



## OREGON STATE PLAN FOR SERVICE BY ADULTS AGE 50 OR OLDER

Oregon is considered by many to be a national leader in the area of older adult services. Thanks to a strong commitment by all Oregonians, we have a very high rate of older residents living independently, thus remaining actively engaged in their communities longer than those in surrounding states. It is one of our core beliefs that *an age-friendly state is a state that is friendly for people of all ages and abilities.*

As a result of this interest in, and commitment to, a healthy aging process for all Oregonians, national service is seen as a strong partner in the aging field, with representatives involved in ongoing efforts to insure support to elders and their families or other caregivers to live independently.

Much of the content in this state plan is taken from four recent documents that all focus their attention on the issues of aging in our state. Each of the reports has a strong series of recommendations on continuing engagement by older residents. They include the following:

- *2009-2013 State Plan on Aging*, released in September 2009 by the Seniors and People with Disabilities Division of the Oregon Department of Human Services. The division serves as the State Unit on Aging (SUA) as required by the federal Older Americans Act.
- *World Health Organization Age Friendly Cities Project Report on Portland, Oregon* (Portland was the only community in the United States included in the study)
- *A Community Assessment on Aging* released in spring 2009 by a consortium including the United Way of the Columbia-Willamette, the Urban League, and Volunteers of America, in conjunction with the Portland State University Institute on Aging.
- *A Practical Guide to Building a Community for All Ages*, released by the Multnomah County Task Force on Vital Aging in summer 2008.

Members of the Commission, staff from the commission or Corporation for National and Community Service state office, members of our State Committee on Volunteerism or our State Committee on Civic Engagement, and/or Senior Corps programs from across the state participated in the development of each of these plans, which reflect the best thinking in our state.

Thus, our plan will be focused on how to bring or expand national service programs and our partner organizations into the recommendations provided by each group, which all share in common a commitment to insuring life-long engagement opportunities for all Oregonians. Throughout the document, "national service" refers to current national service programs as well as our many program partners involved in volunteerism and civic engagement.

## **CURRENT SENIOR CORPS PROGRAMMING IN OREGON**

Senior Corps in Oregon is ripe for change and inclusion of this cohort in the State Service Plan is one of the best ways to ensure that people 55+ and programs that serve people 55+ receive the support and assistance they need to continue making meaningful volunteer service contributions in Oregon.

The passage of the Kennedy Serve America Act (KSAA) lowered the age requirement for the Foster Grandparent and Senior Companion programs from 60 to 55, and also raised the income eligibility from 125% to 200% of the poverty index. This change invites more people age 55+ to become engaged in stipend service to children at risk and to frail, homebound client populations.

The KSAA also requires CNCS to establish Re-Competition of the existing RSVP programs. A CNCS workgroup, including the Oregon State Director, is currently developing the process for a smooth implementation of an assessment, technical assistance and support and re-competition basics for all RSVP programs. An overview and status update is attached.

In Oregon, the RSVP re-competition requirement is timely as we review the efficiency and efficacy of current RSVP programs and determine how this program can meet more critical needs throughout the state. We will be working collaboratively with each sponsor and program staff this year to “right size” the current programs and to identify potential signature projects within each service area. We believe that by redefining the purpose of RSVP to meet critical community needs, the volunteers will find the experience to be more valuable and meaningful in addition to achieving high impact results.

The Seniors Serving Oregon Coalition (SSOC) is a group of all dues-paying Foster Grandparent, Senior Companion and RSVP program directors from across Oregon. This 501(C)3 organization works closely with the Oregon State Office and Oregon Volunteers to champion service events and networking conferences. A representative serves on the Oregon Volunteers Commission. The executive team of the SSOC is made up of representatives from all three Senior Corps programs and encourages all Senior Corps program directors to participate in the various committees of Oregon Volunteers. Several Senior Corps program directors serve or have served as governor-appointed commissioners, as well as on various commissions and committees for seniors and children. This group of senior service advocates is thrilled to be included and appoint a representative to serve on the Commission’s new Inclusive Volunteering workgroup. This will ensure that training for all Senior Corps program directors on current practices and resources on disability inclusion for volunteers extends to all 36 counties across Oregon.

The landscape for the Foster Grandparent and Senior Companion programs is changing. In late October 2009, the Oregon State Office released a Notice of Funding Opportunity for development of 7 Foster Grandparent programs and new sponsors for 1 Senior Companion program. This revises the current model of programming that has one sponsor attempting to serve the needs of a number of counties outside of their service area and offers more programs with better, more consistent local control.

