



Saying goodbye to our good friend Pat King

On June 30, we lost a dear friend and tireless advocate for Georgia's seniors. In Pat King's 15 years with the state, she helped create the Forensic Special Initiatives Unit (FSIU) and a training program to teach law enforcement and other first responders and professionals to spot abuse of elderly and vulnerable adults. King's passion led to changes in state laws to help prosecute elder abuse cases.

King made a lasting impression on every person she met. Georgia Bureau of Investigation's Director Vic Reynolds said he first met King in 2013 shortly after he had been elected the district attorney in Cobb County. She set up a meeting and came by Reynolds's office with a demand for him to act.

"She said, 'I have a case of a 92-year-old victim who is being exploited and nobody will do a ... thing about it. Are you going to?'" Assistant Deputy Commissioner for Aging Services, Abby Cox, said she will deeply miss King's friendship and dedication. "What I am going to miss most about her is that contagious smile, her quick wit, her unwavering passion, her

In Memoriam

The Division of Aging Services extends its deepest sympathy to family, friends and colleagues on the passing of

Patricia King



desire to grow the training around abuse, neglect and exploitation and her deep love for so many of her colleagues," Cox said. "Pat was fiercely loyal and would move mountains to be there for those who needed support. When I went with her to one of her chemo treatments, she was joking the entire time and had such a positive outlook on her health. You could feel the positive energy surrounding her, and nurses and patients were naturally drawn to her."

"This picture was at GPB TV when there was a panel discussion on abuse, neglect and exploitation," Cox said. "Pat was so happy that there was more visibility being given to this critical issue. And, for many of us in Georgia, we might take the work of the FSIU for granted. It should be noted that we have paved the way for greater collaboration around abuse, neglect and exploitation, and the training of mandatory reporters. Pat was a visionary who not only left a lasting positive



King and Cox

impact on the state of Georgia, but across the nation, as well." Joe Gavalis with the North Georgia Elder Abuse Task Force said King was always the "go-to person" to address any issues that affected the elderly.

"Law enforcement looked to her for her guidance and thoughts any hour of the day," said Gavalis. "She believed in actively helping law enforcement in investigating and prosecuting wrongdoers. She was a leader in working on establishing new legislation to address elder issues. She was a giant in her field and will be missed by all. Rest in peace, Pat."

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In Memoriam



Tanesha Thomas

The Aging and Disability Resource Connection (ADRC) Program Manager in Middle Georgia, Tanesha Thomas, died July 12.

Tanesha joined the Middle Georgia Area Agency on Aging in July 2014 as an ADRC Counselor and served as the ADRC Program Manager for the past three and a half years.

Our hearts are heavy as we grieve the untimely death of another colleague.

Staff shoutouts

Lead Worker (LW) **Michelle Davis**, Adult Protective Services (APS) is coordinating with the Policing Alternatives and Diversion Initiative (PAD) unit in Fulton County.

This unit works to reduce arrest and incarceration of people experiencing extreme poverty, problematic substance use or mental health concerns and to increase the accessibility of supportive service in Atlanta and Fulton County. Davis has been with the agency in Fulton County 20 plus years and works to build stronger relationships with our community partners.

On Wednesday, July 21 APS Supervisor **Kiron Gates-Simpson**, Lead Worker **Nicole Moore**, APS, District Manager **Anastasia Smith**, APS and Supervisor **Adrian Copeland**, APS, gave a Zoom presentation to over 30 individuals within the social work and social science field at Children's Healthcare of Atlanta. They spoke about investigating allegations of abuse, neglect and exploitation and about resources they use to assist young adults with disabilities.

Building relationships throughout the community is important to educate more people about DAS/APS. This connection with Children's Healthcare of Atlanta gives DAS another avenue when it comes to providing services to younger adults.

APS has two new units under District Manager Andrea Glasper and District Manager Vivian Jackson. Along with providing assistance with the training of new supervisors, lead workers and case managers, all district managers have banded together to cover staff



shortages because of vacancies. Everyone continues to work hard to serve APS clients as well as APS staff. Thank you for all that you do to protect Georgia's seniors and disabled adults.

