free performances hosted at senior centers during MusicianFest 2016

Last year's MusicianFest Performance Series was a great success, with 443 performances hosted between May and December, 2016. In partnership with the Musician Performance Trust Fund, we were able to provide free musical performances across the country. [Review the 2016 program](#)



### NCOA/NISC Opportunities

**NISC Improving Health Team and NCOA Center for Healthy Aging staff present webinar:** The webinar, *Strategies for Implementation of Evidence-Based Programs in Senior Centers* describes common benefits and challenges to implementing evidence-based programs in senior centers and includes helpful resources and successful strategies between senior centers and state and local partners are featured.

### Congratulations to the winners of the Flu Shot Challenge!

This past fall, NISC senior centers competed against each other to see who could attain the highest vaccinations rate amongst participants at their centers. Arlington Council on Aging, Arlington, MA, came out on top, followed by Newington Senior and Disability Center, Newington, CT, and Portage Senior Center, Portage, MI. The awards were for \$5,000, \$3,000, and \$2,000 for first, second, and third, respectively. Congratulations to the winners, and thank you for educating older adults about their flu shot options!

### Gen2Gen and NISC Partnership

Generation to Generation is a five-year campaign to mobilize 1 million people over 50 to help young people thrive, and unite all ages to create a better future. NCOA's National Institute of Senior Centers is a campaign partner, and we would like to highlight your senior center's intergenerational work. Ask your participants to share their stories, and be sure they mention your senior center's role in connecting the generations. [Share your stories here](#)

### Intergenerational engagement with Gen2Gen Summer Challenge

Summertime is awesome, but not for kids who fall behind. This past summer older adults were encouraged to take the Gen2Gen Summer Challenge! Generation to Generation (Gen2Gen) is a campaign aimed at inspiring adults over 50 to make a positive difference in the lives of children and youth, particularly those growing up in challenging circumstances. [See Gen2Gen Reads](#)





### Advocacy training for non-profit professionals

Senior centers need to be prepared to educate their elected leaders on the implications of policy decisions on their constituents. In February, NCOA cosponsored a webinar with a host of other national aging organizations, led by experts at the Alliance for Justice, on the basics of lobbying rules for nonprofits. [Learn about the difference between advocacy and lobbying.](#)

### New BenefitsCheckUp® to easily help your participants find the benefits they need

More than 5 million older adults have used BenefitsCheckUp® (BCU) to connect with over \$18 billion in assistance. In FY 17 NISC members saw the latest improvements, and were encouraged to use BCU as a tool in efforts to help your participants find the benefits they need. [Get started](#)

### Free placemats for Malnutrition Awareness Week

Malnutrition Awareness Week was Sept. 26-30. NISC member ordered free educational placemats on malnutrition for their centers. If you missed the signup for these, you can still download and print your own at your center. [5 Facts about Malnutrition placemat](#) | [6 Questions to Ask Your Doctor placemat](#) | [Learn more about malnutrition](#)

### Check out this chronic disease information to inform the programs and resources you offer

The NCOA blog offered a great resource with tips on healthy aging, advocacy and policy news, benefits for seniors, and much more. Senior Centers were encouraged to share our posts to provide this valuable information to individuals in the senior center network, one example of blog articles was on how to manage the top 10 chronic conditions in older adults. [Read the blog](#)

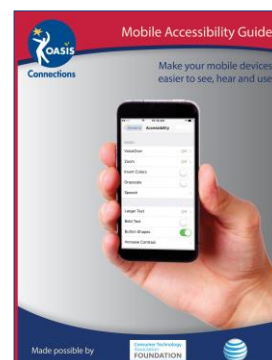
### Dr. Rita Chow's Research Corner highlighted research relevant to senior centers in our newsletter:

