



Senior Nutrition Programs: Promising Practices for Diverse Populations



Jon S. Corzine
Governor



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Dear Nutrition Service Provider:

It is my pleasure to present "Senior Nutrition Programs: Promising Practices for Diverse Populations," a directory of programs from across the country that have shown success in attracting and improving services for diverse populations. The directory is also available on our website at www.state.nj.us/health/senior/nutrition/index.shtml.

As the demographics of our nation change, it is becoming increasingly important that all social service providers, especially those operating nutrition programs, be willing and able to bridge the cultural divide and offer assistance to seniors of all backgrounds.

We know that a significant number of individuals from diverse population groups have a nutrition status that falls in the vulnerable-to-poor range. These individuals are at high risk of experiencing chronic health problems and social isolation. Seniors with limited English language skills have difficulty accessing services and advocating for themselves. We also know that nutrition programs have a positive impact on senior health and that the programs serve as important gateways to other aging services.

That is why we are excited to present this directory of programs that have launched innovative and creative strategies to increase participation by seniors of diverse populations. We hope that inside you find great ideas to further your services to your communities.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Heather Howard".

Heather Howard
Commissioner
New Jersey Department of Health and Senior Services

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Department of Health and Senior Services, Division of Aging and Community Services wishes to thank the following agencies that distributed the call for promising practices through their networks:

U.S. Administration on Aging (AoA)
Gerontological Nutritionists Network (GNN)
Meals on Wheels Association of America (MOWAA)
National Association of State Units on Aging (NASUA)
National Association of Nutrition and Aging Services Programs (NANASP)
National Resource Center on Nutrition, Physical Activity and Aging
State Unit on Aging Nutritionist Network (SUANN)

A very special thanks is also extended to all the agencies that submitted information on their innovative projects. Your hard work and commitment to serving diverse populations is evident in your wonderful programs.

We also wish to acknowledge the contributions of the Service to Diverse Populations Workgroup of the Comprehensive Mission Nutrition Planning Grant, including Angela Dubivsky (Chair), Padma Arvind, Jeri Beaumont, Joan Campanelli, Laila Cuane, Mary Davis, Sharon Graham, Jill Lambert, Joshua Lees, Dot McKnight, Cynthia Mosley, Joyce Nelson, Vernell Williams, and Shahla Wunderlichs. We are grateful for the support provided by NASUA's Technical Assistance Support Center (TASC). We also wish to thank Joe Carlin and Jean Lloyd from the U.S. Administration on Aging for their guidance.

This directory is a collaboration between the Division of Aging and Community Services of the New Jersey Department of Health and Senior Services and the Stockton Center on Successful Aging at the Richard Stockton College of New Jersey.

Division of Aging and Community Services
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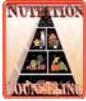
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This project is funded through an AoA Comprehensive Planning Grant.

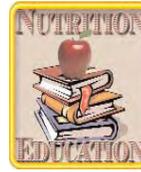
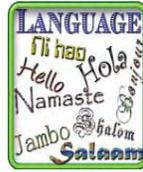
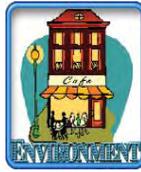
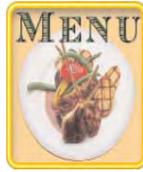
SERVICE TO DIVERSE POPULATIONS: SUCCESSFUL PROGRAM ELEMENTS

The 21 programs detailed in this directory have shown creativity and commitment in providing culturally sensitive services. A nationwide request was sent to agencies serving older adults, to submit programs that have demonstrated success in attracting and serving diverse populations.

Eight (8) program elements appear to be vital in attracting and serving diverse populations. The featured programs use one or more of these elements. Each element is represented with an icon. The elements and corresponding icons are:

Menu		Innovative, culturally sensitive menus/restaurants/taste-testing.
Environment		Culturally sensitive settings that are warm, welcoming; celebrations of cultural holidays.
Language		Multi-cultural languages spoken, multi-cultural staff/volunteers.
Health Promotion		Exercise, tai-chi, health screenings, emphasis on healthy lifestyles.
Nutrition Education		Innovative, engaging, delivered in participants' language, targeting food preferences of specific ethnic groups.
Nutrition Counseling		Complements wellness screenings, education; tailored to individual participants' needs.
Outreach		Ethnic media outlets, ambassadors, innovative partners.
Staff/volunteer		Multi-cultural, engaging and welcoming all cultures.

The grid on the next page details the elements used in each program. In addition, the icons are on the top of the first page for each entry.



Asian Meal Program

LifeCare Alliance

Columbus, Ohio

Target Population(s) Korean and Southeast Asian seniors.

Goal The Asian Meal Program is designed to assist Asian seniors, who may face social isolation, poor nutritional status and service barriers, to connect to resources.

Description A leader in the Asian community approached LifeCare Alliance, Columbus, OH, about the social isolation of Asian seniors in the community. LifeCare partnered with local Asian restaurants to provide meals to seniors. Every Monday, Wednesday and Friday meals are served at various Asian restaurants. Saturday and Sunday meals are rotated between restaurants. Families can join their aging parents on the weekends, paying for their own meals. This allows the opportunity to provide education for family members. Transportation, health education, and flu shots are all provided. People attend regularly and are invested in the program.

“Saturday and Sunday meals are offered at local Asian restaurants. Families can join their aging parents on the weekends, paying for their own meals.”

Setting This program has been implemented in several local Asian restaurants in urban and suburban Ohio. 1,023 meals are served per month to 85 participants.

Promotional/Outreach Primarily word-of-mouth and networking in the aging and Asian communities. Flyers are used to advertise the program.

Partnerships The Asian-American Community Service Council (ACSC) provides technical support, partnership and programming. ACSC also provides referrals to seniors and keeps the aging network apprised of resources targeted to the Asian community.

LifeCare Alliance

Cost/Source of Funding The program utilizes existing funding sources: 90% federal and 10% donations.

Barriers

Language was a barrier until the program employed a coordinator who speaks a Chinese dialect. He translates all information, and coordinates reservations, attendance and transportation.

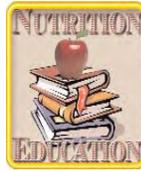
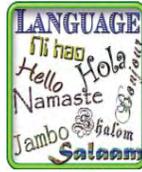
Evaluation

An annual client survey measures dietary quality and subjective quality of life factors. Surveys show participants are eating more fruits and vegetables, are now eating two meals a day and have an improved quality of life.

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Asian Pacific Senior Nutrition Services

Korean Women's Association (KWA)

Tacoma, Washington

Target Population(s) Korean, Filipino and Samoan seniors.

Goal The program aims to reach multicultural seniors who are isolated due to lack of transportation and language barriers, and to provide multicultural, multilingual community services.

Description This multicultural community agency provides meals to seniors from three different ethnic groups three days a week. Also, preventive health services such as screening on blood pressure, cholesterol and diabetes are offered. Services are translated into the appropriate language. Regular services provided by registered nurses help to monitor seniors' health. A registered dietician from the Korean Womens' Association (KWA) helps monitor the menu, gives talks on healthy eating and exercises, and trains the kitchen staff on sanitation and safe handling of food and storage. The program has two passenger vans that provide transportation for homebound seniors.

