

CCoA
California Commission on Aging

AGEWATCH

California Commission on Aging Elects New Officers for 2011

The California Commission on Aging (CCoA) elected new officers for 2011 at its December 7 and 8, 2010 meeting in Burlingame. The CCoA will be chaired by Havard L. Staggs of Jackson, with Tom Rowe of Eureka as vice chairman. Additional Executive Committee members include Sharon Monck (Rio Vista) as chair of the Operational Procedures and Bylaws Committee, Bert Bettis (Wilton) as chair of the Advocacy and Policy Committee, and members-at-large Karen Josephson (Long Beach) and Donna Ueland (Fresno). Outgoing CCoA chair Jim Davis of Eureka will remain on as immediate past chair.

“It is an honor to serve as the chair of the commission,” said Staggs. “We are in the midst of very difficult financial times and I will see that the CCoA meets its statutory mandates to advocate for core services for the state’s vulnerable population, to advise state government concerning programs and services that affect older individuals, to hold hearings regarding solutions to problems confronting older adults and to recommend ways to most effectively use all available resources.” Governor Schwarzenegger first appointed Staggs to the Commission in 2006.

Commission elections are held annually at the final meeting of the calendar year. During Chairman Davis’ tenure, the Commission co-sponsored three bills that were signed into law, held public hearings on rural health access for older adults, older adult mental health care and on elder abuse, as well as sponsored a statewide forum on the future of senior centers.

The next CCoA meeting will be February 1 and 2, 2011 in Sacramento.



Havard L. Staggs

AGE WATCH is an occasional publication of the California Commission on Aging (CCoA) intended to inform, educate, and advocate. The CCoA is an independent state agency established in 1973 to serve as the principal state advocate on behalf of older Californians. The CCoA office is located at 1300 National Drive, Suite 173, Sacramento, CA 95834.

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Aging and Disability Commissions Join Forces to Work on Shared Goals.

The California Commission on Aging held its third joint meeting with the State Independent Living Council in Burlingame in December. Focused on identifying issues of common concern, the joint meeting was addressed by Professor Fernando Torres-Gil, Director of the Center for Policy Research on Aging at the School of Public Affairs, UCLA, and Presidential appointee to the National Committee on Disability. Professor Torres-Gil praised the two groups for leading the way in their efforts to work together on policies that affect their constituencies.

The meeting also featured an expert panel discussing the crime of financial abuse against elderly and dependent adults. The panel included Nora Baladerian, Ph.D., Project Director of the Disability, Abuse & Personal Rights Project of Spectrum Institute, Bert Bettis, M.A., of Sacramento County Health and Human Services Department, and Mary Counihan, public liaison of the California Elder Justice Project. The forum focus was the broad range of actions that are encompassed in the definition of financial elder abuse, and the immense vulnerability of these populations.

The CCoA and SILC hope to continue discussion regarding these issues with a view to increasing awareness in Sacramento and identifying additional support for vulnerable victims of financial crimes.

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January, 2011

Shingles Vaccine Still Underutilized

Only 10% of individuals eligible for the shingles vaccine have received it, reports the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). In November, CDC and the National Foundation for Infectious Diseases (NFID) released findings about the health consequences for adults who skip vaccines. While older Americans have the highest immunization levels, only 16% know the shingles vaccine is recommended for everyone aged 60+.

With the Patchwork of Hope Network and Endo Pharmaceuticals, NCOA promotes the shingles vaccine. Additional information: <http://www.ncoa.org/news-ncoa-publications/aging-news/shingles-vaccine-still.html> Reprinted from the National Council on Aging website.



Alzheimer's Advocate Retires

The California Commission on Aging joined with other Sacramento aging advocates in November to honor Jackie McGrath, who retired from the role of State Policy Director of the Alzheimer's Association California Council at the end of December. Ms. McGrath has served the Alzheimer's Association since 2002, providing an effective voice in the development of state policies and regulations to improve care and service levels for Alzheimer's patients. Among her many accomplishments are the development of regulations to assure that residential care facility staff have training in dementia care; working with the Legislature to raise awareness of nursing home abuse; securing extensions of the Alzheimer's Research tax check-off on state income tax forms; and working to bring the Alzheimer's Disease State Plan from the proposal stage to fruition.

