2024

Aging Innovations & Achievement AWARDS SHOWCASE

Honoring Successful Initiatives of USAging Members

USAGing
Aging Innovations & Achievement Awards

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Cumulus
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About Caregiving.com
Caregiving.com is committed to engaging and empowering family caregivers worldwide via a multi-faceted support model delivered through our leading-edge platform. We strive to inspire a sense of community that engages and supports caregivers to THRIVE as they navigate their caregiving journey. Likewise, we aim to be a safe, accessible space for all family caregivers to find comfort, support, and advice.

Caregiving.com Leadership:
Michael Eidsaune, CEO

About Cumulus
Cumulus helps organizations securely collaborate, automate workflows among partners, conduct intakes, screen and assess clients, streamline social care referrals, and track outcomes—even when different IT systems are used. Used by multidisciplinary teams, including medical and social care teams, Cumulus embraces interoperability and is a leader in implementing FHIR standards for aging services data sets.

Cumulus.care Leadership:
John Byer, CEO  Tom Laba, President

About USAgeing
USAgeing is the national association representing and supporting the network of Area Agencies on Aging and advocating for the Title VI Native American Aging Programs. Our members help older adults and people with disabilities throughout the United States live with optimal health, well-being, independence and dignity in their homes and communities. USAgeing is dedicated to supporting the success of our members through advancing public policy, sparking innovation, strengthening the capacity of our members, raising their visibility and working to drive excellence in the fields of aging and home and community-based services.

For more information about USAgeing, AAAs or Title VI programs, visit www.usaging.org.

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Introduction

Every year, USAging proudly recognizes the innovative, successful and replicable programs and initiatives of our members through the USAging Aging Innovations & Achievement (AIA) Awards program. This publication is a comprehensive listing of the 38 programs earning awards in 2024.

It is thanks to our partnership with Caregiving.com and Cumulus.care that we have this opportunity to honor and showcase the initiatives of Area Agencies on Aging (AAAs) and Title VI Native American Aging Programs across the country.

We salute all those who have enhanced the prestige of this awards program by sharing their initiatives with their peers in the Aging Network. This sharing of cutting-edge concepts, innovative ideas and successful strategies helps inspire others, seed replication and ultimately, boost the capacity and success of all agencies.

The awards highlight leading-edge and successful programs that demonstrate sound management practices that are replicable by others in the Aging Network. They exemplify both traditional and new strategies in a range of categories.

Aging Innovations Awards honor the most innovative programs among all nominations received and Aging Achievement Awards recognize the most contemporary, effective and replicable programs.

Highlights of all past Aging Innovations Award recipients are available in the USAging members-only AIA Clearinghouse at www.usaging.org/aia.

We hope that these award-winning programs will inspire your efforts as you address current challenges, seize opportunities and implement solutions in your community. And be sure to share your innovations with us next year!

“We’ve all heard the old adage, ‘When life gives you lemons, make lemonade!’ We all know the funding climate is challenging for agencies across the country, but these organizations are still finding ways to innovate and drive impact in their communities. We’re inspired by this work and hope we can continue to help these organizations that are serving so many.”

Michael Eidsaune
CEO, Caregiving.com

“It is an honor for Cumulus to support the USAging Aging Innovations & Achievement (AIA) Awards program. Supporting users in 40+ states nationwide shows us each day that successful health care outcomes rely on long-term services and supports (LTSS) and home- and community-based services (HCBS). LTSS and HCBS can’t succeed without Area Agencies on Aging and Title VI Native American Aging Programs. Highlighting the cutting-edge initiatives of this year’s winners is especially important and something Cumulus is proud to support. Congratulations!”

The Cumulus.care Team
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2024 Aging INNOVATIONS Awards
“Delivery With a Ring” Doorbell Program
Piedmont Senior Resources Area Agency on Aging

Staff at Piedmont Senior Resources Area Agency on Aging developed a new doorbell program when they realized the older adults they serve were missing home-delivered meals because they did not hear drivers knock on their doors. If clients realized they missed the delivery call, drivers would try to return, but a return trip was not always possible and resulted in additional costs to the agency and delays for other clients.

When the doorbell program began, drivers were asked to make note of which clients could benefit from doorbell installation, resulting in a recommendation of more than 60 clients. The inexpensive doorbells, with an outside push button attached by adhesive and two ringers that fit in wall outlets inside each residence, were easy for meal drivers to install. Four volume adjustments and a blue light further help clients with trouble hearing when someone rings the doorbell. Volunteers periodically call clients who initially declined doorbell installation in case their needs change over time.

Budget:
American Rescue Plan Act funds were used to purchase the doorbells ($20 each) since the program affects home-delivered meals program operations. Time spent on the program is one hour per month. Doorbells are easy to install during meal delivery.

Accomplishments:
To date, drivers have installed 124 doorbells. The number of clients missing meals has decreased significantly. Clients report the doorbells ensure they receive other deliveries as well, including medications, testing supplies and more.

Replicability:
Replication requires funding for doorbells and meal drivers willing to assess client needs and install doorbells.
Access and Inclusion Through Mobile Services
Olympic Area Agency on Aging

The Mobile Assistance Van (MAV) combines food, COVID-19 information and mitigation supplies, and resources in a single mobile service unit that travels to 18 partner sites in a rural four-county region. The MAV serves seven federally recognized tribes, most of whom are in isolated coastal areas, provides a bicultural/bilingual specialist to sites with more Spanish speakers and focuses on serving areas with a high concentration (at least 40 percent) of older adults or food and service deserts.

The MAV serves more than 850 people monthly, many of whom are unable to access the AAA’s locations and other brick-and-mortar service locations due to limited transportation options. The program succeeds through collaboration with local tribes; food banks; libraries; community and senior centers; and donors including churches, health care organizations, hotels and the local health department.

Budget:
The program has been funded by two Centers for Disease Control and Prevention grants initiated during the pandemic to address equity issues in rural areas. The grant period ends in May 2024. Costs of $375,000 include staff time, benefits, mileage, administration and supplies.

Accomplishments:
Since November 2022, the MAV has served more than 10,000 individuals and provided more than 8,000 bags of food, 6,000 rapid COVID-19 test kits, 10,000 masks, 200 informational sheets about COVID-19 and 13,000 handouts about additional resources. The program has provided access to nutrition and services throughout the most isolated areas in the region, targeting individuals with the least access to healthy food and critical services.

Replicability:
This program can be replicated and adapted to fit specific community needs by leveraging local partnerships, expanding partnerships with food banks and combining Older Americans Act Title III B funding with other federal, state or local grants.
The Missouri Direct Adult Protective Services (MODAPS) Initiative is an innovative partnership between Missouri’s 10 Area Agencies on Aging and Adult Protective Services (APS) that adds community-based supportive services to emergency interventions to improve the health, wellness and safety of eligible adults referred to the APS hotline for abuse or neglect. Through this project, AAAs have expanded their reach to elderly and disabled Missourians previously unaware of AAA services.

