

# **Governor's Advisory Council on Aging**

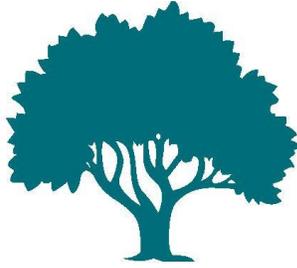
## **2014 ANNUAL REPORT**



# Purpose & Mission

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The Governor's Advisory Council on Aging's purpose by statute is to "advise the Governor, Legislature and all State Departments which the Advisory Council deems necessary on all matters and issues relating to aging, including the administration of the State Plan on Aging." The Advisory Council's mission is "to enhance the quality of life for older Arizonans." Through the work of its committees, the Advisory Council reviews and develops strategies to address wide-ranging issues. The Governor's Advisory Council on Aging advises policy makers and state agencies, and works with local communities, non profit organizations, private enterprises and older adults across Arizona to fulfill its purpose and accomplish its mission.



## GOVERNOR'S ADVISORY COUNCIL ON AGING

*Becky Brimhall-Lepire, 2014 Chair*

*Deborah Lavinsky, 2014 Vice Chair*

January 14, 2015

Dear Governor Ducey, Speaker Gowan, Senate President Biggs & older Arizonans:

On behalf of the Governor's Advisory Council on Aging, I present you with our 2014 Annual Report.

We are pleased to provide this overview that outlines the commitment of our Council members, liaisons, volunteers and staff to advocate, educate and work to enhance the quality of life for older Arizonans.

With our purpose and mission in mind and feedback from constituents participating in the 2013 Senior Actions Days, the Governor's Advisory Council on Aging dedicated 2014 to a year-long strategic, internal review that resulted in recommendations for change. A critical self-evaluation was conducted by an Ad Hoc Committee to help strengthen and revitalize our group and ensure significant, measurable outcomes around updated initiatives in the months and years ahead. The recommendations of this group were unanimously approved by the Advisory Council and serve as the basis for a change in focus and operation to improve our effectiveness and efficiency and prepare for the next Sunset Review process.

The ongoing work of the Advisory Council included monitoring the State Plan on Aging and providing educational opportunities around elder abuse, fall prevention, lifespan respite, healthy aging, older workers and age-friendly communities. The Council also continued to support the work of the Arizona Alzheimer's Task Force, an initiative launched through the Governor's Office on Aging focused on addressing the growing human and financial impact of dementia on our state.

The Governor's Advisory Council on Aging has a renewed dedication to enhancing the quality of life for older Arizonans, and we seek your support to help ensure our success.

Sincerely,

Becky Brimhall-Lepire  
Council Chair

# Governor's Advisory Council on Aging 2014 Roster

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**Becky Brimhall-Lepire, Chair**

Maricopa County  
(Carefree)

**Doyle Meredith**

Yavapai County  
(Prescott Valley)

**Charles E. Brown, Secretary**

Cochise County  
(Sun Sites)

**Lisa M. O'Neill**

Pima County  
(Tucson)

**George A. Evanoff**

Pima County  
(Tucson)

**Allison Perrin, M.D.**

Maricopa County  
(Phoenix)

**Patsy J. Gillis**

Maricopa County  
(Phoenix)

**Melinda Preston**

Maricopa County  
(Tempe)

**Joy P. Grainger**

Maricopa County  
(Surprise)

**Teresa Ramirez Lopez**

Maricopa County  
(Phoenix)

**Diane Joens**

Yavapai County  
(Cottonwood)

**Trudy W. Schuett**

Yuma County  
(Yuma)

**Deborah M. Lavinsky, Vice Chair**

Maricopa County  
(Phoenix)

**Tonya L. Watson**

Coconino County  
(Flagstaff)

**C.T. Wright, Past Chair**

Maricopa County  
(Fountain Hills)

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**The Council wishes to thank our agency liasions:**

