

RESPECT FOR
YESTERDAY,
SUPPORT FOR
TODAY,
PLAN FOR
TOMORROW



Aging Matters

May 2023 Newsletter from the Illinois Department on Aging

Office of
Governor JB
Pritzker

Message From Director Paula Basta



News and
Events

Happy Older Americans Month! For the past 60 years, the [Administration for Community Living \(ACL\)](#) has helped us celebrate and honor older adults each May. This year's Older Americans Month theme, *Aging Unbound*, promotes flexible thinking about aging - and how we all benefit when older adults remain engaged, independent, and included in our communities.

Illinois' State
Plan on Aging

The theme is closely aligned with IDoA's mission to support independence, dignity, and quality of life for Illinois' nearly 2.9 million older adults. We do this by administering quality and culturally appropriate programs that help older adults remain in their homes, connected to their families and communities for as long as possible.

Find Services
in Your Area

No matter where you are in your aging journey, we're here to help. To speak with a staff member about programs and services you may be eligible for, contact the Senior HelpLine toll-free at 1-800-252-8966, 711 (TRS), or via email at aging.ilsenior@illinois.gov. In most instances, we will help you get connected to a local office in your area.

Senior
Illinoisans Hall
of Fame

Please continue to stay safe and well.

License Plate
Discount

Sincerely,

Older Americans Month 2023



Established in 1963, Older Americans Month (OAM) is celebrated every May. Led by the Administration for Community Living (ACL), OAM is a time for us to acknowledge the contributions and achievements of older Americans, highlight important trends, and strengthen our commitment to honoring our older citizens.

This year's theme, *Aging Unbound*, offers an opportunity to explore a wide range of aging experiences and to promote the importance of enjoying independence and fulfillment by paving our own paths as we age.

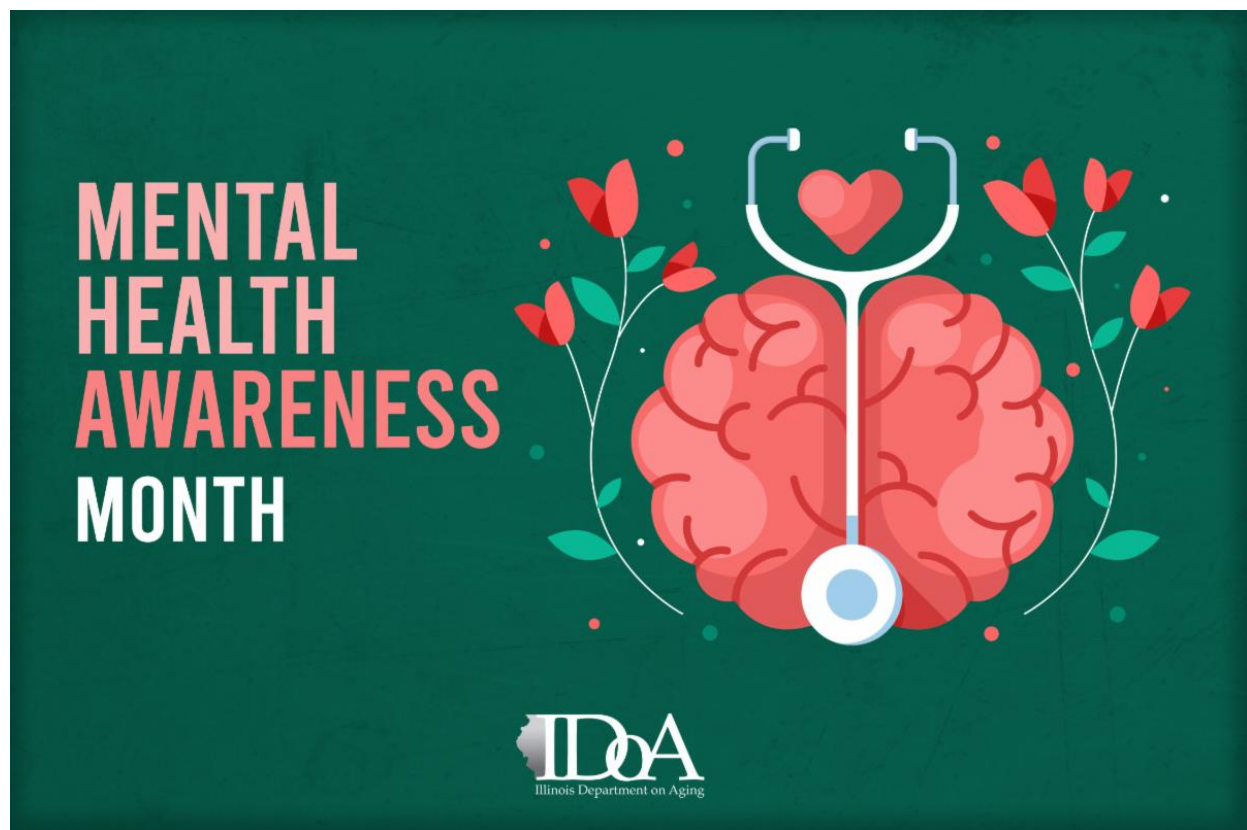
This May, join us as we recognize the 60th anniversary of OAM and challenge the narrative on aging. Here are some ways we can all participate in *Aging Unbound*:

