

AGING & independence

COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES AGENCY
AGING & INDEPENDENCE SERVICES

Southeastern San Diego Churches Get to Residents' Hearts

By Barbara Jiménez, MPH
Director, HHSA Central and South Regions

On Sunday mornings, members of Mount Olive Baptist Church in Southeastern San Diego do what they have been doing for years—show up for church to nurture their souls. Recently though, attending church has given them the opportunity to learn how to better nurture their bodies, too. Through the Southeastern San Diego Cardiac Disparities Project, 21 predominantly African American churches and a mosque have resolved to empower and educate their members on how to improve their heart health. This project is one of many examples of partners working to together through the *Live Well San Diego* Central Region Leadership Team to support healthy communities.

The project was spearheaded in 2014 by Be There San Diego, a coalition of patients, communities, healthcare systems and others working together to prevent heart attacks and strokes. The organization wanted to focus efforts on communities where the need was greatest, so they concentrated their work on the African American community in Southeastern San Diego.

Tragically, African Americans experience a much greater burden from cardiovascular disease than the

population as a whole. Across the United States, 48% of African American women and 44% of African American men suffer from cardiovascular disease.

In San Diego County, African Americans have the highest rates of chronic diseases. The reasons are complex and are due to a confluence of factors, including poverty and living in under-resourced neighborhoods. But there is hope, given that 70% of heart attacks and strokes could be prevented through healthy lifestyles and appropriate treatment.

Be There San Diego wanted to take an innovative approach to working with the community.

They partnered with local community stakeholders to determine the best way to engage residents. It soon became apparent that linking with local churches would be most impactful.

Director of Community Engagement at Be There San Diego, and active member of the *Live Well San Diego* Central Region Leadership Team, Elizabeth Bustos, explained, “What moves communities is what they hold close to their heart. Black churches are the hub and cornerstone of the black family.” She added, “The



A woman gets her blood pressure checked during a church-sponsored health event

(Continued on page two)



(Continued from page one)

black church also has a very rich legacy of being at the forefront of civil rights and social justice movements.”

To help support their work, Be There San Diego applied for, and was awarded, a grant from the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) for using racially and ethnically appropriate approaches to community health. But Ms. Bustos and her colleagues didn't just show up at local churches and present a lot of data about heart disease and stroke. Instead, they invited faith leaders to find their own sources of inspiration and determine what heart health might look like in their own spiritual community. Many leaders turned to sacred texts and came up with variations on the theme: “being ‘good’ with God is being clean in mind, body, and spirit.”

Just as each congregation is unique, the 20 churches and mosque promote heart health in their own way through customized “heart health action plans.” Some congregations, such as Total Deliverance Worship Center, offer a 90-Day Challenge. Members are invited to participate in 90 days of exercise, healthy eating, and attendance at Sunday service. At Mount Olive Baptist Church, Pastor Clater created a regular fellowship meal event where participants eat healthy foods and talk about reading nutrition labels. Most congregations offer regular blood pressure readings and have conversations about ways to support each other in eating well, getting physical activity, knowing their blood pressure numbers, and seeking medical care, when appropriate. Since the project began in 2014, more than 1,000 African American adults have been checking their blood pressure at least once a month.



Members of a local church enjoy a hearty dose of friendship, fun, and fellowship, along with some healthy snacks.



Doctors and pastors have honest, constructive conversations to build trust and explore ways to improve the community's health.

However, knowing you have high blood pressure is of little use if you are too intimidated to discuss lifestyle or medication options with a doctor. One important element of the Southeastern San Diego Cardiac Disparities Project is bringing healthcare providers to the churches to meet congregants and start to establish relationships built on trust and mutual respect. The conversations have not always been easy. One resident voiced her frustration, “When I go to a doctor’s office, they tell me everything that is wrong with me... I don’t exercise, I don’t eat well. Staff don’t look me in the eye.” Clinicians, too, have voiced frustrations: “I don’t know how to help if patients do not comply with treatment recommendations.”

It turns out that many of the influences on a person’s health have to do with their environment: Are there places nearby to purchase healthy produce? Are neighborhoods safe to walk in? The community-clinical linkages created by the project are allowing patients and providers to come together, learn from one another, and connect. Often, difficult interactions have ended in a handshake and an embrace.

At its core, the project is helping to give life back to a community that has suffered more than its fair share of heartache. Ms. Bustos explained, “Our lens is justice... every man, woman, and child has the right to live well and to thrive. Communities have the power and the greatest insights into how to resolve issues. We just have to get out the way, lead from behind, and be the support system.”

