

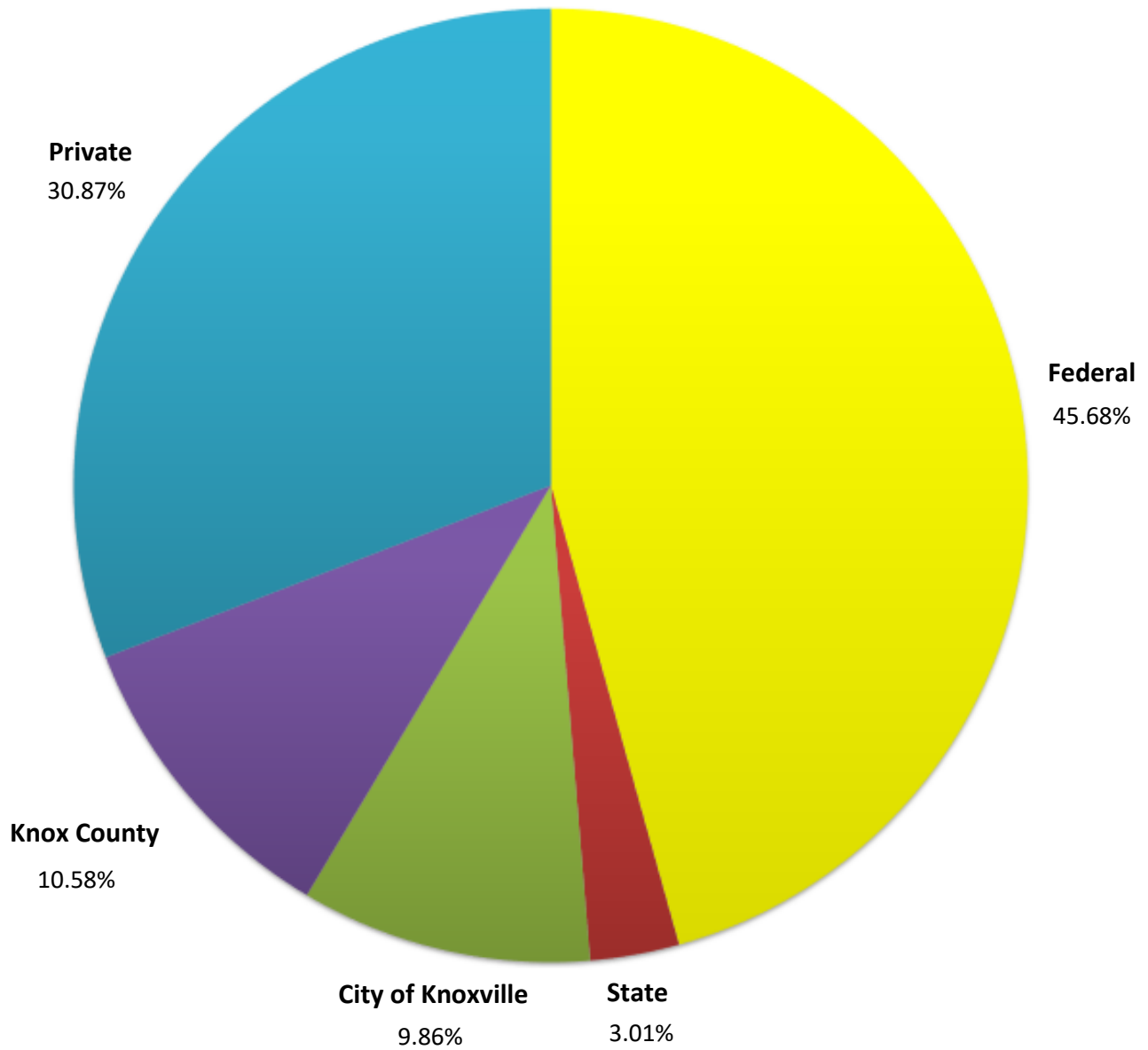


Knoxville-Knox County CAC
OFFICE ON AGING

ANNUAL REPORT
July 1, 2019—June 30, 2020

2019-2020 OOA REVENUE SOURCES

TOTAL = \$5,874,143








 Federal—\$2,682,804 (45.68%)	 State—\$177,084 (3.01%)
 Knox County—\$621,739 (10.58%)	 Private—\$1,813,406 (30.87%)
 City of Knoxville—\$579,110 (9.86%)	

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**MISSION STATEMENT OF THE
KNOXVILLE-KNOX COUNTY COMMUNITY ACTION COMMITTEE (CAC)
OFFICE ON AGING**

The CAC Office on Aging is a public nonprofit agency that serves all seniors, regardless of life situation, but we are passionate about helping those for whom aging often presents the greatest hardship: those who are poor, in frail health, or alone.

OFFICE ON AGING CONTACT INFORMATION

This annual report is published by the Knoxville-Knox County CAC Office on Aging. It covers the year from July 1, 2019 through June 30, 2020.

If you would like more information about the Office on Aging or any of its programs, or if you would like additional copies of this report, contact the Office on Aging.

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Email address: knoxooa@knoxseniors.org

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www.facebook.com/knox.OOA



CAC Office on Aging



KnoxOOA

History of CAC & Office on Aging

The Knoxville-Knox County Community Action Committee (CAC) is a public not-for-profit agency with the general mission of helping individuals and families break the cycle of poverty and achieve self-sufficiency. Created in 1965 by the Knox County and Knoxville City governments, CAC is governed by a board of up to 31 citizens representing government, the community at large, and the people served by the organization and its programs.

Annual funding totaling more than 40.4 million, comes from federal, state, and local governments, as well as private foundations, businesses, churches, individual donors and contributions from individuals receiving services.

Operating within CAC, the Office on Aging has the mission of assisting Knox County's older residents to achieve the highest possible level of independence, maintaining a high quality of life, and avoiding unnecessary institutionalization. It has served older citizens of Knox County since 1975 through more than 23 programs. The Council on Aging (page 2) is the advisory body to the Office on Aging.

Hilton Bolton was the first Office on Aging director. In 1977, Barbara Monty became the second director of the office. Monty retired in April 2013, and Susan Long stepped in to become the third director. Upon her retirement in 2019, Dottie Lyvers became the fourth director of the Office on Aging.

Programs of the Office on Aging

Years in parenthesis indicates the year the program became a part of the Office in Aging.

Affordable Medicine Options
for Seniors (AMOS, 2002)

The Caring Plate (2014)

Connecting Hearts (2016)

Daily Living Center (2002)

East Tennessee 2-1-1 (2008)

Feed-A-Pet (2000)

Foster Grandparent Program (1976)

Gift of Sight, Hearing & Dentures (1985)

Grandparents As Parents Program (2000)

Knox PAWS (2005)

Mobile Affordable Meal Service (1992)

John T. O'Connor Senior Center (1978)

Project LIVE (1984)

Retired & Senior Volunteer Program
(RSVP, 1982)

Rise Above Crime (2018)

Savings Check Up (2019)

Senior Care Calls (2020)

Senior Community Service

Employment Program (2013)

Senior Companion Program (1988)

Senior Employment Service (1982)

Senior Information & Referral (2004)

Senior Nutrition Program/
Mobile Meals (1971)

Supplemental Nutrition Assistance

Program (SNAP) Outreach (2015)

CAC Board as of June 30, 2020

Virginia S. Anagnost, Chair
Emili Alexander
Ben Bentley
Dr. Martha Buchanan
Mayor Glenn Jacobs
Doug Burton
Commissioner Charles Busler
Chris Caldwell
Anna Compton
Polly Doka
Gerald Green
Buz Johnson
Renee Kelly
Vice Mayor Gwen McKenzie
Orris Nero
Ashley Ogle
Martha Olson
Terrell Patrick
Judy Poulson
Mayor Indya Kincannon
Judge John R. Rosson
Rep. Rick Staples
Thomas "Tank" Strickland
Derek Tate
Bob Thomas
Ronnie Thompson, Sr.
Dr. Sandra Twardosz
Jennifer Valentine
Patrick Wade
Lula Williams
Charles Wright

Barbara Kelly
Executive Director

Knoxville-Knox County Council on Aging

The Knoxville-Knox County Council on Aging (COA) is an independent 501(c)(3) organization that serves as an advisory council to the Knoxville-Knox County Office on Aging.

The purposes of the Council on Aging are to:

- ◆ Study the needs of older persons and the resources to meet those needs, including reviewing and recommending allocation of funds from the Older Americans Act for Knox County services.
- ◆ Encourage groups and agencies to develop and extend services to meet the needs of older Knox Countians.
- ◆ Promote, encourage, and, when desirable, sponsor the initiation of new services.
- ◆ Advocate for older citizens of Knox County and consult with other groups concerned with the needs of older citizens.

Both individuals and agencies or organizations are eligible for membership. There are no dues or membership fees. Any person or group desiring membership can join the organization by filling out a membership form (available from the OOA).

An elected Executive Committee handles the council business, but members have a voice at general meetings and vote on all important issues. The Executive Committee meets at 1:00 p.m., before the 2:30 p.m. council meeting, on the second Thursday of each month (meetings are not held in July and August). Meetings are usually held at the O'Connor Center but transitioned to virtual meetings due to the pandemic. More information about Council on Aging can be found at knoxseniors.org.

Notices and minutes are sent to members by mail or e-mail.

Programs focus on issues, services, and ideas of interest to seniors. Each member is asked to carry the program information back to his or her group and to bring concerns and ideas from the group or agency to the attention of the council.

COA Executive Committee as of June 30, 2020

Jan W. Brown, Chair
Mary Sophia Hawks, Vice Chair
Donna Ellstrom, Secretary
Laura Berry, Treasurer
Lynn Champion
Yvette DuPree
Terry Finnerty
V. Lynn Greene
Del Holley
Mitch Olszewski
Vivian Underwood Shipe
Bill Tapp

Note: client confidentiality

Being respectful of our clients and preserving their dignity while providing them with the services they need to remain independent in their own homes is of the utmost concern to the staff of the CAC Office on Aging. For that reason, the names used in the stories on the following pages have been changed or abbreviated to protect our clients' identities. All of the stories in this report reflect the real-life situations that our staff members encounter daily; any alterations to those stories are only to make identification of a specific individual impossible. Likewise, any photos that accompany the stories are not necessarily associated with the people in the stories.

Director's Report

Serving in a Time of Crisis

New plans, new ways of serving, and new ways of connecting with the world. Like many others, this was our reality in the last half of our fiscal year. A global pandemic, especially one that affected our most vulnerable adults, was never in our imaginations. When others were being sent home, the Office on Aging stepped up to continue providing essential services to the most vulnerable individuals in our community.

With the help of countless volunteers and community partners, we quickly changed gears to continue serving our clients in a safe, socially-distanced way. This included regular wellness check calls to our clients, participants, and volunteers – connecting with more than 1,500 individuals each week. Through these efforts, we were able to assist with reducing social isolation, securing needed resources, and meeting essential needs such as access to food and medicine. Moreover, in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, we launched a new program – Senior Care Calls – where volunteers make weekly check-in calls with seniors who are homebound, isolated, and lonely. Volunteers were able to connect with seniors in need from the safety of their home, and served as a lifeline for those on the other end of the line.

Our Mobile Meals program continued providing much needed nutrition to homebound seniors. The request and need for this service only increased, as more seniors found themselves homebound and isolated. From a once a week delivery of five meals, to returning to serving hot meals five days a week, numerous community partners and volunteers assisted with assuring that more than 1,100 seniors had food every week.

As the O'Connor Senior Center and the Daily Living Center temporarily closed, creative service deliveries began in response to the current health crisis. The Daily Living Center staff delivered activity packets and ideas for families and participants to provide stimulating things to do while they were at home. The O'Connor Center provided virtual programming including a Zoom Coffee Hour Conversation, online live-streamed exercise classes, and online video exercises.

The support of others and gratitude shown to us by volunteers, community partners and most importantly, those we serve, kept us going every day. Knowing that we were the only connection someone had to the outside world was all the reason we needed to keep going amid the worldwide health crisis. The Office on Aging is here and will continue to be here to serve those who need help or need to get connected to resources. As has been emphasized to us this year, never underestimate the power of a simple phone call.

Thank you to everyone who stepped up to help us meet the new and increased needs of our clients and community. Your support is appreciated!