- **Embrace the opportunity to change.** Find a new passion, go on an adventure, and push boundaries by not letting age define your limits. Invite creativity and purpose into your life by trying new activities in your community to bring in more growth, joy, and energy.
- **Explore the rewards of growing older.** With age comes knowledge, which provides insight and confidence to understand and experience the world more deeply. Continue to grow that knowledge through reading, listening, classes, and creative activities.
- **Stay engaged in your community.** Everyone benefits when everyone is connected and involved. Stay active by volunteering, working, mentoring, participating in social clubs, and taking part in activities at your local senior center or elsewhere in the community.
- **Form relationships.** As an essential ingredient of well-being, relationships can enhance your quality of life by introducing new ideas and unique perspectives. Invest time with people to discover deeper connections with family, friends, and community members.

For more information, visit the [official OAM website](#) or watch the below video message from Governor JB Pritzker.



Mental Health Awareness Month



As people age, they may experience certain life changes that impact their mental health, such as coping with a serious illness or losing a loved one. Although many people will adjust to these life changes, some may experience feelings of grief, social isolation, or loneliness. When these feelings persist, they can lead to mental illnesses, such as depression and anxiety.

Mental health is important at every stage of life. Effective treatment options are available to help older adults manage their mental health and improve their quality of life. Recognizing the signs and seeing a health care provider are the first steps to getting treatment.

Symptoms of mental disorders in older adults may include:

- Noticeable changes in mood, energy level, or appetite
- Feeling flat or having trouble feeling positive emotions
- Difficulty sleeping or sleeping too much
- Difficulty concentrating, feeling restless, or on edge
- Increased worry or feeling stressed
- Anger, irritability, or aggressiveness
- Ongoing headaches, digestive issues, or pain
- Misuse of alcohol or drugs
- Sadness or hopelessness
- Thoughts of death or suicide or suicide attempts
- Engaging in high-risk activities
- Obsessive thinking or compulsive behavior
- Thoughts or behaviors that interfere with work, family, or social life
- Engaging in thinking or behavior that is concerning to others
- Seeing, hearing, and feeling things that other people do not see, hear, or feel

If you notice several of these symptoms in yourself or a loved one, help is available. Talk to

your health care provider or visit the National Institute of Mental Health's [Help for Mental Illnesses webpage](#). To learn how to take care of your mental health to support your treatment and recovery, [click here](#).

Need Help?

If you need suicide or mental health-related crisis support, or are worried about someone else, please visit the [988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline](#). Call or text **988** or chat [988lifeline.org](#) (TTY: **1-800-487-4889**), or use the [Behavioral Health Treatment Locator](#) to get help.