Setting Services are provided in a meal site hall in a non-profit community agency on an on-going basis. 1,080 meals are served per month to 270 people per month.

Promotional/Outreach The agency uses fliers, ethnic media and word-of-mouth.

Partnerships Pierce County and Tacoma Health Dept. provide the RN to monitor health and provide check ups such as cholesterol, blood pressure, diabetes, and offer health talks on various health topics. Pierce County Aging and Long Term Care provides technical support, funding and on-going program monitoring. Community organizations such as ethnic churches, local cultural groups, Senior Companion Program, Senior Aides Program, Retired and Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP), local high schools, Asian Pacific Cultural Center (APCC) and Asian Pacific Islander Coalition (APIC) are involved in outreach and programming.

“Preventive health services such as screening on blood pressure, cholesterol and diabetes are offered.”

Korean Women's Association (KWA)

Cost/Source of Funding Older Americans Act, donations.

Barriers The language barrier was addressed by hiring language appropriate staff. Participants wanted to celebrate their own cultural events, the program accomodated the participants by planning and celebrating their holiday events.

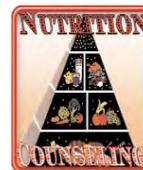
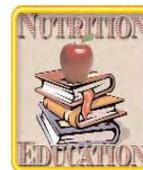
Evaluation An annual participant survey is given. Attendance has increased and seniors request the program to be held daily.

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BE WELL©: Exercise/Weight Management Program



Los Angeles County Area Agency on Aging

California

Target Population(s) Low income, African American, Hispanic, and Asian seniors with moderate and high nutrition risk scores and multiple chronic diseases.

Goal The goal of BE WELL© is to improve access to appropriate exercise and nutritional health education for low income, minority, older Americans at moderate and high nutrition risk due to multiple chronic diseases.

Description BE WELL© is an exercise and weight management program designed for seniors at moderate and high nutrition risk (as measured by the Nutrition Screening Initiative-NSI, a national tool for evaluating nutritional risk) who have multiple chronic diseases. The program is delivered for either 4 months at 2 sessions/week or for 6 months at 1 session/week. The average age of the participant is 74. Over 250 seniors have participated since inception in 2004. Seniors arrive at 9 a.m., listen to an hour-long nutrition/health lecture, exercise for an hour, then have lunch. The program collects pre and post weight and measurement data, conducts monthly blood pressure readings and one-on-one nutrition intervention at least twice during the program's duration.

"The program has received the 2008 NOMA (Network of Multicultural Aging) award for excellence in multicultural aging."

Setting The program is ongoing at 7 sites (including nutrition sites and churches) in an urban area. Three sites are bilingual (Spanish). Meal data is not collected; the vast majority of BE WELL© participants participate in the meal program. The BE WELL© program is held weekly, however, participants may come daily to the nutrition site.

Promotional/Outreach Seniors are referred by the Nutrition Screening Initiative. In addition, seniors involved are excellent ambassadors to spread the message.

Partnerships Food and Nutrition Management Services, Inc. provides program development, management and data collection. The City of Inglewood and the Los Angeles County AAA developed a task force to serve as an advisory group

Los Angeles County Area Agency on Aging

and seek funding for program continuation. Partners in Care provides the evaluation component. Community HMO provides funding and refers their clients for pilot programs.

Cost/Source of Funding \$50,000 for the program to serve 40 people. \$35,000 federal/HMO's and \$15,000 donations.

Barriers The program implemented a buddy system and telephone call reminders which improved attendance substantially.

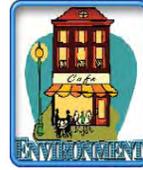
Evaluation BE WELL© has demonstrated impressive outcomes based on the evaluation of the programs. Examples include:

- ❖ Significant reduction in weight for many participants.
- ❖ Statistically improved diastolic and systolic blood pressure.
- ❖ Overall average weekly steps increased from 28,621 to 46,678.
- ❖ Improved senior fitness test scores. As many as 25% of participants improved in every fitness area.
- ❖ Medication adjustment and/or reduction.

Additional Information The program has received the 2008 NOMA (Network of Multicultural Aging) award for excellence in multicultural aging. DVD, marketing materials and training manuals are available at nominal fees.

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Bergen County Senior Activity Centers

Bergen County Division of Community Development

New Jersey

Target Population(s) Korean, Polish and Hispanic seniors. The United Center has Cuban, Columbian, Ecuadorian, Puerto Rican, Mexican, Dominican and other Hispanic seniors.

Goal The program is designed to provide the senior activity center experience in a culturally sensitive manner and to meet the social needs of the growing diverse ethnic populations in the community.

Description The Bergen County Division of Community Development operates 11 senior activity centers. As the population has become more diverse, the program has employed staff at 3 of the centers to meet the changing needs of the community. Korean speaking staff was hired at the Palisades Center (now 90% Korean) and the Southwest Senior Activity Center (60% Korean). Spanish speaking staff was hired at the United Center which is 70% Hispanic and is now also attracting Korean and African American seniors. Services include English as a Second Language (ESL) and citizenship classes, Korean folk dancing, calligraphy, and parties with Hispanic influence.

Setting The program is implemented in 3 senior activity centers in urban and suburban Bergen County. At the United Center, 950 meals are served per month to 140 participants; at Southwest Center, 1,112 meals are served per month to 150 participants; and at Palisades Park, 780 meals are served per month to 125 participants. The Southwest Center is located in a senior high rise building.

Promotional/Outreach Advertising in the various ethnic communities through outreach to churches and various Korean service agencies. Participation at senior expos. All outreach includes distribution of calendars and newsletters.

“Bergen County Special Services School District hired and funds a Korean speaking teacher for the Southwest Senior Center to teach ESL, Citizenship classes and music and choir.”

Bergen County Division of Community Development

Partnerships The Bergen County Special Services School District hired and funds a Korean speaking teacher for the Southwest Senior Center to teach ESL, citizenship classes, music and choir.

Cost/Source of Funding The program has not incurred additional costs by targeting these centers for specific ethnic populations. 90% federal and 10% county/municipal funding.

Barriers The program experienced challenges hiring staff who speak the languages of program participants. Staff addressed concerns and helped long-time program participants to welcome the new, younger and ethnically-diverse seniors. It is challenging to provide programming that is unique for each particular center. The food comes from a county wide contract, so all 11 centers have the same non-ethnic food.

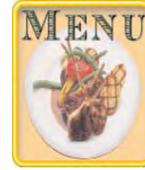
Evaluation Since appropriate staff in the centers with large minority populations have been hired, the number of minority participants has increased.

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Cambodian Congregate Meal Site Cambodian Collaborative



Human Services Association, Asian & Pacific Islander Older Adults
Task Force (APIOATP), & Los Angeles County AAA

California

Target Population(s) Cambodian seniors.

Goal The program aims to overcome the isolation of low income Cambodian senior citizens due to fear and/or mistrust of government programs, by providing authentic Cambodian meals, English as a Second Language (ESL) classes and additional activities.