Dottie Lyvers

Director, Office on Aging

AFFORDABLE MEDICINE OPTIONS FOR SENIORS

Affordable Medicine Options for Seniors (AMOS) is a program that provides information, advising, and public education that assists seniors and people with disabilities to obtain prescription medicines at the lowest possible cost. Trained volunteers, working with the program manager, answer general questions, conduct research on the internet, and do individualized, personal advising. The program enables people to obtain their medicines consistently at a reasonable cost, which, in turn, helps them maintain their health and overall well-being.

AMOS contributes to a better public understanding of Medicare, manufacturers' free medicine programs, discounts, and other resources. AMOS also assists clients by performing research for co-pay assistance based on diagnoses and medications.

A high priority for the AMOS program is to find and assist Medicare beneficiaries whose low income and modest assets make them eligible for financial assistance for their Medicare-related out-of-pocket expenses. This includes helping clients apply for Medicare beneficiary programs such as Extra Help for Part D and the Medicare Savings Program. Staff is Alliance of Information and Referral Systems (AIRS) Certified and State Health Insurance Assistance Program (SHIP) trained to help older adults.



Services

Provides education for Knox County groups, including seniors, people with disabilities, and families through:

- Explaining Medicare options
- Answering questions
- Assisting with plan comparisons
- Helping with applications
- Offering personalized information for East Tennessee seniors and people with disabilities
- Providing training for Knox County healthcare and social services professionals

Number of people served

- 1,721 people were provided information and/or advising

Accomplishments

- Assisted 123 Medicare beneficiaries in applying to Social Security for the Extra Help subsidy for prescription drug expenses
- Helped 123 Medicare beneficiaries apply for the Medicare Savings Program to help with Medicare co-pay expenses

Budget \$75,808
Major Sources of Revenue
Federal/State
Knox County
Foundations/Grants
Community Contributions

Client confidentiality is important to the Office on Aging. For information about how we protect our clients' identities in this report, see note on page 2.

Ben gets help from AMOS

Benjamin S is 74 years old. He is enrolled in a 0-premium Medicare Advantage Plan but his primary care provider is not in the plan's network. His Medicare Part B premium is \$144.60 per month and is deducted from his Social Security check each month. He pays almost \$100 per month for four generic prescriptions. His gross income is \$1,016 per month, and he has no savings or property. He called the AMOS Program for help.

The AMOS counselor reviewed Ben's coverage and recommended he apply for Qualified Medicare Beneficiary, which is a level of assistance in the Medicare Savings Program that pays the Part B premium. The Qualified Medicare Beneficiary program pays the co-pays and deductibles with Medicare. The Medicare Savings Program also includes the Extra Help program which will limit the co-pay on his generic prescriptions to \$3.40 each (and brand-name prescriptions to \$8.50 each).

The AMOS counselor also explained that with the Qualified Medicare Beneficiary program assistance, he will have the option to enroll in a Special Needs Plan that will help with additional expenses for dental, vision, hearing, and transportation. When choosing a Special Needs Plan, he will want to ask his Primary Care Provider which plan(s) will be in network so he will have coverage with his preferred physician.

Ben was happy with the help he found in the AMOS program. With a phone call, he was able to keep a little more money in his pocket. Ben said, "I live on a fixed-budget, so this program relieves some of the pressure. I don't have to worry as much about paying for my medications. Thank you all for your help!"



FOR AMOS - Peggy **Urgent**

DATE 12/9/19 TIME 1:15 pm

While You Were Out

M Ms. Smith

OF _____

PHONE _____

CELL _____

FAX _____

TELEPHONED

CAME TO SEE YOU

RETURNED YOUR CALL

PLEASE CALL

WILL CALL AGAIN

WANTS TO SEE YOU

Message

Thank you for the helpful advice, I'm amazed. I can now order all my medications at a lower cost. I can't thank you enough for your help!

A-9711
T-3002

SIGNED *[Signature]*

Phone message from a client served by AMOS

THE DAILY LIVING CENTER

Not all vulnerable adults need the services of a nursing home, but they may require services that will help them function to their fullest potential. Seniors often need a place that will help them avoid feeling isolated or lonely, and one that will help their family and/or caregivers take some time to rest and care for themselves; some caregivers need that time to work.

The Daily Living Center (DLC), a state-licensed adult day care, is critical to helping meet these needs. DLC is partially funded with state dollars under a Social Services Block Grant (SSBG) and seeks to serve low-income Knox County residents age 60 and older, as well as Adult Protective Services clients. Transportation services are provided at no cost to the participant, and income eligibility and fee structure are established by the Tennessee Department of Human Services Social Services Block Grant guidelines.

The Daily Living Center provides programs for adults in need of some level of supervision throughout the day as well as those adults who have physical, neurological, or emotional limitations requiring special intervention or care. Daily activities include opportunities for socialization as well as activities that support maintaining or improving their level of independence.

The Daily Living Center, located at 3900 Probus Rd. in North Ridge Crossing, operates from 7:45 a.m. to 4:15 p.m., Monday through Friday. Breakfast, lunch, and an afternoon snack are provided in accordance with the Child and Adult Care Food Program guidelines.

Number of clients served: 23

Units of service provided: 2,212

Days of operation: 218

Accomplishments

- The Daily Living Center was awarded the Pat Summitt Foundation grant to start Music and Memory, which provided personalized music players and training of staff to set up for participants based on their preferences. The goal of the program is to provide access to musical favorites that tap deep memories not lost to dementia that can bring back a spark, enabling them to feel like themselves again, to converse and socialize and stay present.
- DLC continued Pet Therapy twice a week with the UT HABIT program. It is especially helpful for those with Alzheimer's, who tend to be socially withdrawn. Pet Therapy allows participants an avenue to engage and talk in a social setting.
- The DLC received an Akima Club grant to assist with personal hygiene needs of participants.

Budget \$151,407

Major Sources of Revenue

Federal/State

Foundations/Grants

Community Contributions

Knox County

Louise's Story

A Daily Living Center Success Story as told by her daughter, Venita

My mother, Louise, moved to Knoxville in 2014 and started coming to the Daily Living Center. I could not find a doctor for her so I asked the Program Coordinator, Wendy, for help and she was able to direct me to a doctor. I was so relieved.

Since then, the Daily Living Center has been such a blessing for us. I work 12- hour shifts, so this program allows Mama to be safe while I am at work. She can be with someone instead of being alone. She is happy to be around friends her own age. Mama is known as the "Pitty Pat Cards Lady" because she taught her friends at the DLC to play this card game.

When my mother sometimes doesn't want to go, I'll tell her Wendy will let her sit in the lounge chair and she does not have to participate. She soon sees them having fun socializing and Mama gets involved. This place is a God send. Thank you!

Sincerely,

Venita

P.S. I've been taking care of my Mama since 1986. This makes it worth getting up 3 days a week.



Daily Living Center participants get dressed up for an Easter egg hunt in 2019.

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EAST TENNESSEE 2-1-1

While all year long the most frequent requests from East Tennessee 2-1-1 are usually for help paying utility bills, rent, and food, the year is generally punctuated by certain seasonal happenings – in the Summer, there are requests for daycares, and school supply giveaways. In the Fall comes Thanksgiving and Christmas assistance. Winter is tax preparation season, and Spring brings requests for information about summer camps.

As of June 30, 2020, there were 4,731 listings in the 2-1-1 database. These resources must be updated every year, and this year we were lucky enough to have two enthusiastic part time Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP) participants helping to make these many updates. We were sad to lose one of them when he accepted full time employment with another Knoxville non-profit organization.

In March 2020, our routine was suddenly up-ended by the arrival of COVID-19, which began an odyssey that has taken us into new territories of social services, emergency services, and financial services. Our time was filled with searching out new resources, daily checking of the Center for Disease Control, Knox County Health Department, and Department of Human Services websites, as well as breaking news reports to see what new crises might require new additions to the database. And then, of course, making endless updates and then more updates of the updates. We lost the second SCSEP assistant in March when all the SCSEP participants were required to remain at home during the pandemic. Meanwhile, the 2-1-1 Call Center got some extra help from a new addition to the “staff” - Chatbot.

Chatbot is a software app used to conduct an on-line conversation via text or text-to-speech in lieu of providing direct contact with a live human. The chatbot can even converse in several foreign languages. By June, the chatbot had handled 1,365 conversations!

During this time, the database curator was in touch with the 2-1-1 Call Center staff to see what COVID-19-related services were the most frequently requested, and added as many as could be found, such as food pantries, feeding programs for children, and emergency assistance with rent, utilities and gas. Also added were public service notices such as COVID-19 testing sites, the CARES Act, the Pandemic EBT program, COVID-19 information in Spanish, KAT bus schedules, as well as sources for financial counseling, legal information about evictions and foreclosures, homeless services, mental health, unemployment, and veterans’ assistance.

In this fiscal year, the total number of contacts with East Tennessee 2-1-1 was 27,739. Of this, 21,702 were visits to the website and 6,037 were calls to the 2-1-1 Call Center. The number of phone calls in March 2020 nearly doubled, with COVID-19 being the number one reason for the call. By the end of June 2020, the number was even higher.

In this unprecedented time, it is obvious that 2-1-1 has become a major player in getting information and assistance out to the public.

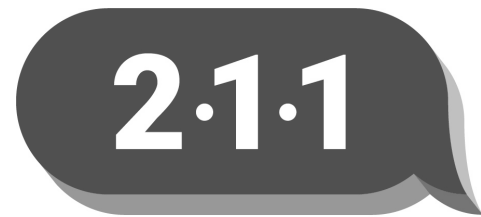
Budget \$124,669
Major Sources of Revenue
Federal/State
United Way
Community Contributions

Help is a Phone Call Away

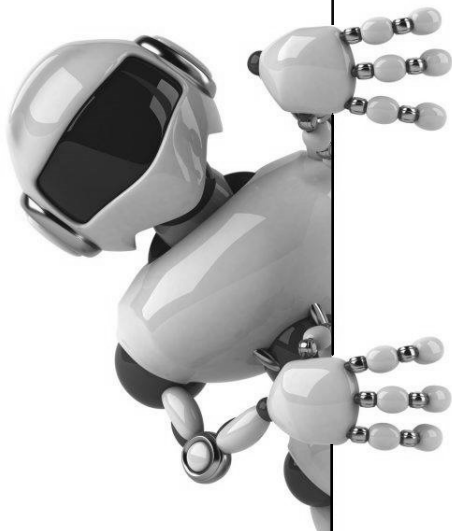
Ms. Becky contacted 2-1-1 after seeing the United Way building off Interstate-40 that says, “4 Help Dial 2-1-1.” “Boy, do I need help!” she said. Ms. Becky is 69 years-old and living with diabetes. She expressed how expensive her medication was and she wasn’t sure how she could continue to afford it. The 2-1-1 Operator referred her to the Affordable Medicine Options for Seniors (AMOS) program here at the CAC Office on Aging. AMOS staff was able to assist Ms. Becky with applying for Extra Help for her prescription medication. What was previously costing her \$100/month, now costs her less than \$9/month.



Through their conversation, Ms. Becky was also connected to the Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP). She has been able to earn a stipend through community work that helps with her monthly budget. In a recent follow-up with Ms. Becky, she was thrilled with the resources that were provided to her. “That sign on the Interstate really has helped me so much!”



Get Connected. Get Help.™



Meet the 2-1-1 Chatbot!

Chatbot is a software app used to conduct an online conversation via text or text-to-speech in lieu of providing direct contact with a live human.

The chatbot can even converse in several foreign languages!

FEED-A-PET

Feed-A-Pet helps to provide food for eligible seniors' pets. These participants receive enough food for a month of feeding. The ultimate goal is to provide healthy feeding options for their pets, so the senior owners can focus on their own nutritional needs.

The Feed-A-Pet program partners with The University of Tennessee College of Veterinary Medicine to provide prescription pet food, donated by the Hills Science Diet company for the majority of these pets. Additional participants receive maintenance pet food acquired through public donations and food drives. Pet food is delivered by students at The University of Tennessee College of Veterinary Medicine and several dedicated volunteers.

Feed-A-Pet works closely with Mobile Meals and CAC case managers to provide pet food for those in need. Food can be provided on an emergency basis. Because of the tremendous need, there is a significant waiting list for the Feed-A-Pet program.

In addition to the food provided, often these participants need help with veterinary care for their pets. Feed-A-Pet, with the help of community support and donations, is sometimes able to help with veterinary services.