A cloud-based social referral platform enables APS and AAA partners to leverage their respective expertise and resources, closing the loop on social care referrals between more than 250 APS staff in eight regions and more than 150 AAA staff in 10 regions, covering all of Missouri’s 115 counties. The most common interventions are home modifications, environmental cleanup, pest control, consumable supplies, emergency assistance and housing assistance.

Budget:
The State of Missouri allocated $1.1 million to support the statewide partnership. Funds were allocated across the 10 AAAs in proportion to the number of referrals to each region, and $50,000 was allocated to establish a social referral hub to connect more than 400 AAA and APS staff and community partners. AAAs were reimbursed for case management time and services. The average cost of interventions is about $2,500 per eligible adult.

Accomplishments:
To date, 95 percent of clients report a high level of satisfaction with assistance provided; 94 percent report increased safety in their living conditions; 100 percent report improved ability to remain at home; and 94 percent report increased awareness of and ability to access resources to support independent living.

Replicability:
The MODAPS model can be adapted by other states; several have already consulted with Missouri to establish similar programs. In Missouri, project planning to launch took less than five months, thanks to strong AAA and APS staff collaboration.
Community Care Hub Indiana
Aging & In-Home Services of Northeast Indiana, Inc.

Community Care Hub Indiana (CCHI) serves as an innovative management services organization dedicated to lifting barriers so community-based organizations can partner with managed care entities participating in Indiana PathWays for Aging, ensuring consistent care for members with health and social care needs. Emerging as a direct response to Indiana’s shift to Medicaid managed long-term services and supports (MLTSS), CCHI centralizes administrative functions and operational infrastructure through an integrated care model and data-driven approach.

Evidence-informed or evidence-based interventions and care coordination models align with the National Committee of Quality Assurance (NCQA) principles for person-centered care. Technology system alignment aids data transmission between networks. CCHI contracts with health care systems, managed care organizations, the state and private businesses to support patients, members and employees. Beginning with a partnership between lead agency (and state-designated community care hub) Aging & In-Home Services of Northeast Indiana (AIHS) and venture partner CICOA Aging & In-Home Services, CCHI has support from the Indiana AAA network and is used as the Indiana Association of Area Agencies on Aging’s contracting arm for the Indiana PathWays for Aging program.

Budget:
Organizations should anticipate $1.5 million expenses for typical startup costs (staffing, infrastructure, software acquisition) before the first revenue cycle. AIHS and partner organization CICOA each contributed $250,000 as startup capital. Other investors contributed the remaining $1 million.

Accomplishments:
CCHI created a formal network of AAAs to provide service coordination and established a formal training and compliance program to standardize care. The goal of CCHI is to build an infrastructure for AAAs to be able to achieve scale in MLTSS contracts. Leveraging statewide AAA collaboration and strategic partnerships created a pathway for the capital investment needed to engage with national managed care entities, enabling AAAs to engage as partners in community integrated health care.

Replicability:
This model could be replicated in any state that is involved in or moving toward MLTSS programs.
Bay Aging’s Community Care Innovation Collaborative is a shared learning space for leaders interested in creating community care networks that connect people to health care and social supports. A public service of VAAACares, Virginia’s community care hub, the collaborative launched in 2021 and serves more than 300 members representing 166 organizations. The Community Care Innovation Collaborative brings together knowledgeable community-based organizations (CBOs) with health entities that can offer financial resources, business acumen and information technology systems.

Collaborative members participate in virtual meetings led by subject matter experts. Topics covered have included populations in need; network, payment and operating models; public policy development; software interoperability; and health information exchange. Participants learn to build capacity and make valuable contacts for building their networks, with the longer-term goal of serving more underserved and vulnerable populations with health-related social needs. An online resource center facilitates continuous learning.

Budget:
Development of the collaborative was funded by a No Wrong Door Community Infrastructure Grant awarded to Bay Aging by the U.S. Administration for Community Living, and Bay Aging now supports the collaborative through general agency funds. Capital costs consist of an annual software fee ($1,188) for the online resource center. Personnel costs for a part-time project manager and a part-time consultant are approximately $100,000 annually. The CEO provides a few hours of oversight monthly.

Accomplishments:
The collaborative has recruited and engaged a group of multi-sector leaders, facilitated sharing of best practices, created an online resource center, completed a software capabilities matrix and assessment, promoted a partnership with Virginia’s emerging health information exchange and delivered targeted technical assistance to 43 CBOs.

Replicability:
Replication is possible at a lower cost using the collaborative’s framework and resources, which are available to the public. The biggest challenge is getting leaders from health entities and CBOs to participate. Startup can be funded by state or national grants.
Ageism Awareness Program
Howard County Office on Aging and Independence

Howard County Office on Aging and Independence (OAI) gathered the facts about the negative impact ageism has on physical and mental health, listened to public concern through its Age-Friendly Action Plan, and responded by developing an innovative ageism awareness training program for professionals and the public. To affect change directly, OAI used information from researchers, experts in the field of aging and leaders in culture change to develop a locally focused, low-cost and highly interactive training that transforms research findings and theoretical concepts into tangible actions for specific audiences.

Participants in the initial trainings learn to develop advocacy skills and ways to take action by correcting stereotypes and challenging ageist jokes and comments; learn how ageism shapes thoughts, feelings and experiences; and discuss the power of language. A second tier of trainings uses an open, guided-discussion format to lead conversation and facilitate reflection.

Budget:
This low-cost program requires in-kind staff time or volunteers to initiate and maintain training efforts. The only hard cost is printing materials such as brochures and positive affirmation cards, which are designed in-house and printed for distribution at trainings and outreach events.

Accomplishments:
Since October 2022, OAI’s single trainer educated 90 individuals in formal, interactive training sessions and 50 individuals in four community discussions. In 2024, a train-the-trainer program will expand classes and outreach.

Replicability:
Howard County’s ageism awareness program is easily tailored to any size community. To sustain the program, communities will need to customize efforts to reach different audiences.
Arts & Aging (A&A) is a public health and arts initiative to raise awareness of dementia and its impact and to inspire action toward building a dementia-friendly and dementia-inclusive community. The partnership utilizes the arts to spotlight significant issues connected to the care, diagnosis and experience of dementia. Artistic performances and exhibitions are followed by facilitated “safe space” community conversations about themes depicted in the performances and exhibits to build understanding and support for people living with dementia and their caregivers.

A&A is a collaboration between Region IV Area Agency on Aging (RIV AAA), the arts community, public health, higher education, philanthropy and business. The A&A partners convene community events depicting challenges faced by individuals living with dementia. A hybrid option staffed by RIV AAA enables participants who need to attend virtually to do small group activities via a chat room.

**Budget:**
Funding for the A&A partnership includes seed grants from the local community foundation and private donors ($10,000). Event ticket sales ($1,800) and business sponsorships ($500) further supported the effort in FY 2023, when costs included staff/professional services ($4,000), event expenses ($2,650), advertising ($375) and catering ($520).