### RSVP STATE PROFILE

Currently there are 15 RSVP programs statewide that receive \$996,787 of federal funds and \$1,112,309 in local funds:

- 8,731 RSVP volunteers, including 1,125 Baby Boomers
- 1,395,188 hours served during 2008
- RSVP volunteers at 1,309 volunteer stations

### FOSTER GRANDPARENT PROFILE

Currently there are 5 programs with \$1,581,235 of federal funds and \$310,338 in local funds:

- 424 Foster Grandparents
- Foster Grandparents served 333,096 hours
- 5,958 children paired with Foster Grandparent volunteers, including 26 children of prisoners
- Foster Grandparents at 200 volunteer stations

### SENIOR COMPANION PROFILE

Currently there are 6 programs with \$772,786 of federal funds and \$563,349 in local funds:

- 239 Senior Companions
- Senior Companions served 182,682 hours
- 1,806 adult clients were paired with a Senior Companion
- Senior Companions at 146 volunteer stations

### STATE DEMOGRAPHIC CHANGES

The first members of the baby boom generation-those born between 1946 and 1964-began turning 60 years old in 2006 and this population will increase rapidly during the next several decades. Between 2010 and 2015, Oregon's 60+ population is predicted to increase by almost 140,000, according to the State's Office on Economic Analysis.

By 2020, one in five Oregonians will be 60 years and older and projections indicate that one in four residents will be 60 years and older by 2030. Oregonians 85 years or older make up a small but rapidly growing group; in 2010 76,000 individuals will be 85 and older, and by 2030, nearly 120,000 will be 85 and older, a 57 percent increase.

In addition, the senior population will be more racially, ethnically, and linguistically diverse.

At the same time, the growth number of younger age cohorts (youth, young adults, and middle aged adults) is much slower than those over the age of 60. The average number of working age-adults per elderly was 5.3 in 2007, but will shrink to 3.5 in 2020. In 2007, less than 12 % of Oregonians over aged 65 were employed. The aging population in Oregon will have a profound impact on the social and economic fabric of communities across Oregon.

### PHILOSOPHY AND COMMITMENT

Our plan is based on a belief that all Oregon communities should have the resources to provide three or more of the National Association of Area Agencies on Aging's 10 "Best Practices" to help communities serve their aging populations. In each of these best

practices, we can find a number of opportunities for engagement, many of which are already being undertaken by Oregon's national service programs and partner organizations.

1.) Nutrition education to promote healthy eating through a person's entire lifespan, and community-sponsored nutrition programs like home-delivered meals for older adults who have difficulty preparing their own meals.

2.) Age-appropriate fitness programs and recreational facilities that provide walking trails, benches, and fitness equipment.

3.) Safe driving assistance, including larger, easier-to-read road signage, grooved lane dividers, reflective road markings and dedicated left-turn lanes. Include driver assessments and training to promote safe driving for all ages, especially after strokes or other health incidents. Make transportation options available for people who cannot or do not want to drive.

4.) Special planning and training for public safety personnel and other first responders to help them locate and assist older adults during emergencies and disasters.

5.) Preventive health care—including health and “lifestyle” education, immunizations and health screenings—to reduce injuries and the onset of chronic diseases. Include a range of in-home services that will help older adults staying their homes longer.

6.) Home modification programs to help people adjust for special needs. Include zoning and subdivision plans that promote a variety of affordable, accessible housing located near medical, commercial and other desired services, as well as shared housing options for older adults and their caregivers.

7.) Tax assistance and property-tax relief for people in financial need, and programs to protect older adults against scams and elder abuse.

8.) Job training, re-training and lifelong learning opportunities, plus flexible employment options that will attract and retain older workers.

9.) Community engagement opportunities, including serving on community boards and commissions, as well as volunteer opportunities in local government and non-profit organizations.

10.) Single point of access to ALL aging information and services in the community, and the strategic expansion of services that will help older adults age with dignity and independence in their homes and communities.

### **POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS TO INCREASE SERVICE FOR ADULTS AGE 55 +**

These recommendations are confirmed as cornerstones of livability and provision of adequate services to insure that Oregon residents remain active and vital during the aging process.

### **1) Ensure alignment of the Aging Network Service Delivery System and the State Policy on Aging (Oregon Revised Statutes - ORS 410)**

- Coordinate effective, efficient, and convenient provision of community services to older citizens so that services will be readily available to the greatest number over the widest geographical area.

**National Service Involvement** - *Ensure that older Oregonians and their champions are proportionately represented on decision-making bodies at local, regional, and state levels.*

### **2) Ensure availability of healthy living options for all older Oregonians.**

- Increase participation of older adults in existing evidence-based health promotion programs.
- Increase participation of racial, ethnic, cultural and language minority adults in existing evidence-based health promotion programs
- Increase the number of instructors and lay leaders trained statewide to provide evidence-based health programs to older adults
- Conduct assessments of age-friendly livability in urban, suburban, and rural communities to measure factors such as barriers to physical activity, access to health food, and opportunities for civic engagement and intergenerational collaboration.