This year's numbers

- Currently, there are 70 clients with a total of 136 pets being served by Feed-A-Pet
- An additional 5 clients (and 10 pets) were added to the Feed-A-Pet program this year
- 15 of the Feed-A-Pet participants' animals received newly prescribed pet food this year
- The typical monthly per-pound average of food being delivered to these participants is close to 1,900 pounds

- 81 of these pets received assistance with veterinary or grooming services
- 26 volunteers, in addition to the students at The University of Tennessee College of Veterinary Medicine, delivered pet food
- Volunteers provided 1,250 hours of service to the program

Accomplishments

- In September 2019, the Discovery Channel collected nearly 1,500 pounds of pet food for the Feed-A-Pet program
- In October 2019, as an Eagle Scout project, one young man collected 2,300 pounds of pet food for the Feed-A-Pet program
- Asheville Highway Animal Hospital continued collecting pet food for the Feed-A-Pet program and serves as a drop off location year-round
- Young Williams Animal Center Spay/Neuter Solutions helped 12 Feed-A-Pet clients to spay or neuter their pets
- The annual Kibble Bowl, sponsored by Knoxville Pays it Forward, provided nearly 600 pounds of pet food for the program
- Knoxville Pays it Forward sponsored another food drive for Feed-A-Pet in March 2020, to assist with any potential emergency needs due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Nearly 500 pounds of food was collected in 5 days
- The Knoxville Veterinary Medical Association partnered with Feed-A-Pet, collecting food for program participants for the month of April

Major Sources of Revenue
Community Contributions

Mr. J and Dixie

Mr. J is relatively new to the Feed-A-Pet program, but he already understands the benefits of the program to his companion's life as well as his own. Like many seniors, he lives on a fixed-income and rarely has extra money to spend at the end of the month. When his medication cost went up, so did his concern for his already-meager budget.

Dixie and Mr. J have always shared everything. Before Feed-A-Pet started bringing pet food each month for Dixie, Mr. J often shared his own meals with her. Mr. J laughed and said the only thing Dixie won't eat is vegetables.

Now, each month, Feed-A-Pet delivers dog food for Dixie so Mr. J can eat his own vegetables. He says he still shares a little.

Mr. J is thankful for the help that Feed-A-Pet provides so he doesn't have to worry about Dixie having enough to eat.



Client confidentiality is important to the Office on Aging. For information about how we protect our clients' identities in this report, see note on page 2.

FOSTER GRANDPARENT PROGRAM

The Foster Grandparent Program is a national service program that has been a part of the Knoxville community since 1976. Foster Grandparents are age 55 and over who volunteer between 15 to 40 hours a week as loving and experienced tutors, and advocates for at-risk children in schools and afterschool settings.

Foster Grandparents are role models, mentors, and friends to children with exceptional needs. Volunteers serve at over 40 locations helping children learn to read, providing one-on-one tutoring, mentoring young children, and helping children with unmet physical, emotional, social or literacy needs.

For their service to the community, Foster Grandparents receive a small stipend, a sense of renewed purpose, access to community resources, empowerment through learning new skills, and friendship & support to manage challenges that come with growing older.

This program benefits both the Foster Grandparents and the children they support in Knox and Blount Counties.



Prior to the pandemic, Ms. Addie served as a mentor and friend to children at Head Start.

Service Impact

- Number of volunteers engaged: 68
- Number of children served: 388
- Number of Service Hours Provided: 75,344

Accomplishments

- Provided 80 hours of in-service training to foster grandparent volunteers
- Provided 1,036 wellness calls during the COVID-19 pandemic
- Provided 75+ Information and Referral services during the COVID-19 pandemic
- Provided case management support to handle 30+ crisis situations

We would like to acknowledge the Foster Grandparent Advisory Council for their advocacy and support which allows this program to expand in response to growing community needs.



Budget \$442,274
Major Sources of Revenue
Corporation for National &
Community Service
Knox County
City of Knoxville
Foundations/Grants
Community Contributions

From the Principal's Office

Dear Mrs. Deisha and the Senior Corps Staff,

The Boys and Girls Club at Northwest Middle School just wants to brag a little on our favorite Foster Grandparent ever! Mr. Paul has been such a wonderful asset to our club and a blessing to our members in the year he has been with us. He really goes above and beyond for our children. Even when he's a little tired, he never gives up and keeps a smile on his face. He works closely with a few of our special needs members and others as a mentor for them. He is up to a game of kick ball if the kids ask. LOL - Ask him his age! He brings out the kid in all of us - even the staff. We couldn't ask for a more kind soul to grace our Boys and Girls Club.

We love our Foster Grandparent!

Mrs. S



Mr. Paul at The Boys & Girls Club
Sep. 2019



**FOSTER
GRANDPARENTS**

Share Today. Shape Tomorrow.

Client confidentiality is important to the Office on Aging. For information about how we protect our clients' identities in this report, see note on page 2.

GIFT OF SIGHT, HEARING, & DENTURES (GOSH-D)

Many of our seniors in Knox County suffer from diminished eye sight, impaired hearing, or the loss of teeth, which negatively affects a seniors' physical and emotional health. These losses cause many seniors to become withdrawn and isolated, leading to depression and other emotional health problems. It is also a safety risk when they cannot see who is at the door, cannot hear a smoke alarm going off, or cannot chew well enough to eat a balanced diet. Yet, many seniors cannot afford the cost of eyeglasses, hearing aids, or dentures and the professional examinations that are necessary to ensure these devices are right for them.

The Gift of Sight program began in 1985, the Hearing program in 1995, and the Denture Program in 2007. These programs are administered by Senior Information & Referral which helps low-income seniors pay for eyeglasses, hearing aids, and dentures. Age eligibility starts at 50 for glasses and hearing aids and at 60 for dentures. GOSH-D works with local optometrists, audiologists and dentists who are willing to offer services at a discounted price. The program pays for the initial cost of eyeglasses, hearing aids, or dentures and allows the seniors to pay back the cost over time as they are able. Special grants, donations, and partnerships are also sought out by GOSH-D to help supplement and serve the most seniors possible.

Gift of Sight continues to partner with local eye doctors who offer basic eye exams at no-charge to program participants. It also works with the Smoky Mountain Lion's Charities, Inc., to provide glasses to participants at a significantly reduced cost.



The Gift of Denture Program began a partnership with the Smile on 60+ Program and Interfaith Health Clinic of Knoxville through the Middle TN Grant Davidson County Chancery Court – TN Commission on Aging & Disability to serve low-income individuals with no dental insurance and no access to dental services. Smile on 60+ offers a full range of services to assist individuals with ongoing and overall dental health. We continue to seek out additional funding sources to aid those in need.

Gift of Hearing continues to partner with The University of Tennessee Health Science Center (UTHSC) Department of Audiology and Speech Pathology to assist participants who are 65 or older and uninsured or underinsured in getting hearing evaluations and hearing aids at a low cost. We have also been able to serve waiting list participants utilizing CSBG (Community Service Block Grant) funds through our partnership with the Family Hearing Center which continues to work with local audiologists to assist those who are age 50 years of age and over.

Number of People Served

- 97 people received eyeglasses
- 52 people received dental services
- 7 people received hearing aids

Budget \$1,952
Major Sources of Revenue
Foundations/Grants
State
Community Contributions

Client confidentiality is important to the Office on Aging. For information about how we protect our clients' identities in this report, see note on page 2.



Hearing is believing

After many months of struggling with hearing loss, Mr. P contacted Senior Information & Referral to ask if we could provide any resources for assistance. Unfortunately, the type of medical plan he was under offered very little coverage for the cost of a hearing exam, and nothing for hearing aids, should he need them.

With the help of funds received through the Community Service Block Grant and a participating provider, Senior Information & Referral staff were able to arrange a thorough examination and hearing evaluation through the Gift of Sight, Hearing and Denture program. The program was then able to assist Mr. P in receiving two brand new, high quality hearing aids and a supply of batteries.

The total cost of all this to Mr. P was less than \$40.

Mr. P recently visited the Senior Information & Referral office to express his gratefulness to the program and to express how thankful he is to hear again. He stated the doctors were wonderful and explained everything, and now he is planning on listening to the O'Connor 'Music Jam' which he previously could not hear. He was so grateful and pleased with the service he immediately encouraged his sister-in-law to sign-up for the program.

GRANDPARENTS AS PARENTS PROGRAM

Grandparents as Parents (GAP) addresses the unique needs of grandparents and other relative caregivers raising children whose parents are unable to care for them.

Nationally, there are 2.8 million grandparents who are responsible for the care of their grandchildren. There are even more aunts, uncles, and siblings who are in the parental role.

Some of the tools GAP uses to serve this growing population include facilitation of support group meetings, assistance with development of short and long term Grandfamily goals, and providing services. Divorce, domestic violence, substance abuse, incarceration, illness, abandonment, or the death of a parent thrusts relative caregivers into a new role of parenting the next generation.

Grandparents as Parents is a free program with no income or age requirement, and exists as a resource to collect, assess, and disseminate information and services of support and encouragement to Grandfamilies.

Number of people served

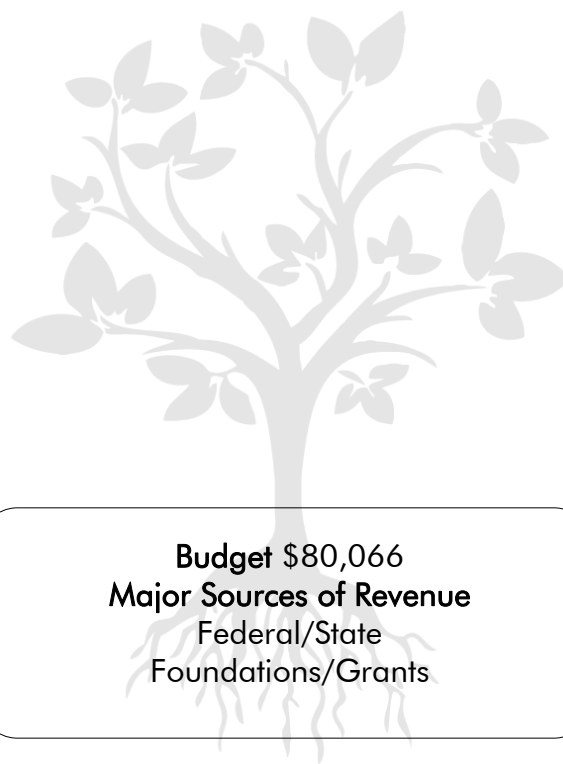
- 478 Active GAP Families
- 108 New Enrollments
- 58 Grandfamilies served through GAP Case Management (121 children)
- 146 unduplicated GAP families served (286 children)
- 54% of surveyed GAP members reported substance abuse as the primary reason for their caregiving role

Accomplishments

- Released the 2nd Edition of the Grandparents as Parents Guidebook. Guidebook was expanded to include resources from Anderson, Blount, Knox, Loudon, & Sevier Counties
- Received a Brookdale Foundation Grant
- Received a Knoxville Bar Foundation Grant
- GAP families participated in the Tennessee Tree Project
- GAP Advisory Council reinstated
- Distributed 1,662 GAP Guidebooks
- Electronic weekly GAP Bulletin
- Distributed monthly GAP newsletter to provide information about GAP events, community resources, and educational opportunities
- Sponsored two Saturday Legal Clinics

COVID-19 Response

During the pandemic, the Grandfamilies Together Support Group maintained their weekly Conference Calls. GAP also started a Pen Pal Project and published a special GAP Summer Activities Newsletter.



Budget \$80,066
Major Sources of Revenue
Federal/State
Foundations/Grants



A Letter from Ms. G

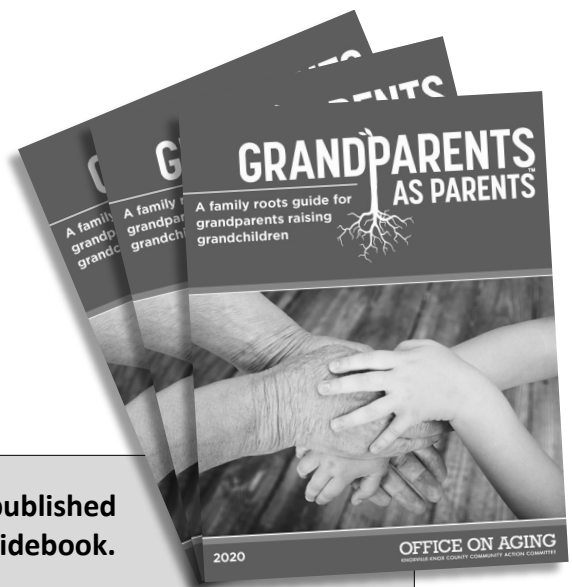
“GAP has been helpful to us in so many ways! The first meeting that I went to, I received the new manual of resources last winter which started my journey with you all. Then, when we needed a lawyer to protect my granddaughter, you all gave us a free referral to the most wonderful lawyer who helped protect her and now she is in her forever home with my son and daughter-in-law.