Additional Resources

For older adults:

- [Depression is Not a Normal Part of Growing Older](#)
- [Stress and How to Reduce It: A Guide for Older Adults](#)
- [Mental Health and Older Adults Facebook Live Q&A](#)

For family members and caregivers:

- [Hobbies for Caregivers to Ease Stress, Make Life Better](#)

Asian American and Pacific Islander (AAPI) Heritage Month



May is AAPI Heritage Month, a time to recognize and celebrate the diverse cultures, contributions, and achievements of the AAPI community in the United States.

It's also a reminder to acknowledge the challenges and struggles that AAPI community members have faced historically and continue to experience today. AAPI Heritage Month provides a platform for raising awareness of violence and discrimination, promoting inclusivity, and standing in solidarity with our AAPI colleagues and friends.

As we use this month to learn and celebrate the richness of AAPI heritage, *Aging Matters*

spoke with Illinois Council on Aging member Nancy Chen about some of her contributions, achievements, and how Nancy's own heritage is reflected in everything she does.



I understand that you recently founded an organization, [Chinese American Women in Action \(CAWA\)](#). Can you tell us more about this organization and what it does?

I founded CAWA in 2022 in the wake of ongoing anti-Asian racism and violence around the country, including in Naperville. Chinese and Asian American women and elderly were disproportionately targeted and subjected to anti-Asian hate and violence during the pandemic. Despite our presence in this country for 150 years, many still view Chinese and Asian

Americans as foreigners. The perception of being perpetual foreigners and the lack of political representation has rendered our community invisible and voiceless.

CAWA's mission is to empower Chinese American women in Naperville and other local communities in Illinois through education, advocacy, networking, and mentoring to lead and engage at all levels of community and civic activity. We partner with government officials and civic and business leaders to change attitudes, shape actions, increase our visibility, and ultimately achieve the recognition and sense of belonging deserved by all.

I've heard that you previously worked with AARP staff on outreach to the Asian American communities in Chicago. Why is this outreach important?

I served on the Illinois AARP Executive Council for six years, helping the organization to better serve the Asian American community in the Chicago area. We have held roundtables with leaders, conducted Medicare seminars to inform seniors about benefits and supported a rally against anti-Asian hate in the height of the pandemic. I believe it is important that AARP's Executive Council values the diversity of the members who can bring unique perspectives from their communities to better serve the 50+ population.

You were also appointed by Governor JB Pritzker to serve on the Illinois Council on Aging. How will you use your experience and perspective to shape the council's work?

I am honored to be appointed by Governor JB Pritzker to serve on ICOA. Being on the Council with a very experienced and professional group of leaders has widened my perspective of the needs of our Illinois seniors and how the coordination between our government agencies - the IDOA and IDPH - have supported countless seniors who were often isolated during the pandemic and kept them safe. The position enables me to share programs and resources with my community and also bring back the needs and concerns of our community to the Council. This has been especially crucial during the pandemic when Asian American elders were facing double jeopardies by the virus and anti-Asian violence.

May is AAPI Heritage Month. Can you tell us what it means to you, and how your own heritage is reflected in honoring the AAPI community?

When President Jimmy Carter designated a week in May to celebrate Asian American heritage in 1979, there were few Asian Americans active in local, state or federal governments in Illinois. I began my public service career shortly thereafter for U.S. Senator Paul Simon. In 1990, he cosponsored legislation to expand Heritage Week into the entire month of

May. Today, Asian Americans are 6% of the state's population and are represented by many Asian American federal, state and local elected and appointed officials and employees who serve all the people. In my own retirement from the Senate and the U.S. Department of Labor, I continue to seek to give back by participating in community and civic affairs. To me, the Heritage Month activities are a chance to cherish and honor our heritage and celebrate our progress as we continue our work toward an equitable society where everyone belongs.

It is of course incumbent upon people to do their own research. But I was just curious if you have any resources you'd recommend for folks aiming to support the AAPI community — this May and always?

To support the AAPI community and to build bridges and promote understanding not just for the month of May, I would urge our readers to make sure that your local public schools have implemented the TEACH Act, which is a new Illinois law requiring the teaching of Asian American history, challenges and contributions of Asian Americans in Illinois and our nation.

