



At the Center of it All

MCOA Annual Report FY15

History

The Massachusetts Association of Councils on Aging and Senior Center Directors was incorporated as a 501c3 non-profit in 1979 though its origin can be traced back at least to 1974 when the first known statewide gathering of Councils on Aging staff and board members occurred in Northampton, Massachusetts. Currently 349 communities have established a COA municipal department.

MCOA Mission Statement

MCOA is a non-profit membership organization comprised of municipal Councils on Aging. Our mission is to support the independence of adults 60 and older by advocating for programs and services to meet their needs, promote the growth and quality of Councils on Aging and senior centers and strengthen the professional skills of Council on Aging staff.

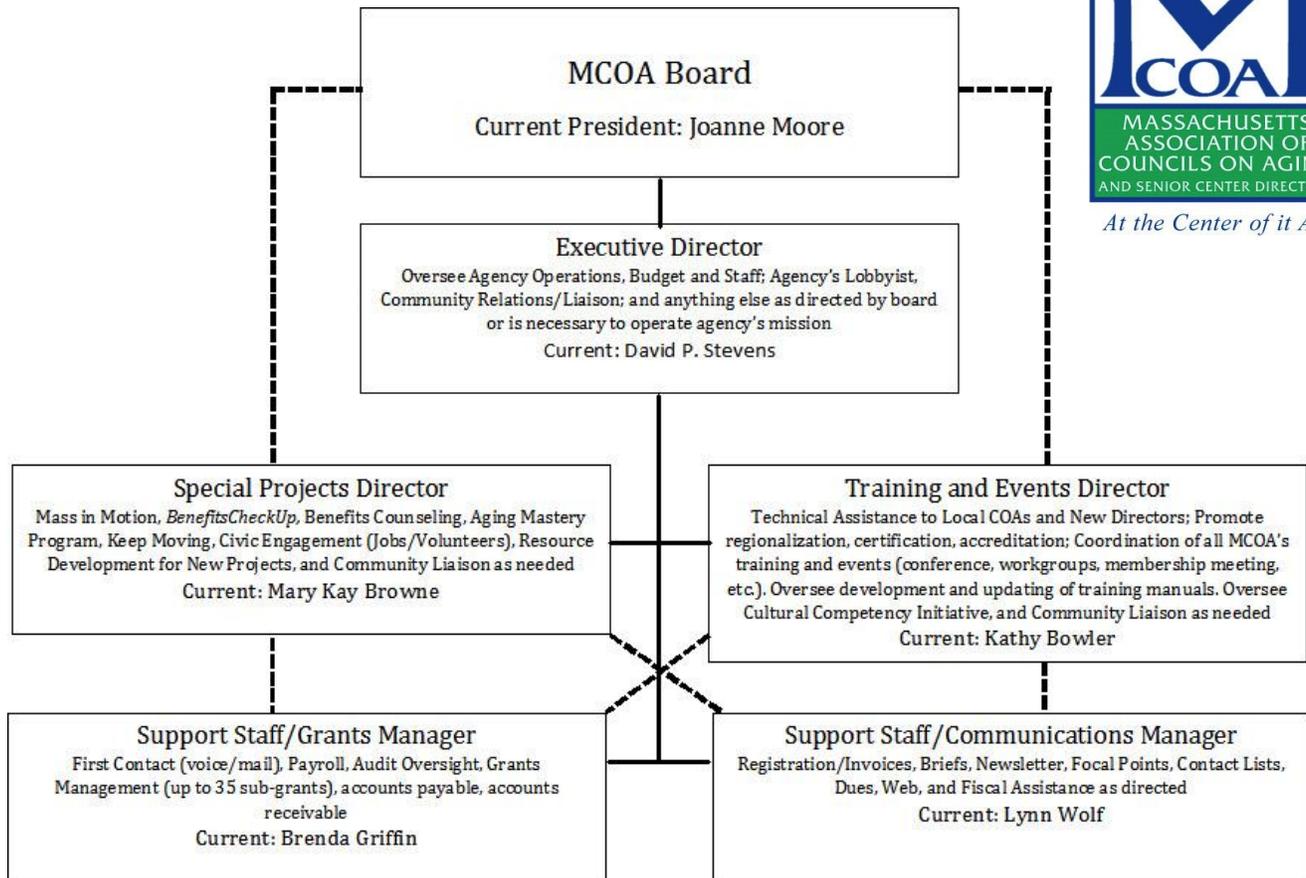
Statement of Purpose

Established in 1979, the Massachusetts Association of Councils On Aging & Senior Center Directors was formed to:

- Improve the quality of services provided to older adults of the Commonwealth by the Councils on Aging, Senior Centers, and other social services providers within the Commonwealth.
- Educate and otherwise improve the skills of the staff of Councils on Aging and Senior Centers of cities and towns of the Commonwealth.
- Encourage and promote the development of new Senior Centers in the Commonwealth and the expansion of existing ones.
- To do and perform any and all acts and services that may be incidental or necessary to carry out the above purposes.



At the Center of it All



June 5, 2015

MCOA Membership:

A few years back I asked the Membership “Where Do We *Grow* From Here?” Through your guidance and the support of our Board of Directors and Advisory Council, MCOA has “*grown*” to meet your needs.

With additional funding through the Service Incentive Grant Program administered by the Executive Office of Elder Affairs we have grown exponentially pursuing four keys areas of defined need: training and technical assistance for our members; outreach programs to underserved populations; healthy aging initiatives in conjunction with EOEA and the MA Department of Public Health; and developing tools to address economic insecurity documented in this state by MA Elder Economic Security Standard Index (“Elder Index”) detailed by Wider Opportunities for Women (WOW), the Gerontology Institute at the University of Massachusetts Boston and the Massachusetts Association of Older Americans along many other state partners including MCOA.

To focus on these four initiatives, the operative word for the last 24 months is *growth*. As recently as FY13 our budget was a mere \$330,000 which grew threefold in FY14 and will approach \$1.5 million when the final numbers are counted for FY15. This financial gain allowed for the hiring of two new Directors and increased hours for support staff, establishing our current staffing at five full time equivalents. FY15 is the year MCOA hit its stride and is now not only meeting the defined needs of our members by actively participating throughout the Commonwealth to make our state ‘Age Friendly’.