My granddaughter and I benefit from your program every Tuesday when I call in and feel encouraged and uplifted by the topic and conversation. The community of other grandparents and your support, along with Anne’s, has been a huge help navigating this new territory.

I would tell other grandparents that are new to this whole arena of taking on their grandchildren, that they can be a blessing if they choose to be. It will not be easy, but my granddaughter is such a blessing to me and keeps me young. We are in this together and we would not have it any other way. There are things that are difficult for me to do with her because of my age, but then, I have wisdom that I can impart because of my age. It all balances out and we make a beautiful family together. One just has to realize that it was not the original plan, but it can be a wonderful plan for the family if you just are willing to be blessed with the new arrangement.

Thank you for all that you do! We appreciate it so very much!”

-Ms. G



With the help of a Brookdale Foundation grant, GAP published the second edition of the Grandparents as Parents Guidebook.

Download the GAP Guidebook at knoxseniors.org/grandparents.

This publication, in part, was funded with Community Services Block Grant (CSBG) funds through the Tennessee Department of Human Services and the Knoxville-Knox County Community Action Committee.

KNOX PAWS (Placing Animals With Seniors)

Knox PAWS (Placing Animals with Seniors) assists eligible seniors to gain the companionship of a furry friend. For many elderly persons, the financial burden of a pet prohibits them from the joy of having a pet. Knox PAWS, with the help of community donations and support, relieves this burden. Knox PAWS helps to provide pet supplies, veterinary care, medicines, grooming and even transportation for the senior and their pet. Knox PAWS currently serves 55 clients and their pets.

Knox PAWS is community aware and partners with the local animal shelters to find just the right pet for the participant. This also relieves some of the stress associated with animal overpopulation in crowded animal shelters.

This year's numbers

- Currently, 54 seniors and their pets are receiving services from Knox PAWS
- 13 new clients were added since last year. All have found their new best friends.
- 29 volunteers helped assist the Knox PAWS clients and their pets.
- These volunteers provided 295 hours of service to the program.

Accomplishments

Several new community partnerships were formed:

- Forest Park Veterinary Clinic
- Tazewell Pike Animal Hospital
- Admiral Veterinary Hospital
- Concord Grooming (A Dog's Life and Kitty too)
- Blount County Animal Shelter
- Sevier County Animal Care Center
- Oak Ridge Animal Shelter
- Knoxville Veterinary Medical Association

The impact of COVID-19 on Knox PAWS

The COVID-19 pandemic has had an economic impact for many nationwide. Knox PAWS is not immune to this either. A great majority of the funding used to provide for these pets comes from donations, grants, and fundraisers.

Unfortunately, we have seen a drastic decrease in financial assistance over the past several months. Our fundraising efforts have also been cancelled. What would have been our 10th annual PAWS Among the Blooms was slated to be the biggest ever.

Many of the grants that were applied for throughout the year changed mid-cycle to aid COVID-19 relief instead of year long program support.

Through all of this, our participants and their pets have still had needs, and some needs have increased. Despite it all, we have still been able to assist our clients. Studies have proven pet companionship for the elderly decreases anxiety and depression and increases physical and social activity. This has proven true during the pandemic.



Budget \$36,885
Major Sources of Revenue
Foundations/Grants
Community Contributions

Ms. P and Kitty

A Purr-fect Match

Ms. P felt lonely and depressed. She lives alone and doesn't leave the house very often. Her doctor suggested she look into adopting a pet for companionship. When she called the local animal shelter, they suggested she contact the Office on Aging's Knox PAWS program.

Ms. P was eligible for services through Knox PAWS, so she and the Program Manager loaded up and being a self-proclaimed "cat lover", she was a bit overwhelmed by the number of cats looking for a lap to call home. That is, until that magic moment when she met Kitty at the animal shelter.

Not only was Kitty beautiful, but she loved the attention Ms. P gave her during the visit. Kitty loved to be held and cuddled. Ms. P knew right away that this was her cat.

Recently, Kitty was diagnosed with kidney disease. With the help of Knox PAWS and Ms. P, the veterinarian believes Kitty will be able to maintain her kidney disease.

Ms. P is grateful for the help provided by Knox PAWS. She is grateful for Kitty, who has added great joy to her life by easing the burden of loneliness and being the purr-fect companion she so desperately needed.



Client confidentiality is important to the Office on Aging. For information about how we protect our clients' identities in this report, see note on page 2.

JOHN T. O'CONNOR SENIOR CENTER

The O'Connor Senior Center is a place where senior adults age 50 and older can find programs and services that empower them to care for themselves and to enhance their quality of life. The Center promotes community engagement through volunteer opportunities and provides programs and activities that help seniors stay healthy and prolong independence. There is no membership fee to attend the Center. However, contributions are encouraged, and some classes may have an associated fee.

Services

Programming at the O'Connor Center falls into five categories: Education, Recreation, Physical Fitness, Health Education, and Health Screening. In addition to senior program services, the Center offers space for community meetings, free tax preparation through AARP, is an official voting site, and quarterly commodities distribution site. In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, limited programming became available virtually via Facebook, YouTube, and WebEx meetings. During times of uncertainty, the O'Connor Center strives to create innovative ways to stay connected with their participants and looks forward to developing their virtual programs in order to break down barriers to those who are unable to attend programs on site.

Number of people served

Over 1,500 individuals participated in classes and/or activities at the Center this year resulting in a total of 61,367 documented units of service having been provided.

Approximately 5,942 hours of service were provided by 289 registered volunteers.

Due to the outbreak of COVID-19, the Center closed to the public on March 17, 2020. In total, the Center had 177 days of operation through the year, not counting special weekend events.

Accomplishments

- The O'Connor Band were the recipients of the Bijou Theatre Community Outreach Grant and were invited to play a show for Independence Day.
- The Singing Seniors toured Knoxville for the holidays and ended their season with a sold-out performance at the Cathedral of the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus on December 20th
- We began offering Art Café in partnership with Alzheimer's Tennessee for individuals in the first stages of Alzheimer's and their caregivers.
- Programming went virtual in April with the O'Connor staff developing online platform for line dancing, cooking, and bingo.



O'CONNOR SENIOR CENTER

Add life to your years

Budget \$369,892

Major Sources of Revenue

Federal/State

Knox County

City of Knoxville

Foundations/Grants

Community Contributions

Program income

How the O'Connor Center Helped Me Adapt to Living in Tennessee

by Lynn Eagle

O'Connor Center Creative Writer, First Trumpet Player, Alto Singer, Happy Hiker, and Friend.

After I moved to Knoxville, Tennessee from Sistersville, West Virginia in August 2015, uprooting myself from my lifelong residence in West Virginia, leaving my friends, church, and all my activities, setting myself up in a new place seemed somewhat daunting. It was a major life change, but I immediately got to the task of seeking people and places that offered immediate opportunities to connect with people who were my neighbors. My condo mate, Frances, suggested that I should attend a rehearsal of the Singing Seniors at the O'Connor Center. I decided to join this group as well as another group called

Forever Young, singing alto in both performing groups. The director of the Singing Seniors is adept and talented and she has the ability to draw upon our talents, enabling us to present greater and more skilled performances.



She does indeed bring out the best in us. Belonging to these two groups led to many wonderful friendships and opened the doors to other recreational pastimes.

I also joined the Old Time String Band where I play the guitar, mandolin, violin, and sometimes, the bowed psaltery. We have weekly practice where we take turns leading or performing in round robin fashion. This group has expanded and we perform for the Center as well as other venues!

The following year, I joined the Amazing Geezer Band and the Dixieland Band where I play first trumpet. We play for fundraisers, church groups, as well as other venues. I encouraged two others to join us because the director makes the experience so enjoyable. We perform a variety of music some of which has been written by the director.

There are just so many activities offered at the Center that most folks can participate in during any given week. We are so fortunate to have this special place in our area with such dedicated staff to provide and maintain assistance to all. I have developed a social network and have met and made many new friends. The Center is important in maintaining our lives as seniors and we certainly benefit from it. In turn, the entire community benefits as we entertain ourselves and share our talents with them.

The O'Connor Center staff would like to express their gratitude for the friendship, joy, and love that Lynn brought to our Center. She was a light to our days and a tremendous advocate for our program. She will be missed by all who knew her.

Calie Terry, O'Connor Center Program Manager

PROJECT LIVE

Project LIVE coordinates services that allow frail older adults to remain in their own homes and as independent as possible. Project LIVE is responsible for oversight of all Office on Aging in-home assessments to determine seniors' need for home-delivered meals, homemaker services, case management, and other supportive services.

Services provided include *case management*, which includes an assessment to determine an individual's needs and the assignment of a care manager for those who need help to access community resources, services, and support in their homes, and *supportive services*, performed largely by volunteers who perform minor home repairs, cleaning, and lawn care, as well as home safety assessments and installation of safety devices.

Project LIVE's **Homeless Prevention Case Management Project** continued to receive funding through the City of Knoxville. Four case managers are placed at four KCDC high rises that have experienced high eviction rates: Northgate Terrace, Isabella Towers, Cagle Terrace, and Guy B. Love Towers. The program's goal is to prevent and reduce evictions onto the streets.



Services

- Case Management: 14,560 hours
- Volunteer Services (home repairs, chores, nursing student visits): 3,642 hours
- Visiting: 3,081 home visits

Number of people served

- 1,757 households served

Accomplishments

Project LIVE staff and case management project provided case management services to more than 450 seniors and persons with disabilities in our community.

- 138 volunteers provided more than 3,642 hours of free services to Project LIVE clients
- 47 seniors who were experiencing homelessness were re-housed
- Local businesses donated \$5,000 worth of service hours to Project LIVE clients

Budget \$197,729
Major Sources of Revenue

Federal/State
Knox County
City of Knoxville
Foundations/Grants
Community Contributions

Client confidentiality is important to the Office on Aging. For information about how we protect our clients' identities in this report, see note on page 2.

“Endlessly Grateful”

Ms. S, an 80 year old female victim of multiple strokes, who lives alone, was referred to Project LIVE by a member of the community. Ms. S only receives about \$1,100 a month in Social Security Benefits. Her daughter had recently become very ill and was staying in a facility on the other side of the state, leaving Ms. S to fend for herself.

Her Project LIVE case manager made a visit to her home. Ms. S was very excited to have someone visit. After completing the initial assessment, her case manager found multiple ways to assist her.

After discussing it with Ms. S, her case manager made a referral to Volunteer Assisted Transportation so that she would be able to go grocery shopping, make her doctor’s appointments, and go on errands. Most importantly, she wouldn’t have to go alone. Her case manager also helped her apply for LIHEAP to help with a large utility bill during the winter. Ms. S also needed some work done inside her home.

Her case manager saw black mold growing on the kitchen wall. This prevented her from receiving other services such as caregiving and housekeeping assistance. Project LIVE Home Repairs was able to fix the leak causing the mold, as well as replace her cabinets, counter tops, and the wall that had been damaged by the mold. They also replaced some of flooring in front of the leaky sink that was damaged and falling through. Finally, they were able to replace her hot water heater, which was causing all the damage.

When Ms. S’s daughter passed away, her case manager was able to help Ms. S reconnect with her sister who lived out of state. When her sister came to visit, Ms. S said it was the first time they had been together in many, many years. They were both comforted by each other’s company.

Ms. S sent a special note to her case manager expressing her gratitude for the life-changing help she had received through Project LIVE. “I am endlessly grateful,” she wrote, “I appreciate everything you and your volunteers have done for me. I simply cannot thank you enough. You made all the difference.”

“I simply cannot thank you enough!”



RETIRED & SENIOR VOLUNTEER PROGRAM (RSVP)

RSVP is a national service program that has been a part of the Knoxville community since 1982. RSVP is one of the largest volunteer networks in the nation for people 55 and over that support local nonprofit organizations and provide a variety of services throughout the community.