National Senior Fraud Awareness Day

A dark blue rectangular graphic with a white border. At the top center is a yellow circular warning sign containing a black exclamation mark inside a triangle. Below the sign, the words "FRAUD" and "ALERT" are written in large, bold, yellow capital letters. Underneath that, "NATIONAL SENIOR FRAUD AWARENESS DAY" is written in white capital letters, followed by "MAY 15" in a smaller white font. In the bottom right corner, there is a logo for the Illinois Department on Aging (IDoA) in white, with the text "IDoA" in a stylized font and "Illinois Department on Aging" in a smaller font below it.

National Senior Fraud Awareness Day was established in 2018 by the U.S. Congress to raise awareness of fraudulent schemes targeting older adults.

Financial crimes against older adults can be devastating, often leaving victims with no way to recoup their losses. Learn how to identify and stop the top five financial scams targeting seniors in [this article from the National Council on Aging](#).

Additional Resources

- [Avoiding Scams and Fraud for Professionals](#)
- [Avoiding Scams and Fraud for Caregivers](#)
- [Avoiding Scams and Fraud for Older Adults](#)

Honor Our LGBTQ Elders Day



May 16

National Honor Our LGBTQ Elders Day



First celebrated on May 16, 2015, National Honor Our LGBTQ Elders Day is an opportunity to recognize and pay tribute to earlier generations whose activism and bravery have created a path for younger community members to envision a future free from discrimination and stigmatization.

To mark the observance last year, Governor Pritzker [signed legislation](#) creating the Illinois Commission on LGBTQ Aging, an advisory body to the state legislature tasked with studying the health care, housing, financial, and other needs of LGBTQ older Illinoisans. The commission began meeting in January and published its first report in March, available [here](#).

Nomination Deadline Approaching for Senior Illinoisan Hall of Fame Awards



The Senior Illinoisan Hall of Fame was established by the state legislature to honor older adults' accomplishments and contributions to their communities. Each year, four Illinoisans aged 65 or older are inducted into the Hall of Fame for their work in community service, education, arts or the labor force. To see biographies of inductees since 1994 or to submit a

nomination, please visit [this page](#). Nominations for 2023 inductees must be received by Thursday, June 1.

[Submit a nomination](#)

Subscribe to Our New YouTube Channel



Be sure to check out and subscribe to [IDoA's YouTube channel](#) where we'll be posting new long-form videos.

[Click here to subscribe.](#)

Homecare Aides Honored at Awards Ceremony, Reception



The Mary I. Hill Homecare Aide of the Year Award was created to recognize the important role homecare aides play in the success of IDoA's Community Care Program. The 2023 award winners were honored during an awards luncheon at the Inn at 835 Boutique Hotel in Springfield on April 12.

Congratulations to awards winners Helen Jones with the Mason County Health Department, Alondra Quiñonez with ASI, Inc., Myeonghwa Kim with Hanul Family Alliance, and Beth Harvey with Help at Home.

Honorable Mentions

Sonja Cozad - Help at Home

Sarah Lewis - Illinois Valley Economic Development Corporation

Asta Stankeviciene - European Service at Home

Carol Stanley - Addus HomeCare

Sherry Fanelli - AccentCare

Myong Hui Flores – Hanul Family Alliance

Kennetta Johnson – Chicago Commons

Da Thao Le - Vietnamese Association of Illinois

Vanessa Mclaurin - European Service at Home

Doris Pate - Sahara Home Care

Manjula Patel - Universal Industries, Inc.

Maria Laffita Reyna – Healthcare Plus Senior Care

David Dominguez – Fox Valley Community Services

Karina Erazo – Sahara Home Care

Wanda Gonzalez - Universal Industries, Inc.

Tamara Govorovskaia - European Service at Home

Amanda Lancaste - Help at Home

Heather Marie Tarbill - Healthcare Plus Senior Care

Rhonda Albrecht - Senior Services Plus

Carmen Jones - Addus HomeCare

Get Ready to Renew Your Medicaid



**GOT
MEDICAID?**

 **HFS**
Illinois Department of
Healthcare and Family Services

abe.illinois.gov

GET
READY TO
RENEW!