**Accomplishments:**
A&A participants with dementia are empowered and report feeling “heard,” while caregivers gain insight, support and resources and community members benefit from awareness and understanding of dementia and its impacts.

**Replicability:**
A&A can easily be replicated by tapping into the passion and talents of the arts community. Hearing from patients and caregivers impacted by dementia is key to inspiring change. Approach community funders for seed funding prior to applying for grants. RIV AAA can share a sample grant application and case for support with agencies interested in replicating this program.
Medicare Assistance in the Community
The Senior Alliance, Area Agency on Aging 1C

The Senior Alliance restructured its State Health Insurance Assistance Program, known as the Michigan Medicare Assistance Program (MMAP), to a 100 percent community model with regular health insurance counseling hours scheduled at local trusted organizations throughout the service region. The Senior Alliance MMAP team focused the restructuring on partnerships that meet client needs and now conducts counseling in culturally and geographically familiar locations within 15-18 minutes of every home in the AAA’s service area.

The Senior Alliance began the process of program redesign after the 2021 Medicare annual enrollment period was conducted remotely due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Analysis of service trends and census levels in The Senior Alliance’s 34-community service area identified gaps in service levels and areas for improvement. In May 2022, The Senior Alliance tapped local senior centers and libraries as locations for MMAP in the Community so that health insurance counseling could be conducted locally without requiring clients to travel to The Senior Alliance office. The program expanded in 2023 to include Information & Assistance (I&A) in the Community to provide onsite information, resources and referrals.

Budget:
MMAP and I&A are longstanding programs in The Senior Alliance's annual operating budget. One-time costs included $5,000 in FY 2022 for MMAP in the Community and $2,000 in FY 2023 for I&A in the Community to purchase technology and outreach items. Older Americans Act and American Rescue Plan Act funds covered these costs. Local organizations host the program at no cost. Additional expenses include technology and outreach items.

Accomplishments:
The Senior Alliance partners with 16 local sites to provide MMAP in the Community. In 2023, MMAP in the Community served 552 English as a Second Language clients. Total clients served increased from 3,891 in 2021 to 4,740 in 2023. Health care savings in the community also increased from $370,889 in 2021 to $503,527 in 2023. For three consecutive years, The Senior Alliance has been recognized statewide as MMAP Team of the Year.

Replicability:
MMAP in the Community can be replicated through partnerships with trusted local organizations such as community and senior centers, cultural organizations and libraries. Organizations should assess cultural and community-specific needs.

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Jefferson Area Board for Aging’s (JABA’s) Pathway to Enrichment program boasts an innovative design that supports participants who are aging naturally and at their own pace. Participants receive enrichment and socialization through free membership at JABA’s community centers. As they age and if their health declines, they transition to JABA’s Respite & Enrichment Centers (JRECs).

JABA’s community centers provide socialization, activities that promote health and wellness, and dietician-approved lunches at no cost. Staff are also trained to recognize signs that participants’ care needs may be changing, then discuss what those changes might be and intervene if necessary. This type of blended monitoring outside of a clinical setting allows for seamless transitions between different levels of care, while still encouraging participants to maintain their independence.

**Budget:**
Last fiscal year, the JRECs incurred $802,939 in expenses with revenue coming from federal (28.4 percent), state (20.3 percent), city (31.7 percent), and public or private grant (1.4 percent) funding sources, with the remaining gap made up through client fees (18.2 percent). While the JRECs charge $82 a day for care, they accept Medicaid and provide scholarships and financial aid for families who are unable to afford care. Community center services are provided at no cost, with a suggested $3 donation for lunch.

**Accomplishments:**
Participants in the Pathway to Enrichment program demonstrate positive outcomes. Members report high satisfaction with activities that stimulate mind, body and soul (97 percent); quality of care and health education (98 percent); and the nutritional, delicious meals that are provided (97 percent). Participants live at home longer and more successfully.

**Replicability:**
Community centers or adult day programs can replicate Pathway to Enrichment with smaller, focused groups. Community centers could offer a small group of six to 12 participants who have a more pronounced cognitive impairment. This group could attend two to three times per week, with trained staff providing sensory-stimulating activities adapted to different functioning levels.

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Senior Telehealth Connect
Detroit Area Agency on Aging

Senior Telehealth Connect services provide care for participating older adults from the comfort and safety of their homes. Detroit Area Agency on Aging (DAAA) launched Senior Telehealth Connect during the COVID-19 pandemic. The program enables older adults to stay at home and communicate about health concerns with a nurse practitioner via audio or video calls.

Remote patient monitoring devices further assist patients, alerting both patients and DAAA staff about vital signs, such as glucose and hypertension numbers, to reduce unnecessary visits to the emergency room and help patients become self-aware of their health conditions. Due to the success of this program, DAAA is expanding beyond telehealth services to provide in-home, face-to-face nurse practitioner visits in fall 2024.

Budget:
A minimum of $250,000 is needed to start a telehealth program for older adults. This funds staffing (a part-time team member to administer the program, a nurse practitioner and a biller), marketing and communications, remote patient monitoring equipment and other expenses. A minimum of $400,000 is needed if a full-time staffer is required. These expenditures do not include a medical director to oversee the program. This budget information is based upon a Medicare reimbursement model.

Accomplishments:
Participants experience improved accessibility to medical care, less frequent emergency room visits and enhanced medical care coordination. Remote patient monitoring and monthly care plans have resulted in improved client cardiovascular condition and comprehensive diabetes care.

Replicability:
Other organizations can replicate this program by obtaining credentials with major insurance carriers in the region, hiring or contracting with medical staff, obtaining billing and electronic medical records software systems and developing a marketing campaign to recruit patients.

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Homeless Mobile Intake Team
Multnomah County Aging, Disability & Veterans Services Division

The Mobile Intake Team (MIT) was created to meet unhoused people where they live and assess them for Title XIX long-term care services and supports and other qualifying critical supports such as rent assistance and special needs funding. MIT works with consumers to understand their living and care needs and build a person-centered plan of their choice. The program provides access to services for the most vulnerable, including the disproportionately affected Black, Indigenous and people of color populations.

Created by the Multnomah County Aging, Disability & Veterans Services Division and funded through the Joint Office of Homelessness Services (JOHS), the MIT is comprised of people who have lived experience with homelessness, an Indigenous member, a registered nurse and two Spanish speakers. To facilitate outreach, the MIT has a scheduled rotation to different shelters across the county and the Multnomah County Behavioral Health Center. Referrals are also sent from community partners.

Budget:
The budget for FY 2024 of $847,241 includes $687,241 for staffing (four case manager seniors, a case manager assistant and a dedicated case manager for regional long-term rental assistance vouchers) and $160,000 for client assistance, all covered by the JOHS. Client assistance funding supports payments for deposits, utility and rent assistance and resources not covered by Medicaid. Additional costs include face masks, gloves and other supplies.

