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## Bradley Winick Elected to Chair AgeOptions Board of Directors



*Bradley Winick, AICP*

Bradley Winick, AICP, was elected chair of the AgeOptions Board of Directors at the October meeting. Genevieve Kruse, MBA, divisional vice president, Retail Markets, for Blue Cross Blue Shield in Illinois, Montana, New Mexico, Oklahoma and Texas, is vice chair.

Brad, who has been a member of the Board since 2011, succeeds the Rev. Kirsten Peachey, who is director of Congregational Health Partnerships at Advocate Health Care. He served as vice chair for the past two years, chaired the Advocacy Task Force for two years, and served on the Program, Executive and Membership Committees.

“This is a wonderful Board and Gen Kruse and I are very proud to be a part of it and to have been elected to lead it,” Brad says. “Fortunately I have some wonderful predecessors whose wisdom and experiences I can draw upon. I look forward to building on the leadership, energy and commitment Kirsten Peachey has brought to the Board and AgeOptions for the last two years.”

Brad’s first goal for the next two years (Board Officers traditionally serve two one-year terms) involves leadership transition. With AgeOptions’ current president and chief executive officer planning to retire next year, the Board is preparing for the change in that position. “The Board has oversight, legal and fiduciary responsibility to be sure transitions are done in the

organization's best interest," he says. "We have a role to play in planning and orchestrating leadership transitions."

His second goal is to continue to diversify the agency's revenue streams. "AgeOptions realized years ago that the good old days of waiting for the phone to ring and Springfield or Washington telling us what kind of money we're getting and our deciding what to do with it are gone," he says. "None of us are sitting by that phone any longer. We are working on a more diverse funding package." That, he says, involves the Board giving support and guidance in business planning and seeking more non-public funding.

"We also need to continue to do what we've done well and find ways to leverage funding we get from the Older Americans Act, other public sources and outside funding to provide impactful programs," he adds. "We need to continue with the same passion, commitment and skill as we've done over the years with Jonathan Lavin's and Diane Slezak's leadership."

Brad's third goal is for the directors to focus on Board sustainability and future leadership development. "This goal belongs to the entire Board," he says. "I'm challenging each Board member to provide one name of a person to put into our pipeline – someone they think would be good at helping us meet these three challenges."

In addition to these goals, Brad and other Board members are committed to AgeOptions leadership in advocacy for older adults. "I've had the honor of chairing the Advocacy Task Force the last couple of years and will continue to do so," he says. "We will need to continue and increase our advocacy role both as an organization and in partnership with our partner agencies, and also as part of broader coalitions."

Brad is an urban planner, architect and planning consultant whose niche consultancy, Planning/Aging, focuses on helping communities plan for their aging populations. "I've found an appalling gap and a clear need to better integrate the needs of the older adult population into the physical planning structure," he says.

He is the primary author of the well-regarded *Planning Aging – Supportive Cities and Communities*, a Planning Advisory Service Report on Aging-in-Community for the American Planning Association. He has provided national leadership through the American Society on

Aging to bring together people in the Aging Network with city planners to talk about how they can work more collaboratively.

The challenge, he believes, is one of affordability. “AgeOptions hears from the community that people are looking for affordable places to live and better transportation, and this is not limited to older adults. We’re seeing horrible things happen to the safety net. We need to find a way to provide better-located and affordable housing and better transportation. That’s important for families with children, older adults – everybody.”

As an adjunct professor at the University of Illinois at Chicago’s College of Urban Planning and Public Affairs, Brad developed a graduate urban planning and public health course on planning healthy communities for an aging population. He and his wife, Janet Settle, live in Downtown Chicago in an intentional community, which is a planned residential community designed for a high degree of social cohesion and teamwork. Their son, Max Settle-Winick, lives and works in Seattle.

A few years ago Brad, who didn’t play any instrument until he was 57 years old, took up the guitar. What he found, he says, was another kind of community – people of all ages who get together to play music. “I went looking for an instrument but found a community. My life is full of marvelous communities and I’m very fortunate for that.”