Get ready to renew your Medicaid! Medicaid customers have not had to renew their Medicaid coverage since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Medicaid pays for healthcare, like doctor visits, prescription medicine, and urgent emergency services.

Now Illinois is starting renewals again to see if people are still eligible. Everybody's renewal date is different, so it is critical that you get ready to renew.

Don't risk losing your Medicaid! Here is what you need to do:

Click Manage My Case at abe.illinois.gov to:

- Verify your mailing address under "contact us."
- Find your due date (also called redetermination date) in your "benefit details".

Watch your mail and complete your renewal right away.

If you are no longer eligible for Medicaid, connect to coverage at work or through the official Affordable Care Act marketplace for Illinois, [GetCoveredIllinois.gov](https://www.getcoveredillinois.gov).

Illinois Broadband Virtual Events & Survey

Having trouble getting internet connectivity in your home? Do you want better and more reliable broadband access?

The Illinois Office of Broadband and the Illinois Broadband Lab are hosting a series of virtual and in-person listening sessions and launching a public survey to collect feedback and seek input on the Connect Illinois Broadband and Digital Equity Planning Initiatives. The survey will be used to collect feedback from the public, local and community organizations, and governments in the State of Illinois and ensure that federal BEAD and Digital Equity funding addresses demonstrated barriers and needs.

Please help the Illinois Department of Commerce and Illinois Broadband Lab to bring affordable, high-speed internet access to Illinoisans by filling out the survey below.

[Visit this link](#) to see the full list of virtual listening sessions and register. [Take the survey here.](#)

Employment Opportunities

Training Program Manager (Executive II)

Work Location: Chicago

Salary: \$5,536 - \$8,279 monthly

Application Deadline: May 26, 2023

Job Responsibilities:

1. Manages Adult Protective Services Training Program.
2. Researches, develops, and drafts trainings to effectively implement and promote services for the prevention of abuse, neglect, and financial exploitation.
3. Plans for management and efficient utilization of staff and resources allocated to the Adult Protective Services Training Program.
4. Integrates APS training program operations on an intra and inter-agency basis by interfacing with Department staff, adult protective services advocates, long-term care Ombudspersons, family caregivers, home and community-based groups, long-term care facility staff and volunteer money management program staff.
5. Performs other duties as required or assigned which are reasonably within the scope of the duties enumerated above.

[View application instructions](#)

Procurement Specialist (Executive I)

Work Location: Springfield

Salary: \$4,982 - \$7,369 monthly

Application Deadline: May 26, 2023

Job Responsibilities:

1. Confers with management and other department staff to facilitate contracting, granting, and procurement processes with key program areas.
2. Evaluates All Willing and Qualified (AWAQ) applications for prospective Service Providers and grant applications/proposals.
3. Reviews statuses of entities registering in GATA.
4. Develops and prepares correspondence with providers, grantees and applicants if required by the application and/or the grant agreement/award processes.
5. Performs other duties as required or assigned which are reasonably within the scope of the duties enumerated above.

[View application instructions](#)

For a full list of open positions, check the [State of Illinois job board](#).

Spring Events Recap

Evanston Aging Well Conference Returns After Three-Year Hiatus



Hundreds of older adults gathered at the Levy Senior Center in Evanston on Friday, May 5 to participate in a series of workshops designed to educate older residents and their care partners on available resources and support.

The day kicked off with welcoming remarks from Evanston Mayor Daniel Biss, followed by the keynote address by IDoA Director Paula Basta.

Yorkville Restaurant Opens As Community Dining Site for Seniors

Joined by representatives from the Community Nutrition Network and several local officials, Director Basta attended a ribbon cutting marking the grand opening of AgeGuide's new community dining site at Dakotas Restaurant on Tuesday, May 9.