LW **Kanisha White**, PGO, received the LET'S SERVE DHS Leadership Commissioner's Award. Kanisha received the award because of her ability to connect with her clients and ensure that they are happy and thriving. She is a veteran case manager and currently has 28 cases (several with complex needs), more than anyone else on her team.

Although most of her day-to-day work consists of ensuring her clients have their basic medical and mental health needs met, she is always willing to provide support to her team members in absence of her supervisor. Kanisha is dependable and knowledgeable about policy and procedure. She is an asset to the team!

A huge thank you to Program Integrity's **Larry Robb**, Elderly Legal Assistance Program (ELAP) for the incredible work he has done so far and continues to do for ELAP to prepare for the new The Older

Americans Act Performance System reporting system that will begin in October.

Larry has implemented a new, easy way to provide data on the WellSky platform to meet ACL requirements.

Mandel Jones is the GeorgiaCares SHIP coordinator and trainer. He has mastered the CMS National Training modules, and he has provided over 70 Medicare training sessions from January to July. Each training session helped attendees learn about Medicare and developed their skills to provide counseling services. He has participated in numerous interviews to help fill staff vacancies and rebuild the GeorgiaCares team. Kudos to Mandel and his hard work!

Lashonda Edwards is the GeorgiaCares SHIP competition. Lashonda has provided Medicare counseling services to 976 clients from January to June.

In the months of May and June, she met the following criteria: highest number of calls answered, highest number of STARS Beneficiary Contact Forms entered, no agent rejects and no agent timeouts on Platform28. Kudos to Lashonda!

Area Agencies on Aging

3 AAAs earn awards for health, senior nutrition and dementia initiatives

Three of DAS' Area Agencies on Aging (AAAs) recently received awards from the National Association of Area Agencies on Aging (n4a), the highest honor presented by n4a to member agencies. The Atlanta Regional Commission, the Middle Georgia Area Agency on Aging and the Three Rivers Area Agency on Aging were among 36 local aging programs to receive honors during the n4a annual conference.

The awards program is supported by iN2L, provider of the leading engagement and social connection platform for seniors, offering a foundation for activities that facilitate social interaction, cognitive and physical exercise, education, reminiscing, areas of interest and memory support engagement.

The Atlanta Regional Commission was awarded the n4a Aging Innovations and Achievement Award for Healthy Aging through their Diabetes Health Coaching Program. During the pandemic, the telephone-based program was perfect for reaching clients with uncontrolled diabetes since most were unable to leave their homes. The coaching program resulted in improved clinical outcomes for most patients.

The Three Rivers AAA was awarded the n4a Aging Innovations and Achievement Award for Nutrition for their work as a Senior Hunger Coalition. The Coalition developed and implemented a regional plan to collaborate with first responders, law enforcement and medical personnel to connect older adults to resources in the community. The Three Rivers

AAA worked to decrease senior hunger by using a voucher program to provide free meals at senior centers. Vouchers were given to older adults who were at risk for hunger issues and have been in contact with a first responder, are a patient at a free medical clinic or have participated in a food bank. This program was funded by a \$5,000 grant from DAS.

Three Rivers AAA also won the n4a Achievement Award for Caregiving due to their work to make the most rural county in their region dementia friendly. The Three Rivers AAA received a grant from the Georgia Gerontology Society to make the most rural county in the region dementia friendly. The AAA organized a group of community partners to brainstorm ideas to assist caregivers and individuals living with dementia. This led to the AAA conducting meetings, collecting data on need in the community, purchasing care packages and providing educational Dementia Friends trainings.

The Middle Georgia AAA also took home an award. Lead Case Worker, Benae Hogan, was awarded the Mom's Meals Community Champion Award.

