

Governor's Advisory Council on Aging

**ANNUAL REPORT
2009**



**Joyce Finkelstein, Chair
December 31, 2009**

MISSION

The Governor's Advisory Council on Aging's mission is to enhance the quality of life for older Arizonans. The Council advises policy makers and state agencies, and works with local communities, private enterprises and older adults across Arizona to accomplish its mission.



GOVERNOR'S ADVISORY COUNCIL ON AGING

Joyce Finkelstein, Chair

George Evanoff, Vice Chair

December 31, 2009

Dear Governor Brewer, Speaker Adams, Senate President Burns & Older Arizonans:

On behalf of the Governor's Advisory Council on Aging, I'm pleased to present you with the Council on Aging's 2009 Annual Report.

Thanks to the hard work and dedication of our Council members, liaisons, volunteers and staff, the Council continued to fulfill our mission and achieve significant goals throughout this challenging year. Our valued partnerships with state agencies and community organizations helped make this possible, and we are grateful for their participation and support.

In 2009, a few highlighted Council achievements included the Mature Worker Friendly Certification of additional employers (including one of Arizona's largest employers - Banner Health), the expansion of mature worker resource listings and information available through the Arizona Mature Worker website, the development of written resources that support educational outreach efforts on hearing loss aimed at educating both service providers and older consumers, the creation of a three-year work plan to help improve affordable access to dental care for older Arizonans, as well as the convening of Senior Action Day which provided older Arizonans and aging advocates with the opportunity to meet with their legislators. In addition, the Council continued to share information with other states seeking best practices related to the Council's and the Governor's Office on Aging's efforts on behalf of older Arizonans.

As the Council looks forward to its continuation legislation in 2010, we stress the importance of having a non-partisan voice for the more than 1,000,000 older Arizonans. We understand that more difficult decisions lie ahead, and we can assure you that the Council remains committed to efficiency and the Office on Aging remains a highly productive and cost-effective office.

We look forward to continuing our work with you during 2010, and appreciate your support to ensure people of our state can live with dignity and independence throughout their lives.

Sincerely,

Joyce Finkelstein, 2009 Chair

Governor's Advisory Council on Aging 2009

Joyce Finkelstein, Chair
Pima County
(Green Valley)

Bill Engler
Maricopa County
(Anthem)

George Evanoff, Vice Chair
Pima County
(Tucson)

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(Mohave County)
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Maricopa County
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Barry Spiker
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(Fountain Hills)

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The Council wishes to thank our agency liaisons:

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Pam Stevenson
Attorney General's Office

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Council Responsibilities

The Governor's Advisory Council on Aging (Council) was authorized by legislation in 1980 (A.R.S. §§ 46-183 & 46-184) to "advise the Governor, Legislature and all State Departments which the Council deems necessary on all matters and issues relating to aging, including the administration of the State Plan on Aging." In accordance with the state statute, the Council is comprised of 15 members appointed by the Governor. To ensure comprehensive representation, the members come from various geographic, cultural, professional, and personal backgrounds relevant to the issues facing older Arizonans.

Arizona has also designated the Governor's Advisory Council on Aging as its State Advisory Council on Aging, as set forth in the federal Older Americans Act of 1965, as amended (45 CFR §1321.47). In accordance with federal regulations, more than 50 percent of the appointed members must be at least 60 years of age and include: (1) persons with greatest economic or social need, and (2) participants under the Older American Act. In this role as the State Advisory Council, the body advises the federally designated State Unit on Aging (the Division of Aging and Adult Services within the Department of Economic Security) on the development and implementation of the State Plan on Aging, and in the development and operations of policies and programs for older adults.

The Council has four (4) Standing Committees:

- The Executive Committee;
- The Legislative and Policy Coordinating Committee;
- The Mature Workforce Committee; and
- The Social, Health and Alzheimer's Committee.