Description This project is centered in Long Beach, CA where a high concentration of Cambodian immigrants reside (Los Angeles County has the largest population of Cambodian people outside of Cambodia). Due to past atrocities in Cambodia, these senior citizen immigrants have historically not trusted government services. This project has bridged the trust issue and provides authentic Cambodian food, ESL classes, activities, training, and an avenue to learn and explore services offered by the local community.

“This project has bridged the trust issue and provides authentic Cambodian food, ESL classes, activities, training, and an avenue to learn and explore services offered by the local communities.”

Setting The program is being implemented in a single nutrition site in an urban community; 600 meals are served per month to 50 participants.

Promotional/Outreach Many hours of outreach to the local Cambodian population, and months and years of gaining trust from the population.

Partnerships The Human Services Association provides the meals and staffing for the meal portion. APIOATF provides site staff for programming and outreach. Los Angeles County AAA provides coordination and funding for the project.

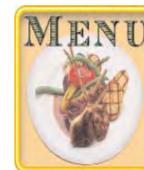
Human Services Association, Asian & Pacific Islander Older Adults Task Force (APIOATP), & Los Angeles County AAA

- Cost/Source of Funding** Estimated at 80% federal and 20% state.
- Barriers** Finding a chef who specializes in Cambodian cuisine is a challenge.
- Evaluation** Program has resulted in consistent attendance by 30 or more Cambodian seniors that did not attend any similar type program previously.

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Congregate Dining Program/Ethnic Onsite Providers

Chicago Department on Aging

Illinois

Target Population(s)	Puerto Rican, African American, Chinese, Korean, Laotian, Vietnamese, Italian American, Filipino, Japanese, Indian/Pakistan and Middle Eastern.
Goal	The goal of the project is to prevent isolation as a result of cultural barriers and reduce nutritional risk in designated sub-populations.
Description	The Golden Diners ethnic specific program provides culturally-sensitive meals and social services to seniors in underserved ethnic communities. At eight of the nutrition sites, meals are prepared on site by ethnic cooks.
Setting	The program is ongoing in multiple sites (including senior centers and nutrition sites) in an urban area. 15,000 meals are served per month to 900 participants.
Promotional/Outreach	The agency works with their aging network partners to host this program where it can benefit the most people. When sites were first opened, they advertised in community newspapers. Currently, the sites have designated the responsibility of promoting the program to their host agencies.
Partnerships	Social service agencies, religious institutions, the city parks departments and public housing facilities host meal sites in their buildings.
Cost/Source of Funding	\$700,000 per year: 100% federal.

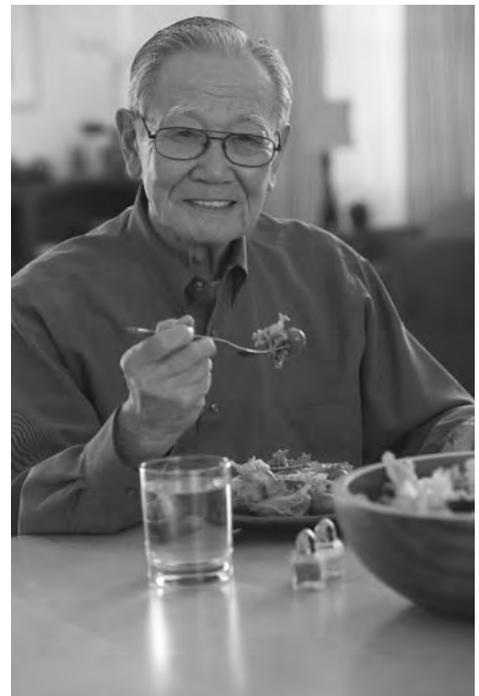
“The Golden Diners ethnic specific program provides culturally-sensitive meals and social services to seniors in underserved ethnic communities. At eight of the nutrition sites, meals are prepared on site by ethnic cooks.”

Chicago Department on Aging

- Barriers** Many of the participants were initially reluctant to provide their information for registration purposes.
- Evaluation** Monitor participation trends through weekly reports to evaluate effectiveness of program.

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Congregate Nutrition Programs for Ethnic Populations

Montgomery County Senior Nutrition Program

Maryland

Target Population(s)	Chinese, Hispanic, Jewish, Korean, Vietnamese, and other seniors.
Goal	Congregate nutrition sites are targeted to ethnic seniors offering meals and activities appropriate for each ethnic group, meeting the requirements of the Older Americans Act (OAA) Nutrition Programs, and using an open solicitation process with a pre-approved contract.
Description	<p>Montgomery County, MD, is one of the most ethnically diverse counties in the US. From the 1970s when the Senior Nutrition Program (SNP) began, traditional meals and kosher meals have been available. In 1990, a Korean group, concerned about the isolation of their elders, requested meals at a church where Korean volunteers would provide activities for the seniors. SNP developed a Letter of Agreement with the group to pay for meals, served by Korean volunteers who also conducted activities including nutrition education and physical fitness.</p> <p>An agreement was developed with a Korean restaurant for meals that met OAA requirements. The same year, a Vietnamese group requested a similar arrangement, followed by 2 more Korean and another Vietnamese group.</p> <p>These agreements were partnerships between ethnic organizations and SNP in which the ethnic organizations provided sites and site management and found restaurants to provide meals. Montgomery County SNP paid for meals and provided technical expertise including training for safe food handling, procedures for meal reservations, ordering meals, voluntary donations, recording participants, meals and activities.</p> <p>As the ethnic programs grew, contracts became necessary. An RFP produced 5 contracts for nutrition service providers. Contractors were required to provide nutrition sites, site management, food service agreements for meals using menus approved by an SNP dietitian, nutrition education and physical fitness programs, and other activities for seniors.</p> <p>However, additional contracts could not be issued until the RFP expired 5 years later. Then, an open solicitation process was developed to issue contracts to nutrition service providers.</p>

Montgomery County Senior Nutrition Program

The open solicitation uses a pre-approved contract that can be issued quickly, at any time during a 6-year period to applicants that showed they can meet contract requirements. RFP contract requirements were used for the open solicitation with one change: contractors kept donations which were used in calculating per meal reimbursement rates.

Six contracts were issued to organizations providing Chinese, Korean, Vietnamese or kosher meals. Contracting in this manner is cost-effective. Most staff are volunteers; Asian organizations get meals from restaurants and can negotiate a lower cost per meal than the SNP could. When contractors keep voluntary donations, participants are more committed to making donations for meals provided by their own organizations.

With traditional RFP contracts, there was no growth. The open solicitation process increased minority senior participation by 50% and the number of meals served doubled. The open solicitation process was so successful that when it expired, it was refreshed and reissued. Today, ethnic sites and minority participants exceed traditional sites and non-minority participants.

Setting

The ongoing program is offered in multiple sites and restaurants in urban and rural areas of Montgomery County. Approximately 5,000 meals are served per month to 1,800 participants.

“Montgomery County Senior Nutrition Program received two National awards for the ethnic nutrition programs: from the National Association of Counties (2005), and the National Association of Area Agencies on Aging (2006).”