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Congress Endorses National Alzheimer's Plan

Congress voted in December to create, for the first time, a national plan to combat Alzheimer's disease with the same intensity as the attacks on AIDS and cancer. The bill, expected to be signed by President Obama, would establish a National Alzheimer's Project within the Department of Health and Human Services to coordinate a national approach to research, treatment and caregiving.

Focusing on research to identify early brain changes that occur before signs of dementia are visible, the legislation aims to promote the development of preventive or even curative treatments and to improve the early diagnosis of the disease. The legislation establishes an advisory body that includes representatives from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the National Institutes of Health, the Department of Veterans Affairs, the Food and Drug Administration, the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services, the Indian health Service and scientists, providers and family caregivers.

Yamada Reappointed to Chair Assembly Aging and Long-Term Care Committee

Assembly Member Mariko Yamada (D-Davis) has been reappointed by Assembly Speaker John Perez to chair the Assembly Aging and Long-Term Care Committee. Under Ms. Yamada's leadership since March of 2010, the Committee has held five oversight hearings focused on caregivers, older adults and their families. In the coming term Ms. Yamada hopes to hold joint hearings on senior housing, paratransit, and factors affecting the safety and security of older adults.

The Aging and Long-Term Care Committee also retains two members from the previous session: Manuel Perez (D-Cathedral City) and Norma Torres (D-Pomona). New members of the Committee include Vice Chair Linda Halderman (R-Fresno), Richard Pan (D-Sacramento), and Donald Wagner (R-Irvine).

Havard L. Staggs, Chair
Jackson

Thomas Rowe, Vice
Chair, Eureka

Commissioners

Bert Bettis

Wilton

Constance Chang

Oakland

Rafael Cosio

West Hollywood

James L. Davis,

Eureka

Michael DeNunzio

San Francisco

Karen Josephson

Long Beach

Henry "Hank" Lacayo

Newbury Park

Marian Last

Rossmoor

Richard Lundin

Benicia

Barbara Mitchell

Riverside

Sharon Monck

Rio Vista

Cheryl Phillips

Carmichael

Donna Ueland

Fresno

Virgie Walker

Carson

Benny Y. Yee

San Francisco

Diana Dooley Appointed to Lead State Health & Human Service Agency

Governor-elect Jerry Brown in early December appointed Diana Dooley to head the California Health & Human Service Agency. Ms. Dooley is currently the President and Chief Executive Officer of the California Children's Hospital Association. Prior to leading the Association, Ms. Dooley was General Counsel and Vice President for Children's Hospital Central California near Fresno. She served the previous Brown Administration as Legislative Secretary and later Special Assistant to the Governor.

"I am humbled by the opportunity to lead the Health and Human Services Agency," Ms. Dooley said. "In these difficult times, it's more important than ever to manage our health and social programs with efficiency and a sense of compassion. And that's my commitment in taking this position."

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Senior Legal Hotline to Serve Older Domestic Violence Victims

Thanks to a new two-year grant from the Office on Violence Against Women (OVW) at the U.S. Department of Justice, the Senior Legal Hotline (SLH) is undertaking to provide legal assistance to older domestic violence victims across California. "In the course of talking to thousands of seniors over the years, we've heard some horrific tales involving domestic violence," said SLH program manager David Mandel. "This grant will help our staff and volunteers serve these very vulnerable clients more effectively and safely. It will also allow us to share this knowledge with other senior legal services providers – and help us educate Adult Protective Services workers and others about legal issues that older domestic violence victims often face."

Elder domestic violence victims frequently face overwhelming legal problems, but most have little access to legal assistance. They get "lost in the cracks between the domestic violence and elder abuse service systems," according to Bonnie Brandl and Loree Cook-Daniels, who authored Domestic Abuse in Later Life, a review of research and resources that was published by VAWnet, a project of the National Resource Center on Domestic Violence and the Pennsylvania Coalition Against Domestic Violence. Under California law and in SLH's plans for the project "domestic violence" is not limited to assaults or threats by someone actually living with the victim, or by an intimate partner. Many other instances of elder abuse are covered as well.

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