This report details this *growth* and will depict among others things:

- MCOA received \$871,165 in grants from EOEA, MA DPH, Tufts Health Plan Foundation, Blue Cross Blue Shield of Massachusetts, the National Council on Aging and dispersed \$671,665 back into the field thru 80 subcontracts to carry forth various initiatives.
- As of June 1, 2015 we have received \$182,775.76 in voluntary dues from our members from 333 cities and towns (95.4%), and we hope the remaining 16 our able to make their member approved/ fair share contribution by June 30, 2015.
- Over ninety per cent of our members have participated in one of our initiatives or attended at least one of our trainings or the fall conference.
- MCOA Leadership remains strong with over 65 individuals ‘volunteering’ their time to be on our Board of Directors or our Advisory Council or chairing one of our six work groups or 21 task forces. In addition this year, the Western Massachusetts Association (WMACA - the oldest regional COA association in the state) merged with MCOA to join Cape Coast and CEMACA (Central Massachusetts) as Regional Affiliates, where under our umbrella they can receive funding and staff support.
- MCOA is engaged statewide with 6 appointments to State Commissions and serving on numerous stakeholders groups. We also have an active partnership with the National Council on Aging field testing many of their major initiatives on the local level.
- Following up on our partial success to restore \$1 million dollars to the Service Incentive Grant program in FY15; this year we began a five-year campaign to increase the COA Formula Grant to \$12/elder by 2020. As we go to press it appears that the first step has been achieved, as both the House and the Senate have included sufficient funding to allow the Formula Grant to rise from the current \$8/elder/YEAR to \$9 for FY16.

MCOA has *grown* to meet the needs you stated. Your participation on any or all of these initiatives is welcome. After you have read this Annual Report, get inspired and join our Leadership Team to implement and expand these services.

Submitted by
David P. Stevens
Executive Director

In conjunction with

Brenda Griffin
Grant Manager

Lynn Wolf
Communications Manager

Mary Kay Browne
Director of Special Projects

Kathy Bowler
Director of Training, Technical
Assistance and Special Events

MCOA By the Numbers

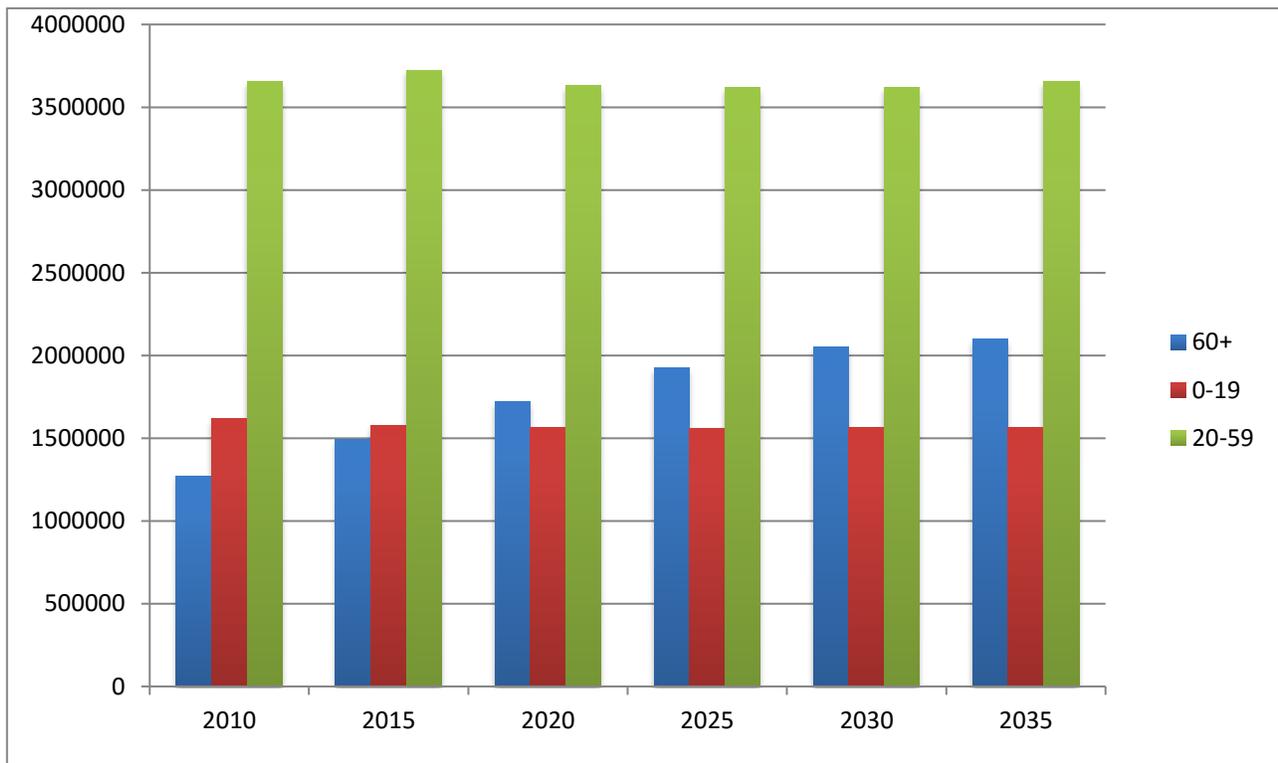
MCOA needs to continue to grow to meet the needs of the expanding 60+ population

Source: Donahue Institute, UMASS/ Boston

	2010	2015	2020	2025	2030	2035
60+	1273271	1493156	1721462	1925417	2049347	2098125
0-19	1621143	1575847	1567780	1560991	1563211	1564122
20-59	3653215	3723588	3632485	3619470	3618568	3657222
total	6547629	6792591	6921727	7105878	7231126	7319469

5 Takeaways from these Charts:

1. The 60+ population has increased by 220,000 more older adults since April 1, 2010, a 17.3% growth.
2. The overall population is projected to grow 11.8% over the next 20 years but the age 60+ is growing at a phenomenal rate of 64.8%. The 20-59 age cohort remains steady over the 25 year period depicted above and the under 20 age populations actually decreases slightly.
3. Sometime over the next five years there will be more older adults (age 60+) than children (under 20) in the Commonwealth.
4. The Boomers have definitely arrived with the oldest of that generation now approaching 70 and the youngest in their mid-fifties, this should be the clear focus for municipally based Councils on Aging as we are the first step on the elder care continuum.
5. Are we ready? This is a question that should be asked over and over as our Commonwealth ages. By 2035 nearly 29% of our residents will be age 60+. Do we have the infrastructure in place to meet this need. In addition other projections indicate that the 85+ population will also see a dramatic increase as residents live longer. Most will want to age in place, what are the implications?