RSVP volunteers use their knowledge, skills, and experience to volunteer in diverse activities. RSVP volunteers choose when, where, and how often they want to serve, with commitments ranging from a few hours to 40 hours per week.

In Knox County, RSVP volunteers provide transportation support, conduct wellness check calls, deliver food to homebound and isolated individuals, provide administrative support, and assist local non-profits during various events.

In Blount County, RSVP volunteers provide support in conjunction with the Smiles (Senior Miles) program. Through RSVP recruitment and support, an additional 92 Blount RSVP volunteers were recruited to provide transportation support and escort older adults and individuals with disabilities to doctor appointments, grocery shopping, and other social and recreational activities.

Service Impact

Number of volunteers engaged: 308

COVID-19 Response

In early spring, RSVP volunteers mobilized to respond to a growing community concern, senior isolation. In a span of a few weeks, a new initiative was generated – Senior Care Calls. In the weeks that followed, over 100 referrals were made to the program to provide socialization and wellness checks twice a week.

These wellness calls uncovered seniors who had fallen and needed emergency help, seniors who were scared or had forgotten to refill important medications, seniors who had run out of groceries but were too embarrassed to seek help, seniors who were victims of crime and neglect, and seniors who were lonely and needed someone to listen.

We would like to acknowledge the RSVP Advisory Council for their advocacy and support which allows this program to expand in response to growing community needs.



senior
care
calls

Budget \$139,752
Major Sources of Revenue
Corporation for National &
Community Service
Knox County
City of Knoxville
Foundations/Grants
Community Contributions

Client confidentiality is important to the Office on Aging. For information about how we protect our clients' identities in this report, see note on page 2.

Staying Connected while Staying Apart

In response to COVID-19, RSVP launched a new initiative called Senior Care Calls. We began planning and collaborating with RSVP volunteers, station manager, and community members to meet the need of isolated and lonely seniors in Knoxville in March of 2020. Since March, over 30 seniors have been supported through our telephone call reassurance program. We were the first program to develop a working remote volunteer opportunity for RSVP volunteers to serve safely during the pandemic. Our program offers the freedom for a client to choose what type of calls they receive, while some are just a quick wellness check or medication reminder, most are an emotional outlet for our clients. RSVP volunteers are matched with a client they will have a positive and supportive conversation with and continue to maintain this relationship for as long as they are able and willing. This match process has proven to be effective in allowing clients to depend on their RSVP volunteer, know they are truly cared for and thus are more willing to ask for help if they need it. The continued consistent relationship has also allowed us to better monitor changes in client behavior, declining health, or noticing changes in memory.



“There is life and excitement again.”

-Ms. R

RSVP STORIES

Ms. R had amazing things to say about her RSVP volunteer, Tracy, during a call with the RSVP coordinator - “Tracy has been very encouraging. Since the last time she and I spoke, there seems like a remarkable difference in her mood and outlook. She has ownership over her own life and able to ask for help. She laughed quite a bit in her recall over her conversations with Tracy - “She knows how to speak to me that makes me feel important and significant. By her second phone call, she and I really started talking. I had a very alienated childhood and Tracy makes me feel important. I've always been a negative person and I feel like I've started a new life. Tracy's relationship has been as a sister to me and there is life and excitement again.”

Ms. Judy, an 82-year old RSVP volunteer, has been volunteering since she was a teenager. She's a retired widow with 3 children and too many grand children to count!

She has been a reader for the blind, Mobile Meals driver, pink lady, and before COVID, often visited seniors in nursing facilities. When the Safer at Home order took effect, she was not able to help the community as she once had and felt a need to contribute again. Since then, she has been a reliable, thoughtful, and empathetic ear to her Senior Care Calls client, often talking with her client for an hour and a half! Ms. Judy was surprised when she started serving that her calls would be so fruitful as she has very little in common with her client. But as they continued their conversations, her client has expressed gratitude for having such a warm and supportive person in her life.

RISE ABOVE CRIME

According to the National Council on Aging (NCOA), 1 in 10 Americans aged 60 and older have experienced some form of elder abuse in the last year. There are many types of elder abuse that an older adult may experience including physical, emotional, psychological, and sexual abuse as well as neglect and financial exploitation.

Thanks to advances in technology, healthcare, and other areas, people age 65 years and older are the fastest growing age group in our country. While it is a great thing that people are living longer, healthier lives, the fact remains that with the increasingly aging population, there are more instances in which elder abuse can occur. Elder abuse presents unique challenges to those who experience it and its impact goes beyond the individual to the community in which they live.

The main focuses of Rise Above Crime (RAC) are to provide outreach, education, and services surrounding the issue of elder abuse in Knoxville and Knox County. The Rise Above Crime program operates the Knoxville Coordinated Community Response to Elder Abuse – a group that focuses on identifying how our community can best respond to this issue and create better systems and resources for those who have been victimized.

Additionally, RAC provides case management to adults age 50 years of age and older who have been victims of elder abuse and crime. RAC works with local law enforcement, Adult Protective Services (APS), the Knox County District Attorney's Office, and other victim service providers and social services agencies to reach older adults who need support and resources related to their victimization.

The RAC program has provided over 120 clients with services such as information and referral to community resources, advocacy, emotional support and safety planning, assistance with the criminal and civil justice systems, and beyond.

The RAC program continues to provide client services, facilitate the Knoxville Coordinate Community Response to Elder Abuse, and educate the community on elder abuse with free presentations on how to recognize, report, and respond to elder abuse. RAC also implemented the Coffee and Conversation group – an educational discussion group that meets bi-monthly at the O'Connor Senior Center. It is an open discussion group that meets to learn about a new topic related to elder abuse at each meeting.

Number of people served: 124 new individuals

Accomplishments

- Over 120 adults age 50 and older receiving case management services
- Provided free public awareness presentations to over 250 individuals who work with older adults or who are adults in the Knoxville and Knox County area
- Managed and facilitated the Knoxville Coordinated Community Response to Elder Abuse on a monthly basis
- Created and facilitated the Coffee and Conversation Elder Abuse Educational group held on a monthly basis
- Completed over 10 media units to promote public awareness of elder abuse in our community

Budget \$211,022
Major Sources of Revenue
Federal/State

Responding to Elder Abuse

Rise Above Crime received a referral asking for someone to confirm if an elderly individual was alive and well. The victim was an elderly grandmother with dementia and the abuser was the victim's granddaughter, who was also her caregiver and alleged power of attorney. The referral was received because the granddaughter was attempting to utilize the grandmother's social security benefits to obtain housing. No one had seen the grandmother in person as the granddaughter was refusing to allow anyone access to her. At the time of the referral, neglect and financial exploitation were suspected, but there were some doubts about the grandmother being alive at all.



A Rise Above Crime case manager contacted the granddaughter and at first, she refused, again, to allow the case manager to see or speak with the victim. Finally, during a home visit by the case manager, the victim was eventually brought out of her room and could interact with the case manager. The victim was unsure of where she was, how long she had been there, or who she was with. The caregiver appeared to be upset at the case manager's questions and stated she was taking care of her grandmother and had done so for years. After observing the victim's room and seeing that the victim was sleeping on a broken, reclining beach chair, Rise Above Crime provided the victim with an air mattress, blankets, and adult diapers. It appeared to the case manager that though the victim was alive, she was not well. She appeared to be suffering from severe dementia, and a report was filed based on elder abuse, neglect, and financial exploitation by a caregiver.

A short time later, Rise Above Crime was alerted that the granddaughter had been arrested on outstanding warrants and the case manager was again asked to check on the victim since her caregiver was incarcerated. The victim was found unresponsive in her room, lying on the broken beach chair in the dark. EMS was contacted, and she was removed from the residence for her own safety and taken to a regional hospital for treatment.

With the abuser out of the home and the victim in a safe place, the case manager was able to find out that the victim had been taken from her home in Florida by the granddaughter, who had forged the power of attorney paperwork. The case

manager determined the victim had been missing from her family in Florida for nearly 8 months. The granddaughter had essentially kidnapped the victim to live off the victim's social security benefits.

The victim's family in Florida was contacted. The family relayed to the case manager that they had been trying to find the victim for almost eight months and finally she had been located to their great relief. The family arrived in Knoxville the next day and the victim was reunited with them. After release from the hospital, the victim was taken home to Florida where she has fully recovered. She is now thriving and doing very well.

RISE
ABOVE CRIME

Client confidentiality is important to the Office on Aging. For information about how we protect our clients' identities in this report, see note on page 2.

SAVINGS CHECK UP

In January 2019, the National Council on Aging (NCOA) named the Knoxville-Knox County CAC Office on Aging a Benefits Enrollment Center (BEC). BECs help low-income seniors and persons with disabilities find and enroll in all the benefits programs for which they are eligible, and create coordinated, community-wide systems of benefits access. To date, there are 84 BECs across the United States and only 2 in Tennessee (Knox County & Blount County).

When the Office on Aging was named a BEC, the Savings Check Up program was born. Savings Check Up is a branch of the Senior Information & Referral (SIR) office. Staff are dually trained as Certified Resource Specialists for Aging/Disabled (CRS-A/D) and benefits counselors – able to assist with general Information and Referral needs and more detailed benefits questions.

A “Savings Check Up” is an easy way for Medicare beneficiaries to find out if they may be eligible for money saving benefits that may aid their long-term financial future. With just a few simple questions staff can access if someone is potentially eligible for benefit programs, and provide in-depth application assistance as needed. Clients are screened for:

- Medicare Savings Program (MSP): assistance with Medicare Part B premiums
- Low Income Subsidy (LIS)/ Extra Help: assistance with Medicare Prescription drug costs
- Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP): provides monthly money for groceries
- Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP): once-a-year assistance

with utilities

- Knox County Property Tax Freeze: keeps property taxes from going up
- Knox County Property Tax Relief: portion of your property taxes may be paid or reimbursed

Savings Check Ups can be completed over the phone, and in-person throughout Knox County at seven different senior centers, the CAC Ross Building, and other locations upon request.

Number of people served

655 individuals

Accomplishments

Since the program’s inception, 1,061 low-income individuals have been assisted with 1,635 benefits applications – an estimated \$3,109,878 value in benefits. (January 2019 – June 2020)



Budget \$83,045
Major Sources of Revenue
Foundations/Grants

“We worry a little less”

Mrs. S. contacted Savings Check Up after seeing a short news spot about the program on television. She wanted to know if it might help her and her husband.

The couple live on a combined income of about \$1,750/month. The benefits screening revealed they would likely be eligible for LIHEAP, SNAP, MSP & LIS - all programs the couple had never heard of until now. After explaining the various benefits, we completed applications for all four programs.

Shortly after, the couple began receiving \$30 per month in SNAP benefits, and their prescription costs and drug plan premiums went down (LIS). Mrs. S. mentioned “that other program we signed up for has paid our utility bill for the last two months!” (LIHEAP) and the State of Tennessee is now paying each of their \$144.60 monthly Medicare Part B premiums (MSP). Combining the value of the various programs the couple was eligible for, they will save approximately \$4,776 over the course of the year.

They were happily surprised to realize that all of their cost savings was the result of watching the afternoon news and making a phone call to Savings Check Up. “We were just getting by, but with your help, we are living more comfortably. We worry a little less, and that makes a big difference at the end of the day,” Mrs. S said with a smile.

Delighted with their experience with Savings Check Up, the couple have been referring their friends to the program. “A lot of us older folks are in the same boat with regard to finances, so I just want everyone who needs extra help to call and find out if they qualify for it. It is such a wonderful program.”



Email from a Savings Check Up client:

“I just wanted to drop you a line to let you know how much I appreciate the time you took to help me get my finances shaped up. I generally don’t like asking anybody for help. I have always been the helper, not the one being helped. You made me feel comfortable and I enjoyed talking with you. I’m also happy to be able to get that extra discount on my medications, so thank you for that! I will drop by your office and say hello next time I’m over your way.”

-ML

Client confidentiality is important to the Office on Aging. For information about how we protect our clients’ identities in this report, see note on page 2.

SENIOR COMMUNITY SERVICE EMPLOYMENT PROGRAM (SCSEP)

The Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP) is the largest federally-funded program specifically targeting older adults seeking employment and training assistance.

Providing jobs and training to unemployed, low-income older adults has been a core mission of SCSEP throughout its history.