Upcoming Events

SAVE THE DATE
23rd Annual
Central Illinois
Senior Celebration

Aging Unbound



Presented by Senior Services of Central Illinois
May 17, 2023 | 9 am - 2 pm
Orr Building | Illinois State Fairgrounds



SANGAMON COUNTY TRIAD PRESENTS: FIRST RESPONDERS FASHION SHOW



Join us as we build connections and strengthen relationships between seniors and our local first responders.

**SENIOR CELEBRATION AT THE ORR BUILDING
WEDNESDAY, MAY 17TH 11:30-12PM**

An award will go to the first responder who struts their stuff the best!

Made with PosterMyWall.com

The next meeting of the [Resident and Family Support Council](#) will be on Tuesday, May 23 at 3 p.m.

Registration is not required for this meeting. Join the Zoom call by clicking the link below.

[Join the Resident and Family Support Council](#)

The Illinois Supreme Court is hosting a series of listening sessions, open to elder law

practitioners, attorneys, justice professionals, guardians, healthcare/social service professionals, caregivers, and family members of older adults. The next session will be on Thursday June 1 from 2 to 4 p.m. at the Kane County Branch Court, located at 530 S. Randall Rd. in St. Charles.

Future sessions will take place in the central and southern parts of Illinois.

[Register for the June 1 listening session](#)

The [Illinois Commission on LGBTQ Aging](#) will meet on Wednesday, June 7 at 2 p.m. Stakeholders and members of the public are invited to attend using the link below.

[Join via WebEx](#)

The Sad Truth...

It Matters Where You Live

A comprehensive look at the changing needs and demographics of Suburban Cook County

Presenters of Qualitative Report

Tamar Heller Ph.D.

(UIC) Department of Disability and Human Development, College of Applied Health Sciences

Michael Gelder, MHA

(UIC) Department of Disability and Human Development, College of Applied Health Sciences

Kelly Hsieh, Ph.D.

(UIC) Department of Disability and Human Development, College of Applied Health Sciences

Presenter of Quantitative Report

Rob Paral

Principal at Rob Paral and Associates

Moderator

Rev. Kirsten Peachey, MSW, MDiv, DMin

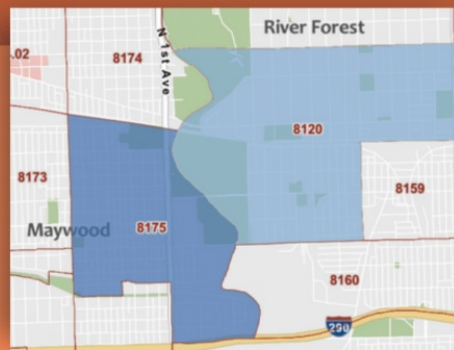
Advocate Health Midwest & Chair of AgeOptions DEI Committee

Wednesday, June 28, 2023 | 8:30 A.M.

Crowne Plaza Chicago SW
300 S Frontage Rd,
Burr Ridge, IL 60527
Breakfast will be provided.



click or scan the QR to register.



Census Tract 8120

Life Expectancy – 82.7 years

Census Tract 8175

Life Expectancy 72.7 years

Respondents

Paula Basta, MDiv

Director of Illinois Department on Aging

Kiran Joshi, MD, MPH

Cook County Department of Public Health

Maria del Socorro Pesqueira

President of Healthy Communities Foundation

Shellie Williams, MD

University of Chicago



Call 708-383-0258 or visit www.ageoptions.org for more information

Items of Interest

[Township offers help for seniors balancing a budget - Oak Park](#)

[Orland Township Announces 2023 Senior American Idol Winner](#)

[Why Older Adults Should Review Their Medicare Coverage Each Year](#)

[The Widowhood Effect: How to Survive the Loss of a Spouse](#)

[The Impact of COVID-19 on Older Adults' Mental Health: How Online Therapy Can Help](#)

The Illinois Department on Aging does not discriminate in admission to programs or treatment of employment in programs or activities in compliance with appropriate State and Federal statutes. If you feel you have been discriminated against, call the **Senior HelpLine at (800) 252-8966; (888) 206-1327 (TTY)**



[Visit our website](#)