Hogan was awarded for her efforts in service of the region's older adults. The award promotes case managers who positively impact the quality of life and health of older adults by incorporating a focus on nutrition. Benae has served as a case manager for over 14 years. In that time, she has successfully dealt with some difficult challenges, including immediate



nursing home placement; hoarding issues; no income; rodent and insect infestations; condemned homes due to structural integrity, and limited to no food supplies among many others. The agency is thankful to have such a dedicated and passionate staff member and appreciates the recognition and honor bestowed on her by Mom's Meals.

The 2021 n4a Aging Innovations and Achievement Awards recognizes AAAs that develop and implement cutting-edge approaches to support older adults, people with disabilities and their family caregivers. Among the selection criteria was the ease with which other agencies could replicate the program in their communities.

"We are so honored that our state Area Agencies on Aging were recognized for the tremendous work they are doing," said Abby Cox, assistant deputy commissioner for Aging Services. "The programs and initiatives the AAAs are implementing show why Georgia is a pioneering state in providing quality care and resources to our aging community."

All winners are showcased in the n4a [2021 AIA awards book](#).

Area Agencies on Aging

2 AAAs, CSRA and ARC, partner to provide behavioral health coaching in communities

Behavioral health coaching supports aging in place for individuals with behavioral health concerns living in congregate settings in the community.

Safe and affordable housing is critically important to the independence of older adults and persons with disabilities. For individuals with limited incomes, senior housing provides a sense of belonging in the community. Housing is a critical component of health and independence.

The Area Agency on Aging is working with several affordable housing providers to identify residents in need of services to reduce evictions and/or displacement. The AAA offers a multi-tiered service to reduce service gaps and streamline access to support people in the setting of their choice.

To receive additional information or to make a referral in the CSRA area, contact CSRA AAA behavioral health coach Sharonda Chavous at 706-650-5695. To receive information or make a referral in the ARC area, call the ADRC information counselors at 404-463-3333.

Behavioral health grant offers hope, pride

Mr. D. was homeless for several years prior to living at St. John Towers. He moved in with what he could carry, and he only owned a few pieces of clothing. His home was infested with bugs which meant letting go of many material possessions and clothing. He only owned one set of clothes when the behavioral coach met him, and they were often dirty, and he was unkempt.

Through the behavioral health coach funding, the CSRA AAA was able to purchase shirts, T-shirts, pants, shoes, socks and underwear for Mr. D. He is able to wash his clothing and has a change of clothing. He can now be around other residents, go to medical appointments and handle other affairs without being ashamed of his appearance. Mr. D. is still working with the coach regarding other behavioral health concerns that put him at risk of eviction, and he actively participates in counseling arranged by his behavioral health coach.

CSRA hosts annual elder abuse series virtually

In recognition of Elder Abuse Awareness Day, the CSRA's first virtual conference, "Emerging Stronger

Against the Pandemic of Elder Abuse" was held in June. The conference included presentations every Wednesday in June. The presentation was a joint effort of Taking Elder Abuse Seriously and the Central Savannah River Area (CSRA) Area Agency on Aging (AAA).

Each week, new topics were presented to address pertinent issues. A panel discussion with professionals from Adult Protective Services, Legal Services and the Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program took place on June 16. Information was provided to help those viewing the session understand the focus of each agency, how the agencies work together and how to obtain assistance during the pandemic while offices were closed to the public.

Additional sessions included presentations from District Attorney Jared Williams, the Forensic Special Initiatives Unit, the Richmond County Marshal's Office and the Council on Aging. The sessions provided excellent information for viewers, telling them what resources are available, how to access each agency and how to advocate as needed.

Throughout the conference, those in attendance were encouraged to remain active, alert and involved to avoid abuse, neglect and exploitation.

The seniors were reminded of the importance of staying in touch with their family and friends, which will help them avoid becoming a victim of abuse and exploitation, including scams. If they received calls and were offered something that sounded too good to be true, they were encouraged to guard their personal information and hang up.

A highlight of the conference came on June 15, World Elder Abuse Awareness Day, as the inaugural Jeanette Glenn Cummings' Advocacy Award was presented.