**Melanie Starns**

DES

**Wayne Tormala**

& **Babak Nayeri**  
ADHS

**Vanessa Martin**

Attorney General's Office

**Cydney DeModica**

ADOT/MVD

**Jay Dunkleberger**

AHCCCS

**Ronald Moore**

Arizona Indian Council on  
Aging

**Elisa Davis**

AZ Association of  
Area Agencies on  
Aging – AZ4A

**Andrew Carlson**

Department of Insurance

**Kristin Fray**

Arizona Dept. of Veterans'  
Services - Phoenix

# Council Responsibilities

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The Governor's Advisory Council on Aging is a special purpose Council authorized under Laws 1980, Chapter 150, and covered by A.R.S. §§ 46-183, 46-184, Chapter 6, Laws 2010 and provisions of the Older Americans Act of 1965, P.L. 89-73, 87 STAT. 30, 42 U.S.C. 3001 et seq. and C.F.R. 1321.47 (as amended) promulgated pursuant to the Act.

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 Advisory Council has traditionally had standing committees and the goals of the Advisory Council are largely accomplished through the work of these committees, as well as ad hoc committees created for special purposes or projects. This year, the Ad Hoc Committee on Review and Revitalization & Public Relations coordinated an extensive internal review that resulted in the restructuring of the work and the committees of the Governor's Advisory Council on Aging.

The Advisory Council views its responsibility for bringing information on aging issues to the Governor, legislature and state departments as one of its primary roles. The Council provides older adults with an official channel of communication to elected and state officials and helps the officials stay informed about older citizens' concerns.

The Advisory Council's primary roles and responsibilities:

- Review and approve the State Plan on Aging; monitor and evaluate implementation of the State Plan.
- Discuss and recommend actions to all state agencies on program and policy which affect the Arizona senior population.
- Develop legislative priorities and advocate for such, both in respect to the Advisory Council's short-term and long-range plans and goals on aging.
- Submit a written report of its recommendations regarding the State Plan on Aging as well as the Council's accomplishments and future goals to the Governor, the President of the Senate and the Speaker of the House of Representatives.

- Promote public understanding and acceptance of programs and services relating to the well-being of the state's senior population.
- Be the official advocate for the seniors in the state and actively promote policies to further the well-being of our state's seniors.

# 2014 Accomplishments

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The following are highlights of the Governor's Advisory Council on Aging's 2014 activities.

## ***1. Monitored the State Plan on Aging***

As part of its statutory purpose, the Governor's Advisory Council on Aging (GACA) continued to work with the DES Division of Aging and Adult Services (DAAS) and the Arizona Association of Area Agencies on Aging to monitor the administration of the State Plan on Aging which is required by federal law. Presentations to the Council regarding the gathering of public input, the development of the new plan that incorporates the goals of Aging 2020, and changes made based on public input are provided by staff of the Division of Aging and Adult Services (DAAS) to the Council on Aging. The draft plan is provided for the Council's review and endorsement by the Council Chair prior to submittal to the Governor. DES/DAAS staff provided updates on the plan at the GACA 2014 meetings. After reviewing and discussing the proposed 2015 – 2018 State Plan on Aging, the Governor's Advisory Council on Aging voted to endorse it at their May meeting. In addition, the Advisory Council continued to support the Governor's Office on Aging's leadership role in the Planning Group of the Arizona Alzheimer's Task Force and efforts to address the growing human and financial cost of Alzheimer's and related disorders in Arizona through objectives and strategies linked directly to the goals of Arizona's State Plan on Aging.

## ***2. Provided the Legislative Update Email Newsletter***

The Governor's Advisory Council on Aging and staff continued to monitor state and federal legislation that impacts older adults and report it through the non-partisan *Legislative Update*. The intent of the email newsletter is to inform readers about the state and federal legislative process and help older Arizonans and aging advocates formulate their own opinions and ensure their voices are heard. Each issue includes news and resources at the national, state and local level.

## ***3. Promoted Transportation Options***

As an ongoing priority, updates on regional transit programs as options for older adults were received by the Advisory Council on Aging. Presentations were provided from Maricopa Association of Governments, Cottonwood Area Transit program, iTNGreaterTucson and Northwest Valley Connect. The Advisory Council on Aging continued to gather and disseminate information on local, regional and statewide mobility plans that promote and support independence in later life. With transit as one of its focal areas, the Governor's Advisory Council on Aging voted to endorse the Arizona Age-Friendly Community Initiative coordinated by Maricopa Association of Governments.