Source: Donahue Institute, UMASS/ Boston

MCOA Advocacy: FY15

Our mission statement reads, "... to support the independence of adults 60 and older by advocating for programs and services to meet their needs, promote the growth and quality of Councils on Aging and senior centers and strengthen the professional skills of Council on Aging staff." Thus as 'advocates' we see the need to give voice to older adults through empowerment of various stakeholders and through our own lobbying of the Administration and Legislature on Beacon Hill and down in Washington D.C. In addition, we provide technical assistance to local communities who campaign to get their own voices heard in front of city hall or at town meetings.

For the last five years, Massachusetts Association of Councils on Aging and Senior Center Directors has registered with the Secretary of State as an agency that lobbies both the Executive and the Legislative Branches. MCOA's Executive Director is also a registered lobbying agent for both branches and files biannual reports in accordance with M.G.L. All reports are available at <http://www.sec.state.ma.us/lob/lobidx.htm>.

During FY15, MCOA kept a watchful eye on all legislation filed that pertains to older adults but, since the 188th General Court recessed in July, 2014 and the 189th General Court did not begin until January 2015, most of our focus has been on implementation of the FY15 budget and lobbying for increased funding in the FY16 budget.

FY15 Service Incentive Grant Funding

We were successful with the legislature in restoring the \$1 million cumulative cut that occurred over the Great Recession for the SIG program. This allowed for many new initiatives of regional consortiums and local COAs totaling nearly \$320,000 and \$675,000 for MCOA to hire staff and disperse grants to local COAs targeting priority areas as defined by MCOA and EOE. However, when the news broke of another state fiscal shortfall in November, we recommended to EOE to sequester the remaining \$380,000 of SIG funding in case a '9c' cut was inevitable. In early February of 2015, the Administration did reduce line item #9110-9002 by said amount and that curtailed further growth in the SIG Program. We are hoping 'someday' to have that money restored; the House of Representatives included full restoration in their version of the FY16 Budget proposal, however the Senate did not. As we go to press, we await the Conference Committee final recommendation. The \$380,000 did impact the growth of many of the initiatives detailed in this report. Restoration could mean expansion of existing programs or even new directions as prioritized by the incoming Secretary of Elder Affairs and the new Administration.

FY16 Formula Grant Campaign "\$12/elder by 2020"

Delayed by the great recession, MCOA started a five-year campaign in FY15 to increase the Formula Grant to \$12/elder/YEAR. MCOA Executive Director visited 60 state offices from February thru May on behalf of the Membership to make the case to increase the FG:

1. MCOA shared the Donahue Institute's projections of the Older Adult population of Massachusetts, which indicates a 17.3% growth since April 1, 2010 - 220,000 more seniors.
2. MCOA shared the local results of the Massachusetts Healthy Aging Collaborative Data Report funded by Tufts Health Plan Foundation (<http://mahealthyagingcollaborative.org/data-report/explore-the-profiles/>). "The Report is designed to help residents, agencies, providers and governments understand the older adults who live in their cities and towns – their ages, living arrangements, health status, strengths and vulnerabilities..."
3. MCOA shared a list of existing COA programs that could provided solutions for the problems identified by the Data Report.
4. And we concluded with "Since we can't change the (US Census) count we need to change the (formula) rate to meet the challenges of both population increase and the determined needs.

Frequently accompanied by board members including President Joanne Moore and Legislative Chair Vicki Lowe these Beacon Hill visits were augmented with local 'legislative breakfasts' held throughout the Commonwealth where individual COAs (staff and constituents) made the case for the increase. **We were successful.** Both the House and the Senate included enough funds to increase the Formula Grant to \$9/elder but we await the final FY16 Budget from the Conference Committee, a final up or down vote by each chamber, the Governor's review and signature, and finally we await the new Secretary who is charged with funding line item #9110-9002 provided that all monies "shall be expended under the distribution schedules for formula and incentive grants established by the secretary of elder affairs".

Property Tax Task Force

After a decade of significant successes on Beacon Hill to provide both statewide relief and local options for senior property tax payers this legislative session so far as been quiet during this fiscal year. There was one public hearing where Property Tax Task Force Chair Norma Simons Fitzgerald was accompanied by David Klein and Lina Arena DeRosa to provide testimony on MCOA's behalf. Stay tuned we expect the second half of this legislative session to be quite busy.

White House Conference on Aging



U.S. Senator Elizabeth Warren

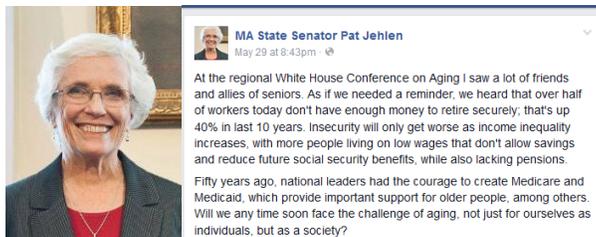


Director of the White House Council on Aging, Nora Super



AARP Chief Advocacy & Engagement Officer, Nancy Leamond

Elder Advocates from across the northeast gathered on May 28, 2015 at the Edward M. Kennedy Institute at UMASS/ Boston to focus developing priorities in four key areas of interest: Healthy Aging, Long Term Services and Supports, Elder Justice and Retirement Security. MCOA Executive Director David P. Stevens and Special Projects Director Mary Kay Browne joined Board President Joanne Moore, Past President Jayne Colino, and Boston Commissioner and Board Member Emily Shea to participate in this forum designed to develop a national strategic agenda for the next decade. Also in attendance was incoming EOEA Secretary Alice Bonner, AARP State President Sandy Albright, AARP State Director Mike Festa, Alzheimer's Executive Director James Wessler, MSAC Executive Director Carolyn Villers, Mass Home's Al Norman, with Joint Committee on Elder Affairs Co-Chairs Senator Pat Jehlen and Representative Denise Garlick, among many others. This event was the last of five regional "Conferences" that lead to the national event scheduled for July 13, 2015, which will be 'live streamed' to encourage participation from everybody. MCOA Members are encouraged to hook their senior center up to the live feed and invite older adults to come and listen and participate in this event. More details at <http://www.whitehouseconferenceonaging.gov>