For over 40 years, Jeanette G. Cummings dedicated herself to the service of senior adults throughout the CSRA. A pioneer in the field of aging and a true advocate against elder abuse, her impact extended throughout Georgia, and far beyond. Ms. Ethel Jenkins became the first recipient of the award.

Viewers can access the recorded sessions and resource information [here](#).

Area Agencies on Aging

River Valley AAA, hosts large drive-thru event in May for Older Americans Month

The River Valley Area Agency on Aging celebrated Older Americans Month in May with a drive-thru event on May 7, 2021, in the agency's parking lot in Columbus. Normally a large in-person celebration is held with entertainment, music, food, vendors and door prizes. Because of the pandemic, organizers shifted to a drive-thru event. More than 20 vendors gave out information about their services to those who attended. Seniors spun the wheel to get door prizes, T-shirts, a box lunch and other items! Approximately 300 seniors and vendors attended the event.

Annual ADRC Healthy Communities Summit sets record with nearly 500 attendees

The 22nd annual Aging and Disability Resource Connection (ADRC) Healthy Communities Summit hosted the largest audience yet with nearly 500 attendees in June! The theme of this year's summit was "united in person-centered care."

The summit took place over three days and featured training sessions, panel discussions and first-hand accounts to help service providers and caregivers practice person-centered care. The ADRC Summit offered numerous resources for those working with and caring for older adults, individuals with disabilities and their care partners.

DHS solicits stories for new mission campaign

DHS is launching a success stories campaign this fall and we want to hear from you! Tell us about a daily interaction that brought a smile to a constituent, a time when you saw our #StrongerFamilies mission in action, a moment when you felt pride in the work we do here. Think about these everyday hero moments, big and small, when you saw DHS deliver and make a difference in the lives of our constituents.

We'll be soliciting these stories in the coming weeks, so keep an eye out for further instructions on where to submit these success stories. Stay tuned!

Honor a centenarian in your community

Do you know someone who will be 100 years of age or older this year? Share their story with kaylan.storey@dhs.ga.gov so we can highlight them on our social media pages.



Senior Hunger Summit draws crowd of 500

The fifth Senior Hunger Summit took place in June, bringing in its largest audience yet with nearly 500 attendees. The state's 12 Senior Hunger Regional Coalitions participated in a panel discussion on addressing senior hunger in rural and urban areas. Great ideas and innovation were shared that will help prepare Georgia's next senior hunger state plan. To learn more about senior hunger in Georgia, click [here](#).

Atlanta's oldest living man turns 105 years old

On July 6, veteran Herbert Brimer celebrated his 105th birthday. Brimer still has a sharp mind and many great stories about his century-plus years as an Atlanta native. He enjoys listening to books on audio and Southern food. Read the 11Alive story on Brimer [here](#).



Herbert Brimer

Hosted by the Department of Human Services

Dementia Friends Informational Webinar

Become a Dementia Friend! Join us for a **free webinar** to learn how you can improve the lives of people living with dementia.

Register now!
The next webinar is **September 21** from **2-3:30 p.m.**

Join Dementia Friends upcoming webinar

Dementia Friends Webinar is on September 21 from 2-3:30 p.m. To register, click [here](#).

Area Agencies on Aging

Join various upcoming webinars hosted by DAS

- Prepare to Care: Resources and Services for Caregivers is on September 30 from 5:30–7 p.m. presented by AARP. Register [here](#).
- September 24: Music therapy – connecting in unique ways. Register [here](#).
- October 1: The physical and cognitive consequences of fear of falling. Register [here](#).



Area Agencies on Aging

Southern Georgia Area Agency on Aging
There's No Excuse for Elder Abuse!
National Center on Elder Abuse
<https://ncea.acl.gov>
Aging Services: 904.885.7323
<http://sgaia.org>

The SGRC-AAA is grateful to everyone who helped make the 2021 World Elder Abuse Awareness campaign a great success.

Thank you for taking a stand with us against elder abuse!