## ***4. Offered Consumer Education and Training***

Through the Committee and Council meetings, members and supporters were provided with more than 35 educational opportunities in 2014. Topics included:

- Arizona's Open Meeting Law
- Fresh Start Women's Foundation
- Mercy Housing
- Lifespan Respite Voucher Program
- Arizona Caregiver Coalition/Caregiver Resource Line
- Arizona Alzheimer's Task Force and the National Alzheimer's Project Act (NAPA)
- Maricopa Association of Governments (MAG)– Greater Phoenix Age-Friendly Network
- Arizona Statewide Oral Health Coalitions and Central Arizona Dental Mission of Mercy
- Regional Transit Programs as Options for Older Adults – MAG
- iTNGreaterTucson/iTNAmerica
- Cottonwood Area Transit
- Northwest Valley Connect
- Plus 50 Program, Pima Community College
- Lifelong Learning Program, Yavapai College
- Maricopa Corporate College
- Banner Sun Health Research Institute, Brain & Body Donation Program
- SB1135: qualified immunity; non-profit clinics
- Arizona Community Dental Clinic
- Arizona Healthy Aging & DES/Division of Aging & Adult Services  
Older Americans Month Proclamation
- Adult Protective Services
- Healthy Aging at Scottsdale Healthcare
- Wellness Works for Everyone, Maricopa County employee wellness
- Wellness & Well-Being, Cancer Treatment Centers of America
- State of Arizona Wellness Program
- Best Practices in Volunteer Programs & Initiatives Supporting Aging in Community featuring Benevilla, Duet Partners in Health & Aging, Verde Valley Caregivers Coalition, and Neighbors Who Care
- AHCCCS/ALTCS Eligibility
- Updates on 2011-2014 State Plan on Aging
- Development & Review of the 2015-2018 State Plan on Aging
- The Legislative Process – Arizona Legislative Council
- The Elder Index: What Does It Mean to Mature Workers?
- Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services Rules for Home and Community Based Services
- Overview of the Arizona Association of Area Agencies on Aging
- AARP Foundation: Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP)
- Suicide Prevention Program, Pima Council on Aging
- City of Phoenix Community Initiative on Medicare Assistance Programs
- Arizona Fall Prevention Coalition
- Regional Oral Health Coalitions
- Arizona Age-Friendly Communities Initiative

***5. Continued to Provide Updated Resources on the Mature Worker Website***

The Arizona Mature Worker Website hosted by Jobing.com received continuous updates with new resources for mature job seekers, employers and professionals seeking to connect older workers with employers who value them. The website has featured blogs by ASU law students about laws affecting mature workers. In addition, 29 employers elected to recertify as mature worker friendly employers and are listed on the website.

***6. Supported Education and Outreach Efforts***

The Advisory Council on Aging continued to support the efforts of the Arizona Fall Prevention Coalition through the Director's participation in the Coalition's Steering Committee. This year, the coalition took a statewide focus with a new collaboration in leadership by the Arizona Department of Health Services and Area Agency on Aging Region One. The Advisory Council continued to support and promote the efforts of the Arizona Caregiver Coalition and the Lifespan Respite Coalition.

***7. Ensured Continuing Education Opportunities for Council Members***

Educational presentations and training opportunities continued to be a part of the Advisory Council's meetings in 2014. Training is focused on helping build awareness or enhancing Council members' knowledge of aging-related issues. For the benefit of new members and as a refresher for others, Council leadership offered an expanded orientation session. A training session by the Assistant Ombudsman for Public Access outlined requirements of the Open Meeting Law for members of the Advisory Council on Aging at the first meeting in 2014.

***8. Represented the Governor at the National Indian Council on Aging Conference***

As requested, the Chair of the Governor's Advisory Council on Aging provided greetings and welcoming remarks on behalf of Governor Brewer at the September National Indian Council on Aging conference.