Economic Security and Civic Engagement Initiatives

The Profile of Elder Economic Insecurity in Massachusetts

The Elder Economic Security Standard Index (“Elder Index”), a measure of income older adults require to meet the basic and necessary costs of living, **shows that 63% of elder-only households in Massachusetts are economically insecure.** Additional key findings for Massachusetts elders from the 2014 Elder Index include:

- 91% of Hispanic senior households are economically insecure
- 81% of African-American households are economically insecure
- 64% of elder women and 53% of elder men in MA are economically insecure.
- **The gap between the average income and expenses for older adults in MA was \$9,800/year** in 2013. For Massachusetts in 2014, the Elder Index was \$24,240 for a single homeowner, \$28,452 for a single renter, \$35,856 for a single person with a mortgage, \$36,144 for married homeowners, \$40,356 for married renters, and \$47,760 for married couples with a mortgage. (Source: Wider Opportunities for Women, 2014).
- According to the Social Security Administration, Old Age Pensions are the sole source (*representing 90% or more of gross income*) of income for 23% of married couples and 46% (almost half!) of unmarried persons. However, the average old age pension covers only between 42-65% of the true cost of living for elders in Massachusetts

New Benefits Counseling and Application Assistance Program to Serve 86 Towns in Western Massachusetts

MCOA has awarded contracts to 2 organizations to develop new Benefits Counseling and Application Assistance (BCAA) Programs over the next 30 months (through June 2017). The purpose of the BCAA Program will be to help individuals who live on a fixed and limited income to apply for programs that pay for basic household expenses such as food, energy, property tax relief, housing and home maintenance and repairs.



The 2 organizations are the Northampton Council on Aging, poised to serve older adults throughout the *service area defined by the Highland Valley Area Agency on Aging*, and Elder Services of Berkshire County, Inc., to serve older adults residing throughout *Berkshire County*. With these 2 new program sponsors, plus the Franklin County Home Care BCAA Program, **a total of 86 communities in western Massachusetts are now served by the Benefits Counseling Program, representing 24.5% of the MCOA member communities and including 100,000 adults over age 60.**

The BCAA Program is funded through a Service Incentive Grant (SIG) to the MCOA from the Executive Office of Elder Affairs.

SNAP Enrollment Initiative

The National Council on Aging (NCOA) awarded a \$50,000 grant to MCOA for a 12-month Senior SNAP Enrollment Initiative for Older Adults in Hampden County. The SNAP Enrollment Initiative will fight senior hunger in Hampden County by supporting intensive outreach, eligibility screening and enrollment assistance efforts by economic case workers and health benefits counselors all across the county. The project aims to enroll 1,000 older adults (age 60 and over) into the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP).

The Springfield Department of Elder Affairs will lead the effort in Hampden County. A new outreach worker will arrange extensive outreach events throughout the county. The SDEA's economic case workers will complete and track SNAP applications, and the Hampden County SHINE counselors will refer SNAP eligible elders to the SDEA team to conduct benefits counseling. MCOA will share the outreach tools and lessons learned from the project with all COAs.

With funding from the Walmart Foundation, NCOA awarded grant funding to 30 community-based organizations across America for this SNAP outreach and application assistance effort.

Benefits Check Up Screening Initiative

In Massachusetts, many older adults have monthly incomes insufficient for paying for all household expenses. And, their limited savings cannot make up the gap between income and expenses.

During FY15, MCOA trained hundreds of human services personnel about an easy to use, comprehensive benefits screening tool at www.benefitscheckup.org/mcoa. The online tool includes more than 2,000 federal and state as well as private benefits programs.

In addition to COA staff, trainees included: the state's Veterans Service Officers, legislative staffers, ASAP case managers, information specialists, options counselors, and staff of other community based service providers. Since 2001, more than three million people have used BenefitsCheckUp® to find programs that help them pay for prescription drugs, health care, meals, housing, utilities, tax relief, and other needs.

Regional Affiliations within MCOA

Cape Coast – Serving Cape Cod and the Islands

CEMACA - Serving Central Massachusetts

WMACA - Serving Western Massachusetts

State Commission Appointments

Protective Service Commission- Terri Marciello and Barbara Farnsworth

Falls Prevention- Joanne Moore

PCA- Kristan McCosh

LGBT- David P. Stevens

ESSI- Eileen Bogle

MA DOR 360- Norma Simons Fitzgerald

National Liaison

NISC- Jayne Colino & Joanne Moore

Wellness Initiatives

Active aging embodies the philosophy that individuals can live as fully as possible within the seven dimensions of wellness -- emotional, vocational, physical, spiritual, intellectual, social, and environmental. Improving the quality of life for older adults within the seven dimensions of wellness is a goal of every COA staff person. MCOA supports COA professionals with resources and tools so they can achieve optimal success in supporting wellness and healthy aging in their communities. A summary of these activities follows.



Aging Mastery Program (AMP)



MCOA awarded AMP Grants to 27 new communities to offer the Aging Mastery Pilot Program in FY15. Mass Councils on Aging have provided extensive feedback to the National Council on Aging, the program founder, on ways to improve the program design. The Aging Mastery Program™ is an innovative program designed to demonstrate how 4 components -- educational training sessions, self-determined plans designed by participants, follow-up tracking of activities, and rewards bestowed based upon behavior change -- can empower older adults to make and maintain small but impactful changes in their health behaviors. The participants make plans for how they will improve their sleep quality, eat more produce, exercise more routinely, manage medications more precisely, and update legal documents to reflect new realities and plans.