The Congressional Research Service has described SCSEP as the primary job creation program for older adults.

Most SCSEP participants work part-time at minimum wage in a local nonprofit or public agency serving their communities. Placing older individuals in community service positions strengthens the ability of the individuals to become self-sufficient, provides much-needed support to organizations that benefit from increased civic engagement, and strengthens the communities that are served by such organizations. This paid work experience prepares many of the participants to find unsubsidized employment.

SCSEP participants must be

- 55 or older
- Legally eligible to work in the United States
- Have a household income of no more than 125% of the federal poverty level

Special consideration is given to people who are among the following

- 65 and older
- Disabled
- Limited in English proficiency or in literacy skills
- Veteran
- Considered to have low employment prospects
- Homeless or at-risk of homelessness

Number of people served

- 68 participants were assigned to a wide range of training opportunities in Knox County
- 9 participants were placed in unsubsidized jobs
- 59 participants completed Digital Inclusion Training Classes
- 1,342 wellness calls were made during COVID-19 sheltering in place

Accomplishments

- Assisted 52 Host Agencies with employment needs
- Co-sponsored Job Fair in October that served over 175 job seekers and 35 Supportive Service Providers
- Met United States Department of Labor federal guidelines for SCSEP
- Co-sponsored Digital Inclusion Initiative



Budget \$462,088
Major Sources of Revenue
U.S. Department of Labor
Employment & Training
Administration
City of Knoxville
Knox County

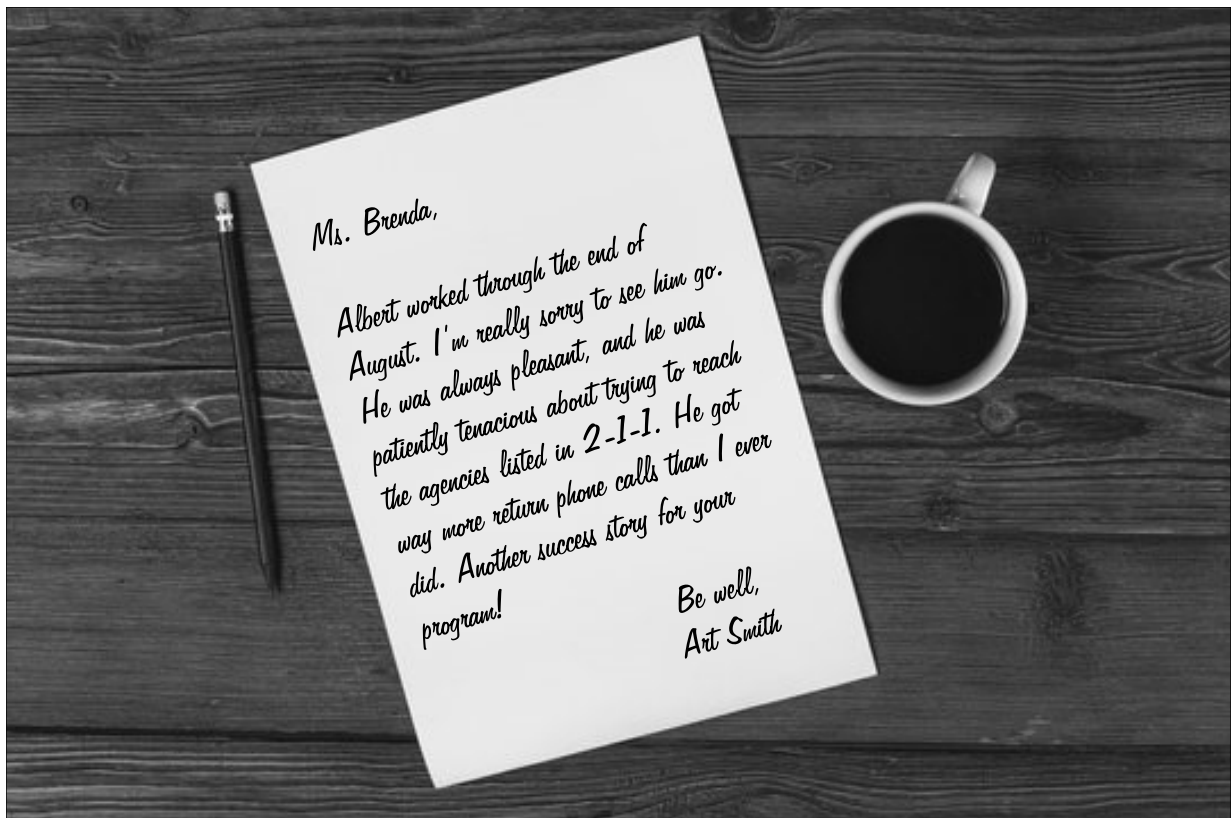
Testimonials from program participants

“SCSEP helped me to be successful! I had the chance to work for 8 months for East Tennessee 2-1-1 through SCSEP before CAC was ready to hire someone. That experience put me in a good position to be the one that was hired. I’ve now been associated with 2-1-1 for nearly 2 years and just passed the exam to be a certified database curator. SCSEP gave me the chance to have several very good jobs that helped me get the one I have now, which I expect to have until I die at my desk of old age and have to be carted out the door. So, I thank SCSEP for giving me opportunities that I wouldn’t have had. I appreciate the help!”

- Ms. K

“The reason SCSEP means so much to me is because of the excellent opportunities it has allowed me. I now have better computer skills because of my assignments with SCSEP. I also have the opportunity to help people improve their lives by working in different capacities at a local neighborhood center. To me, the program provided job skills, which I needed, but the staff was there for moral support and encouragement, which made all the difference and gave me the courage to go out there and get a job that I would feel good about. I am grateful that I found this valuable program in Knoxville.”

- Mr. Y



Note from an employer

Client confidentiality is important to the Office on Aging. For information about how we protect our clients’ identities in this report, see note on page 2.

SENIOR COMPANION PROGRAM

Who we are:

The Senior Companion Program is a national service program that has been a part of the Knoxville community since 1988. Senior Companions are age 55 and over who volunteer between 15 to 40 hours a week as loving and experienced companions to frail, homebound, isolated, and disabled seniors.

What we do:

Seniors helping one another. That is what we do. Senior companions have a primary goal to provide socialization, friendship, and respite care to low-income seniors who are substantially limited by memory loss, hearing or visual impairments, developmental disabilities, and physical challenges. As these relationships strengthen, companions work side by side with their clients to support with preparing meals together, running errands, completing household chores, and maintaining a safe environment.

For their service to the community, companions receive a small stipend, a sense of renewed purpose, access to community resources, empowerment through learning new skills, and friendship and support to manage challenges that come with growing older.

This program benefits both the senior companions and the individuals they serve to live independently and age with dignity. Last year, over 95% of the individuals served reported that they felt less lonely and felt closer ties to more people as a direct result of the Senior Companion Program.

We would like to acknowledge the Senior Companion Advisory Council for their advocacy and support which allows this program to expand in response to growing community needs.

Service Impact

Number of volunteers engaged: 75
Number of individuals served: 255
Number of Service Hours Provided: 68,612

Accomplishments

- Completed 109 new in-home placements between volunteers and clients
- Provided 68 hours of in-service training to senior companion volunteers
- Provided 3,244 wellness calls during the COVID-19 pandemic
- Provided 225 Information and Referral services during the COVID-19 pandemic
- Provided case management support to handle 83 crisis situations

Budget \$422,438
Major Sources of Revenue
Corporation for National & Community Service
Knox County
City of Knoxville
Foundations/Grants
Community Contributions



Senior Companions Make a Difference

Senior Companion volunteers are resilient, even during this time of uncertainty. In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, companions have shifted their schedules to provide wellness checks and social support to their clients via phone. Companions and staff are collectively calling 250+ seniors daily to provide wellness checks, information and referral support, and socialization. Companions have already worked creatively to assist their clients with grocery delivery, medication delivery, helping reschedule doctor appointments, medication reminders, enrolling clients for mobile meals, and connecting folks to mental health support services through these phone visits. Here are two service impact stories:

An immediate impact

“I’m driving and I have no idea where I’m going. I feel really confused,” Mr. James said to Lisa, the Senior Corps staff member. She was calling him for his weekly wellness check, and it turned out to be one of the most important calls of his life.

Lisa asked Mr. James a few questions. He didn’t recognize his surroundings. He couldn’t remember why or where he was going. She told him to pull his car over and turn his engine off. After a few more questions, Lisa was on her way to meet him in a nearby parking lot.

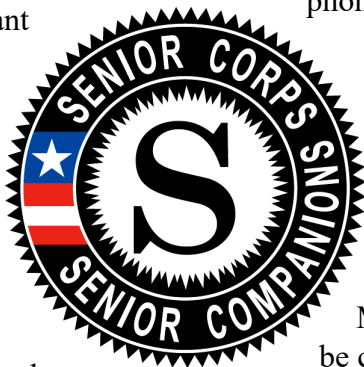
When she got there, Lisa found Mr. James disoriented, slightly slumped over, and unable to recall basic information. Paramedics were called and Mr. James was treated at the scene for dehydration and low blood sugar. Within minutes, he was able to communicate and began to feel better. A team of staff members helped him get home safely, and made sure he was settled after this traumatic event.

Senior Corps staff and volunteers have many stories like this; each one illustrates the direct impact of Senior Corps’ mission in the lives of those they serve.

Editor’s note: This story was published in the March-April 2020 issue of Elder News and Views as part of COVID-related impact stories.

Saving lives through weekly calls

During the COVID-19 pandemic, Senior Companions modified their schedule to provide wellness checks, companionship, and support via phone.



During these routine calls, Senior Companion Robin became concerned when she could not get her client, Ms. Julie, on the phone. Turns out, Ms. Julie had a bad fall the night before and was unable to get up off the floor. Ms. Julie knew that her companion would be checking in on her in the morning, and she did not lose hope.

Sure enough, Robin knew Ms. Julie well and knew that something was wrong. Robin’s quick response resulted in an in-person wellness check, where it was discovered that Ms. Julie needed help. Emergency services were contacted and Ms. Julie was taken to the hospital.

After a quick recovery, Ms. Julie contacted the Senior Companion office to express her gratitude for saving her life.

“If not for Robin, I don’t know what would have happened to me. I would probably have been in very bad shape,” Ms. Julie said, “I just can’t thank her enough for checking in on me and getting me the help I needed. I truly believe my Senior Companion saved my life that day.”

SENIOR INFORMATION & REFERRAL

A call to Senior Information & Referral (SIR) will help seniors in Knoxville and Knox County get their questions answered. They will be listened to and linked to the services they need with as little confusion as possible. Seniors, persons with disabilities, civic groups, social service agencies, church groups, and families or caregivers of older residents of Knoxville and Knox County are welcome to call for assistance. Our Alliance of Information & Referral Systems (AIRS) Certified Information & Referral Specialists for Aging/Disability (CRS-A/D) are available to provide referrals to the vast network of services available in Knox County including health, employment, housing, transportation, legal services, recreation, support groups, emergency assistance, in-home services, minor home repair and more.

SIR began in 1968 as an independent agency, and in 2004 became a program of the Office on Aging. It has long been the go-to source for information and referral (called "I & R") in Knox County. SIR staff can be reached by calling 546-6262, by emailing sir@knoxseniors.org, visiting the office located in the CAC Ross Building, or at Outreach Days hosted at the six Knox County run senior centers. SIR is proud to offer so many avenues of access; allowing staff to offer personal assistance to seniors throughout Knox County.

SIR oversees East Tennessee 2-1-1 (see page 8), the CHIPS program, and the One Call Club until its closure in 2019. CHIPS provides a limited number of donated computers to eligible home-bound/ isolated seniors in Knox County to help decrease social isolation. This year, 15 computers were given out.

In January 2019, the Knoxville-Knox County CAC Office on Aging received a grant to become a National Council on Aging (NCOA)

Benefits Enrollment Center (BEC). We were tasked "to develop and implement [a] coordinated, community-wide, person-centered and more seamless system for finding, enrolling and retaining Medicare-eligible seniors and/or adults with disabilities in all the public benefits for which they are eligible." (NCOA, 2019)

SIR is spearheading this effort within the Office on Aging, and is actively developing this program and working with beneficiaries to access benefits. SIR also takes applications for and administers the Gift of Sight, Hearing & Dentures program (page 14), and updates the yellow Knox County Senior Service Directory for publication.