Accomplishments:
Since November 2022, MIT has served 295 participants (50 African American, 15 Indigenous, five Spanish speakers and the remaining White or undisclosed). Of those served, 25 percent were age 51–60, 39 percent were age 61–70, 22 percent were age 71–80, 1.35 percent were age 81–90 and 12.65 percent were under age 51.

Replicability:
This program is replicable with funding support and available services for participants. Increase the impact by building a team with diverse skills and lived experience.
Grandparents Raising Grandkids Resource Center
Central Massachusetts Agency on Aging, Inc.

The Central Massachusetts Agency on Aging, Inc. (CMAA) Grandparents Raising Grandkids Resource Center emerged from the AAA's Grandparents Raising Grandchildren Initiative. The Resource Center serves as a one-stop shop to connect grandfamilies with resources such as housing, childcare, utility assistance, legal services, job training, transportation, food, support groups and more. The Center is staffed by Mobile Grandfamily Community Health Workers who travel through 61 communities in central Massachusetts to meet with grandfamilies to assess their needs and connect them to programs and services.

Grandfamilies are a historically overlooked and underserved population who face many challenges and stresses, which can lead to declines in physical and mental health. Trained Grandfamily Community Health Workers (GCHWs) go out into the community to find grandfamilies, who often do not know they are eligible for services. Specific outreach strategies ensure GCHWs reach Black, Indigenous and people of color grandfamilies.

Budget:
The annual cost for the resource center is $375,000. Costs were originally covered through private funding. As the initiative grew, it attracted the attention of U.S. Representative James McGovern (D-MA-2), who offered to put in a federal earmark of $1.2 million to transform the initiative into a fully developed resource center.

Accomplishments:
CMAA uses a case management application that quantifies how many needs have been met and their outcomes. Since launching the center in August 2023, CMAA has worked on 662 cases. Data shows that financial aid, rental assistance, utility assistance and culturally appropriate food assistance are in-demand services.

Replicability:
Creating a center is a multi-year process. CMAA can provide tailored fee-for-service technical assistance to assess the specific needs of a AAA and the communities it serves. More generally, collecting data on grandfamilies in the AAA’s service area using census data and reports from Generations United and the Grandfamilies & Kinship Support Network: A National Technical Assistance Center (of which USAging is a partner) is a crucial first step.
Food First is an innovative technology-based program that connects caregivers and care recipients to pre-paid, nutritious, culturally appropriate restaurant meals three times a week using a texting software platform. Detroit Area Agency on Aging (DAAA) implemented this project over two years in collaboration with Bento (a California-based software enterprise), the University of Michigan School of Public Health and four community-based organizations (CBOs). The Bento software allows communication via text between the caregiver, Bento and restaurants located within 10 miles of the phone being used so the caregiver can order meals near their workplace or the care recipient’s home.

DAAA selected three target areas in its service area that have large African American, Hispanic and Muslim populations and high levels of food insecurity to pilot Food First. Caregivers in these areas are referred by staff from CBOs. When meals are ordered, only the client’s name under Bento is used, so there is no stigma associated with ordering and picking up the meal.

**Budget:**
Food First was funded by a $250,000 grant from the Michigan Health Endowment Fund. The two-year program budget consisted of funding for salaries and fringe, Bento contract, marketing, meal costs ($123,000), community meetings, travel and conference, translation services and program evaluation.

**Accomplishments:**
A total of 3,650 meals were ordered by 50 caregivers. Food First was well received by caregivers, many of whom reported outcomes such as reduced stress and improved nutrition. Food insecurity was reduced from 68 percent to 54 percent from baseline to follow-up, 71 percent of caregivers spent less time preparing meals, and 51 percent reported their eating was “healthier” or “much healthier.” The program also increased support for the local economy.

**Replicability:**
Interested AAAs can replicate if they have access to funding, staff, a software texting platform, interested community partners and local restaurants. DAAA also developed a program evaluation and toolkit to promote replication.
Freezer Nutrition Program for Older Adults
Riverside County Office on Aging

The Riverside County Office on Aging’s (OoA’s) Freezer Nutrition Program promotes collaboration between county departments to improve overall health and well-being among older adults experiencing immediate food insecurity. Freezers strategically located at various county department sites are stocked with bundles of frozen meals that contain a three-day supply of nutritious foods. Upon receiving notification via telephone from an older adult expressing an immediate need, Riverside County Adult Protective Services (APS) and Riverside County OoA staff scan a QR code to check out a meal bundle for delivery.

Post-pandemic, Riverside County OoA continues to see an increase in older adults experiencing food insecurity due to inflation. Older adults who access the food bundles also receive additional resources, such as enrollment in case management programs, home-delivered meals and other local community resources.

Budget:
This program was launched using funding from California Department of Aging’s Older Adults Recovery and Resilience program and the federal American Rescue Plan Act. Freezers range in price from $850 to $1,400. Each meal bundle costs $49 and is replenished as needed. In the most recent fiscal year, approximately $5,000 was spent to replenish meals throughout the county. Ultimately, investment in the program will result in countywide savings, as the program helps to mitigate increased costs resulting from clients being admitted to the hospital for malnutrition.

Accomplishments:
APS has utilized 70 percent of the Freezer Nutrition Program. Older adults have expressed gratitude for the emergency meals. APS and Riverside County OoA social workers appreciate having this resource to quickly aid older adults in need. Since July 2023, the program has served more than 100 clients (300 meals), a 100 percent increase from FY 2022–2023. The program was implemented three years ago at three sites and has since expanded to six. Three additional sites will be added next fiscal year.

Replicability:
This program can be replicated through collaboration with county departments and community-based organizations with shared funding streams for older adult nutrition.
A successful interoperability IT integration between WellWise Services Area Agency on Aging and Jackson Care Hub, a community referral and social determinants of health screening system, enables older adults, adults with disabilities and their caregivers to more easily access assistance and resources. The integration automates closed-loop referrals and improves customer experiences and staff workflows.

WellWise Services AAA worked with a consultant who assisted in bridging an internal IT system (WellSky) with an external IT system (Jackson Care Hub, a Riverstar product) to automate the connection between the two IT systems. The integration includes a more robust intake/referral/options counseling IT system and automates health care–based screening and community-based referrals into the AAA’s IT system. It also enables WellWise Services AAA to capture social determinants of health screenings in other counties.

**Budget:**
Project costs of just under $100,000 included consultant fees, IT enhancements and staff time on the project, funded through a Michigan Health Endowment Fund grant. The Jackson Care Hub provided funds for part of the integration expenses. Annual IT maintenance fees are an ongoing cost.