Montgomery County Senior Nutrition Program

Promotional/Outreach	Ethnic contractors promote the project to their ethnic seniors. Popularity of the program promoted its growth to more ethnic groups.
Partnerships	Each ethnic group contractor is a partner with the SNP. The SNP provides the funding to assist the contractors in managing the nutrition site(s).
Cost/Source of Funding	The overall cost of the project was \$325,000: \$207,000 federal, \$43,000 State, and \$75,000 from donations.
Barriers	Language barriers for the SNP to communicate with seniors were addressed by having contractors' staff manage the sites. Problems include finding spaces for nutrition sites; finding restaurants to provide ethnic meals at low cost; training ethnic seniors about safe food handling; obtaining documentation of invoices (registrations, number of meals/person) and inadequate funding to meet growing needs.
Evaluation	<p>The program evaluation consists of a survey distributed annually to participants that includes two program measures to achieve overall health outcomes: (1) Are people eating better and (2) Do they have more contact with other people since they began participating in the program.</p> <p>In addition, participants complete a customer satisfaction survey regarding meals, activities and social environment. Results indicate that 80-90% of participants eat better, have more social contacts, and are highly satisfied with the program.</p>
Additional Information	Montgomery County Senior Nutrition Program received two National awards for the ethnic nutrition programs: from the National Association of Counties (2005), and the National Association of Area Agencies on Aging (2006).

Montgomery County Senior Nutrition Program

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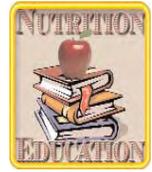
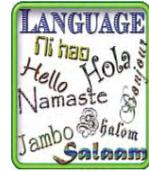
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Hispanic Nutrition Education

Catholic Charities of Fairfield County, Inc.

Connecticut

Target Population(s) Hispanic seniors.

Goal The goal of the program is to provide nutrition education that is accessible to minority program participants and eliminate/reduce communication barriers.

Description The program presents six new nutrition education topics each year, and information is updated throughout the year as new resources become available. Spanish Heart bingo is offered several times throughout the year to teach nutrition information in a fun and interactive manner. Heart Bingo, developed by Food and Health Communications Inc., is in addition to the regular nutrition education program. Food samples that are healthy, inexpensive and convenient (along with product and purchasing information) are distributed in two sessions per year.

Setting The program is offered in multiple suburban nutrition sites. 945 meals are served per month to 45 participants.

Promotional/Outreach A list of topics is developed at the beginning of each program year. Nutrition sites post the nutrition educational topic for each program as they are scheduled.

Cost/Source of Funding \$500.00 per year: 60% federal and 40% state.

Barriers It is challenging, given time constraints, to find new nutrition information that is free, specific to the elderly, current and available in both Spanish and English.

“Spanish Heart bingo is offered several times throughout the year to teach nutrition information in a fun and interactive manner.”

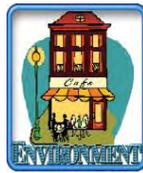
Catholic Charities of Fairfield County, Inc.

Evaluation Participants are enthusiastic about receiving and having access to user-friendly nutrition information.

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Inclusion of Diverse Populations

Walter Reed Senior Center, Office of Senior Adult Programs

Virginia

Target Population(s) Vietnamese, Ethiopian and Eritrean seniors.

Goal The goal is to provide on-going and sustainable services for immigrant seniors in the community.

Description As early as 1982, a Vietnamese staff person was added to the senior center and assigned the role of going into the community to visit and describe the senior center and its programs to Vietnamese seniors in Arlington, VA. Before too long, enough Vietnamese-speaking seniors arrived at the center to make it possible to develop educational programs in that language. The center director also found Vietnamese-speaking staff from other community agencies willing to provide educational programs in health, safety, legal issues and other topics of interest. In addition, activities that transcend the language barrier (such as billiards, exercise, trips, arts and crafts) were implemented in order to encourage the the Vietnamese-speaking seniors to better integrate into the senior center community.

“People need to know they are wanted and that welcome must be sincere. Programs in participants' native language not only serve to stimulate and educate, but also send the message that the center is their home as well.”

Our success in serving the Vietnamese community has served as a model for outreach and service to other immigrant groups in our multicultural community, particularly Ethiopian and Eritrean seniors. The director has found resources in the community to offer programs in the Amharic language several times a month.

Our experience suggests that several factors are essential in serving a diverse population. First and foremost is a welcoming environment. People need to know they are wanted and that welcome must be sincere. Programs in participants' native language not only serve to stimulate and educate, but also send the message that the center is their home as well.

Another highly effective way to attract and serve ethnic seniors is by hiring staff from that culture. Such staff serve as a liaison to the programs, a source of information, and a reassuring presence to newcomers. Volunteers often function in that role when staff cannot be hired.

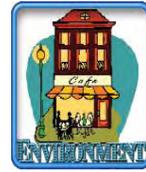
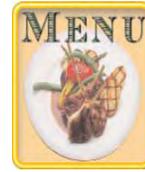
Setting The program is ongoing in a single, urban, senior center/nutrition site. Approximately 900 meals served per month to all participants, 25 participants are Vietnamese and Ethiopian.

Walter Reed Senior Center, Office of Senior Adult Programs

Promotional/Outreach	The community agencies that provide programs and services at Walter Reed serve as contacts to a wider community and spread the word about the program. Staff also attends community meetings at retirement homes, civic associations and other locations.
Partnerships	<p>Arlington County departments, such as the Health Department, Area on Aging and Human Services provide monthly blood pressure monitoring and wellness lectures; programs by a mental health therapist; information and counseling on Medicare; real estate tax relief; and access to farm market coupons and fans in the summer.</p> <p>The Ethiopian/Eritrean Community Center provides monthly wellness lectures. It also provides transportation to free health clinics and free mammography centers.</p>
Cost/Source of Funding	County and municipal funds represent the major source of support for this program (70%). Other sources include federal/state (15%) and donations (15%).
Barriers	The baby boomers do not consider themselves seniors; they do not read literature targeted to seniors nor do they take part in senior center activities. They resist being considered seniors and believe our programs are meant for a frail and vulnerable population which does not fit them. We have not found the best way to reach the younger, more active seniors.
Evaluation	Specific programs are evaluated formally, other feedback is obtained in quarterly town hall meetings.

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Introduction of Asian Indian Meals

Middlesex County Area Agency on Aging

New Jersey

Target Population(s) Asian Indian seniors.

Goal The aim is to offer ethnic meals appealing to Asian Indians based on the vegetarian cuisine offered in the Middlesex Senior Nutrition Program, and through menu design and coordination with the Asian Indian seniors attending the program.

Description Six of the eight meal sites are located in senior centers that have daily activities. Participants can choose from regular and vegetarian menus. Currently, many Asian Indians come to the centers for activities, but not necessarily for meals. In an effort to entice Asian Indians to attend the meal program, the existing vegetarian menu has been revamped to include Asian Indian meals at least 2-3 times per week. Since then, many of the plain vegetarian menu items have been transformed into Asian Indian selections. The Middlesex Senior Nutrition Program has worked closely with several different Asian Indian groups at four sites. Seniors are asked for input on menu items and participate in taste-testing. The agency selected six dishes, then tested the Indian meals and asked for input regarding spices. The program's caterer helped to regularly incorporate the new entrees into the menu. The program continues to work with Asian Indian seniors and the food service vendor to offer meals that are enticing to Asian Indian clients as well as all participants.