- **Tai Ji Quan shown to decrease falls in senior center participants** [Read more](#)
- **Research that supports your work in preventing loneliness** is evident in a study of 14,199 Chinese Americans that participated in Loneliness and Cognitive Function in Older Adults: Findings From the Chinese Longitudinal Healthy Longevity Survey. [Learn more](#)
- **Mindfulness meditation**, originating from Buddhism, involves sitting and giving attention to one's breath and trains the mind to control stress and negative emotions. See this two-part study and the support for incorporating meditation to assist in addressing issues such as pain, substance use, and insomnia. Consider starting a meditation program at your senior center. [Read the first part of the study](#) | [Read the second part of the study](#)
- A new report from the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine provides an overview of family caregivers of older adults, impact on caregivers' health, economic security, and evidence of programs and interventions that are designed to support family caregivers. The report calls upon the new Administration to take steps to address the health, economic, and social issues facing family caregivers of older adults. [Read the report](#)

### Programming Connections

#### Try the OASIS Mobile Accessibility Guide to enhance your computer class

In our increasingly digital society, more people are staying connected to family, friends and opportunities using smartphones and tablets, and older adults are participating in this shift. Mobile devices are more challenging to use for people experiencing changes in vision and hearing that are common as we age. NISC has partnered with OASIS to provide this free guide to your center for device usability. [Download the guide here](#)



### **Use a new toolkit to combat social isolation**

Senior centers have evolved over time to support the independence and quality of life of older adults and the communities they serve. But, they also remain true to their roots as the community's best resource to reduce social isolation and loneliness. AARP and n4a released a new toolkit to combat social isolation, and we encourage use at your center. [Download the toolkit](#) | [More information on social isolation](#)

### **Help us reframe the aging conversation with this new toolkit**

As Americans live longer and healthier lives, society needs to adjust both our attitude toward aging and our systems that support and shape wellbeing in later life. Understanding this, the National Council on Aging partnered with seven of our peer organizations, several forward-thinking funders, and the FrameWorks Institute to figure out how to reframe aging. The findings and recommendations are now available to the field in a new toolkit, Gaining Momentum. [Check out the toolkit](#)

### **New resource helps combat malnutrition among older adults**

Up to 10% of all older Americans are malnourished, which can worsen chronic conditions and make it difficult for them to stay independent. The National Council on Aging and several partners have developed a new Community Malnutrition Resource Hub to help local organizations combat this issue. Implement a malnutrition plan in your community. [Learn more](#)

### **Learn about the Elder Index and how to use it to define the cost of aging in your community**

Being able to define the cost of aging by zip code in your area can provide a powerful new way to communicate the value of your center's programs and services. An April [webinar](#) educated members about the Elder Index, how it measures economic security in a specific location and use it in your work.

### **Generations United and Programs of Distinction**

In FY17 we shared an invitation for members to apply for the Programs of Distinction from Generations United. They annually recognize outstanding intergenerational programs. These awards highlight excellence while exploring diversity among these types of programs. [Learn about the Programs of Distinction.](#)

### **Celebrate Park and Recreation Month at your senior center**

This July, members celebrated the power and importance of play with the National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) for Park and Recreation Month! Play is vital for our health and well-being and there's no better place to play than our local parks and recreation facilities. We shared resources on how to get involved. [Visit NRPA's website](#)



### **Learn how to implement an oral health program at your center**

A new website from the Administration for Community Living focuses on community-based oral health programs around the country. It includes a searchable database of nearly 200 programs, and resources for you to start your own. [Learn more about oral health programs](#)

## **FY17 Grant Connections**

### **In January we shared Grants for the Walk with Ease program**

The Osteoarthritis Action Alliance (OAAA) invited applicants for eight mini grants of up to \$7,000 to strengthen delivery and expand dissemination of the evidence based, cost effective and arthritis-appropriate *Walk With Ease* program. [Learn more about Walk with Ease](#)

### **Grants for instructor trainings for evidence-based programs**

The [National Recreation and Park Association \(NRPA\)](#), with the support of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), accepted applications for the Instructor Training for Adults 50+ Physical Activity Programs Grants. Trainings were for either the *Walk With Ease* or *Active Living Every Day* program. A total of 300 instructor training grants were awarded.