**Accomplishments:**
WellWise Services AAA received 27 automated referrals from the integration “go live” date in October 2023 through the end of 2023. This is 27 fewer times that staff had to enter into another platform, the Jackson Care Hub, to retrieve these referrals. This automation starts recordkeeping and data collection of the referral automatically, which has improved service and resource delivery to clients. The IT system automation resulted in automatic entry of 1,074 data points on 928 clients for options counseling in FY 2023.

**Replicability:**
WellWise Services AAA’s IT integration project can serve as a roadmap for other AAAs. In order to re-create such an integration, expect to use staff and/or consultant time to continue to build network relationships, understand IT details and complete the project.
Bay Aging’s Leadership Institute
Bay Aging

Bay Aging’s Leadership Institute offers employees working at any management level the opportunity to develop and strengthen their leadership and public speaking skills, improve overall agency knowledge and network. The Institute utilizes an established leadership development curriculum centered on John Maxwell’s 21 Indispensable Qualities of a Leader, which is supplemented with participant-led activities, public speaking opportunities, guest speakers and a field trip to the Annual Community Forum on Aging in Hampton, VA.

Bay Aging’s Institute was developed with the goal of positioning employees of all backgrounds, experiences and education for advancement within the AAA or their respective fields. Each class consists of 15 to 20 participants across every department and position level in the AAA. The Institute meets via Zoom for two hours twice a month for eight months.

Budget:
The largest investment is the training curriculum and staff time. The teacher edition of the workbook and video discs for the curriculum are a one-time purchase of $299.99. Each one-time-use student workbook is $11.99. Staff time to plan, implement and participate will vary by AAA. Attendance at the Community Forum on Aging is $5 per person. Internal and external guest speakers donate their time.

Accomplishments:
Feedback from program participants has been overwhelmingly positive. Since the Institute’s creation in 2020, 68 Bay Aging staff have completed the course. Of those graduates, 28 have already earned promotions, with 12 additional graduates taking on expanded roles. Post-graduation surveys indicate that many alumni feel an increase in confidence, social skills, knowledge of the AAA, public speaking skills and application of leadership concepts.

Replicability:
The Institute can be replicated and adapted to fit the needs of any AAA. John Maxwell's curriculum is available for purchase and can be modified or supplemented at little to no cost. An HR manager or other staff member can organize and present the curriculum.

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2024 Aging ACHIEVEMENT Awards
ADVOCACY

Unveiling the Power of Podcasting
AgeGuide Northeastern Illinois

The AgeGuide Podcast spotlights the realities, joys and challenges of aging. Each episode features personal stories of older adults and caregivers who have benefited from Older Americans Act services. Other segments include the Medicare Minute, which shares Medicare updates and addresses common Medicare questions from callers, and the Age Stage, where guests share an issue they are passionate about. Each podcast episode includes commercials highlighting new programs and events before concluding with a call to action and links to resources.

Budget:
AgeGuide records and produces the podcast in-house at minimal cost. Expenses include one-time equipment purchases and staff time to schedule guests, develop interview questions, record, edit, write show notes and promote episodes (approximately 25 hours of staff time per episode).

Accomplishments:
Over 20 episodes have aired since the podcast’s inception. To date, it has 1,426 listens, which is a significant milestone for podcasts according to industry standards. Since launching, the podcast featured over 30 guests including older adult service recipients, long-term care residents, veterans, legislators and advocates.

Replicability:
One 15 to 30-minute podcast episode per month is a good starting point. Unique segments like the Medicare Minute can be replicated and customized based on agency goals.

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CAREGIVING

Caregiver Support Program
Bay Aging

Bay Aging’s Caregiver Support program provides free counseling, education and support groups for caregivers. The program is led by options counselors with personal and professional experience with dementia who offer a person-centered approach for counseling and home visits. Through a multi-tiered approach and partnerships with doctors, assisted living and long-term care facilities, homecare agencies and the Alzheimer’s Association, families are supported throughout their caregiving journey. Bay Aging’s 10-county service area now has nine caregiver support groups and a Memory Café.

Budget:
Costs of $181,500 include personnel ($125,000), fringe benefits ($17,500), indirect costs ($25,000), travel ($5,000), materials ($5,000), IT ($2,000) and communication services ($2,000). Financial support from Bay Aging’s Foundation Board means many services are free of charge.

Accomplishments:
Bay Aging aimed for 300 caregiver contacts in FY 2023 and ultimately had 866 contacts, resulting in the need to hire an additional employee. Among survey respondents, 63 percent rated support groups and classes “excellent,” and 37 percent rated them “good,” with 100 percent expressing interest in more classes or groups.

Replicability:
Replication requires staff with expertise in caregiving and dementia who have strong community networks.

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CAREGGIVING
Collaboration to Develop New Dementia Caregiving Webinar
WellWise Services Area Agency on Aging

To replace an existing costly and technologically outdated dementia caregiving curriculum, WellWise Services Area Agency on Aging brought together content experts from the Michigan AAAs and partnered with the Michigan State Unit on Aging to create a three-part webinar series for caregivers. The result is a user-friendly tool for facilitators now used by AAAs across the state. Each one-hour session can be offered virtually or in person. An additional half-hour session offers time for caregiver Q&A and problem-solving.

Budget:
Older Americans Act Title III E funds can be used to cover program administration and facilitation costs. Quotes for the cost of the train-the-trainer program are available.

Accomplishments:
Pilot program evaluations found 96 percent of respondents reported being more informed about the impact of dementia, 89 percent learned new skills to communicate, 83 percent recognized the importance of self-care and learned skills to reduce stress, and 81 percent felt more confident in their abilities as caregivers.

Replicability:
Detailed facilitation notes and a train-the-trainer session make replication easy. AAAs can access this new tool via the U.S. Administration for Community Living website.

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COMMUNITY PLANNING AND LIVABLE COMMUNITIES
Purposeful Aging Los Angeles (PALA) Phase 2.0
Los Angeles County Aging & Disabilities Department

Purposeful Aging Los Angeles (PALA) Phase 2.0 is an initiative led by the County of Los Angeles and the City of Los Angeles AAAs and external stakeholders to prepare the region for a rapidly aging population and coordinate services across an 88-city, two-PSA region. The initiative shares best practices, identifies gaps and advocates for older adults on issues including connectivity, housing and food insecurity, transportation, emergency preparedness and social isolation. PALA 2.0 incorporates the U.S. Administration for Community Living No Wrong Door approach to further build community partnerships, provide services and reduce barriers.

Budget:
The primary cost of PALA is staff time. Individual programs created under PALA have attracted funding from sponsors, partner agencies and other stakeholders.

Accomplishments:
Cross-cutting strategies that create infrastructure and systems to align and coordinate programs serving older residents have continued to be implemented. Seven new Los Angeles County cities joined the Age-Friendly Cities Network, and three Los Angeles–area universities joined the Age-Friendly University Global Network.

Replicability:
PALA can be replicated by leveraging public and private partnerships across a region. Begin by focusing on community engagement.