Adding these 27 to the 19 communities who piloted the program in FY14, Massachusetts has 46 communities engaged in hosting AMP programs. The communities engaged in AMP includes: **Adams, Amesbury, Arlington, Ashby, Auburn, Barnstable, Belchertown, Braintree, Cheshire, Clarksburg, Concord, Dalton, Duxbury, East Longmeadow, Easthampton, Florida, Foxborough, Franklin, Gardner, Hampden, Hancock, Harwich, Kingston, Lawrence, Lexington, Lincoln, Marshfield, Medfield, Medway, Millville, Natick, New Bedford, North Adams, Plymouth, Rochester, Rutland, ,Salem, Sandwich, Savoy, Scituate, Shirley, Somerville , Ware, Wayland, Weston, and Williamstown.**

The Aging Mastery Program pilots in FY15 were funded through a Service Incentive Grant (SIG) to the MCOA from the Executive Office of Elder Affairs and a grant from the Tufts Health Plan Foundation. MCOA plans to extend funding to additional communities to offer AMP in FY16.

24 Communities to Launch New Keep Moving Walking Clubs in Spring 2015

Twenty-four new communities launched a Keep Moving Walking Program with a grant they received from MCOA in 2015. The purpose of the \$600 awards were to support efforts that would engage older adults in a walking routine 2-3 days per week, a minimum threshold for sustaining maximal health and independence in older adults. The 24 new walking clubs bloomed in: **Braintree, Brimfield, Brockton, Cheshire, Egremont, Essex, Halifax, Hamilton, Holliston, Hopkinton, Kingston, Merrimac, Millbury, North Attleboro, Natick, New Bedford, Palmer, Peabody, Plymouth, Sandisfield, Sheffield, Stoneham, Upton and Yarmouth.**

Keep Moving Walking Program Champions organized access for older adults to safe indoor and outdoor physical activity spaces, such as town tracks and neighborhoods as well as indoor spaces like gyms and malls for winter time walks. In addition, many towns created Safe Walking maps, with suggestions for safe, beautiful and interesting places to walk in town.

In all, there are now over 80 Keep Moving Walking Programs in Massachusetts. Blue Cross Blue Shield of Massachusetts has been the main sponsor of the Keep Moving Walking Club Coalition for over 15 years. In addition, Elder Affairs lent support to the program with SIG 2015 funding. In FY16, MCOA will continue developing new community walking programs for older adults across the state.

Councils on Aging across the State Organize 1st Annual Go the Distance 1-Mile Walk Challenge in June 2015

The ability to live independently depends in part on a person's ability to walk a reasonable distance. By walking for as little as 30 minutes each day, older adults can significantly extend their life and sustain their independence. Twenty-two communities have organized a June 2015 1-mile walk challenge to increase their community's awareness of the link between health and walking. Through the efforts of these COAs in June as well as the 80+ Keep Moving Walking Clubs year round, older adults will gain a better awareness of the link between sustaining one's independence and quality of life and being able to walk 1 mile. The 20+ local Go the Distance events were funded and organized by each local Council on Aging and its community partners.



Healthy Aging through Community Design Projects

Healthy community design brings evidence-based health strategies into community planning, transportation, and land-use decisions. MCOA, in partnership with the MA Department of Public Health and Mass in Motion communities, contracted with 17 organizations to conduct Healthy Aging through Community Design projects during FY15. The communities involved included: **Cambridge, Belchertown, Fall River, Fitchburg, Gloucester, Lowell, Medford, Malden, New Bedford, North Adams with Adams, Palmer with West Springfield, Pittsfield, Salem, Weymouth and Worcester.**

These projects were designed to identify elder-specific needs and issues in Mass in Motion cities and to make these issues stronger components in the overall community planning process. Mass in Motion communities create more opportunities for people to eat better and move more as they live in their communities. Mass in Motion is dedicated to making the "healthy choice the easy choice". It is imperative that these 'policy and systems-change strategies' consider the impacts on **all** residents and **across the life span**. This approach is embodied by the "8 to 80" concept -- if you create a city that's good for an 8 year old and good for an 80 year old, you will create a successful city for everyone to enjoy in safety and better health.

Last summer, with funding from MCOA, the Pioneer Valley Planning Commission published the 2nd edition of the **Healthy Community Design Toolkit— Leveraging Positive Change**, to address input from Mass in Motion partners and to add a new focus on healthy aging throughout the report.

“The focus on healthy aging accomplishes two goals. First, it provides a window into how the toolkit can be used to address the specific needs of a population. This example will provide a replicable model for thinking through how to link a population’s healthy living needs with specific community design leverage points. Second, meeting the needs of older adults will take communities a long way toward meeting the needs of their full populations. The needs of older adults are, in many ways, not unique; it is more a question of degree than difference. For example, while a younger couple may be physically able to navigate a narrow sidewalk that is cracked and slippery, they will have a more enjoyable and safer walk on a sidewalk that has smooth, high-grip pavement, a wide unobstructed area for walking abreast, and curb ramps that lead directly to crosswalks.”

This summer, MCOA and DPH will combine the 17 project summaries and lessons learned into a final report on how to add Healthy Aging into Community Design and Age-Friendly community planning efforts. The Final Report will be widely circulated to policymakers, city planners, public health managers, council on aging directors and board members, and other healthy aging partners so they can integrate these lessons into their planning processes.

The Healthy Aging through Community Design grants were funded by a Service Incentive Grant (SIG) to the MCOA from the Executive Office of Elder Affairs as well as a grant from the Department of Public Health.

Outreach Initiatives

Our world is becoming increasingly diverse. The composition of our communities is reflective of the demographic shifts. Over the last generation, Senior Centers are far more likely than ever to serve older adults of multiple generations, persons of color, persons with a variety of ethnic backgrounds, persons of a variety of gender and sexual orientations, persons of differing physical and cognitive abilities and socioeconomic backgrounds. These individual characteristics can play an enormous role as persons participate, or choose not to participate, at Senior Centers.

Intergenerational Programming Taking Flight in Massachusetts

We live in a society in which many people are not friends with, nor have the opportunity to interact frequently with, people from other generations. This is caused by many factors – young parents living far apart from their own parents is one reason – and ageist assumptions and age segregated social activities is another primary reason.