“Seniors are asked for input on menu items and participate in taste-testing. The agency selected six dishes, tested the Indian meals and asked for input regarding spices.”

Setting The Asian Indian meals are offered in all nutrition sites in mostly suburban locations, on an on-going basis. Approximately 7,200 meals are served per month to 400 participants (30 Asian Indians).

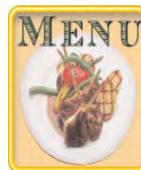
Middlesex County Area Agency on Aging

- Promotional/Outreach** The staff of the Middlesex Senior Nutrition Program meet with Asian Indian seniors at each location and request input for menu items. Taste-testing is also provided. Participants provide word of mouth or act as ambassadors.
- Partnerships** Asian Indian seniors who attend each nutrition site are partners. Senior centers hold several different ethnic celebrations per year, which attract diverse populations.
- Cost/Source of Funding** There was no additional cost to the nutrition program to introduce Asian Indian food to the menu: 53.6% federal, 14.66% state, 9.33% county and 12.41% donations.
- Barriers** The most significant barrier is adjusting the seasoning of the food to the taste of the majority of the Asian Indian seniors. The program has been trying to encourage a wider diversity of Asian Indians to participate and enjoy meals with seniors who regularly attend.
- Evaluation** There has been an increase in attendance at the centers that serve Asian Indian meals. The number of Asian Indian meals served is slowly growing. The program continues to work with Asian Indian seniors and the vendor for new menu ideas and flavors to appeal to Asian Indian taste.

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Jene Wah Chinese Senior Center Nutrition Program

San Joaquin County Area Agency on Aging

California

Target Population(s) Chinese seniors.

Goal The program is designed to increase participation of Chinese seniors and improve their nutrition through the provision of culturally appropriate food.

Description Beginning in 1993, the AAA partnered with the Jene Wah Senior Center to provide a traditional Chinese meal that met the nutritional requirements of the Older Americans Act (OAA). Meals were initially prepared by a local restaurant, and delivered daily to Jene Wah. Due to the overwhelming response, Jene Wah successfully expanded their small kitchen, and now prepares approximately 1,400 meals each month in-house. Chinese seniors enjoy the center, which depicts Chinese culture and heritage, and is staffed by multi-lingual paid and volunteer staff. The nutrition program is a magnet for seniors, drawing them in for meals, recreation, exercise and social services available at the center. Their participation improves their overall health and sense of belonging to a larger community.

“Chinese seniors enjoy the center, which depicts Chinese culture and heritage, and is staffed by multi-lingual paid and volunteer staff. The nutrition program is a magnet for seniors, drawing them in for meals, recreation, exercise and social services available at the center.”

Setting The program operates in a single Senior Center Nutritional site in an urban community; 1,400 meals are served per month to 65 participants.

Promotional/Outreach The senior center and the AAA widely advertised the service when it was new. The quality of the food, and the supportive environment of multi-lingual staff and volunteers, coupled with the additional supportive services, has resulted in the service literally selling itself.

San Joaquin County Area Agency on Aging

Partnerships The Jene Wah Board of Directors provides fundraising to continually improve the quality of services provided; and the San Joaquin County Board of Supervisors approves contracts to provide OAA services.

Cost/Source of Funding Program costs: 75% federal, 10% donations and 15% fundraising.

Barriers Initially, it was important for the AAA to work closely with the restaurant and Jene Wah to ensure all nutrition requirements were met. The AAA nutritionist worked very closely with Jene Wah to educate and provide food options that met requirements, but maintained the flavor and variety the seniors desired.

Evaluation The AAA conducts a formal monitoring visit semi-annually and regular unannounced drop-in visits. Consistently, seniors are observed enjoying their food in a well-lit, comfortable environment. Seniors indicate they enjoy the food, and they appreciate the additional services they can receive, including exercise programs, while at the congregate site.

Additional Information Jene Wah is an excellent example of public/private partnership, designed to meet the needs of the senior population.

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Outreach to Elderly Refugees

Senior Resources of Guilford

North Carolina

Target Population(s) Elderly refugees living in Guilford County, NC, including, but not limited to: Vietnamese, Montagnards (an ethnic group native to Vietnam), and individuals from the former Soviet Union and the former Republic of Yugoslavia. There are roughly 30,000-40,000 refugees, asylees, immigrants and undocumented immigrants residing in North Carolina.

Goal The program is designed to integrate refugee elders into mainstream activities, provide them with a nutritious congregate meal and offer supplemental activities to support those who desire to become naturalized citizens.

Description Part-time bilingual staff coordinate programs and activities such as educational presentations, health and nutrition education/screenings, recreational activities and field trips. In addition to these regular weekly activities, separate monthly meetings of refugee groups feature ethnically appropriate meals that have been certified by a registered dietician to meet the standards mandated for congregate nutrition (these meals are provided by area restaurants). English as a Second Language (ESL) and citizenship/civics classes are offered weekly for participants who desire to become naturalized citizens. Interpretation, translation and transportation services are also provided.

Setting The program is offered in multiple senior centers and nutrition sites in urban areas in Guilford County. 206 meals are served per month to 82 participants.

Promotional/Outreach Following initial meetings with leaders from the targeted communities, outreach events were held for each refugee group at either the Greensboro Senior Center, or at a facility that was a comfortable meeting place for the community. These outreach events included recreational activities, an informational presentation about Senior Resources of Guilford's outreach program and an ethnically-appropriate meal.

“Educating mainstream participants about the refugee experience helped ensure that senior center and community nutrition staff and participants were welcoming of refugee participants.”

Senior Resources of Guilford

The availability of interpretation and transportation services was an integral part of the initial strategy.

Partnerships Funding is provided through a federal grant administered by the North Carolina Office of Refugee Resettlement. Local refugee resettlement agencies (Lutheran Family Services of the Carolinas, World Relief, Jewish Family Services) and the University of North Carolina at Greensboro's Center for New North Carolinians provides technical assistance related to reaching out to various refugee communities.

Cost/Source of Funding Ranges from \$40,000-\$95,000 annually. 100% federal.

Barriers Hiring bilingual staff to coordinate activities was necessary to overcome language barriers. Hiring a driver to provide roundtrip transportation also helped to ensure regular participation. Educating mainstream participants about the refugee experience helped ensure that senior center and community nutrition staff and participants were welcoming of refugee participants.

Evaluation Senior Resources of Guilford's Outreach to Elderly Refugees is monitored by the North Carolina Office of Refugee Resettlement. Senior Resources acknowledges success by celebrating the number of refugee seniors annually who are able to achieve naturalization.

Additional Information The success of the outreach to elderly refugees has led to outreach efforts being extended to other immigrant populations, notably the elderly Korean community.

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Project Senior Nutrition/Fitness Program

Erie County Senior Services

New York

Target Population(s) Native Americans, African Americans, Hispanic, and Polish seniors.

Goal The goal of the Senior Nutrition/Fitness Program is to enhance the quality of life for senior residents of Erie County. The objective of this holistic program concept of combining nutrition and exercise is to increase social capital while achieving health care cost containment and avoidance or delay of morbidity and mortality.