Number of People Served

- 6,102 contacts
- 2,854 unduplicated individuals
- 9,751 units of information and referrals provided, including follow-up calls.

Accomplishments/Achievements for the year

- Staff members maintained their Certifications in Aging and Disability (CRS-A/D) with the 2-1-1 Database Resource Specialist earning her certification as a **Community Resource Specialist - Database Curator** (CRS-DC).
- SIR's Outreach Program continues to provide individual assistance throughout the community. SIR Staff regularly visit the six, Knox County-run Senior Centers providing answers and assistance for a variety of needs.
- SIR continues to seek out partnerships to support ongoing efforts to expand services and reduce program costs.

Budget \$19,125
Major Sources of Revenue
Federal/State
Knox County
City of Knoxville
United Way
Foundations/Grants
Community Contributions

Senior Information & Referral is here to help

Senior Information & Referral (SIR) was contacted by Ms. C, the sister of recently widowed Mr. L, an 85-year-old gentleman. She was concerned that due to his recent loss, he was suffering from depression and had been neglecting his person and his health. She also mentioned that Mr. L was difficult to deal with and was not one to ask for help. After a long discussion about different options available to him, Ms. C hung up with hopes of persuading her brother to contact SIR personally. Mr. L did make that call and staff at the SIR office were able to conduct a Savings Check Up screen to help determine what benefits he might qualify for and also to see what Office on Aging programs might be of assistance to him.



Mr. L was connected with the Office on Aging's case management program, Project LIVE, and the CAC Transportation Department. Mr. L was also encouraged to get out and attend some social events to combat some of his loneliness. He is now planning to join the O'Connor Senior Center to make new friends and get involved in a variety of activities.

Although Mr. L is still mourning the loss of his beloved spouse, he is thankful that he made the call to Senior Information & Referral. He no longer fears being isolated and knows there are resources available to aid him along his journey. SIR exists to help people like Mr. L find the answers they need to improve their quality of life and allows them to thrive and stay connected to friends, family, and the greater community.

Have questions?



Looking for answers?

SIR CAN HELP!
Call 865-546-6262

**Senior
Information
& Referral**

SENIOR EMPLOYMENT SERVICE

Senior Employment Service offers workshops for seniors age 50+ who are seeking employment for any reason: some are laid off or forced to retire, some are re-entering the job market after a period of retirement, while others need to enhance their retirement income because of the rising cost of living or other economic factors. Others are seeking jobs that are more equal to their level of skills and experience than their current jobs. For all of these job seekers, Senior Employment Service offers valuable job-search workshops each month. Employers speak to the participants about the qualities they are seeking in job candidates. The program also offers individualized help in job counseling and job-seeking.

Senior Employment Service also sponsors Senior Job Fairs where senior job seekers can be assured that the employers who participate truly appreciate the value of the work ethic that is exemplified by the attendees who are seeking employment.

SES participants must be

- 50 or older
- Legally eligible to work in the United States

Number of people served

- 1,342 Wellness Calls due to COVID-19
- 43 people attended Seniors Seeking Employment workshops
- 189 additional people received job counseling and referrals
- 59 participants completed Digital Inclusion Training Classes

Services

- Seniors Seeking Employment workshops offer information about first impressions, dressing for success, interviewing, skills assessment and resume writing, how to handle different personalities, and reasons why many employers prefer older workers
- Job search assistance
- Assistance with resumes, cover letters, and filing online applications
- Two yearly job fairs for seniors that are 50+
- Digital inclusion computer and technology assistance

Accomplishments

- SES sponsored one senior job fair, with 35 employers and supportive service providers participating and more than 200 senior applicants in attendance
- SES staff helped job candidates prepare resumes, write cover letters, file online job applications, fax resumes to prospective employers, and select items from professional career closet

Major Sources of Revenue
City of Knoxville
Knox County

Notes from participants



“ I want to thank the staff for seeing my need and helping me get to where I needed to be. Having been out of work for some time, I was hesitant to go back because I was afraid that things had changed so much that I wouldn’t know what I was suppose to do. Well, the staff encouraged me and let me know that I still have the “skills to pay the bills.” They showed me how to use a few computer programs used in business offices, so I learned that. It made me feel good to get updated so I can know what I need to be doing. Thank you to this program that really helped someone like me who needed the extra help. I feel more confident about job hunting than I was before I came into the program.”

Sincerely,
Ms. H



“Thank you for your help with my job search. I worried about my prospects for finding a job I could do well. That’s when I found out about the Senior Employment Service. A friend at church told me about it and I called. Ms. Frankie called me back right away and got me enrolled in a class to learn about using technology. I thought that was a good place to start. Thank you for everything—from the classes, to the job search, to the position I accepted at a call center. You made it easier for me. I realized I could do this if I really put my mind to it. And I did, with your help! Thank you again.”

Best regards,
K. Jones

Client confidentiality is important to the Office on Aging. For information about how we protect our clients’ identities in this report, see note on page 2.

SUPPLEMENTAL NUTRITION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (SNAP) OUTREACH

The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, also known as Tennessee SNAP, provides extra purchasing power for individuals and households to buy food needed for good health. SNAP eligibility comes with many added incentives for seniors such as bonus bucks at Farmers Markets, Amazon and Walmart discounts which now allows you to order groceries online, AT&T internet discounts, free phone service through Safe Link and Assurance Wireless, vegetable seeds and produce-bearing plants, museum discounts, and other incentives.

The SNAP Outreach Initiative at the Office on Aging educates adults, especially those over 60, about how easy it is to apply. With our assistance, you don't have to leave the comfort of your home for any reason to file; we can complete your application by telephone. There are many myths about SNAP, but we give you facts you may not have known about this vital program.

Tennessee ranks 4th in the nation for senior hunger, leading to poor health, high medical costs, and triggering other expenses that can be avoided with SNAP eligibility. We don't want anyone to be food insecure, especially our older adults and their family members.

Since 2015, the SNAP program continues to grow successfully throughout Knox County and our surrounding communities because *"Nutrition is our Mission!"*

If you know of anyone who would benefit from the SNAP program, help us spread the word! If you would like to find out if you are eligible for SNAP, please call our office at (865) 524-2786.

Number of people served: 3,874

Number of SNAP Applications: 1,572

Number of SNAP Screenings: 2,302

Accomplishments: The SNAP Outreach program has assisted over 3,000 individuals with SNAP applications



Nutrition is our mission!

Budget \$39,129
Major Sources of Revenue
Foundations/Grants
Community Contributions

Client confidentiality is important to the Office on Aging. For information about how we protect our clients' identities in this report, see note on page 2.

A Renewed Sense of Hope

Ms. D called the SNAP Outreach Coordinator in distress with the following issues:

She was diagnosed with Thyroid Cancer in March 2020 and had to stop work due to surgery and treatments. She had no insurance for medical treatments. She is a divorced Hispanic/Latino widow with 2 children under 18.

Prior to her diagnosis, her SNAP benefits amounted to \$100 per month, based on her wages.

She wasn't able to get in contact with her case worker during her cancer treatments, so SNAP benefits were stopped because she did not send in recertification.

Her Social Security card was stolen and someone began using her identity in March 2020.

Her ex-husband died while out of the country and she cannot get the death certificate certified for United States verification for Social Security Administration benefits for herself and her kids. Mr. D. was a United States citizen and the children's dependent benefits can't be paid until verification of his death is received.

The client is learning English, but needs translation services.

We successfully applied for her SNAP recertification and she was eligible for a benefit increase of \$657 per month. The SNAP Outreach Coordinator helped the client file for Medicaid to help with the cost of her cancer treatment. Ms. D was referred to Centro Hispano and Latino Task Force for help with legal issues in obtaining death verification of her former spouse. She also received a referral for her to file for Social Security Disability.

The SNAP Outreach Coordinator put her in direct contact with a social worker at Thompson Cancer Survivors Center. Ms. D was referred to Knoxville Sheriff's Department as an identity theft victim.

The SNAP Outreach Coordinator assisted her and her children with the Department of Human Service's Temporary Assistance for Needy Families. In a socially-distanced in-person interview, joined by an interpreter, this client was served with dignity and comfort. With masks on, they discussed programs and services available to Ms. D that would allow her to navigate her circumstances during the COVID-19 pandemic. Ms. D and her children left with a renewed sense of hope. These services would have been professionally valued at over \$6,000. In the SNAP Outreach Program, our vision is not only the mission of nutrition, but in helping the whole person.



Alice Allen (right), SNAP Outreach Coordinator, and a SNAP recipient visit the Farmer's Market at New Harvest Park. SNAP benefits can be used at participating local Farmer's Markets to buy healthy fruit and vegetables.

SENIOR NUTRITION PROGRAM

Since 1971, we strive to bring food and hope to Knox County seniors in need. Through Mobile Meals, our program also provides homebound seniors with an important daily safety check Monday – Friday. The friendly volunteer visitor helps in the fight against loneliness and isolation that so many seniors face. By participating in the Congregate Dining program, clients benefit from valuable social interaction along with the nutritious meal.

Who we serve:

Knox County residents 60 years or older regardless of income based on the criteria for the programs.

We serve our community through our two meal service programs:

Mobile Meals

Delivers a hot, nutritious lunch each weekday to seniors who are home alone during the day and cannot cook for themselves.



Minimum age to qualify for the Mobile Meals program is 60; most are in their 70's; 26% are over 85 years old, the fastest growing segment of our population. During this fiscal year, Mobile Meals averaged delivering to 1,096 people daily, Monday – Friday. 503 meals were served on Thanksgiving Day and 521 meals on Christmas Day.

Congregate Meals

Through this program, seniors age 60+ that are physically able are served at group dining sites, most located in senior apartment complexes throughout Knox County. Dining in the congregate program gives clients the opportunity for social interaction while they eat the same nutritious meals served in the Mobile Meals home-delivered program.

COVID-19 EMERGENCY PLAN

During this unprecedented time of the COVID-19 emergency Mobile Meals had to adapt.

- To limit contact, a weekly meal delivery schedule was put in place from March 26 – May 7. Each Mobile Meals client received one box containing five complete meals. Volunteers adapted, made extra room in their vehicles for the boxes and increased number of clients, followed safety protocol and continued to serve.
- In addition to home delivery service, Mobile Meals continued to serve seniors in high rise apartment buildings and communities that normally received nutritious meals in group dining. We met this challenge with the help of volunteers by implementing a weekly door-to-door and drive-through meal service for this group.
- Utilizing the Mobile Meals App technology platform, volunteers conducted the all-important wellness checks on non-delivery days. Volunteers replaced the in-person contact with a daily friendly phone call. Feedback from these calls allowed Mobile Meals staff to respond to needs, help with referrals for additional services, and assist with any urgent situations brought to light. The phone conversations helped combat isolation and brightened the day for both Mobile Meals clients and volunteers.
- On average, 1,400 meal boxes weekly containing five complete meals were being packed and delivered to seniors in need during this time period.
- 150 Mobile Meals clients were added to the program as result of the pandemic.

Mobile Meals home delivery returned to daily

Monday - Friday as soon as possible with safety procedures in place following guidelines set forth by the Knox County Health Department. Congregate dining returned to daily service with clients picking up meals rather than gathering in a community room setting.

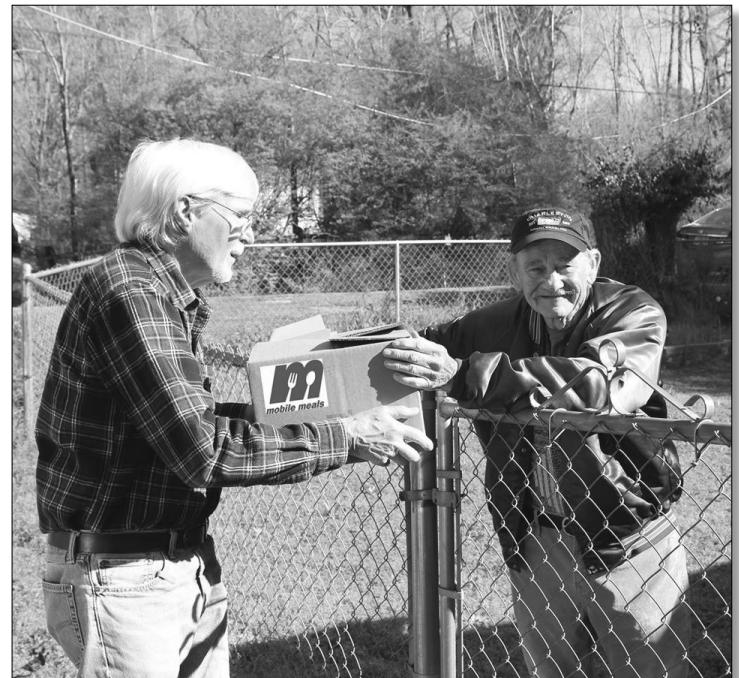
Number of people served 1,887

Accomplishments:

- No waiting list for Mobile Meals home-delivered program.
- Packed 16,232 emergency and holiday shelf stable meals.
- Provided 18,654 meals to seniors with money raised from the Power of the Purse event.
- Mobile Meals staff responded to 1,270 wellness alerts reported from volunteers using the Mobile Meals App and this number grows daily.
- 74% of all Mobile Meals volunteers using the Mobile Meals App and all new volunteers with a Smart Phone are trained to use this technology which proves we are providing “much more than a meal.”
- Over 100 volunteers deliver a meal and safety check every day Monday – Friday to home-bound seniors.