To learn more about the Southeastern San Diego Cardiac Disparities project, visit <http://sdheartjustice.org>.

In the COMMUNITY

BECOME A SENIOR LEGISLATOR

If you are passionate about issues facing older Californians and their families, you may want to consider running for the California Senior Legislature (CSL). The volunteer CSL recommends legislation that would benefit older adults. Eight legislators are elected in San Diego County for six Assembly and two Senate seats.

To be eligible, the candidate must be age 60 or older on election day (Monday, May 14 this year), be registered to vote, and reside in San Diego County.

Interested persons can call **(858) 495-5251** to have a nomination petition package mailed to them. Applications are also available online at <http://4csl.org/members/forms/> under the “Candidates for Election to the CSL” section.

The election will be held at the AIS Advisory Council meeting on Monday, May 14.

SENIORS COMPUTER GROUP

For 32 years, the Seniors Computer Group of San Diego has been helping older adults learn how to use computers and technology, such as smart phones, effectively and safely. Open to all ages, and free to visitors.

Meetings are held each Saturday morning at 9:30 a.m. in the Wesley Palms retirement community, 2404 Loring St., San Diego 92109 (Pacific Beach area). Coffee, tea and hot chocolate provided. For more information, call **(858) 459-9065** or visit www.scgsd.org.



GRANDPARENTS SYMPOSIUM

Are you raising a grandchild or young relative? Join us on Saturday, March 17 from 9 a.m.-1:30 p.m. at Meridian Elementary School, 651 S. 3rd St, El Cajon 92019, for a free symposium tailored to the needs of relative caregivers. Learn about local resources and hear from informative speakers on topics such as child development and cyber security. In addition, attendees will have the opportunity to connect with other families and build a support network. This year, teens are invited to attend for a special sports day and other fun activities.

Childcare and lunch will be provided free to those who pre-register. There will also be free school supplies, prizes, and giveaways! Spanish and Arabic translation will be available.

To register, please call **2-1-1** or visit www.211sandiego.org/grandparents.



INTERGENERATIONAL GAMES

Intergenerational (IG) Games offer adults and youth the opportunity to connect while having fun engaging in noncompetitive fitness and wellness activities such as paddle tennis, nutritional bingo, and ultimate Frisbee. This year's event will be held on **Tuesday, April 3: 9 a.m.-12:30 p.m.** at the Chula Vista Elite Athlete Training Center (formerly the Olympic Training Center).

Enrollment is now open for older adult (50+) participants. For more information or to register, contact Marlenne Zavala at **(858) 514-4920** or Marlenne.Zavala@sdcounty.ca.gov.

SENIOR VOLUNTEERS

Senior Volunteer Program Celebrates 25th Anniversary

The Senior Volunteer Program at the California Highway Patrol (CHP) El Cajon office, celebrated its 25-year anniversary in January. While this would be a milestone in any organization, it has especially great importance as the California Highway Patrol's Senior Volunteer Program began in the El Cajon office.

At first, senior volunteers only assisted with office duties. Over the years, their role grew to encompass field duties, including: checking parking complaints, providing traffic direction at accident scenes, assisting at community events, and fulfilling other duties assigned by the Area Commander.

In addition, the Senior Volunteer Program helps administer the School Safety Program in elementary schools under the CHP's jurisdiction. Along with office and field duties, senior volunteers are encouraged to ride with an officer at least once a quarter to help build a strong working relationship.

During the past 25 years, the El Cajon CHP Senior Volunteer Program has developed into a robust group of up to 50 volunteers, the largest CHP Senior Volunteer Program in the state. However, they are always looking for qualified seniors to join their ranks. Interested seniors 55+ should contact Officer Bill Mullen at (619) 401-2000 for more details.



Officers and volunteers from the California Highway Patrol office in El Cajon, from left to right: Sgt. Frank Lamb, Senior Volunteer Bob Weishan, Senior Volunteer Administrator Steve Stone, Officer Bill Mullen, and Officer Travis Carrow.

Volunteer Station of the Month- California Highway Patrol



California Highway Patrol (CHP), El Cajon, is being recognized as Volunteer Station of the Month. They were nominated by Volunteer Administrator Stephen Stone for their charitable efforts toward volunteers from another community.