MCOA members want to build far greater social inclusiveness for older adults within community life by significantly increasing intergenerational events, activities and programming for older adults and youth of all ages. COAs affiliate with myriad local partners – preschools through colleges, parks and recreation programs, community music and theater programs, Boys and Girls clubs, Scout Troops, and many others to achieve this goal.

In FY15, MCOA engaged with Bridges Together Inc., an intergenerational programming leader, to offer a series of Intergenerational (IG) professional development opportunities. These included:



- communities to implement the award-winning Bridges Intergenerational© Program Curricula.
- Establishing a database of IG programs in the state.
- Mentoring staff who decide to implement new IG programs and activities in their community.

These intergenerational program development activities were funded through a Service Incentive Grant (SIG) to MCOA from the Executive Office of Elder Affairs.

Creating a Welcoming Place for All

In December, 2014 MCOA convened a group of stakeholders to discuss strategies to build the capacity of Senior Centers to work effectively with the growing diversity of older adults. The consensus of the group was that the initial thrust should be to train communities around the concept of culturally competent care and to develop best practice materials in support of efforts to work with specific population groups.

MCOA has launched a three-year project to work with local Councils on Aging to develop the skills, tools and strategies to broaden community participation and inclusion at Senior Centers. This multi-faceted approach will include trainings, development of resource materials and videos in support of local efforts to reach out to underserved populations. The initial day-long training, “Communicating Across Cultural Boundaries,” is being developed through a partnership between the Multicultural Coalition on Aging, UMass Boston, the VNA Care Network Foundation & Affiliates and MCOA. The project is funded by EOE. The initial training is composed of three elements:

- “Communicating Across Boundaries” training
- Review of local demographic data to identify underserved populations
- Development of action plans to reach out to the underserved population in the community

We are in the process of working with 15 communities: **Milton, Kingston, Hingham, Norwell, Newton, Braintree, Brockton, Easthampton, Springfield, Templeton, Longmeadow, Williamsburg, Athol, West Springfield and Shirley.** They have developed leadership teams at the local level to participate in the day long training, to work together to identify an underserved population in their community and identify programmatic strategies to reach out to the targeted population. MCOA is planning to offer the trainings to additional communities in FY16.

In addition, MCOA is working with the LGBT Aging Project to develop a best practices manual for the LGBT population. This will serve as a template for additional manuals to be developed over the next two years of the project to focus on other underserved populations. A video is in production of the reflections of Latino older adults and how they feel welcomed at a Senior Center in Western Mass.

This project was funded through a Service Incentive Grant (SIG) to MCOA from the Executive Office of Elder Affairs.

Capacity Building & Technical Assistance Initiatives

It is estimated that half of the current Council on Aging Directors have been in their positions for five years or less. As Councils on Aging provide services in an environment that is increasingly complex, it is essential that managers, board members and staff be prepared with the skills and knowledge to work with older adults effectively, providing high quality, innovative programs and services in adherence to applicable laws and regulations. As stewards of public dollars, it is also essential that these services be delivered in a cost effective manner.

These programs and initiatives are financially supported by a Service Incentive Grant (SIG) to the MCOA from the Executive Office of Elder Affairs, program sponsorships, membership dues and fees.

Trainings

MCOA has developed training opportunities for local Councils on Aging staff to learn about state laws and regulations that are applicable to their organization. Training content includes information about procurement, ethics, records retention, campaign finance and protective services. In addition, trainings have been organized at MCOA Membership meetings to explore needs assessments, emergency preparedness, the Securities and Exchange Commission, nutrition program models and development of age friendly communities.

Workgroups

MCOA has convened opportunities for outreach workers and staff interested in wellness activities to meet and identify resources they need to enhance their capacity for the provision of services at the local level. Topics included mental health law, program evaluation and the AARP "Life Reimagined" program. It is planned to convene staff from other disciplines including, but not limited to, volunteer coordinators and activities coordinators, to identify their particular needs for support of their efforts at the local level.

Annual Conference 2014

MCOA hosts a fall conference on an annual basis. This three-day event was held in Falmouth at the Seacrest Resort and the theme was "Where Do We *GROW* From Here?" Attracting 352 participants, the conference is one of the largest conferences in the state focused on the provision of services to older adults. 77 workshops were scheduled with a wide range of content areas of interest to Council on Aging leadership and staff. Plenary Sessions offered perspectives from the Elder Secretaries representing the New England states on Wednesday and Rev. Liz Walker offering her insights on "The Next Chapter" on Thursday. Social Security Commissioner, Carolyn W. Colvin and Jim Firman, President and CEO of the National Council on Aging also presented exciting new initiatives. Linda Fitzgerald, State President of AARP Massachusetts announced her retirement and will be missed and Ann Hartstein retiring Elder Affairs Secretary, received MCOA's Lifetime Achievement Award for her service.



Reverend Liz Walker, The Next Chapter



Elder Care From Around New England:(L to R) Ann Hartstein, Secretary, Massachusetts Executive Office of Elder Affairs, Corinne Calise Russo, Deputy Director, Rhode Island Department of Human Services, Sandy Leubner, Statewide Senior Center and Municipal Agent Liaison Connecticut State Department on Aging, Susan Wehry, M.D., Commissioner, Vermont Department of Disabilities & Independent Living., Moderator: Joanne Moore, President MCOA



Jim Flrman, President and CEO, National Council on Aging



Linda Fitzgerald "Retiring" AARP Massachusetts State President



Carolyn W. Colvin, Commissioner of Social Security

The Center for Aging and Disability Education and Research Training

In order to address the lack of workforce training in the area of aging and mental health, the Center for Aging and Disability Education and Research (CADER) partnered with the Massachusetts Councils on Aging and the Executive Office of Elder Affairs and developed a training program targeting Councils on Aging (COA's).

Last year 50 staff members from Councils on Aging across Massachusetts were selected to participate in this training program. The program, provided competency based training that addresses the core skills, knowledge, and values needed to effectively identify and respond to older adults with mental health and substance use concerns, increase resilience, and further the prevention of suicide. It consisted of a "blended model" of online learning and face-to-face training. CADER offered four online courses for 15 hours of training and two face-to-face sessions at the beginning and end of the program. All participants who completed the program earned a total of 19 hours of training and a *Certificate in Mental Health and Aging* from CADER at Boston University.

