Senior Connections

OUR NEW QUARTERLY PUBLICATION



The Capital Area Agency on Aging

Q1 2023

Senior Connections
The Capital Area Agency on Aging

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FIND US ON SOCIAL MEDIA



FROM THE

Director

To all our friends, partners, volunteers, community members, and colleagues, I am thrilled to announce the launch of our new agency publication. This quarterly periodical aims to be an invaluable resource for our community as well as a testament to both the values of our agency and our commitment to staying at the forefront of our field. With this publication we will reach more people than ever before. I thank you for reading and look forward to your feedback and engagement with this and future issues.

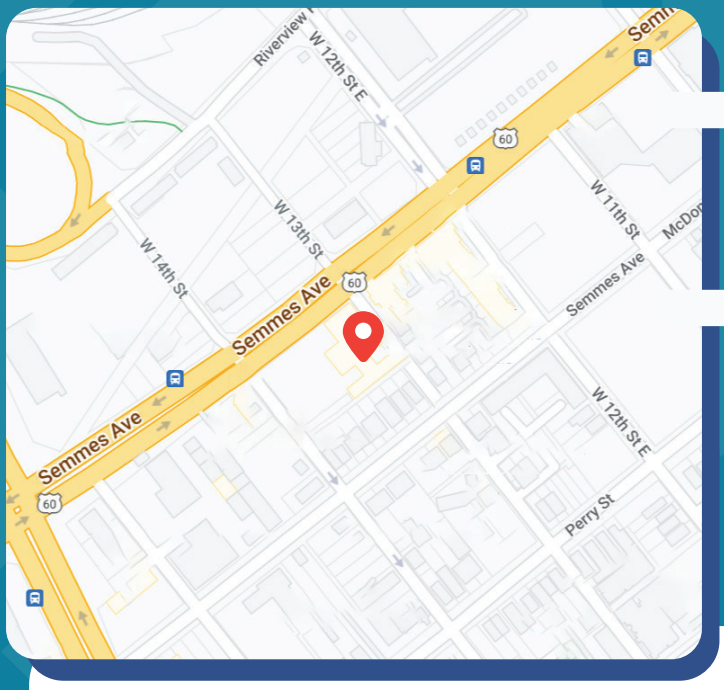
Amy Strite
Executive Director



WE'VE MOVED

We are happy to announce that Senior Connections - The Capital Area Agency on Aging has moved offices to our new location at 1300 Semmes Ave, Richmond, VA 23224. Our location may have changed but our phone numbers, email addresses, and other contact info will remain the same. We are excited to open the doors of our new location with more modern amenities, more parking, and more accessibility! The new space will allow us to continue our services, outreach, and advocacy even more effectively than ever!

We want to thank everyone who has helped make the Cary St. location such a special place for the last 30 years and we cant wait to continue making memories and serving our community from our new home on Semmes Ave.



NEW LOCATION

1300 Semmes Ave.
Richmond, VA 23224

CONTACT

804-343-3000

seniorconnections@youraaa.org

seniorconnections-va.org

Will the contact information be the same?

Our phone numbers and email addresses will remain the same. You can still call the same phone numbers you are used to, including our main line at 804-343-3000. The new mailing address will change to 1300 Semmes Ave, Richmond, VA 23224

Is Public Transportation Available?

Yes! There is a Bus Stop right next to our new building at Semmes + 14th. You can take the 2A, 2B, or 2C bus to get to us!



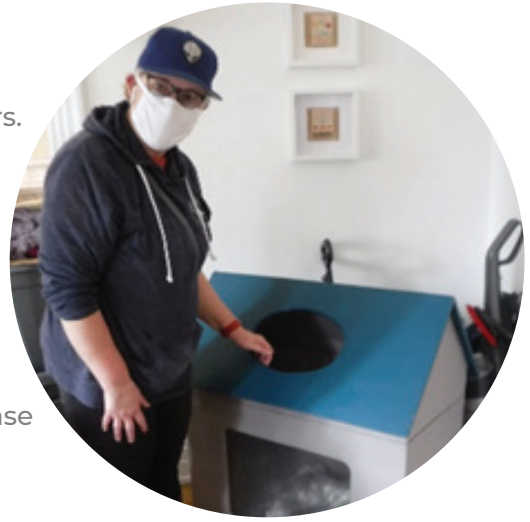
VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT

Volunteer Money Management Program

Hello! I'm extending a warm Welcome to readers who may not be familiar with the Volunteer Money Management Program! Our department matches trained volunteers one-on-one with a senior from our service who needs help with monthly bill-pay chores. Service is tailored to the needs and wants of the client and can include opening and sorting mail, organizing bills, making a budget, balancing statements to the checkbook, and writing checks for the client's signature. Volunteers undergo background checks and are monitored monthly. Clients may donate if able but never receive a bill. More later!