The Santa Rosa Office of the California Highway Patrol had several members, both volunteers and sworn officers, lose everything in the recent wildfires that swept through their area. Many members were left with only what they could carry in their arms, and that didn't include uniforms.

The El Cajon CHP did not hesitate to jump into action to help. They donated over six boxes of replacement uniforms and jackets to the Santa Rosa CHP volunteer program. Their goodwill reached even further as they dug into their own pockets and raised \$1,800 to assist the affected volunteers and sworn officers.

Congratulations, and a big thank you to the entire CHP El Cajon volunteer team for your teamwork in providing assistance to those in need!



SENIOR VOLUNTEERS
IN ACTION



Give. Grow. Volunteer.

Are you looking for a flexible volunteer opportunity to feed your mind, body, and spirit while serving the community? Aging & Independence Services can help! Through Senior Volunteers in Action (SVA) and the Retired and Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP), you can make an impact in rewarding fields such as law enforcement, senior services, youth mentorship, museums and the arts, and more. Contact the Senior Volunteer Programs office today at (858) 505-6399 or visit us online at seniorvolunteersd.org.



JEWISH FAMILY SERVICE: 100 YEARS OF SUPPORTING AGING WITH DIGNITY

Jewish Family Service (JFS), a *Live Well San Diego* Recognized Partner since 2014, is turning 100 years old this year – and inviting the community to get in on the celebration by exploring the many ways to get help, get involved, and give back.



Since 1918, JFS has been a trusted community resource for individuals and families working to build better lives. As they launch a new century of service in San Diego, the caring team of professionals and volunteers in their Aging & Wellness division are focused on meeting the evolving needs of adults as they age. With a wide range of in-home assistance, social programming, transportation solutions, and supportive services, JFS is helping members of our community lead safe, healthy, independent lives at every age.

Each month, Aging & Independence Services acknowledges a Live Well San Diego partner—an organization in our community that is committed to the vision of a region that is building better health, living safely, and thriving. To learn more about Live Well San Diego or to become a partner, visit www.livewellsd.org.

One area where the agency continues to innovate is in providing older adults with safe, cost-effective transportation options through *On the Go*. In 2017, JFS launched *On the Go* Navigator, connecting their riders to on-demand ride scheduling and monitored transportation via Lyft. *On the Go* also coordinates Rides & Smiles, the largest volunteer-based senior transportation program in San Diego. To date, Rides & Smiles volunteers have provided more than 300,000 rides to medical appointments, errands, and more.

JFS is also meeting the unique needs of individuals with Alzheimer’s Disease and Related Dementias and their caregivers. Funded by the federal Health and Human Services administration, the JFS Alzheimer’s Initiative includes dementia training for staff and volunteers provided by Alzheimer’s San Diego, new certification in the evidence-based *Music and Memories* in-home music therapy program, and dementia education and support groups for family members and caregivers. JFS is also partnering with the UCSD Shiley-Marcos Alzheimer’s Disease Research Center to host “Out & About,” providing weekly dementia-friendly excursions throughout San Diego.



Additional services for older adults include the award-winning *Corner Market* food pantry; counseling and support groups; minor home-safety improvements; employment and career services; in-home assessment and care management; home-delivered kosher meals; support services and connection to Jewish life for Holocaust survivors; and Social & Wellness Centers offering daily lunch options and a variety of activities including dancing and exercise, arts and entertainment, computer access, and education and enrichment classes.



JFS relies on a team of nearly 400 volunteers to support their Aging & Wellness initiatives. On any given day, volunteers are delivering meals, visiting those who are ill or isolated, helping with minor home repairs, assisting at Social & Wellness centers, and providing rides for older adults who no longer drive. If you are looking for a rewarding way to give back, you will find more than 30 *different volunteer opportunities at JFS*.

Senior Director of Aging & Wellness Services Brenda Bothel-Hammond explains, “At JFS, we recognize that the aging process is complex, demanding, and dynamic.

No two aging experiences are the same. We invite you to experience our personalized approach to services and explore the many ways to get involved. Join us! Our next century starts *now*.”

Learn more about services and volunteer opportunities at www.jfssd.org or by calling (858) 637-3000.

HEALTHIER LIVING CLASSES

These interactive and goal-oriented workshops help people self-manage their health conditions.

Healthier Living with Diabetes: March 7 – April 11 (Wednesdays), 12:30–3 p.m. at GlenBrook Health Center, 1950 Calle Barcelona, Carlsbad 92025. Ok to start during second week.