Description Project Senior Nutrition Fitness Program has three major components of wellness: diet, activity, and socialization. The decision was made to implement regular and on-going group exercise programs in conjunction with the congregate dining program. The name of the congregate program was changed from Nutrition Program for the Elderly to Stay Fit Lunch. Lunch is served after the exercise program. Trained fitness volunteers lead the exercise program.

“Through a partnership with RSVP, the program has successfully recruited senior volunteers and utilized the train-the-trainer concept to sustain and expand the program.”

Setting The program is ongoing in multiple sites (including nutrition sites, senior centers, and churches) in urban, suburban, and rural areas of Erie County. Approximately 30,000 meals served per month to 2,000-2,500 participants.

Promotional/Outreach Outreach efforts include regular articles in the Erie County Senior Services' quarterly newsletter, and in other publications targeted to older adults, and regular promotional efforts on radio and television outlets. Volunteers also promote the program in their churches and neighborhoods.

Partnerships A creative solution was needed due to fiscal constraints. Limited funding for senior fitness programming meant that only one person, employed as a program coordinator, is responsible for implementing and maintaining fitness activities at all fifty senior centers located throughout the county. The

Erie County Senior Services

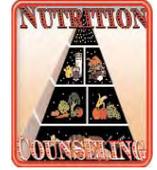
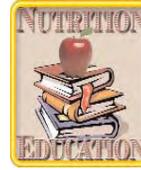
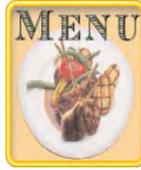
lifeblood of the program is provided by fitness trainer volunteers. Through a partnership with the Retired and Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP), the program has successfully recruited senior volunteers and utilized the train-the-trainer concept to sustain and expand the program. There are currently 19 fitness program volunteers conducting 21 weekly group exercise sessions at centers throughout the county.

Blue Cross/Blue Shield and Independent Health have assisted with the program.

Cost/Source of Funding	The annual program cost is approximately \$45,000; funds are primarily federal (89%), with 11% provided by private/foundation sources.
Barriers	This innovative program helped to remove barriers for effective fitness programming by enlisting RSVP volunteers as fitness program leaders.
Evaluation	Pre and post program evaluations are currently being conducted. Results are being entered into a computer data base for future analysis. In addition, participant survey results overwhelmingly indicate a high level of program satisfaction, better mobility, increased strength, and improved feelings of well-being.
Additional Information	Erie County can provide all the necessary information to others wishing to implement this turnkey, cost saving program.

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Project S.I.E.N. (Seniors Involved in Exercise & Nutrition)

Alamo Area Council of Government's Bexar AAA

Texas

Target Population(s) Mexican American seniors.

Goal The goal of Project S.I.E.N. is to prevent or delay the onset of type II diabetes among Hispanic elders through a comprehensive, culturally-sensitive, community-based program. Participants in this lifestyle modification program attempt to achieve an overall 7 percent weight loss and at least 150 minutes of physical activity per week.

Description Project S.I.E.N. combines low carbohydrate meals, nutrition education/lifestyle modification training with health screening/monitoring and a physical activity program in a community-based setting. The program includes comprehensive health screenings (including laboratory measurements for glucose, a lipid panel that includes total cholesterol, HDL cholesterol, LDL cholesterol and HDL/LDL ratio screening, and blood pressure screening), education, and health referrals to a senior population that is underserved and at risk. This program helps San Antonio in its efforts to meet the Healthy People 2010 goal to eliminate health disparities among different segments of the population.

“Participants in this lifestyle modification program attempt to achieve an overall seven percent weight loss and at least 150 minutes of physical activity per week.”

Project S.I.E.N. brings services to seniors in a community-based setting, but does not offer medication as an intervention. The services are tailored to the scope and budget appropriate for a senior center as opposed to a health care facility. Because of high transportation costs, lack of accessible transportation, and cultural barriers to traditional health care, the audience for this project, low-income Hispanic seniors, have not and would not be able to participate in a clinical program such as the one conducted by the Diabetes Prevention Program Research Group.

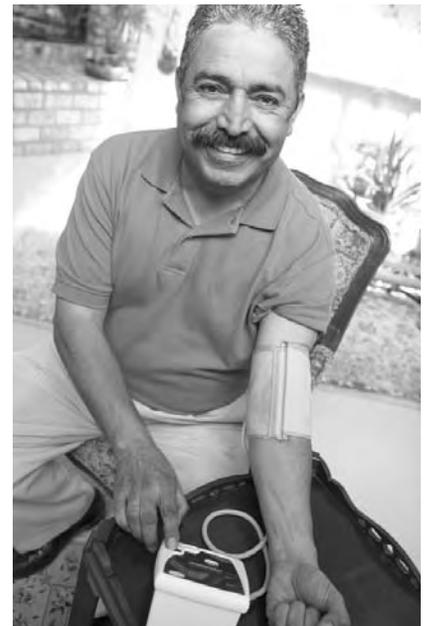
Setting The program is ongoing in multiple sites (including nutrition sites and churches) in an urban area; 3,450 meals are served per month to 115 participants.

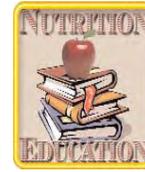
Alamo Area Council of Government's Bexar AAA

Promotional/Outreach	Seniors were identified and recruited through the senior nutrition centers located in a designated zip code.
Partnerships	The Texas Diabetes Institute (TDI) provides the comprehensive health screening.
Cost/Source of Funding	\$200,000 per year. 66% federal and 34% in-kind.
Barriers	When language and literacy barriers were encountered, classes were modified for low literacy groups and offered in Spanish and English. The program director worked closely with the site managers to plan classes around regularly scheduled senior center activities to avoid conflicts.
Evaluation	Increase in participant knowledge of the relationship between nutrition, exercise and diabetes management; increased adherence to lifestyle modifications that reduce risk factors of diabetes.
Additional Information	Project S.I.E.N. received a 2007 Innovation Award from the National Association of Development Organizations (NADO).

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Project Sure Feet

IONA Senior Services

Washington D.C.

Target Population(s) Washington DC is a highly diverse city, with 20+ ethnicities and great differences in race, ethnicity and class. Ethnic groups include Middle Eastern (Lebanese, Iranian, Iraqi, North African, Moroccan), South American (Brazilian, Columbian, Peruvian), Mexican, African American, French Canadian, and Central European.

Goal The Sure Feet Project aims to utilize Tai Chi practices for health/nutrition education, increasing strength, reducing falls, building a healthier attitude, and to increase visits/participation in congregate meal programs.

The program strives to increase socialization among its diverse participants by decreasing prejudices and diminishing cultural and class differences as a way to build friendships and promote a common understanding about health and well being.

Description Following the meal, Sure Feet Seniors meet once a week for a 20 minute talk on health, followed by Tai Chi practices. The Tai Chi practice uses peer-to-peer partner coaching, which builds social networks as seniors share ideas, advice and friendship.

Setting The program is ongoing in multiple sites (including nutrition sites and churches) in an urban and suburban area. 625-670 meals are served monthly.