At the beginning of the pandemic, staff and volunteers packed boxes of Mobile Meals for clients to eat throughout the week to reduce chances of exposure to COVID-19.



A Mobile Meals volunteer delivers a box of five meals. This once-a-week delivery, combined with daily phone call wellness checks, reduced the risk of spreading the Coronavirus.

Budget \$2,150,290
Major Sources of Revenue
 Federal & State Funding
 Foundations/Grants
 Community Contributions
 City of Knoxville
 Knox County

Bringing Food and Hope Since 1971

The Caring Plate

Mission: To simplify the lives of cancer patients and their loved ones by delivering daily or weekly nutritious meals, so they can focus on successful treatment and recovery. This is a partnership with Provision CARES Foundation.

This year we –

- Delivered 11,364 meals & 1,078 supplements
- Were aided by CAC Transit as well as countless Mobile Meals volunteers
- Served 65 cancer patients and 57 family members



The Caring Plate assures cancer patients currently receiving treatment or recovering have access to healthy nutritious meals. In 2014, Provision CARES Foundation

partnered with the CAC's Senior Nutrition Program to sponsor the Caring Plate as a pilot program in 2014. Patients, families, physicians and their clinical team all found the program to be beneficial since often, when undergoing treatment, patients or their families may be impacted by the inability to prepare healthy or nutritious meals. Nutrition and strength play an important role during treatment and recovery.

Connecting Hearts

Mission: Provide extra help and companionship to Mobile Meals and clients who have been identified as extremely socially isolated and having limited access to food.

This year we –

- Delivered food to 21 clients in need of groceries
- Matched 33 volunteers to 26 Mobile Meals clients

Farm to Seniors

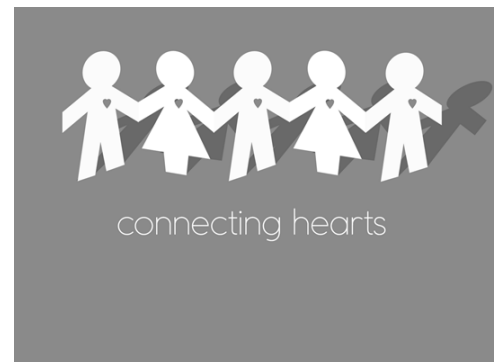
Mission: Add freshness, nutrition, and flavor to meals delivered to Mobile Meals clients by incorporating fresh produce harvested from Beardsley Community Farm.



This year we –

- Had 132 volunteers help harvest, wash, and cut produce
- Processed 1,740.9 lbs. of:

eggplant	swiss chard
carrots	onion
okra	rainbow chard
tomatoes	green bell
zucchini	garlic
kale	peppers
yellow squash	



OFFICE ON AGING STAFF

AS OF JUNE 30, 2020

Office on Aging

Dottie Lyvers, Director
Fred Massingill, Assistant Director
Sharon Brown
Angela Grant Bartlett
Melissa Hitchcock
Shandie Howell
Rachel Kraft
Nikki Lynn

Affordable Medicine Options for Seniors

Peggy Ransom, Manager

Daily Living Center

Laura Nolen, Coordinator
Renee Adams

Foster Grandparents Program

Gina Whitfield, Coordinator

Grandparents as Parents Program

Tracy Van de Vate, Manager
Anne Umbach-Stokes

Knox PAWS/Feed-A-Pet

Monica Brown, Manager

O'Connor Senior Center

Calie Terry, Manager
Claudia Jewell
Angie Jones
John Klimek
Gabe White

Project LIVE

Misty Goodwin, Senior Services Director
Bill Banks
Susan Bradford
Melinda Bryant
Lance Byrd
Yolanda Grant
Kathy Harralson
Eric Johnson
Carol Lamb

Retired & Senior Volunteer Program

Sam Reddick, Coordinator

Rise Above Crime

Sasha Hammett, Manager
Ronna Formon
Pete Garza

Senior Community Service Employment Program & Senior Employment Service

Brenda Tate, Manager
Frankie Slay

Senior Companion Program

Florence Sweat, Coordinator

Senior Corps Management

Deisha Finley, Manager
Lisa Bush

Senior Information & Referral / 2-1-1

LaWanna Broderick
Pat Roney
Sara Mary Wallace

Senior Nutrition Program

Judith Pelot, Nutrition Services Director
Jean Adams
Karen Bible
Norma Jean Brown
Pamela Chambers
Tomere Clark
Debbie Clay
Teresa Coning
Zenobia Dobson
Marleta Holton
Mary Martin
Lewis Pitts
Marsha Reep
Jessica Vandagriff
Shelly Woodrick

SNAP Outreach Initiative

Alice Allen, Coordinator

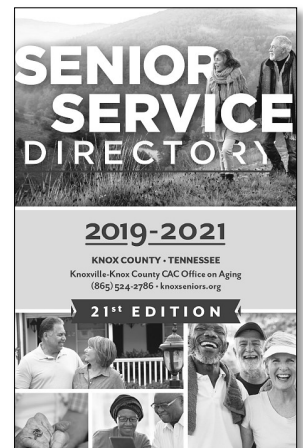
OOA ADMINISTRATION, COMMUNICATION, AND EVENTS

The Office on Aging has a core support staff that offers administrative support to all of the OOA programs listed in this annual report, providing each program with efficient, coordinated, and cost-saving services. Some of the activities of the core staff include:

- ◆ Administrative and financial oversight
- ◆ Identifying and developing additional funding sources such as fundraising activities and grant opportunities
- ◆ Public awareness and information, which includes
 - ◆ Participating in health fairs, community exhibits, and church mission fairs.
 - ◆ The Office on Aging website: knoxseniors.org, which is home to the online versions of the *Senior Service Directory* and *Elder News & Views* (see below for both).
 - ◆ Maintaining a speakers' bureau.
 - ◆ Offering aging information periodically through local media, including Community Television's *Aging Advantage*, composed of 15-minute interviews of aging-network professionals.
 - ◆ In November 2019, the Office on Aging hosted the 35th *Aging: A Family Affair*. The workshop offered practical advice on issues of interest to senior citizens, those with disabilities, caregivers, family members, and professionals. In 2019, the keynote speaker, Knox County Mayor Glenn Jacobs, presented "Growing Older in Knox County: A Mayor's Reflections." Eight workshops were offered in three sessions throughout the day. Participants chose to attend one workshop per session. The 2019 conference, held at Rothchild Conference Center, was a wonderful event with over 380 people in attendance.

Printing and distributing information:

- ◆ The *Senior Service Directory* is a compact, easy-to-use directory of services and information for Knox County senior citizens, family caregivers, and professionals who work with senior citizens. The Office on Aging publishes a new edition of the directory every other year; the office continued distributing the 21st edition of the directory published in February 2019. The directory is distributed free of charge. The 21st edition is online at www.knoxseniors.org/directory.



- ◆ **Elder News & Views** is the Office on Aging’s newsletter. It contains monthly schedules and calendars for the O’Connor Senior Center and articles about Office on Aging happenings, events around town, and issues and topics of interest to senior citizens in Knoxville and Knox County. The newsletter is available free to anyone in Knox County. The office distributed 17,000 copies of the 12-page newsletter six times during the year. The newsletter can be read online at www.knoxseniors.org/news. Call 865-524-2786 to get on the mailing list. Send an e-mail to knoxooa@knoxseniors.org to get an email notification for the online version of the newsletter.



- ◆ **Senior Update** provides news about the Office on Aging and the O’Connor Senior Center schedule of activities in the Sunday Knoxville News Sentinel on the first and third Sunday of the month.
- ◆ **Facebook** offers a speedy and informal way to communicate information about day-to-day events and happenings at the Office on Aging and its programs. To find us, go to www.facebook.com/knox.OOA and like our page!
- ◆ **Twitter** offers quick updates and statistics about Office on Aging events and issues concerning seniors. Follow us at www.twitter.com/KnoxOOA
- ◆ **Instagram** offers a fun, creative way to document Office on Aging Events as well as promote upcoming events. Follow us at www.instagram.com/knoxooa.
- ◆ The **OOA Blog** offers bi-monthly insights into topics of interest to seniors and their caregivers. Read the blog at www.knoxseniors.org.



Office on Aging Contact Information

Office on Aging (865) 524-2786

Ross Building
2247 Western Avenue
Knoxville, TN 37921
knoxseniors.org

Hours: Monday—Friday
8 am—4:45 pm

O'Connor Senior Center (865) 523-1135

611 Winona Street
Knoxville, TN 37917

Hours: Monday—Friday
8:30 am—4:30 pm

The Daily Living Center (865) 689-8412

North Ridge Crossing
3900 Probus Road
Knoxville, TN 37918

Hours: Monday—Friday
7:45 am—4:15 pm

Senior Information & Referral (865) 546-6262

Ross Building
2247 Western Avenue
Knoxville, TN 37921

Hours: Monday—Friday
8 am—4:45 pm

Project LIVE (865) 544-5200

Ross Building
2247 Western Avenue
Knoxville, TN 37921

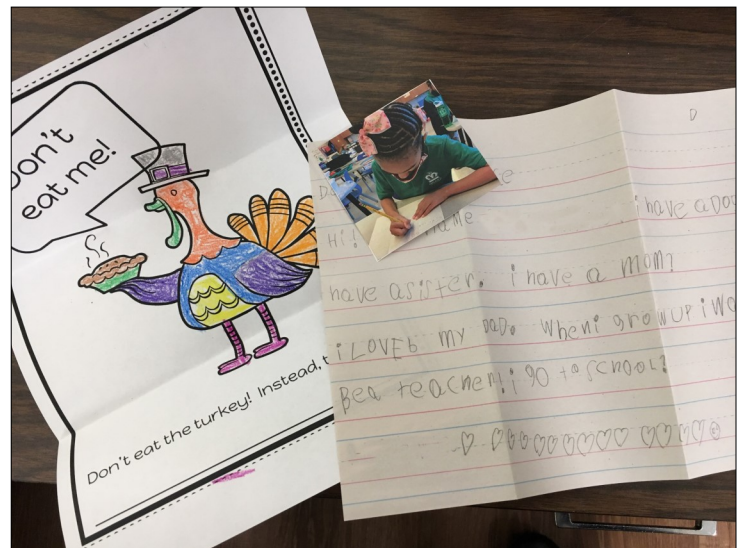
Hours: Monday—Friday
8 am—4:45 pm



RSVP Volunteers stepped up when many lonely seniors became even more isolated during the pandemic. Senior Care Calls is a program that meets the need for phone contact and friendship.



Mobile Meals has a phone app that volunteers can use to report information about a client's status back to the Senior Nutrition Program in real time.



The Foster Grandparent program coordinated the Pen Pals Project for their participants so they and their students could keep in touch when schools and after-school programs were shuttered due to COVID-19.



Each participant of the Daily Living Center received a special Easter basket and a Senior Care Package delivered to their homes when the Center had to close temporarily for health and safety reasons due to COVID-19.



Mobile Meals volunteers delivered weekly boxes of meals to participants. Staff members conducted daily wellness checks by phone to make sure clients were doing alright.



Staff mobilized to make sure everyone participated and was counted in the 2020 U.S. Census. Federal funding for CAC and Office on Aging programs is directly tied to the outcomes of the U.S. Census.