**National Service Involvement** - *Ensure that Oregon national service programs and partners remain engaged in promoting preventative care as well as maintaining healthy lifestyles for older residents.*

### **3) Ensure that opportunities for ongoing civic engagement are available to all older Oregonians**

- Maintain and support the Title V/Senior Community Service Employment Program for older adults seeking to update skills for unsubsidized employment
- Develop volunteer mobilization efforts that recruit older adults to meaningful volunteer opportunities utilizing leadership skills and experience to address community needs.

**National Service Involvement** - *Ensure that more Oregon communities have access to Senior Corps programs and that current programs have adequate financial resources to support their efforts.*

- *Explore issuing an Encore AmeriCorps Program NOFA through the Commission for program year 2011 - 2012.*

- *Continue to work with partners in volunteerism and civic engagement communities of interest to insure that older Oregonians are included in program design and decision-making, as well as in implementation.*

### **4) Ensure the availability of consumer direction and choice opportunities for all Oregonians**

- Convene a statewide collaboration amongst existing consumer choice and direction and advocates to identify best practices and develop standards to guide providers of long term services and supports at the point of consumer access.
- Develop a formal system of mentorship that uses peers working alongside consumers and families to learn how to navigate systems, understands benefits and rights, assess options, and implement choices.

**National Service Involvement** - *Explore opportunities for more Oregon national service programs to be engaged in advocacy for older residents, building on the success already occurring in many local communities through existing programs.*

#### **5) Strengthen the infrastructure of support for family caregivers**

- Develop One-Stop Resource Centers for access to information and resources
- Increase respite care opportunities available for caregivers
- Provide education and awareness on progressive debilitating diseases

**National Service Involvement** - *Explore opportunities for more Oregon national service programs to be engaged in advocacy and education for older residents and their caregivers, building on the success already occurring in many local communities through existing programs.*

#### **6) Ensure adequate access to transportation and related activities**

- Provide driver education and awareness of transportation safety.
- Provide a variety of alternatives for parking convenience and easy accessibility to high-traffic locations.
- Create a special transportation cooperative that allows individuals to pre-pay for service; consider and encourage the development of neighborhood cooperatives that focus on older adults and those with disabilities; increase awareness of current transportation programs that provide age-friendly transportation services.

**National Service Involvement** - *Continue to participate in special transportation programs serving older clientele; provide tools for advocacy in communities with limited public transportation.*

#### **7) Provide a continuum of housing and care options that allow individuals to age in place**

- Create additional affordable housing for older adults and those with disabilities, while maintaining additional stocks
- Ensure that housing near concentrated services is affordable for older adults who have restricted incomes
- Educate older home buyers about how best to age in place (e.g., find housing with services and transit nearby)
- Develop links between programs for children and older adults (e.g., safe routes to schools/community centers); locate key services (e.g., grocery stores, pharmacies) in areas where there are large or growing populations of older adults; co-locate more services for older adults.
- Increase access to respite support and adult day care. Advocate for businesses to sponsor benefits for adult day care.

**National Service Involvement** - *Continue to participate in special housing programs serving older clientele; provide tools for advocacy in communities with insufficient housing in which Oregonians can age in place.*

## Recommendations to Oregon Department Of Human Services, Seniors & People With Disabilities Division:

### 1) On A Marketing Outreach Plan To Businesses -

Continue to work with colleagues in the Oregon Department of Employment, the Oregon Office of Economic and Community Development, Community Colleges and Workforce Development, Oregon Bureau of Labor and Industry, the Oregon Chamber of Commerce network, and local service providers who have relationships with the business sector to insure that information on aging and aging services are available to all.

### 2) On Outreach To Nonprofit Organizations, The State Educational Agency, Institutions Of Higher Education, And Other State Agencies-

- Continue your robust outreach to other agencies and organizations to ensure that current partnerships are ongoing and remain strong. Work with existing partners to develop relationships with new organizations.
- Provide tools to local partners that can be used to strengthen communication with other state agencies that oversee development of and support for housing, transportation and other public structures used by older Oregonians.

## Recommendations For Civic Engagement And Multigenerational Activities:

### 1) Early childhood education and care, family literacy, and after school programs -

- Utilize results from evaluation of Oregon Community Foundation *Babies and Boomers* pilot projects to expand similar funding to additional programs in other part of the state; explore additional funding from Atlantic Philanthropies to support program expansion.
- Encourage Oregon After School for Kids (ASK) to explore partnerships with Seniors Serving Oregon Coalition and the Network of Oregon Volunteer Centers to explore opportunities for older Oregonians to engage in after school programs throughout the state.
- Working with Oregon Department of Education and the Oregon Commission for Children and Families, support creation of family literacy programs in conjunction with development of community schools. Explore methods for engaging national service program and partner volunteers in development and implementation of family literacy programs.

