



COLORADO COMMISSION ON AGING



Advocating for Seniors

Colorado Commission on Aging Annual Report

2012-2013

Report from the Chair

REPORT FROM THE CHAIR, COLORADO COMMISSION ON AGING-Vivian Stovall

Reflecting on the past two years as Chair of the Colorado Commission on Aging (the Commission), I can truly say that it has been an incredible and rewarding journey. The Commission has and continues to be at the forefront, advocating for the improvement and creation of senior services, collaboration with other senior stakeholders, reviewing and supporting crucial legislation, and recognizing the contributions of our state's centenarians and volunteers.

The Colorado Commission on Aging, like many others, has embarked on a movement of change that challenges us to view closely existing services and resources for our older population which includes cultural diversity, the aging disability communities, healthcare reform, person-centered programs and other interests. The combination of these dynamics can cause transformation in how we advocate and communicate.

This year we welcomed seven new members to the Commission: **Jeanette Hensley** and **Robert Spuhler**, Congressional District 3; **Judy Hensley**, Congressional District 4; **Marvin (Joe) Urban**, Congressional District 5; **Bobbie Mecalo** and **Gail Ploen**, Congressional District 6 and **Dar Vriesman**, Congressional District 7.

With the changing demographics and fast growth of our older population, these new members have brought a broader vision and vibrant engagement with the issues in a progressively informed and agenda setting atmosphere.

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As my tenure as Chair comes to an end, I want to thank all past and present members of the Commission for your unselfish time as a volunteer, members of the Colorado General Assembly for allowing me to meet, advise and work with you on bills and issues, members of the Governor's staff and staff of the Colorado Department's of Human Services and Healthcare Policy and Financing. I also want to give a special thank you to many of the aging stakeholders for your insight, recommendations and guidance on so many issues. Though I will remain on the Commission, my duties as Chair would have been difficult without the assistance and open communication that was provided by all of these individuals.

The Commission represents all aging and aged citizens and welcomes recommendations and participation of everyone who supports the needs and concerns of this population. We give an open invitation to our meetings which can be viewed on the Colorado Department of Human Service's website or feel free to contact the State Unit on Aging's office at 303-866-5288 and speak with Tara Franck.

Community Relations Committee

The Community Relations Committee is chaired by Joe Urban with Alice Langley, Karl Aguilera, Judy Hensley and Betty Sweeney as members. The committee has as its mission "To honor the accomplishments of Colorado seniors and to educate the public on the issues that face those seniors". They seek to inform the public on the function of the CCOA, and they support a variety of events each year that recognize senior accomplishments including; the Centenarian Celebration and the Allen Buckingham award.

The 18th Annual Allen Buckingham Senior Leadership Legacy Award November 16, 2012

The Allen Buckingham Award was presented to Mr. Edward Rizer on November 15th, 2012 at the Crowne Plaza Hotel in Colorado Springs. Mr. Rizer was recognized for decades of service to the Southern Regional Development Agency. At age 91 he still works many hours per week with the Meals on Wheels program in Pueblo and is credited with designing and maintaining the current distribution routes for the program. The program serves over 300 needy seniors each day and as a co-worker put it "Mr. Rizer is the heart of the program".



The Allen Buckingham Award is named for Allen M. A. Buckingham, who served on the Colorado Commission on Aging from 1986 to 1998 and held other key positions in his career. The Allen Buckingham Senior Legacy Award is given annually to an individual who has made a noteworthy contribution to the senior community of Colorado. Allen promoted the needs of older adults by helping to ensure that they live in dignity, have freedom of choice and realize full and active participation in society. The spirit of his service is celebrated annually with this award.

Centenarian Celebration

This annual event is held during Older Americans Month and rotates to a different site within the state each year. This year's event was held at the Hotel Colorado in Glenwood Springs on May 17th. It honored the accomplishments of those who are 100 years of age (or older). Nine centenarians from the Western Slope attended this year allowing us all to reflect on the collective wisdom and perseverance that it has taken to make Colorado such a great place today.

The honorees were presented with a certificate recognizing their achievements and Governor John Hickenlooper proclaimed this day as

Colorado Centenarian Day. Colorado Senate President pro tem Lucia Guzman gave a keynote address focusing on the current and future challenges facing seniors in our state. Entertainment was provided by the Sopris Elementary Fourth Grade Honors Ensemble.

The Centenarian Celebration is part of an ongoing effort to recognize all centenarians within the state. Each senior is presented with a certificate from the governor.



Senior Day at the Capitol

Senior Day at the Capitol took place on March 20, 2013, in the Supreme Court chambers. Over 200 seniors attended this annual event, with many arriving from outside the Denver area.

The day began with Sgt. Major Archie Robinson, recipient of the Congressional Gold Medal, leading us in the Pledge of Allegiance. Speakers included Mary Catherine Rabbit, from the The Legal Center, as well as Cary Steven Johnson, 1st District Attorney's Office. Information was shared on changes to Medicare and Medicaid as a result of the Affordable Care Act, and on Power Against Fraud Crime Prevention.

The luncheon speakers were Steve Woods and Mary Kaes representing Columbine Community Village, The Village Movement and your Community: Neighbors helping Neighbors. Over 20 legislators spoke to the group with many focusing on elder abuse, SB 111 and increase funding for the Older Coloradan Cash Fund, SB 127. Unfortunately, the Governor was unable to attend due to the death of a cabinet member.

Legislative Committee

Jeanette Hensley and Bobbi Mecalo were Co-Chairs of the Legislative Committee. Other members of the committee included: Leanne Abdnor, Bob Spuhler, Dar Vriesman, and Gail Ploen.

The committee was very active this year, focusing on two major pieces of legislation, which were both approved and signed by the Governor. First was Senate Bill 13-111, Requiring Reports of Elder Abuse and Exploitation, created mandatory reporting of elder abuse against a senior age 70 or older, from a variety of service providers and professionals. The abuse can be either physical or financial. The second piece of legislation was Senate Bill 13-127, Increase in Funding for the Older Coloradans Cash Fund, provided an additional \$2,000,000 of funding to the 16 Area Agencies on Aging to provide necessary services to seniors throughout the State. Senate Bill 13-127, in addition to the Governor's increase of \$2,000,000 resulted in a \$4,000,000 increase in State Funding for Senior Services.

The Legislative Committee met weekly to review bills and make recommendations to the full Commission. The committee then tracked the progress of the bills. Members of the committee met with other community groups to gather information on the bills; then testified in support or against the bills to Legislators.

Strategic Planning Committee

This year for the first time the Strategic Planning Committee began the process of establishing a Long Range Plan. With the help of a facilitated planning meeting, the committee helped to define and refine the basis of what the Long Range Plan would be for the Commission. Additional time was spent by the entire Commission to complete what we hope will be the beginning of a Long Range Plan with an Action Plan to be used in the coming years. Members of this committee included Linda Sanden, Vice Chair, Ruth Long and Robert Spuhler with input from the entire Colorado Commission on Aging.

FY 13-14 Meetings

July 18-19, 2013 Annual Meeting- Parker

October 3, 2013-Stratton

October 3-4, 2013 EPLSO-Stratton

November 14, 2013-Denver

**November 15 2013-Allen Buckingham
Award Lunch-Denver**

January 30-31, 2014-Denver

April 1, 2014-Denver

April 2, 2014-Senior Day @ the Capitol

May 29, 2014-Ft. Collins

**May 30 2014-Centenarian Celebration
Ft. Collins area**

CCOA Mission

The mission of the
Colorado
Commission on the
Aging (CCOA) is to
inform and advise
decision makers and to
advocate for the quality
of life of all seniors.