Healthier Living with Chronic Pain: March 20 – April 24 (Tuesdays), 1 – 3:30 p.m. at the North Park Recreation Center, 4044 Idaho St., San Diego 92104.

New class dates and locations are added regularly. Visit www.HealthierLivingSD.org, or call (858) 495-5500. Leave a message; your call will be returned.

FEELING FIT CLUB

The Feeling Fit Club is a free functional fitness program for older adults focusing on aerobic endurance, strength, flexibility, and balance.

With more than 30 locations across San Diego County, there is sure to be one near you. For class schedules and locations, visit www.HealthierLivingSD.org or call: (858) 495-5500.

RESPITE FOR MILITARY AND VETERAN CAREGIVERS

Are you a veteran who is providing care to a loved one? Or, are you a caregiver for a veteran? If so, and if you could use a break from your caregiver responsibilities to catch up on errands or simply enjoy some much-needed time for yourself, consider enrolling in the Legacy Corps program.

Legacy Corps is an AmeriCorps program that engages adults 18 and older to provide in-home companion care for frail elders or persons with disabilities. Activities volunteers may do with an assigned family member can include: conversation, watching movies, playing games, going for walks, doing crafts, or listening to music.



Contact the Legacy Corps Program office at (858) 505-6300 or Dalija.Dragisic@sdcounty.ca.gov to learn more about Legacy Corps and to receive an assessment.

CAREGIVER WORKSHOPS

Thursday, March 8 from 10 a.m.-11:30 a.m.-Memory Loss 101 will be held at Tri-City Wellness Center, 6250 El Camino Real, Carlsbad 92009. A comprehensive overview of the various causes of memory loss, including Alzheimer's disease and other types of dementia. Learn about risk factors, the common symptoms, and next steps if you're concerned. For more information or to pre-register, please visit www.alzsd.org/services/education/ or call (858) 492-4400.

Wednesday, March 14 from 9 a.m.-12:30 p.m.-Successful Caregiving will be held at All Souls Episcopal Church, 1475 Catalina Blvd., San Diego 92107. Learn how to take care of yourself while caring for an aging loved one. Session topics include: emotional issues, communication, stress management, and more. Registration required. To RSVP, call (800) 827-4277 or visit www.sharp.com/classes.

Thursday, March 15 from 2-3:30 p.m.-Driving and Memory Loss will be held at the Crest Library, 105 Juanita Ln., El Cajon 92021. Learn about methods for evaluating a driver's safety, transportation resources, and tips for having difficult conversations about driving. For details or to register, visit www.alzsd.org/services/education/ or call (858) 492-4400.

Wednesday, March 21 from 12-1 p.m.-Healthy Living Research for Your Brain & Body: Tips from the Latest Research will be held at the Chula Vista Library, 365 F. St., Chula Vista 91910. Learn about research in the areas of diet and nutrition, exercise, cognitive activity, and social engagement, and use hands-on tools to help you incorporate these recommendations into a plan for healthy aging. RSVP to (800) 272-3900.

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

MARCH 5, MONDAY 12:45 P.M.

A lecture on *The Political Divide* will be held at the College Avenue Center, 6299 Capri Dr., San Diego 92120. Learn about the two dominant political worldviews, conservative and progressive, defining features, and their implications. For details, call (858) 637-3273 or email elissal@jfssd.org.

MARCH 7, WEDNESDAY 12-1 P.M.

Rebuilding After a Financial Crisis, a workshop sponsored by San Diego County Credit Union, will be held at the San Marcos Library, 2 Civic Center Dr., San Marcos 92069. For details, call (858) 603-7326.

MARCH 8, THURSDAY 12:45 P.M.

Managing Transitions, a workshop on how to cope with the loss of people we love and enjoy, will be held at the College Avenue Center, 6299 Capri Dr., San Diego 92120. For details, call (858) 637-3273 or email elissal@jfssd.org.

MARCH 9, FRIDAY 10-11:30 A.M.

Coping with Vision Loss will be held at the Braille Institute, 4555 Executive Dr., San Diego 92121. This free workshop will provide coping tools and resources that will help

you to move forward with day-to-day functions, responsibilities, and enjoyment in your life. For details or to RSVP, call (858) 452-1111 or email thdodds@brailleinstitute.org.

MARCH 12, MONDAY 1-2 P.M.