Goals of the Council are largely accomplished through the work of these committees. Ad hoc committees are also created for special purposes and projects. The Council's primary roles and responsibilities include:

- Advocating on behalf of older Arizonans, to ensure policy makers are aware of the needs and preferences of older adults across the state;
- Advising the Governor and the Arizona State Legislature on all budget, legislative, policy and service delivery matters related to the lives of older Arizonans;

- Ensuring receipt and incorporation of public input into the State Plan on Aging;
- Approving and monitoring the administration of the State Plan on Aging, thereby helping to ensure the continued receipt of federal funding for aging services;
- Recommending changes in programs and service delivery approaches to state agencies, based on input from Arizona seniors currently receiving services;
- Presenting information, education, and training to seniors and professionals on various aging-related topics; and
- Providing leadership to the state and its local communities in developing and maintaining a coordinated, best practice approach to aging services delivery and policy development.

2009 Accomplishments

In 2009, the Governor's Advisory Council on Aging succeeded in fulfilling its purpose despite some of the unprecedented challenges presented by the state's economy. The following are Council highlights for 2009:

1. *Ensured Accomplishments Set Forth in State Plan on Aging were Achieved*

Working directly with the DES Division of Aging & Adult Services and the regional Area Agencies on Aging, the Council continued to monitor expenditures and activities established in the State Plan on Aging, as required by federal law, to help ensure results that are in line with established plans and fiscal priorities.

2. *Expanded Arizona's National Reputation as a Leader in Aging Issues*

Arizona's status as a national leader in aging issues continued to grow in 2009 with Arizona being featured in the AARP Bulletin (national) publication in June 2009, with regard to the mature workforce and the Arizona Mature Worker Website, developed by the Council. Council staff provided technical assistance to the State University of New York at Buffalo, whose representatives visited Arizona to learn more about the work being done by the Council and its many committee member partners in the state. A Council member and Council liaison provided information on the Mature Workforce Initiative at the National Council on Aging spring conference and the National Governor's Association, respectively. Arizona publications featuring information about the mature workforce, and the Mature Worker Friendly Employer Certification included the Arizona Daily Star and the Fountain Hills Times. It is important to note that there is no funding appropriation for the Mature Workforce Initiative; all outcomes are the result of partnerships and leveraged resources.

3. *Hosted Senior Action Day*

The Council on Aging hosted Senior Action Day – an opportunity for older Arizonans and aging advocates to meet their legislators and share their opinions and ideas directly with them. Based on efforts to be as cost and time effective as possible, the Council held one Senior Action Day on April 1st in Phoenix. Input from more than 450 seniors and aging advocates was collected and made available to members of the Legislature and Governor's staff. The Council's Legislative and Policy Coordinating Committee will use the feedback received to help shape their 2010-2011 legislative and policy

priorities. The Governor's Advisory Council on Aging - *Aging in Arizona* "Why Older Arizonans Need Our Support" is provided as Appendix A.

4. *Promoted Dignity and Independence for Older Adults*

Through the voices of older Arizonans and aging service providers participating in Senior Action Day, the Council provided strong advocacy for home and community based service options that allow seniors to remain in their own homes and communities and promote dignity and independence. In doing so, the Council advocated for fiscal responsibility during tough economic times as home and community based care services (HCBS) are *less expensive* than nursing home care. (Independent living support services approximately \$2,174/year; Medicaid- eligible HCBS services through ALTCS approximately \$19,428/year *compared to* \$61,656/year for semi-private skilled nursing care according to AHCCCS and the Division of Aging and Adult Services, Department of Economic Security, AIMS Data, FFY 2008.)

5. *Increased Frequency of Council's Legislative Update for Seniors*

The Council continued providing older Arizonans with an electronic non-partisan Legislative Update e-newsletter. In 2009, staff increased information on federal legislation as well as training and educational events. Based on special sessions, the Legislative Update was provided *weekly* from January to September 2009 and monthly, thereafter.

6. *Explored Transit Options for Older Arizonans*

Throughout 2009, the Council continued to gather information on best practices in transit planning that includes older adults. The Council learned about transit funding and programs in Arizona as transit continues to be a concern raised by older Arizonans to the Council on Aging.

7. *Expanded Content on the Mature Worker Job Bank and Website*

In 2009, the Council continued to provide resource information for mature workers, and a listing of mature worker employment related events throughout the state through the Arizona Mature Worker Website. More than 145 events were posted in the first 10 months of 2009 and in the first 10 months of 2009, new visitors to the website were tallied to be over 194,000, with over 736,000 pages viewed by the visitors. The Arizona Mature Worker Website can be found at www.azmatureworkers.com. This site was launched in partnership with Jobing.com - Phoenix, offering both a Job Bank and a listing of Resources for Arizona's mature workers. The site was developed and is hosted *at no cost to the state*, thanks to a partnership with Jobing.com. The site allows employers to post jobs on the site for 4 weeks at no cost (standard Jobing.com posting in Phoenix is \$389).