- Jean Adams, Manager, Volunteer Money Management Program (VMMP)

Pop Tabs Collection



Karen Olney has volunteered with Senior Connections for many years. In addition to helping with the TeleBridges program, she also collects pop tabs (the tabs from soda cans and other products.) She has collected thousands of tabs, and her latest drop-off at the Ronald McDonald House, was a total of 16,068 tabs, equaling 12.8 pounds! (Ten pounds equals a meal for a family of four.)

If you are interested in collecting and bringing in your pop tabs, please contact Shana Beverly. sbeverly@youraaa.org or 804-343-3024.

VICAP
OPEN ENROLLMENT PERIOD

Congratulations to Volunteers and Staff of VICAP (Virginia Insurance Counseling and Assistance Program), for completing another successful Open Enrollment Period (OEP)! Medicare's Annual Open Enrollment Period runs from October 15th through December 7th. It's an exceptionally busy time. Even during the pandemic, the team continued helping clients! All contacts were by phone, but they still kept up the pace with client need- even exceeding some of last years' numbers!

Chelsea Gilbert, VICAP's manager had this message for the team:
"This has been a very successful open enrollment. We were able to reach a total of 543 beneficiaries from October 15th, 2022 – December 15th, 2022. 295 of these beneficiaries were assisted with enrollment during this time. Our numbers this year exceed last years at 439 contacts and 281 enrollees. That is huge!

Each volunteer/staff member has done amazing work. I can't describe how fortunate we are to have such a hard-working team. Our team has provided our program with new applications/ computer programs (Carl), dental charting and Advantage 65 guidance (Norm), news resources, pharmaceutical knowledge (Larry), in person/ face to face counseling after the pandemic (Mike), continued survey and scheduling assistance (Lynn), billing materials, personal career billing experiences and leadership (Peter), fraud prevention and additional senior Medicare patrol leadership (Dale), SNF/LTC knowledge and resources (Katy), all around VICAP experience, knowledge, and volunteer Training (Roger), DMAS expertise and continuous encouraging support to our team (Elise), data entry and organization of other pertinent information for our program at the Agency (Franck), Part D expertise and knowledge of cost sharing (Anil), mailing, filing, all office duties and day to day tasks (Vickie), and scheduling, keeping our office organized, our team together, and the face of our program (Linda). Without each one of these contributions we would not be as successful as we are or have the impact that we do. Each VICAP member is greatly appreciated and provides our community with hope for a better future in aging. Thank you for making open enrollment a continued success."
VICAP received 740+ calls during OEP resulting in the following: VICAP's 13 volunteers submitted a total of 629 hours. Of those hours, 534.5 were counselors and 94.5 were clerical and data entry. There were a total of 390+ client contacts, too! Great job, VICAP!!! - Chelsea Gilbert, VICAP Manager

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Thank you for making open enrollment a continued success.

VICAP
VA Insurance Counseling & Assistance Program
HELPING YOU NAVIGATE MEDICARE



TeleBridges
Telephone Reassurance

"Senior Connections is dedicated to helping older adults maintain independence and quality of life as they age." This quote from our Web page tells the public what we do every day. I want to share the success we have had with my assigned client through the TeleBridges program.
In getting to know him through our calls he shared that he had some dietary needs that could be better met. He is a recent widower who lives alone. This client has a very supportive family who step in to assist him when needed. I requested help from the TeleBridges program manager to initiate the referral to the Home Delivered Meals program. Last week his Meals on Wheels service began, sooner than expected.
Our client was delighted to meet with and talk to the delivery volunteer whom he described as "a very nice fellow" - this serves as another social contact for him. He will receive 2 boxes of food each week. Receiving meals through our program, supports his independence, and he was relieved not to have to worry about getting out to the store or asking family. He told me everything he had for dinner last night (meatloaf, broccoli, mashed potatoes, and dessert). In the past he was sometimes skipping dinner or eating popcorn shrimp or soup. He is looking forward to another delivery this Friday. He has some chronic health issues, but I think we have made a nice addition to the improvement of his quality of life and independence. - Mary Ann Mugel, TeleBridges Volunteer

TeleBridges



This Holiday Season, our TeleBridges participants each received a holiday gift basket, courtesy of the Truist, Lighthouse Project! Participants were thrilled with the thoughtful items, handpicked with care for mind and body. Volunteers from Truist chose the items, prepared, and provided the baskets, and delivered to the Agency. Volunteers from TeleBridges, Staff, and a special Truist volunteer delivered the baskets.
TeleBridges was honored to receive sponsorship from the Lighthouse project this year, as Truist helped address the community by providing volunteers and resources.
Many of the participants called and wrote to express their appreciation. Here are some pictures of the clients, Truist volunteers, Agency Volunteers, and Staff.

