

## **Ventura County Area Agency on Aging (VCAAA)**

### **Advisory Council:**

The VCAAA's Advisory Council (AC) is a body of advocates for persons age 60 and over. Members of the Council represent the Ventura County Board of Supervisors, local cities and service providers. The objective of the Council is to involve the community in creating and sustaining programs which impact senior living. The Council meets seven times a year and much of the work is done in committees.

The AC forms task forces and committees as needed to address specific issues. Current standing committees include: Outreach/Boomer, Housing & Transportation, Nutrition, Health, PAC (Planning & Allocation), By-Laws, and Legislative all of which work very closely with the agency director and staff in developing program and funding recommendations.

Part of the responsibilities for AC members is to assist during the VCAAA's application review process, the VCAAA AC members, which includes people with disabilities and/or low-income status and/or minority status, make funding recommendations based on targeting policies.

### **Methods of Appointment to the Advisory Council:**

Three methods are used to appoint individuals to the Advisory Council: (1) Two representatives are appointed from each of the ten cities in the county via the local councils on aging (of which members are typically appointed by the respective City Councils); (2) The Ventura County Board of Supervisors conducts an annual recruitment to appoint its representatives; and (3) the VCAAA invites applications to fill the two service provider slots and Advisory Council members vote for their choices. The two applicants with the highest number of votes are elected. The immediate past chair of the Advisory Council remains on the Council for the year following their term of office. Starting in FY 2008-09, the three individuals representing Ventura County on the California Senior Legislature were added as voting members on the Advisory Council.

### **The AC members help guide and assist with the VCAAA's Area Plan goals:**

**GOAL #1:** – Older adults in Ventura County will have access to the resources and services that will enable them to maintain their health, safety, dignity and quality of life.

**GOAL #2:** – Eligible family caregivers will have access to resources and services to ease the emotional and physical strain of caregiving and to support them in their efforts to care for their loved ones.

**GOAL #3:** –VCAAA will be an identifiable leader and advocate for older adults, caregivers and service providers.

**GOAL #4:** –VCAAA will identify and address the emerging and changing needs of the 60+ population as well as Baby Boomers (born 1946-1964).

**Goal #5:** –Advance VCAAA's ability to manage for results.

### **Outreach/Boomer Committee:**

This committee focuses on Agency's outreach, marketing, etc.; provides direction to the VCAAA regarding the needs of those 50+; develop promotional materials and work on branding the agency name and logo to increase visibility of the VCAAA; provide information and tools to Baby Boomers, who are VCAAA's future clients, to make informed decisions to plan for their future and retirement such as "The NOW! Boomer: The NOW! Preparation for Retirement" class.

**The mission statement:** *"To promote awareness amongst all Ventura County residents of senior services, programs and issues that enhances the quality of life."*

### **Housing & Transportation Committee:**

This committee focuses on affordable housing and transportation issues that face Ventura County seniors; brainstorm and work together to identify resources and to help resolve senior transportation issues in each community; developing a program that assist seniors who are no longer driving to find alternate transportation; encourage seniors in their continued independence and to help them understand the route systems and time schedules of the local transit; advocate collaborate with community-based organizations for affordable senior housing; encourage the development of alternative housing.

**The mission statement:** *“To identify housing resources and to provide assistance and guidance to seniors in need of housing and transportation in Ventura County.”*

### **Nutrition Committee:**

This committee meets as needed to provide guidance to the Senior Nutrition Program; to increase public awareness of the food insecurity issues facing seniors in Ventura County; bring awareness and need for wholesome nutrition and help promote nutritional education information and materials to congregate and home delivered meal participants.

### **Health Committee:**

This committee looks at health issues relating to seniors; work toward preventative health measures, identifying chronic disease in communities, and finding solutions for healthier living for seniors; advocate for and improve the current level of health care for Ventura County seniors by continuing to work with health care professionals, stakeholders and service providers.

**Goals:** Develop a baseline of health data to monitor the growth in number of seniors and determine what services are lacking and/or inaccessible; and identify the gaps and overlaps of services among relevant major agencies; establish a clearinghouse of data by city. Information will be entered into a GIS database and will be available on the web; Begin to develop a coordinated chronic disease management program to help address the nine major chronic diseases affecting seniors in Ventura County; Develop a campaign to encourage seniors to obtain screenings procedures covered by Medicare by private physicians; Hold the *Call to Action Symposium* during the year; Lay the ground work to establish a community disease prevention or healthy living program.

### **PAC Committee (Planning & Allocations):**

The AC's Planning and Allocations Committee and VCAAA staff ensure that new programs meet one or more specific service gaps (as determined by needs assessments) and serve one or more target populations. This committee focuses on working with VCAAA staff and to determine grant funding and program development; this committee includes selected members of all standing committees.

### **By-Laws Committee:**

This committee meets only when changes to the by-laws for the Advisory Council are proposed.

### **Legislative Committee:**

This committee works with the California Senior Legislators to develop and respond to legislation that is of interest to seniors and disabled adults; draw attention of legislators to help them realize the importance and complexity of senior issues; to increased public awareness regarding aging issues – Baby Boomers as caregiver for their parents and other seniors; issues facing Baby Boomer as they retire and encouraging them toward self-reliance and “healthy aging.”