8. Completed the Second Mature Worker Friendly Employer Certification

In partnership with the Governor's Office and the Arizona Departments of Commerce and Economic Security, the Council launched the Mature Worker Friendly Employer Certification in 2008. The first certification of its kind in the country, the effort is intended to assist employers in recognizing the skills and expertise that are brought to the workplace by mature workers, and managing the challenges of an aging workforce while creating employment opportunities for mature workers in Arizona. In the second year, the Council received 19 employer applications, and awarded 14 certifications to employers that completed all of the required certification elements. Certified employers included a major retailer in Arizona, as well as other organizations of all sizes. A list of the 2009 Mature Worker Friendly Certified Employers is provided as Appendix B.

9. Partnered in the Continuing Work Being Done at the First Center for Workforce Transition in the Nation

In partnership with GateWay Community College and the Virginia G. Piper Charitable Trust, the Council supported the ongoing work of the Center for Workforce Transition – a service targeted at Boomers interested in making mid-career transitions, changing professions, or returning to the workforce – this Center provides talent and skills assessments, and helps workers obtain the skills they need to make their desired transition. The Caregiving Training Program had a very successful year in 2009, with 315 students being certified. Discussions and plans began in 2009 for the development of the Human Services Worker Paraprofessional Training Program to be launched in Spring 2010. A Council staff member serves on the new program's Advisory Board.

10. Supported the Development of the Arizona Fall Prevention Coalition

Building on earlier work by the Council's Social, Health, and Alzheimer's Committee, the Council supported the development of the state's fall prevention coalition in 2009. Funding was provided to the Governor's Office on Aging from the Virginia G. Piper Charitable Trust. The Arizona Fall Prevention Coalition will officially launch in early 2010.

11. Initiated Effort to Improve Oral Health for Seniors

Based on the work of the Council's Social, Health and Alzheimer's Committee, a Three-Year Oral Health Work Plan was developed to address accessible dental care for older adults. The Work Plan is intended to engage community partners and state agencies in support of oral health for seniors. The Oral Health Work Plan content is based on original input from the 2007 Senior Action Days that affordable access to dental care is a primary concern for seniors. A copy of the Three-Year Oral Health Work Plan is provided as Appendix C.

12. Addressed Special Needs of Older Adults who are Deaf or Have Hearing Loss

This year, the Council collaborated with the Arizona Commission for the Deaf and the Hard of Hearing to develop written resources that promote educational outreach efforts on hearing loss aimed at educating both service providers and older consumers. The intent of this collaboration is improving access to information, services and technology for older Arizonans who are deaf or have hearing loss.

13. Reduced Costs

In response to on-going economic concerns resulting in budget cutbacks, the Council reduced operating costs by reducing meetings, holding one Senior Action Day, supporting Council staff engagement in furlough days and leaving an unfilled leadership position. A number of other office related cost-cutting steps have also been implemented and in-kind contributions received to offset expenses.

14. Advised the Governor and Legislature on Aging Issues

In accordance with the purpose of the Council, the Council continued to provide recommendations and advice to the Governor and Legislature on the needs and interests of older Arizonans. (See Appendix A)

2010 Future Directions

The Governor's Advisory Council on Aging remains committed to making a difference in the lives of older Arizonans in 2010 and will continue to find ways to leverage partnerships to accomplish goals in any economic situation. The Council looks forward to working with the Governor, the State Legislature, and citizens of Arizona to ensure that the basics necessary for lifelong dignity and independence can be maintained despite difficult economic times. The Council will work on the following activities in 2010:

1. Prepare for 2010 Reauthorization of the Council

During the fall of 2009, the Governor's Office on Aging/Council staff and Legislative & Policy Coordinating Committee began the 2010 reauthorization process for the Governor's Advisory Council on Aging. In alignment with the recommendation from the Committee of Reference, the Council will work with Legislators to ensure reauthorization in 2010. With one in four Arizonans reaching the age of 60 by 2020, the Council remains a significant voice for older Arizonans who represent an ever-growing segment of the state's population.