The online courses included:

- **Mental Health and Aging Issues**
- **Mental Wellness and Resilience among Older Immigrants and Refugees**

- **Suicide Prevention Among Older Adults**
- **Substance Abuse Among Older Adults**

CEUs for social workers, nurses, and Council on Aging Directors were offered.

This project was funded by the Massachusetts Department of Public Health (DPH) Suicide Prevention Program through the cooperation of the Executive Office of Elder Affairs (EOEA).

Technical Assistance - New Directors

Council on Aging Directors represent a broad cross section of skills and academic preparation. Hired by local officials, the Directors are reflective of the needs of individual communities. The role of the Director requires that the individual's knowledge base encompass a range of disparate content areas: from elder abuse statutes as a mandated reporter to campaign finance regulations related to access to public facilities. MCOA has prepared a manual designed for new Directors to provide basic information about general responsibilities of the position. The newly hired MCOA Director of Technical Assistance, Training and Special Events has met with a number of new Directors to review the manual and provide technical assistance in the areas that they may lack specific expertise. She will continue to reach out to newly hired Directors to provide assistance.

Technical Assistance - Materials and Modules

In order to enhance the capacity of Councils on Aging statewide, MCOA has identified over 40 potential subjects for best practices manuals/modules. Some materials, such as the New Directors Manual are newly updated and are currently being utilized. Other materials, such as Friends/Board manual are in the development stage and other materials need to be reviewed and updated. All of these materials will be accessible to MCOA membership through the association website www.mcoaonline.com. In addition, a variety of forms, policies, job descriptions and reports are being compiled on an ongoing basis in "Kathy's File Cabinet" located on the association website. Additional topic area materials are being collected from membership on a weekly basis and posted on the website.

NISC Accreditation

To advance the quality of Senior Centers nationally, the National Institute of Senior Centers (NISC) has developed an accreditation process to develop standards in nine content areas. Accreditation is a multi-step process by which: a Senior Center undertakes a self-assessment of the nine areas engaging a wide variety of community members; the center measures their assessment against national standards; the center engages workgroups to develop materials to meet standards and the center is evaluated by reviewers to demonstrate excellence. The standards include:

- Purpose & Planning
- Evaluation
- Fiscal & Asset Responsibility
- Records & Reports
- Facility & Operations
- Community Connections
- Governance
- Administration & Human Resources
- Program Development & Implementation

Director and Program Manager Certification

The intent of MCOA certification is to provide a statewide standard that can be used as a measure of professionalism by interested agencies and individuals. It is further intended that certification will encourage the continuing professional growth and development of certified Council on Aging personnel. The requirements of certification include the submission of a portfolio that reflects a significant body of work as an employee of a Council on Aging.

MCOA Certified Senior Center Directors MCOA Certified Program Managers

Bethany Loveless, *Dracut 2015*
Kathleen Bowler, *MCOA (formerly Holyoke) 2015*
Pamela Woodbury, *Spencer 2014*
Eileen Clarkson, *Gardner 2014*
Nancy Hammond, *Manchester 2014*
Annmary I. Connor, *Amesbury 2013*
Jayne Colino, *Newton 2013*
Vicki Lowe, *Foxborough*
Theresa Poore, *West Newbury*
Karen Alves, *Franklin 2011*
Laura DeMattia, *Bellingham 2010*
Laura Dillingham-Mailman, *Merrimac 2010*
Colleen Ranshaw-Fiorello, *Georgetown 2010*
Elizabeth Pettis, *Salisbury 2010*
Mary Parcher, *Framingham 2010*
Ruth Ann Bleakney, *Milford, 2008*
Deborah Jenkins, *Fairhaven, 2008*
Rebecca C. Moriarty, *Hampden 2007*
Sharon Anne Mercurio, *Pepperell, 2007*
Sharon M. Yager, *Shrewsbury, 2007*
Joanne Moore, *Duxbury, 2006*
Barbara Farnsworth, *Hingham, 2006*
Deborah Arsenault, *Millis, 2006*
Kristin Kiesel, *Sudbury, 2006*
Barbara A. Search, *Sturbridge, 2006*
Chester D. Sewell, *Billerica, 2005*
Susan P. Jacobs, *Dalton, 2005*
Martha A. Campbell, *Groton, 2005*
Barbara L. Reynolds, *Tyngsborough, 2005*
Patricia Carty-Larkin, *Westwood, 2005*
Karen Santucci, *Lincoln, 2003*
Sharon Lally, *Needham, 2003*
Joanne Collins, *Woburn, 2003*
Sandra Lapollo, *Chicopee, 2002*
Patricia Roberts, *Marblehead, 2002*
Susan Schwager, *Marion, 2002*
Laurie Nelson, *Northborough, 2002*
Linda Elworthy, *Salem, 2002*
Anita Sundelin, *Upton, 2002*
Barbara Coghlan, *Walpole, 2002*
M. Beth Kaltner, *Ware, 2002*
Richard Mundo, *Agawam, 2001*
John Jope, *Arlington, 2001*
Jemma Lambert, *Barnstable, 2001*
Leslee Breen, *Beverly, 2001*
Carolyn Brennan, *Hampden, 2001*
Sandra Kent, *Hingham, 2001*
Barbara Lawlor, *Hull, 2001*
Jeanne DeBruin, *Lunenburg, 2001*
Diane Bertolino, *Rockport, 2001*
Kelly Burke, *Sterling, 2001*
Ruth Gately, *Waltham, 2001*