- Shana S. Beverly, TeleBridges and Volunteer Program Manager

AmeriCorps Seniors Foster Grandparent Program

Imagine this... Families are flocking to the movie theater to see “E.T. the Extra-Terrestrial” and Michael Jackson’s Thriller album is playing on radio stations across the country. Epcot opens at Walt Disney World in Florida and an all-weather channel has debuted on cable with some asking who’s going to watch a twenty-four-hour weather-only channel. The year is 1982.

This same year an exciting change happened at The Capital Area Agency on Aging. While researching a grant for a Senior Companion Program to help care for the homebound elderly in Richmond, Executive Director Mary Payne was advised to check into the Foster Grandparent Program since there was no money available for SCP in Virginia. This other program’s goal was to bring together two populations, older adults with limited income and children with special needs. Mary and her team pursued this grant and received funding from ACTION to embark on this new adventure, the Foster Grandparent Program.

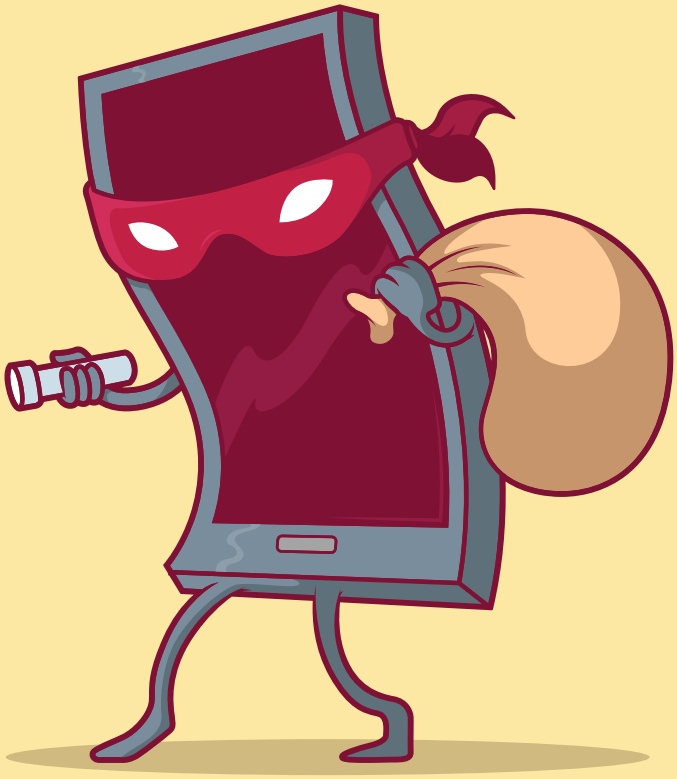
AmeriCorps

In the program’s first year, thirty-eight volunteer mentors served at twenty-one sites. Some of those sites included William Byrd Community House, Virginia Treatment Center for Children, Medical College of Virginia Hospital Children’s Medical Center, and Amelia Street School. A highlight of the year was when the Richmond Foster Grandparents boarded a bus on October 19th and headed to Washington, D.C. First Lady Nancy Reagan hosted a luncheon on the White House lawn to honor the work of the Foster Grandparents, a cause she was passionate about. It was a perfect Autumn day with wonderful entertainment by special guest, Frank Sinatra who sang his song “To Love a Child” which had been written in tribute to the Foster Grandparent Program.
Forty years have passed since the first Foster Grandparent Program grant was written at Senior Connections. As with any huge milestone, a celebration was planned. On December 16th, the Richmond Area Foster Grandparent Program celebrated its 40th Anniversary with cake, a slideshow highlighting 40 years of amazing work done by the volunteer mentors, and memorabilia and scrapbooks dating back to the beginning of the program.

Over 40 years, it is next to impossible to calculate the number of lives that have been touched by the Foster Grandparents volunteer mentors. Over the years, it has been shared how grown men and women would see their former mentor at the bus stop or in a grocery store and run up with a hug. “Grandpa, do you remember me? I was in your class when I was in elementary school.” The children, now adults, remember how a Foster Grandparent touched their life.

But the children aren’t the only lives touched. When asked why she became a Foster Grandma, Grandma Carol said, “I never married and had kids of my own. I never thought I would ever hear children call me Grandma and now I get to hear a whole center call me Grandma every day. What is better than that?" - Carol Ayars, AmeriCorps Seniors Programs Manager

To learn more about the AmeriCorps Seniors Foster Grandparent Program: contact Carol Ayars, CVA at 804-343-3047.



AVOIDING SCAMS

A few tips on how to avoid common scams.

Scams targeting older adults have become a common occurrence, with reports suggesting that older adults are often the target of fraudsters and scammers. It is essential to take steps to protect yourself from these scams and to keep your hard-earned money safe. In this article, we'll discuss some simple tips for avoiding scams targeting older people.