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DIVERSITY, EQUITY AND INCLUSION

Age Your Way LGBTQ Workshops
ElderSource

ElderSource created a five-part series of 90-minute online Zoom workshops offering older LGBTQ adults information and resources about aging in place. Presented by ElderSource and SAGE, the national advocacy and services group for LGBTQ elders, each of the free recorded workshops features a panel of experts who candidly discuss issues that older LGBTQ people face plus a 30-minute live question-and-answer period. Sessions are available on the ElderSource website alongside links to resources. Topics include legal and financial issues, honoring end-of-life wishes, caregiving and healthy living.

**Budget:**
Marketing, promotion and administrative costs for workshop development were funded by a $19,000 grant from the LGBTQ Fund at the Community Foundation of Northeast Florida.

**Accomplishments:**
One of the main challenges was getting people to sign up for the workshops. Workshops were recorded and uploaded to the ElderSource YouTube channel, allowing the videos to remain available in a format that is safe and accessible for people seeking information.

**Replicability:**
Replicate by sharing the ElderSource workshops or expanding topics and recording new sessions. ElderSource can share promotional strategy information and materials.

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Healthier You
MAC, Inc.

Healthier You was developed to reach underserved individuals who are experiencing pre-diabetes, diabetes, obesity or food insecurity. The program bundles activities including social determinants of health (SDOH) screenings, Program to Encourage Active, Rewarding Lives (PEARLS) referrals, the Diabetes Self-Management Program, EnhanceFitness, weekly pickups of organically grown vegetables and cooking classes. Participants attend two to three EnhanceFitness classes in person or via Zoom weekly for six months and receive scales and 5G tablets if needed to access Zoom workshops.

**Budget:**
Estimated cost of program operation is $46,000. Initial funding was provided by TidalHealth Regional Hospital. A CDC Getting Further Faster grant covered salaries, development of promotional materials, and pre and post-program evaluation. County health departments also contribute funding.

**Accomplishments:**
Among participants, 96 percent lost an average of 11.5 pounds and had a two-point reduction in BMI. Over time, some participants who did not want to attend in-person exercise classes felt comfortable going to the gym. Almost 60 percent of participants continue to attend EnhanceFitness.

**Replicability:**
Bundle programs to maximize impact. Connect with community leaders to assist with recruitment. For programs with a local food component, align the program with the growing season.

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ECONOMIC SECURITY
Goods2Home
Area Agency on Aging, Region One

Goods2Home, created by Area Agency on Aging, Region One in partnership with the City of Phoenix, provides kits of essential household goods to residents of U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) subsidized senior housing. AAA staff work with service coordinators at housing sites, who identify those in need of support. The kits contain items including laundry supplies, paper towels, facial tissue, cleaning supplies, trash bags, toilet paper and first aid kits.

Budget:
The program is funded through City of Phoenix American Rescue Plan Act funds. A subcontracted provider purchases items and assembles kits for $350 per kit. A transportation provider that delivers the kits charges an hourly rate and van rental fee. Last fiscal year 2,167 boxes were delivered, costing $841,812.

Accomplishments:
Close to 8,000 kits have been delivered across 40 housing sites since July 2020. The initial success of the six-month program and overall client satisfaction led the City of Phoenix to provide funding for three additional years.

Replicability:
Working with HUD sites is an innovative approach to reach underserved residents. The biggest challenge is maintaining an inventory of goods. Staff time, whether direct or subcontracted, is needed to build and deliver kits.

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ECONOMIC SECURITY
Utility Assistance and Financial Relief Program
Los Angeles County Aging & Disabilities Department

The Los Angeles County Aging & Disabilities Department Community and Senior Centers Utility Assistance Program provides financial relief to those facing hardship due to rising utility rates. Operated in partnership with Southern California Edison (SCE), SoCalGas and United Way, the program streamlines access to SCE’s Energy Assistance Fund and SoCalGas’s Gas Assistance Fund, offering personalized support to ensure eligible individuals receive up to $300 from SCE and $500 from SoCalGas. Interested individuals who visit participating community and senior centers are assessed for eligibility and assisted through the application process. The program significantly alleviates utility expenses for residents and raises awareness of vital county services.

Budget:
The program operates without direct funding for staff or departmental costs. SCE, SoCalGas and United Way provide funding for the utility assistance. Community and senior centers contribute staff support.

Accomplishments:
In program year 2022–2023, the program provided $1,284,177 in aid, a more than 440 percent increase from the previous year. This significantly reduced the utility cost burden for 6,008 residents. As of January 2024, the program offered $523,665 in aid to 3,381 residents for program year 2023–2024.

Replicability:
Other organizations can replicate by establishing partnerships with local utility companies. Create a streamlined application process and focus on leveraging existing staff and infrastructure.

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ELDER ABUSE PREVENTION
Wisconsin Elder Abuse Hotline
Greater Wisconsin Agency on Aging Resources

With funding from the Wisconsin Department of Justice to pilot a program aimed at addressing elder abuse statewide, the Greater Wisconsin Agency on Aging Resources (GWAAR) developed the Wisconsin Elder Abuse Program, which takes a comprehensive approach to assisting victims of elder abuse, neglect and exploitation by bridging gaps between local and state resources. The program offers a single access point for victims, caregivers, family members and concerned community members who suspect elder abuse. As part of the program, the Wisconsin Elder Abuse Hotline was developed to connect victims with appropriate local resources and, if needed, with local law enforcement.

Budget:
Startup costs including travel, promotional materials, website development and hotline setup were covered by grant funding. Following startup, website hosting and telephone system updates are ongoing expenses. The current budget of $110,000 includes personnel ($61,398), benefits ($25,921), travel and training ($4,047) and supplies and operating expenses ($18,634).

Accomplishments:
In 2020, 921 calls for support and resources were received. Since then, project referrals have increased dramatically. The program is expected to exceed 16,000 cases within the 2024 calendar year.

Replicability:
Build on existing hotlines, conduct a gap analysis and build staff core competencies.

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HEALTH–SOCIAL CARE INTEGRATION
Training for Dementia, Alzheimer’s Disease, and Cognitive Decline for First Responders and Providers
Aging and Long Term Care of Eastern Washington

A Building Dementia Capable Communities grant from the Washington State Unit on Aging enabled the creation of educational trainings on dementia. Aging and Long Term Care of Eastern Washington (ALTCEW), in partnership with EMS Connect, American Indian Health Coalition, Spokane LBGTQ+ Group and the Alzheimer’s Association, created professional trainings for first responders and health care workers who work with people living with dementia and their care partners. The trainings address disease state, awareness, communication, crisis de-escalation, safety, caregiver support, pre-hospital care, ambulance transport, cultural competency, post-emergency care and practice scenarios. In-person, virtual and pre-recorded trainings are available.

Budget:
ALTCEW's annual budget of $375,000 includes 2.5 FTE staff, marketing, education development and subcontracting with the Alzheimer’s Association. One-hour trainings are free. EMS Connect provides the three-hour virtual trainings with a continuing education certificate for $5.