2. Review and Approve the Federally-Required New Three-Year Cycle State Plan on Aging

As part of its statutory purpose, the Council will advise DES Division of Aging and Adult Services on the development and approval of the State Plan on Aging.

3. Continue Advising the Governor and Legislature on Aging Issues

In accordance with the purpose of the Council, the Council will continue to provide recommendations and advice to the Governor and Legislature on the needs and interests of older Arizonans. From budget priorities to elders' perspective on any type of legislation, policy makers benefit from utilizing the Council as a single, non-partisan voice on matters that affect seniors.

4. Improve Oral Health Care for Seniors

In the year ahead, the Council will begin implementation of the Three-Year Oral Health Work Plan that facilitates collaboration between governmental divisions, educational institutions, service provider organizations, dental associations and other entities in an effort to promote the importance of good oral health for Arizona's seniors.

5. *Support Educational Outreach Efforts on Hearing Loss*

The Council will support the Arizona Commission for the Deaf and the Hard of Hearing efforts to disseminate written resources that support educational outreach efforts on hearing loss aimed at educating both service providers and older consumers. The intent of this collaboration is improving access to information, services and technology for older Arizonans who are deaf or have hearing loss.

6. *Monitor Development of Transit Options for Older Adults*

The Council on Aging finds it important to continue to monitor the development and funding of transition options for older adults as transit remains an essential factor in maintaining one's independence in later life.

7. *Continue Providing the Legislative Update*

In 2010, the Council will continue to monitor state and federal legislation that impacts older adults. Through the Legislative Update – a free, non-partisan, electronic newsletter – the Council will seek to inform readers about the state and federal legislative process and help older Arizonans and aging advocates remain informed about legislative action as it pertains to them and in turn help them ensure their voices are heard.

8. *Continue Development of the Mature Worker Job Bank and Resource Website*

With the 2008 launching of the Arizona Mature Worker Website, hosted by Jobing.com and maintained by the Council and the Department of Economic Security, the Council will continue to populate the website with valuable information and resources for mature workers and employers wishing to attract and retain members of the mature workforce in Arizona. Once further development is accomplished, maintenance and updating of website content will be ongoing. The Council will continue to collect valuable resources information for both employers and mature workers from counties throughout Arizona and those additional resources further enhance the usefulness of the Mature Worker Website. The Council will continue to coordinate blogs as part of outreach efforts to mature workers.

9. *Award Employers with the Arizona Mature Worker Friendly Employer Certification*

The Council will continue to promote mature worker friendly work environments by awarding employers that take the necessary steps to become designated as “Mature Worker Friendly” with the Mature Worker Friendly Employer Certification. The Council will begin accepting applications from employers seeking this certification in summer, 2010, *which will be the third year of this program.* In addition to certifying incoming employers, the

Council will be accepting applications from those employers that were initially certified for a two-year time frame in 2008 and wish to re-certify as Mature Worker Friendly Employers in 2010. This re-certification process, the first re-certification cycle for this program, will begin in fall 2010.

10. Establish Employer and Mature Worker Training throughout the State

The Council, in partnership with the Governor's Office on Aging, will continue working closely with the Maricopa and Pima Community College Districts to develop trainings for both job seekers and employers, with some of those employers being trained as they seek re-certification as Mature Worker Friendly Employers. It is expected reduced resources could affect colleges' ability to participate; however, it is anticipated that the initial training being developed by this collaborative group, the training for re-certifying employers, will become available through community colleges and other community partners in several parts of the state in 2010.

11. Support the Launch of the Falls Prevention Coalition in 2010

The Council will support the launch of the Arizona Fall Prevention Coalition in early 2010 with the goal of improving older adults' access to falls prevention programming.

Conclusion

Thanks to the work of our very dedicated members, hundreds of community partners and staff, the Governor's Advisory Council on Aging achieved fulfillment of our purpose in 2009 – a year of tremendous challenges. We are grateful for the opportunity to serve as the internal, nonpartisan sounding board for the Governor and the Legislature on all matters related to aging. We look forward to working with you in 2010.

If we can be of any assistance, please do not hesitate to contact our office at:

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