Estate Planning for Long-Term Care will be held at the Escondido Senior Center/Park Ave. Community Ctr., 210 E. Park Ave., Escondido 92025. Learn about documents you need to protect against impoverishment and to maximize long-term care benefits. Cost: \$8. To register, call Oasis at (760) 796-6020 and reference class #631.

MARCH 14, WEDNESDAY 9 A.M.-12 P.M.

A free senior health and wellness fair, *Spring Into Healthy Living*, will be held at the McGrath Family YMCA in Rancho San Diego, 12006 Campo Rd. Spring Valley 91978. Safety and preparedness workshops, resources, healthy screenings, and more. Free continental breakfast for those who RSVP in advance. Photo ID needed to enter YMCA. RSVP to (877) 926-8300.

MARCH 19, MONDAY 10-11:30 A.M.

A free seminar on how to get income from your home without moving, *Life Estate Gift Annuity Vs Reverse Mortgage*, will be held at the Grossmont Healthcare District Conference Center, 9001 Wakarusa

St., La Mesa 91942. RSVP to (800) 827-4277 or www.sharp.com/classes.

MARCH 21, WEDNESDAY 10-11 A.M.

The *Aging Process: What is Normal and What Is Not* will be held at the Clairemont Lutheran Church, 4271 Clairemont Mesa Blvd., San Diego 92117. Learn signs of normal and abnormal aging. Discuss ways to stay physically, socially, and emotionally fit. RSVP to (800) 827-4277 or www.sharp.com/classes.

MARCH 22, THURSDAY 3-4 P.M.

A mother-daughter duo will perform a *Music Through the Ages* show at the Crest Library, 105 Juanita Ln., El Cajon 92021. Enjoy singing, dancing, and storytelling, set to classic songs from the 1920's to the 1970's that every generation loves. For details, call (619) 442-7083 or email paula.soltero@sdcounty.ca.gov.

MARCH 26, MONDAY 1:30-3 P.M.

Come to the *Brain Fit Now!* workshop at the Serra Mesa-Kearny Mesa Library, 9005 Aero Dr., San Diego 92123. Learn tips and techniques to boost your brain health with easy lifestyle changes like nutrition advice, memory games, and stress management. For details, call (858) 573-1396.

ADVISORY COUNCIL

The AIS Advisory Council will meet at noon Monday, March 12 at AIS, 5560 Overland Ave, Third Floor, San Diego 92123. Meetings are open to the public.

SEND IN YOUR ITEMS

This monthly calendar welcomes your contributions. Just send items by the 1st of each month preceding the issue date to: sarah.jackson@sdcounty.ca.gov.



When You Don't Know Where To Turn Turn To Us!



Whether the need is for assessment, service referrals, or follow-up, with justy one phone call, you or a loved one can recieve help for:

- Seniors
- Disabled adults
- Abused adults
- Those requiring home-based care to prevent institutionalization

As a public agency, we provide comprehensive information and impartial assistance free of charge to county residents.

Since 1974, people have been turning to us at
Aging & Independence Services.
You can too.



Call Toll Free: **800-510-2020**
www.aging.sandiegocounty.gov

If calling from an area code out of
San Diego County, call: **(800) 339-4661**



Aging & Independence™ is published monthly by the County of San Diego Health and Human Services Agency, Aging & Independence Services. The purpose is to inform and recognize older adults, volunteers, and community partners.

Board of Supervisors
Greg Cox, District 1
Dianne Jacob, District 2
Kristin Gaspar, District 3
Ron Roberts, District 4
Bill Horn, District 5

Chief Administrative Officer
Helen Robbins-Meyer

Director, Health & Human Services Agency
Nick Macchione

Interim Director, Aging & Independence Services
Chuck Matthews

Editor, Sarah "Sally" Jackson
sarah.jackson@sdcounty.ca.gov

Calendar information is welcome and must be submitted before the 1st of the month preceding the issue date. Submit to: Editor *Aging & Independence*, P.O. Box 23217, San Diego, CA 92193. Or, submit by email to: sarah.jackson@sdcounty.ca.gov

Special permisson is not needed to reproduce any information contained in this publication with credits to *Aging & Independence*™

Return Service Requested

(800) 510-2020
San Diego, CA 92193-3217
P.O. Box 23217

AGING & INDEPENDENCE SERVICES

FIRST CLASS MAIL
PRESORTED
POSTAGE & FEES PAID
COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO
SAN DIEGO, CA
PERMIT NO. 571

LIVE WELL
SAN DIEGO
LIVEWELLSD.ORG