### **Grants available from the Retirement Research Foundation**

The Retirement Research Foundation provided grants for projects that benefit older adults. These grants support a variety of programs, including advocacy, direct service, research, and training.

### **Cash awards announced for Programs of Excellence**

Every day, senior centers across the country offer an exciting array of programs for older adults. The annual NISC Programs of Excellence Awards honor and promote these outstanding efforts. This June NCOA announced that a cash award will be given for the top entries in each category: \$100 awards will be given to the senior centers winning the general categories, while a \$300 award will go to the center with the best marketing campaign.

All senior centers are invited to submit a senior center program in one of 7 general categories, **as well as** the 1 highlighted area. Programs must have been conducted in a senior center between July 1, 2016 and Sept. 30, 2017. Judges will look for programs that are innovative, creative, and easily replicated. Award categories are: General Categories: Community Development, Leadership, and Intergenerational; Cultural Programs; Fundraising; Health and Wellness; Nutrition; Special Events; Technology + Highlighted Program Area (submit a second program in this category): Marketing – Strategies or campaigns to promote senior centers and their activities.

Go to <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/2017ProgrammingAwards> for complete rules and the nomination form. Due to the potential volume of submissions, each senior center may submit only ONE entry in the general category AND ONE in the marketing category (2 total entries).

Completed nomination forms must be received **no later than Friday, Nov. 10, 2017**. Please direct questions and materials to NISC Program Manager, Maureen O’Leary at [Maureen.Oleary@ncoa.org](mailto:Maureen.Oleary@ncoa.org) – Must use “NISC Excellence Awards” in the subject line.



## **FY17 NISC Founders Award Recipient**

### **Rick Eldridge**



A three-member selection committee chose **Rick Eldridge** as the 2016 recipient of the NISC Founders Award. Rick excels in the following three areas that make up the basis of this award: accrued contributions during sustained years of senior center service, outstanding leadership or innovation, and specific significant service of benefit to NCOA/NISC.

For the past 29 years, Rick served as the first and only Executive Director of Rufty-Holmes Senior Center in Salisbury, North Carolina. Rufty-Holmes Senior Center is well-known in NC for its innovative programming, and has been recognized by NISC twice with National Program Awards. Under Rick's leadership the Center was chosen to pilot the NC State Certification Program for senior centers, resulting in Rufty-Holmes being named North Carolina's "First Senior Center of Excellence" in 1999. In 2001, the Center became the first senior center in North Carolina accredited by NISC; with subsequent accreditations granted in 2005, 2011, and 2016.

Rick has served as a mentor, providing training, guidance and making presentations on the state, regional, and national levels. He served as the President of the North Carolina Association on Aging from 2007-2009 after helping to establish the NC Senior Center Alliance in 2005. Rick served as a NC Delegate to the 2005 White House Conference on Aging, and was the NC Representative to the NISC Delegate Council from 2006 to 2009. He has been an Accreditation Reviewer and Standards Trainer since 2004, and has served on NISC Accreditation Board since 2009.

Rick has written and broadcast a daily "Senior Moment" (sixty-second healthy aging tips) on local radio. He and his wife, Susan, have two adult sons. Rick retired June 30, 2017.

# 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: [www.surveymonkey.com/s/NISCExpertsandInterests](http://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:** Jill Hall, [jphall@baltimorecountymd.gov](mailto:jphall@baltimorecountymd.gov)

## 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](mailto: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](mailto:LCisneros@wellmed.net) & Beverly Ferry, [BeverlyF@livingwellinwabashcounty.org](mailto: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](mailto: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](mailto: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](mailto: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](mailto:TColagrossi@hanover-township.org)

## Questions? Contact NISC Chair Lynn Fields Harris [lharris@centerinthepark.org](mailto:lharris@centerinthepark.org)

- See the online version of this document, with live links on <http://www.ncoa.org/NISC>.