### 2) Respite services for adults age 55 or older and caregivers -

See policy recommendation 5.

### 3) Transitions for older adults age 55 or older to purposeful work in their post-career lives - *(NOTE: These recommendations are excerpted from the Multnomah County Task Force on Vital Aging report issued in 2008, and are broken into four areas of responsibility)*

#### Employers: Private, Public and Nonprofit

- Beginning with executive leadership, **publicly and intentionally commit your organization** to full utilization of workers age 50 and older. Reward employees that embrace this commitment and do not tolerate indifference or lack of support.
- Conduct a **workforce sustainability audit** in light of your organization's strategic direction.
- Create **flexible options** for as many workers as legally possible. Toss out that 'one

size fits all' in benefits and work arrangements.

- Establish and **cultivate a culture and work environment** that values cross-generational diversity.
- **Combat negative** stereotypes of all age groups.
- Proactively **develop knowledge transfer strategies**.
- Conduct **multi-generational training** as part of overall diversity training.
- Support **retraining and development programs** for all workers, giving action to the term "lifelong learning."
- Offer **life planning** for pre-retirees through workshops and/or one-on-one coaching.
- Allow **flex-time** for employees to be able to engage in community projects prior to their retirement.

### Nonprofit Organizations

- **Expand language.** Recognize that the lines will blur between volunteers who are unpaid and those who receive a stipend or other forms of compensation. Some volunteers will prefer to have a specific title, such as member, staff, associate, participant, mentor, teacher, advisor, coach, consultant, project manager, coordinator, or by specific function such as designer, clerk or discussion leader. Where appropriate, use functional descriptors for these positions.
- **Pay the upfront costs.** Engaging unpaid individuals does cost time, money and requires effectively investing in infrastructure and systems to manage this resource well.
- **Assign management of unpaid staff to professional volunteer managers** with attention to job and project descriptions, orientation, training, supervision and evaluation.
- **Strengthening the volunteer management function** through staff participation in Northern Oregon Volunteer Administrators Association (NOVAA), training and other professional development opportunities.
- **Don't assume that money is the number one motivation** for older workers wanting to work in the nonprofit sector. There are many other compelling reasons individuals choose to do this work.
- Create **work and compensation options**.
- **Create unpaid staff career ladders** or tracks that allow for advancement.

### Philanthropic and Public Funders

- Provide **funding for nonprofits** that demonstrate successful models of engaging older adults.
- Provide more **funding for training and placement programs** that target older adults through One Stop Career Centers.
- Invest in funding the infrastructure of an existing (Nonprofit Association of Oregon) or new organization that can serve as a **broker between older adults who want to work in the nonprofit sector and nonprofit organizations**. Think of a temporary agency model targeting nonprofits that can cover a full range of compensation including paid,

partially paid and unpaid work.

- Invest in funding in nonprofit organizations for **succession planning and executive transitions**.
- Provide funding for **executive coaching and professional development**. Fund support for structured peer networking opportunities for executives.
- Annually **recognize the top ten best nonprofit organizations** that engage older adults with compensatory prizes.
- Provide **seed money for colleges and nonprofits** to develop educational programs designed to tap the time, talents and skills of older people.
- Provide **general operating and unrestricted support**, more multi-year support and capacity-building support for nonprofits.

### **Community at Large**

- Create an **online resource and information packet** available for employers of all sizes with information and tips on how to make a workplace friendly for all ages.
- Make current local **employment placement and training programs** work more effectively for older people.
- **Transform neighborhood schools into community centers** for all ages and activities, considering using school buses as transportation options.
- Provide and strengthen **opportunities for social interaction** among isolated and vulnerable, older adults. This alleviates or reduces isolation, loneliness and depression. Faith communities, community associations and individuals can be very important resources *in this area*.

### **RECOMMENDATION FOR ENCOURAGING THE DEVELOPMENT OF ENCORE SERVICE PROGRAMS**

1) AmeriCorps Program Committee of Oregon Volunteers will determine the feasibility of and plan for opening an Encore Service Program NOFA for the 2011-2012 program year.

### **SUMMARY**

In closing it is important to reiterate that this plan is a summary of ongoing work being carried on throughout the state by a wide network of public and private organizations, with strong representation from the national service family (which includes our extended family).

We believe that it is critical to acknowledge the strong role that Senior Corps programs play in the state. Through the leadership of the Oregon State Program Office of CNCS we are working together to build strong viable programs that serve more Oregonians ages 55+ as they work to strengthen Oregon communities.