Promotional/Outreach Dear Friend of IONA ... letter of invitation. Senior to senior recruitment, after weekly demos of Tai Chi. Outreach materials include: poster of photos showing seniors doing Tai Chi, photo of instructor/his bio, flyers. Sign Up Sheet at congregate meal site for 3 weeks before program begins.

Partnerships Adas Israel Congregation provides the meeting space. Tikkun Olam Women's Foundation provides seed money. George Washington University Physical Therapy Department provides the researchers. IONA Senior Services health professionals provide mini-lectures and coordination of the program. Partners also include their Tai Chi instructor, and Gene Cohen, MD, PhD, a researcher and lecturer on the active mature mind.

Cost/Source of Funding The program is funded at \$12,500, most is in-kind staff services. A private foundation provided \$3,500, and the university researchers provided in-kind staff.

IONA Senior Services

Barriers The coordination of schedules was challenging. University research staff requested afternoon/evening schedules; seniors wanted mornings. Compromised with offering home visit assessments afternoon/early evening, and project activities early afternoon. To make the transition easy from lunch to exercise, we added the mini-lecture to our format, and that was especially useful for integrating a range of socialization and health-nutrition goals into a holistic program concept.

Evaluation Home assessment by health professionals/researchers to screen for obstacles/risk of falling, pre and post measure of senior balance capacity and pre and post surveys. Focus group discussion post project to explore and identify common ground about important beliefs, including recalling moments of becoming friends thru Tai Chi. Feedback indicates an increase in well being and friendship.

Results:

- ❖ 98% of participants report project as positive, would like to do again, would encourage other seniors to participate
- ❖ 86% of participants indicate learning about balance, strength, bone/muscle nutrition
- ❖ 82% of participants identify building 2 or more balance skills
- ❖ Post balance assessment indicates validity of project design

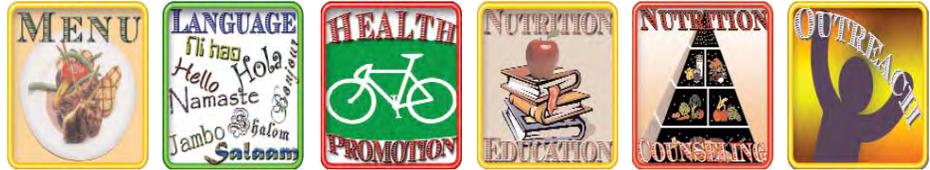
Additional Information

“Now the groups co-mingle and participants have opened their minds and are more relaxed with individuals of different cultures.”

The socialization and interactions which developed suggest improved cognitive function and a further need to explore the meditation aspects of Tai Chi, combined with a specific partnering strategy. Until the Tai Chi program began, participants with similar backgrounds would congregate together. Now the groups co-mingle and participants have opened their minds and are more relaxed with individuals of different cultures. These deeper interactions are consistent with ongoing research by Dr. Cohen, who proposes that positive mental changes can occur among people 60-80 years of age.

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Senior Adults Program

Milwaukee Christian Center (MCC)

Wisconsin

Target Population(s) Southeast Asian seniors, specifically Hmong and Laotian. The county has the third largest population of Hmong and Lao refugees in the nation.

Goal The design of the program is to provide Southeast Asian older adults access to nutritious foods and an understanding of how diet and other lifestyle activities impact their health.

Description Over ten years ago, with support from the Milwaukee County Department on Aging, MCC began serving the Hmong community. Today, MCC's Senior Center is the only site in Milwaukee that provides comprehensive support services to elderly Southeast Asian immigrants and refugees.

MCC's Senior Adults Program receives daily mainstream catered meals. In 2006 MCC acquired funding from the Cudahy Foundation and the Miller Brewing Company Employee Fund to expand nutrition services. Now, three ethnic meals are prepared on-site each week in addition to the catered meals. 80% of the seniors choose the ethnic meals. Traditional Hmong and Lao recipes are prepared according to nutritional guidelines that increase fresh produce and limit fat and sodium intake.

The meal program is staffed by Southeast Asians to eliminate language barriers, and participants are solicited for input. The meals are more appealing to the Asian seniors and are more cost effective. On-site preparation reduces costs associated with transportation and the use of disposables. Many items are purchased from local grocers, benefiting the community.

This core program is supported by wrap-around education and medical services, including the following:

1. **Other nutrition services:** Seniors have access to MCC's garden plot where they can grow fresh produce, and they are assisted in obtaining farmer's market vouchers.
2. **General screening and referral services:** These services are designed to address individual needs. Annual registration includes a nutrition questionnaire and information about health conditions and emergency contacts. Seniors are referred to MCC's food pantry or other community services. With participant permission, a list of seniors who suffer from hypertension,

Milwaukee Christian Center (MCC)

diabetes, or other health conditions is provided to the clinic nurse, and these seniors are targeted for services and specialized health education.

3. Medical and wellness services:

- ❖ Medical clinic: A community nurse provides basic health screenings, immunizations, health counseling, I & R; works with case managers to conduct home visits, assist seniors with medication compliance, and follow-up with physicians.
- ❖ Health education: Monthly presentations by a dietician and other health providers focus on nutrition, cancer detection and treatment, hypertension, diabetes control, etc. Special consideration is given to helping Southeast Asian seniors understand western medical concepts and practices. The physical causes of disease, the purpose of medical screenings, and the nature of chronic illness is explained. The role of nutrition in preventing and managing health conditions is emphasized in these presentations.
- ❖ Wellness activities: Weekly fitness activities include chair aerobics and walking groups.

“Traditional Hmong and Lao recipes are prepared according to nutritional guidelines that increase fresh produce and limit fat and sodium intake. The core meal program is supported by wrap-around education and medical services. Seniors have access to MCC’s garden plot where they can grow fresh produce, and they are assisted in obtaining farmer’s market vouchers.”

Milwaukee Christian Center (MCC)

Setting The program is operated at a single nutrition center in an urban setting and serves an average of 674 meals per month. The unduplicated monthly client count is approximately 60 individuals. Over 80% of participants in the program are Southeast Asian.

Promotional/Outreach Because this is a close-knit community, and less than 10% of elderly participants can read in any language, word-of-mouth and personal referrals are the best promotional tools. MCC staff network with other agencies serving the Southeast Asian community, and a contract with Hmong ABC Radio enables us to broadcast monthly health education information in Hmong and to promote the program in the larger community.

Partnerships This project builds upon a contract with the Milwaukee County Department on Aging, which provides partial support for meals and a recreation/socialization program. Additional partners include: Aurora Healthcare, Alzheimer's Association, City of Milwaukee Health Department, Hmong Peace Academy/Milwaukee Public Schools, Lee Medical Clinic, Prevent Blindness of Wisconsin, St. Luke's Health Care, University of Wisconsin- Milwaukee and Visiting Nurse Association which provides the above programming.

The Senior Adults program director is a member of the Milwaukee Area Refugee Coalition (MARC) which coordinates services to refugees from all ethnic and cultural groups. She is also actively involved in the Elderly Limited English Proficiency Workgroup (LEP), which focuses on identifying resources to serve elderly immigrants and refugees and establishing best practices for serving LEP adults.