Accomplishments:
The program has increased awareness of interventions and treatments for people with dementia, particularly in rural and diverse communities.

Replicability:
ALTCEW developed the training to be free, replicable, adaptable and translated into multiple languages and can provide resources and onboard training for AAAs wishing to use the program.

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HEALTHY AGING

Accessible Wellness: Enhancing a Wellness Program Through a Multi-Media Approach
Central Plains Area Agency on Aging

In November 2020, Central Plains Area Agency on Aging (CPAAA) created a wellness program for people who could not attend in-person classes because of COVID-19. The program reached people through educational posts on Facebook, YouTube exercise videos, web-based classes and a monthly podcast. The expanded program was so successful, CPAAA has maintained this virtual/hybrid model by adding a partnership with the local parks and recreation department to offer nine new wellness classes (2023), as well as implementing a digital platform for classes at 29 senior centers (2024).

**Budget:**
Older Americans Act Title III D funds and other local tax funds covered program development and oversight. Expenses include wellness coordinator salary and benefits ($71,423), equipment ($1,200), web-based learning platform ($6,000 annually) and classes through Wichita Parks and Recreation ($6,000 annually).

**Accomplishments:**
CPAAA’s wellness coordinator engaged adults age 60+ and caregivers unable or reluctant to attend in-person classes. Evidence-based program data indicates that 100 percent of Diabetes Prevention Program participants had at least a 5 percent weight loss or .02 percent reduction in HbA1c.

**Replicability:**
Staff time and knowledge are key to developing non-evidence-based exercise classes and educational content. Many evidence-based programs have hybrid options.

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HEALTHY AGING

Fall-Free Fridays
Area Agency on Aging District 7

Starting in fall 2020, the Area Agency on Aging District 7 (AAA7) and the Shawnee State University Occupational Therapy Program collaborated to provide virtual education to the community through a social media livestream called “Fall-Free Fridays” that is broadcast on Facebook. AAA7 hosts the 15-minute livestream and Shawnee State graduate students conduct education on a variety of falls prevention topics. In spring 2021, another livestream called “Functional Fridays” was created to focus on driver safety, stroke awareness and managing function in everyday life.

**Budget:**
This project does not require any special funding. Existing AAA7 staff assist. Social media livestreams are free.

**Accomplishments:**
The livestream presented by the students reached a wider audience than in-person events would have. A library of the videos is available on AAA7’s Facebook page and website.

**Replicability:**
This program could be replicated by identifying a higher education partner. Public relations efforts through news releases, public service announcements and social media posts help generate viewers.

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HEALTHY AGING
Rehired Retired Club
Appalachian Agency for Senior Citizens

Appalachian Agency for Senior Citizens (AASC) CEO Brian Beck coined the name Rehired Retired Club for five individuals who were former full-time employees at AASC who returned to work part-time after retirement. These retired employees offer a wealth of skills and knowledge, bring a strong work ethic to the job and play a vital role in mentoring younger employees. The oldest member of the club is age 97.

Budget:
Program costs are limited to employee wages. No initial pre-employment costs, such as background checks or training, are involved since all club members were formerly employed by AASC. Most rehired retired workers return on a part-time basis, so they do not need benefits.

Accomplishments:
The retired employees are skilled at their jobs and enjoy sharing their knowledge with other employees. Engaging these retired experts improved employee morale due to greater productivity. Older employees relate to the clients and vice versa.

Replicability:
If a staffing need arises, reach out to retired employees to gauge interest in returning to work part-time. Retired staff can also fill in for special projects.

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HOME AND COMMUNITY-BASED SERVICES
Reducing the Stigma—Food Insecurity
Age Well

Age Well worked closely with faith-based partners, community organizations and libraries in their area to establish eight new meal sites in underserved areas without local senior centers. Each meal site also provides SNAP education and easy access to a food pantry, allowing older adults to pick up goods that they may need while they are already out. This helps reduce the stigma that can prevent asking for help.

Budget:
There are no rental fees or building expenses. Congregate meal costs ($12.81 each) include meals, packaging, staff and administration. Meals are funded through the Older Americans Act, local and state funding, grants and donations. Volunteers from partnering organizations manage the meal sites and cleanup.

Accomplishments:
The creation of eight more sites increased congregate meal participation in rural towns. More older adults are accessing meals, food pantries and SNAP education. In FY 2023, Age Well served an additional 13,475 meals to 745 participants at these eight sites.

Replicability:
This program is replicable with careful analysis of designated towns served and food shelf/pantry locations.

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INFORMATION AND REFERRAL/ASSISTANCE

Innovation Through Voucher Programs and Partnerships
Three Rivers Regional Commission

During the COVID-19 pandemic, Three Rivers Area Agency on Aging developed and implemented eight pilot and voucher programs to better serve clients and caregivers. Three Rivers asked clients and caregivers: “What do you need?” and used their answers to guide creation of voucher programs for in-home service, utility assistance, fresh and/or frozen food, mental health and life coaching support, chore services, assistive technology and material aid assistance. Utilizing this voucher system leveraged existing partnerships to allow clients on the waiting list to receive some services they needed without losing their place on the list.

Budget:
Existing Older Americans Act, Title IV and COVID-19-relief funding covered expenses for new programs. A staffing agency provided temporary administrative support.

Accomplishments:
Three Rivers’ voucher partnerships with providers allow them to check in on clients and provide services and needed items to clients and caregivers. The AAA also immediately served more clients and caregivers who otherwise might have been placed on waitlists.

Replicability:
These pilot and voucher programs are scalable and replicable. As programs grow, funding may be needed for a program manager or special projects coordinator.

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KINSHIP AND GRANDFAMILY SUPPORT

Grandfamilies Stipend Program
Allegheny County Area Agency on Aging

Allegheny County Area Agency on Aging (AAA) joined forces with A Second Chance, Inc. to launch a grandfamilies stipend program. The program assisted income-eligible informal caregivers who do not receive support through the child welfare system with financial resources. This one-time $1,000 stipend was provided to 901 families, who were also connected to support services and parenting classes.

Budget:
In total, the program cost $1 million, with 10 percent allocated to the community partner for staff and administration. The remaining $901,000 went directly to older adults serving as primary caregivers of youth. Funding was provided by the county human services agency.

Accomplishments:
Among the 901 families who received stipends, many grandparents reported the program was an immense help with basic needs and allowed them to purchase items such as clothing and shoes for growing grandchildren.

Replicability:
Consider partnerships with agencies focused on youth to support older adults and the youth they are raising. Data helps make a case for using public funds to support older adult caregivers of youth.

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**KINSHIP AND GRANDFAMILY SUPPORT**

**Kinship Support Program**
Direction Home of Eastern Ohio

Direction Home of Eastern Ohio (DHEO) Kinship Support Program addresses an unmet need of respite for older adults raising children. The program began as a six-week summer camp in 2022 to offer structured care for children at no cost to their caregivers. It has since expanded to offer beds, clothing, health maintenance supplies, food vouchers and monthly support group meetings.