Theresa Greer, *Plymouth 2015*
Beth Hadfield, *Plymouth 2015*
Jennifer Young, *Plymouth 2015*
Laura Stewart, *Nantucket 2015*
Magdaly Martinez, *Holyoke 2015*
Violet Suska, *Chicopee 2014*
Donna Ciappina, *Duxbury 2012*
Colleen Normandy, *Chelmsford 2012*
Laura Veligor, *Wellesley 2012*
Meghan Murtagh, *Salem 2012*
Angela Smith, *Carlisle 2011*
Sheila Ronkin, *Bellingham 2010*
LinnKim McGovern, *Greenfield 2008*
Mary Ann Soquet, *Greenfield 2008*
Christine (Tina) Gorman, *Westfield 2007*
Jared Krok, *Chicopee, 2006*
James Leyden, *Chicopee, 2006*
Susan Moore, *Chicopee, 2006*
Charmagne LaPrise, *Millis, 2006*
Marlene Troupes, *Hopkinton, 2006*
Gail A. Murley, *Beverly, 2005*
Deborah D. Thompson, *Groton, 2005*
Dorothy Blain-Hamel, *Holyoke, 2005*
Mary R. McLeod, *Hopkinton, 2005*
Karen Albright, *Millville/Blackstone 2005*
Joan Pippin, *Arlington, 2003*
Carol Pallozolla, *Beverly, 2003*
Judith Mikkola, *Chicopee, 2003*
Hope Macary, *Greenfield, 2003*
Amy Wilson Kent, *Hopkinton, 2003*
Lynne Waterman, *Mashpee, 2003*
Laura DeMattia, *Millville, 2003*
Joan Linnehan, *Agawam, 2002*
Pat Becker, *Andover, 2002*
Sheila Field, *Beverly, 2002*
Teri Allen McDonough, *Beverly, 2002*
Lynne Barrett, *Salem, 2002*
Judy Tanner, *Woburn, 2002*

National Institute of Senior Centers Nationwide, 121 Senior Centers Are currently Accredited since 1999

Bourne Council on Aging, Buzzards Bay
Callahan Senior Center, Framingham
Danvers Council on Aging, Danvers
Duxbury Senior Community Center, Duxbury
Hingham Senior Center/Hingham Department of Elder Affairs, Hingham
Needham COA Stephen Palmer Center, Needham
Plymouth Council on Aging, Plymouth
Rochester COA and Senior Center, Rochester

2014 Award Winners



President Jayne Colino (right) and Norma Simons-Fitzgerald present David Levington and the Town of Sudbury 2014 Innovator of the Year for the "Means Tested Senior Tax Exemption Program"



President Jayne Colino presents Frances Bedini (left) and Donna Hartlage (center) from the Florida Council on Aging with the 2014 Advocate



Karen Alves and the Franklin County Senior Center win 2014

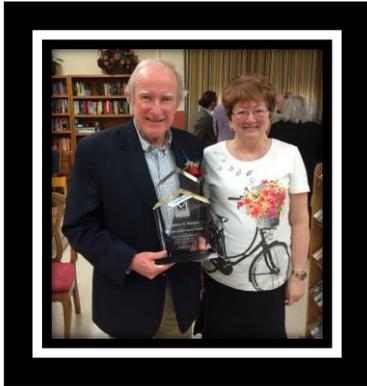


Out-going MCOA President Jayne Colino receives the 2014 Director of the Year Award from in-coming President Joanne Moore



Executive Director David P Stevens receives Lifetime Achievement Award for 20 years with MCOA and 35 years in the field. Pictured with his husband of 30 years, Jeffrey Rankin

Around the Network



Retired Chairman of the House Ways and Means Stephen Brewer receives a Lifetime Achievement Award from MCOA and Debbie Rotchild, Ware COA Director



Secretary Ann Hartstein receives a Lifetime Achievement Award for a distinguished career that included Director of the Needham COA and Executive Director of MAOA



Always a friend to Councils on Aging, Out-going Senate President Therese Murray is recognized with a Lifetime Achievement Award



MCOA joins NISC and NCOA at the Florida State Conference on Aging. (L to R) David Stevens, Angela Sinnott, Joanne Moore, Jim Firman, Mary Kay Browne, Maureen O'Leary and Emily Dessem



MCOA greets new Co-Chair of the Joint Committee on Elder Affairs. (L to R) David Stevens, Representative Denise Garlick, Jamie Brenner Gutner, Janet Claypoole, and Joanne Moore



Kara Cohen, AARP, and Kathi Bailey, Yarmouth Council on Aging, explain the World Health Organization's Elder Friendly Project. Currently, Brookline, Yarmouth and Boston have efforts underway and Berkshire County to begin shortly.



Body builder Ernestine Shepherd (Guinness World Record holder 2010 and 2011) and Donna Richardson, a member of the President's Council on Fitness, Sports and Nutrition

2015 Awards Recipients

Lifetime Achievement: Ruth Grabel

Innovator of the Year: Susan Carp and Betsey Crimmins &

RuthAnn Dobek, Frank Caro and BrooklineCAN

Community Advocate: Dorene Nemeth

Legislative Advocate: State Representative Elizabeth Poirier

Director of the Year: Brian O'Grady

Certified Directors: Bethany Loveless and Kathleen Bowler

Certified Program Managers: Theresa Greer, Beth Hadfield, Jennifer Young, Laura Stewart, Magdaly Martinez



At the Center of it All

MCOA thanks our on-site volunteers

Jean O'Connor	John Holman	Patricia Shufelt	Marilyn Keating	Dariel Ford	Theresa Keyes Ferreira
Jane Angiolillo	Susie Cadrin	Nancy French	Eileen Clarkson	Sheila Ronkin	Susan & Howard Gates
Ed Angiolillo	Jean Dudley	Linda Johnson	Amy Smith	Abby Stephenson	Norma Simons Fitzgerald
Neil Angiolillo	Ellen Wolcott	Andrea Terney	Jenny Lougee	Gene Mazella	Betty Ann Holman
Sandi O'Donnell	Nancy Lovendale	Hank Fitek	Vincent Marinaro	Annmary Connor	
Ray Petrucelli	Jean O'Connor	Lorraine Young	Susan Pacheco	Martha Johnson	
Meghan Leroy	Patricia Kennedy	Susan Weliky	Tori Hartman	Marjorie McClung	
Patricia Mello	Susan Gallagher	Eileen Sullivan	Pam McGuire	Doreen Brothers	

Closing Thoughts

“Just as we built and renovated our schools system back in the fifties and sixties, municipalities need to focus on Senior Centers now that the Boomers have arrived” David P. Stevens, Executive Director, Massachusetts Association of Councils on Aging



The new River Mills Center is located on the grounds of the town-owned golf course



The new River Mills Center in Chicopee, Massachusetts is a two-story structure with 21,209 square feet