By following these simple tips, you can help protect yourself from fraudsters and scammers, and keep your hard-earned money safe. Remember, your safety and financial security are worth the effort to stay informed and vigilant.

TIPS

1) Be wary of unsolicited phone calls and emails. Scammers often use unsolicited phone calls or emails to target their victims. Be cautious of any calls or emails that you receive from individuals you don't know, and never provide personal or financial information unless you have confirmed the authenticity of the caller or sender.

2) NEVER buy gift cards to make payments. One of the top signs that you have been targeted by a scammer is if they ask you to buy gift cards or to make payments using gift cards. No government agency or legitimate company will ever ask you to make a payment using a gift card. Scammers try to have the victim purchase gift cards because they are almost impossible to trace once the scammer has the gift card information.

3) Do not respond to emails or phone calls claiming to be from the government. The government will never contact you by phone or email asking for personal or financial information.

4) Do not make any payment until you are sure of the authenticity of the request. If you are unsure, you can contact the organization directly using a trusted phone number or email address, and confirm that the request is legitimate.

5) If something feels wrong, it probably is. Trust your instincts and never provide personal or financial information if you feel uneasy about the request.

6) Be cautious of individuals who pressure you for a quick decision. Scammers often pressure their victims into making a quick decision, in order to prevent them from thinking critically about the situation. Take your time and make a decision only after you have thoroughly considered all of the information and risks involved.

Caregiver Corner



Healthcare Decisions

By Dee Caras, Caregiver Support Specialist

It is critical for all caregivers (informal, family, and professional) on the support team to know the preferences of the care receiver that will shape medical decisions or advance directives. These decisions must be communicated to those involved in the care, and this information must be documented and readily available. An important aspect is the designation of a Durable Power of Attorney to enable the designee to speak for the care receiver in the event they are unable to speak for themselves. This is often a hard discussion to have with a loved one and may feel better when the conversation is inserted during a non-stressful time within a usual interaction. Once completed, the care receiver can feel assured that their wishes will be enacted, the caregiver can truly serve as the advocate they want to be, and both can feel less stress knowing that when an unexpected event occurs, it will not be experienced as a crisis. Caregivers do not want to be left with guilt or regret because they are wondering if they made the right decision. Regardless of age, have this important conversation earlier rather than later. For assistance in completing a simple will, advance directive, and POA, contact Senior Connections at 804-343-3000 and ask for information about Senior Law Day. For resources on how to have the conversation and documents, go to: www.HonoringChoices-va.org

YOUR SUPPORT

We couldn't do what we do without your generous support. Thank you so much!

Senior Connections depends on the generosity of individuals, corporations, and organizations who support our efforts to enhance the quality of life for older adults and support caregivers.

WAYS TO HELP

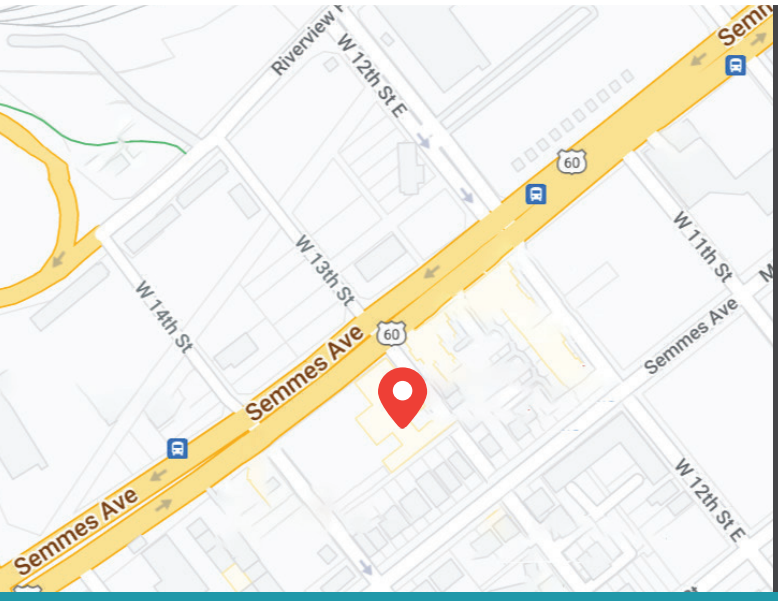
- Make a financial gift. Donations are tax-deductible. You can donate using the QR code below or visit seniorconnections-va.org/give/donate for more options.
- Volunteer your time. Volunteers help provide much needed information and services to the community.
- Spread the word! Tell people about Senior Connections. Like and share our social media posts on Facebook, Instagram, and Youtube.
- Ask your employer if they make matching gifts.

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RICHMOND, VA 23224



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