**Budget:**
DHEO’s inaugural camp was funded through American Rescue Plan Act funding. The Kinship Camp cost $53.25 per day per child, which included transportation, camp counselor stipends, lunch and snacks. The expansion was funded through a $30,000 foundation grant.

**Accomplishments:**
Surveys submitted by caregivers at the close of the camp were all positive. The camp and additional resources serve the intended audience of caregivers aged 55-plus with limited resources caring for minor children.

**Replicability:**
This easily replicable program relies on community partnerships and creativity utilizing the principles of the National Family Caregiver Support Program (NFCSP). Programs can be created and grown through local grant funding. AAAs can utilize NFCSP funding and Title VI Native American Aging Programs can tap Title VI Part C.

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**NUTRITION**

**Healthy Harvest Program**
Bay Aging

In 2019, Bay Aging and Healthy Harvest Food Bank (HHFB) formed a partnership to supplement Bay Aging’s home-delivered meals deliveries with bimonthly deliveries of fresh fruit and vegetables from local farmers that would have otherwise been wasted. Bay Aging staff portion out the fruits and vegetables to deliver to clients along with recipes for how to use the produce. The program has grown to serve congregate and home-delivery clients across a six-county territory.

**Budget:**
Bay Aging purchases produce at the discounted rate of $0.07 per pound for an annual cost of approximately $2,400. Annual program costs include one quarter of an FTE employee plus fringe and indirect costs (approximately $20,000). Funding is split between home-delivered and congregate meals programs.

**Accomplishments:**
The partnership between Bay Aging and HHFB improves clients’ diets and reduces food waste. Bay Aging has delivered over 110,000 pounds of fresh produce to clients since 2019. In a recent participant survey, 99 percent of clients reported eating healthier.

**Replicability:**
Replication is easiest for organizations with a strong home-delivered meals program and an established volunteer corps. Partner with local food banks or farmers to obtain fresh produce.

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SOCIAL ENGAGEMENT
Give 5 Civic Matchmaking Program
Missouri Association of Area Agencies on Aging

The Give 5 Civic Matchmaking Program pairs retirees with meaningful volunteer and civic engagement opportunities by taking them behind the scenes in the community. The three to five-day interactive program increases empathy, trust and feelings of community ownership. The Missouri Association of Area Agencies on Aging (ma4) coordinated efforts to deploy seven Give 5 programs across a statewide network of six host AAAs.

Budget:
Give 5 was funded by the state of Missouri via grants administered by ma4. Each host site received $42,500 for program development in year one and an additional $23,000 for program licenses, implementation services, training and research analysis. In year two (FY 2024), the state increased funding to $88,345 each, covering operational costs and marketing. A separate grant covered license renewal ($3,750 each).

Accomplishments:
Give 5 has demonstrated a significant return on investment. Researchers found that the value of volunteerism from the first five classes exceeded $300,000 in one year. If other Missouri locations achieve similar success with their first five classes, the volunteerism value in just one year would be $3.6 million.

Replicability:
Give 5 has been replicated in 13 communities across the United States. Current Give 5 host sites provide a built-in support network. A consulting team offers templates, marketing materials and training.

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TECHNOLOGY
Expansion of Programs Through the Use of Technology
Ohio District 5 Area Agency on Aging, Inc.

Ohio District 5 Area Agency on Aging, Inc. (AAA5) and its county focal points partnered to identify existing needs and service gaps as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. Recognizing the importance of technology for vulnerable and isolated older adults, AAA5 leveraged American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) dollars and local funding to improve equipment and technology infrastructure, enabling successful delivery and streaming of essential programs, workshops and classes for older adults in rural communities.

Budget:
Total project costs of $196,789 were covered by ARPA OAA Title III B ($17,947) and Title III C1 ($149,324) as well as a local provider cash match ($29,518). Costs included site assessments, equipment, setup, training and technical assistance.

Accomplishments:
AAA5 and its focal points can now leverage one another’s resources, resulting in greater funding stewardship, shared content and increased social engagement among older adults.

Replicability:
This program could be replicated on any scale. It is essential to have the right technology solutions partner to ensure all parties have the proper site assessment, set-up/installation, staff training and ongoing support.

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TRANSPORTATION AND MOBILITY
No-Cost Transportation for Older Adults Program
County of San Diego Health and Human Services Agency, Aging & Independence Services

In 2022, County of San Diego Health and Human Services Agency, Aging & Independence Services launched a two-year, no-cost pilot transportation program in partnership with Jewish Family Service of San Diego. Low-income older adults living in health equity zip codes receive 100 miles of free transportation monthly, supporting mobility independence and allowing them to travel to medical appointments, errands and social activities.

Budget:
Program implementation was contracted to Jewish Family Service of San Diego via a competitive procurement process. The two-year contract was funded by $1,499,993 of American Rescue Plan Act dollars. Within this budget is $849,514 for direct services, with the remaining funding allocated for program administration and reporting. In year one, $451,890 was spent.

Accomplishments:
In the first year, 336 participants took 5,189 one-way rides, including 115 wheelchair-accessible rides, totaling 32,457 miles. Of the 665 customer satisfaction surveys received in year one, 630 indicated that the program increased participants’ ability to complete activities more independently.

Replicability:
Replication is possible with adequate funding and infrastructure. A detailed program statement of work is available for replication. Factor in time for administering a competitive procurement process.

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WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT AND VOLUNTEERISM
All Aboard! Creating a Culture of Belonging
Lewis/Mason/Thurston Area Agency on Aging

Recognizing the importance of long-term employee satisfaction and retention, Lewis/Mason/Thurston Area Agency on Aging (AAA) focused efforts on structured onboarding and training plans and created opportunities for employees to make connections with one another. A supportive work environment, clear communication and strong sense of camaraderie contribute significantly to employee well-being.

Budget:
In 2023, costs included onboarding welcome bags ($20–25) and training (one FTE salary). Connection opportunities and fun activities have minimal costs. The wellness committee, which leads employee engagement activities focused on wellness, secured a grant to cover costs.

Accomplishments:
For the first time in years, the AAA is fully staffed. Recent surveys indicate that the top reasons staff stay working at the agency are positive work culture, meaningful work, flexible/hybrid work schedules, compensation and opportunities for growth and training.

Replicability:
To replicate, agencies should take time to understand the top motivators of their workforce. Be creative with ways to welcome new staff and form a committee to create connection opportunities. Explore grants or fundraising to support staff engagement activities.

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For additional best practice examples from other USAging-administered programs, visit the Social Engagement Innovations Hub at [www.engagingolderadults.org](http://www.engagingolderadults.org) and access the National Aging and Disability Transportation Center Best Practices Compendium at [www.nadtc.org](http://www.nadtc.org).
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