***9. Provided Input to the Governor and Legislature on Aging Issues***

In accordance with its purpose, the Advisory Council continued to offer recommendations and input to the Governor and Legislature on the needs and interests of older Arizonans. This year's input included sharing an advocacy priority list ahead of the 52<sup>nd</sup> Legislative Session. Legislators were invited to share input and review data collected from their constituents at Legislative and Policy Coordinating Committee meetings, and in January and September legislators joined discussions on advocacy issues.

***10. Conducted a strategic review process***

Input from the last Senior Action Day events and stakeholder survey results prompted the Advisory Council to dedicate 2014 to a strategic process, a review and revitalization of the Governor's Advisory Council on Aging, its committees and the work of its initiatives. A critical review and tough self-evaluation was conducted by an Ad Hoc Committee to help strengthen and revitalize our group and ensure significant, measurable outcomes around updated initiatives in the months and years ahead. The recommendations of this group were unanimously approved by the Advisory Council and serve as the basis for a change in focus and operation to improve effectiveness and efficiency.

# 2015 Future Directions

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**Six areas of focus will frame the work of the Governor’s Advisory Council on Aging in 2015.** Those priorities are:

1. Continue to build/strengthen relationships with state agencies, Area Agencies on Aging and organizations across the state dealing with aging issues.
2. Fully engage all GACA members.
3. Modify committee structure and processes.
4. Increase awareness of GACA throughout the state.
5. Conduct joint training and educational opportunities about aging issues in Arizona with other agencies and aging-related organizations around the state.
6. Organize an even-numbered year summit of statewide aging officials and leaders, alternating with Senior Action Days during odd-numbered years.

In addition, the Advisory Council will continue to execute its statutory obligations and remain committed to leveraging essential resources and building partnerships in order to accomplish its goals.

## **Continuing Priorities for 2015**

- ***Monitor the State Plan on Aging***

As part of its statutory purpose, the Advisory Council will continue to work with the DES Division of Aging and Adult Services and the Association of Area Agencies on Aging to monitor activities established in the State Plan on Aging and help ensure those results are in line with established plans and fiscal priorities. Updates to the Council will continue to be requested and reviewed at the Advisory Council meetings.

- ***Provide the Legislative Update Email Newsletter***

The Advisory Council will continue to have staff monitor state and federal legislation that impact older adults and report it through the electronic non-partisan *Legislative Update*. The intent of the email newsletter is to inform readers about the state and federal legislative process and help older Arizonans and aging advocates formulate their own opinions and ensure their voices are heard.

- ***Offer Consumer Education and Training***

In partnership with state agencies and community partners, the Advisory Council will continue to offer education and training through collaborative efforts that result in workshops, summits, special sessions or conferences focused on older adults. These consumer education opportunities will include best practices on current topics of concern.

- ***Support Education and Outreach Efforts***

The Advisory Council will continue to support and promote the efforts of its partners and community stakeholders. The Council will support the Arizona Commission for the Deaf and the Hard of Hearing's efforts to disseminate resources that support educational outreach efforts on hearing loss aimed at educating both service providers and older consumers. The Advisory Council will continue to support the mission of the Arizona Fall Prevention Coalition to promote evidence-based fall prevention approaches that can enhance quality of life for older adults as well as the efforts of the Arizona Caregiver Coalition that advocates for family caregivers in Arizona. The Council will continue to work with community partners and employers who value older workers.

- ***Ensure Continuing Education Opportunities for Council Members***

Educational presentations and training opportunities will continue to be a part of the Advisory Council's activities in 2015. Training is planned that will help build awareness or enhance Council members' knowledge of aging-related issues.

- ***Provide Input to the Governor and Legislature on Aging Issues***

In accordance with its purpose, the Advisory Council will continue to offer recommendations and advice to the Governor and Legislature on the needs and interests of older Arizonans. From budget priorities to elders' perspectives on any type of legislation, policy makers can benefit from utilizing the Advisory Council as a single, non-partisan voice on matters that affect our state's older citizens.

# Conclusion

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We are grateful to the dedicated Council members, liaisons, community partners and staff who support the purpose and mission of the Council and engage in the work of the Governor's Advisory Council on Aging. The Advisory Council is honored to serve as an internal, non-partisan sounding board for the Governor and the Legislature on all matters related to aging.

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