Cost/Source of Funding Annual program costs of \$88,000 are supported as follows: 34% from county/municipal (MCDA), 34% from private/foundation sources, 30% from The United Way, and 2% from fundraising events. In addition, expansion funds of \$30,000 have been received.

Barriers Additional funding has ended. New funds will be sought from other sources. Funding for on-going programs is more difficult to obtain than for new projects. We continue to seek additional funding and educate funders about the ongoing need for and success of this program.

Milwaukee Christian Center (MCC)

It is difficult for funders and others to understand the multiple barriers faced by people from other cultures and the need for bicultural staff. Culturally competent staff may have educational or professional deficits that require additional training.

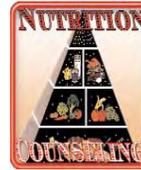
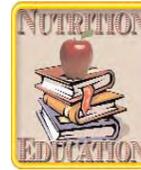
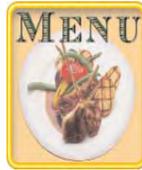
Evaluation Surveys are not suitable for this population, so we rely on behavioral measures and one-on-one feedback. All meal site participants are registered annually, provided with a badge, and the information is entered into a central database. Participation is measured by actual attendance for the meals and all other activities. Each meal is rated for quality on a numerical scale (1-5) based on a random sampling of meal participants. Staff have regular contact with participants, who provide continuous feedback. Attendance records are monitored for changing patterns of attendance.

Additional Information The Asian meal program is integrated into the larger meal site program. The cost of the additional meals was largely, but not entirely, covered by an additional \$30,000 in private funding. Our long-term goal is to prepare all meals on-site, ensuring both quality control and cost effectiveness.

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Senior Nutrition Services

Volunteers of America

Minnesota

Target Population(s) Korean, Hmong, Samoli, Oromo and Hispanic seniors.

Goal The program is designed to reach out to ethnic communities by building community partnerships and to provide culturally appropriate meals to isolated older adults who may be at high nutrition risk.

Description There is one Hmong site operating twice a week. Meals are cooked on site and are traditional Hmong food. Staff of the Hmong Elder Connection provide nutrition counseling, nutrition education and referrals. The Samoli program meets in two different locations a few times a week. The Samoli program offers traditional ethnic meals and nutrition education, counseling and referrals in the Samoli language. Traditional Oromo food is offered at least once a month. Another site is for Hispanic seniors, traditional ethnic food is offered weekly. Program participants are able to access additional services provided at these sites and develop a support system with their peers.

Setting The program is offered in multiple senior centers and nutrition sites in urban areas; 3,515 meals are served per month to 310 participants.

Partnerships Partners include Hmong Elder Connection, Oromo Community of Minnesota, Korean Service Center and internal staff of diverse backgrounds. Community partnerships cannot be stressed enough as they are the key to success.

“The Samoli program offers traditional ethnic meals and nutrition education, counseling and referrals in the Samoli language. Traditional Oromo food is offered at least once a month.”

Cost/Source of Funding \$130,000 per year: 65% federal, 21% state and 14% donations.

Volunteers of America

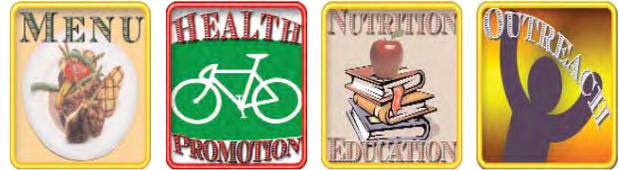
Barriers The language barrier is the biggest challenge. Volunteer translators were engaged from within community partners to address this barrier. The high cost of ethnic meals is also a challenge, as is working with some populations regarding the concepts of donations and volunteering.

Evaluation Participants have expressed satisfaction with the food and appreciation for the opportunity to socialize and access other services.

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Senior Filipino Congregate Dining Program

Meals on Wheels of Solano County

California

Target Population(s)	Filipino seniors.
Goal	The goal of Meals on Wheels of Solano County is to offer two congregate dining sites for Filipino seniors serving Filipino cuisine.
Description	Vallejo, CA has a large Filipino population with a need for expanded senior services. The Solano County program partners with a popular local Filipino restaurant and a nutritionist to provide healthy, nutritious Filipino lunches; designed to help prevent diabetes, decrease obesity, and maintain the cultural aspects of a nutritional meal. The program includes nutritional and exercise education, basic health checks, recreational activities and opportunities to socialize. The Filipino seniors enjoy socializing with their peers and participating in activities.
Setting	The program is offered in a suburban community center and a senior housing complex, serving 350 meals per month to 40 participants.
Promotional/Outreach	Flyers in the Filipino language have been distributed to various Filipino community service groups, churches, senior apartments and congregate sites. The program also depends on word of mouth.

“The Solano County program partners with a popular local Filipino restaurant and a nutritionist to provide healthy, nutritious Filipino lunches; designed to help prevent diabetes, decrease obesity, and maintain the cultural aspects of a nutritional meal.”

Partnerships The program is offered in partnership with the Area Agency on Aging of Napa/Solano which provided an outreach coordinator who held a six-week program entitled "Eat Right and Move More." Kaiser Permanente provides basic health checks once a month. Also, various health educators regularly serve as guest speakers, and Filipino service organizations provide entertainment activities.

Cost/Source of Funding 65% federal funds (Older American Act), 30% private (Kaiser Permanente) and 5% community sources.

Barriers Language barriers in communicating with the participants.

Evaluation Client surveys are conducted regarding the Filipino menu and overall meal program.

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Somerset County Cultural Connections Initiative

Somerset County Office on Aging

New Jersey

Target Population(s)	Asian, East Indian, Latino and African American seniors.
Goal	The Somerset County Nutrition Program promotes cultural diversity through cultural readiness at senior centers. The goal is to create a welcoming attitude toward people of all ethnic groups and make all feel valued and represented through activities and meals served.
Description	<p>The Cultural Connections Initiative is a five-pronged approach that encompasses menu and activity enhancements, culturally diverse health promotion opportunities, the provision of nutrition education and selected materials and programs offered in multiple languages. The menu enhancement includes meat-based entrees offered with corresponding vegetarian entrees.</p> <p>The activity enhancement includes intergenerational and multicultural events and activities. The multicultural activity must represent the ethnic population in the surrounding community of the center. Managers must develop an activity plan using the Internet to identify cultural holidays and cultural celebrations to include in the activity plan.</p>

“Our goal is to create a welcoming attitude toward people of all ethnic groups and make all feel valued and represented through activities and meals served.”

Somerset County employs an exercise physiologist who plans, implements, and evaluates health promotion programs that include yoga and Tai Chi, which have special appeal to Asian seniors.

Examples of multicultural events and activities are: Chinese New Year celebration, Tai Chi and yoga, Divali and Happy Holi celebrations, Indian Cultural Day hosted by an Asian Indian ladies organization, Black History Month educational programs, Cinco de Mayo celebrations, a Cruise to Costa Rica theme party, Latin dancing classes (weekly), dominoes, and Naïpe Cartos (card game-weekly). Brochures, menus and key information literature have

Somerset County Office on Aging

been translated into Hindi, Chinese, and Spanish. English as a Second Language (ESL) classes are conducted for Chinese seniors at a center where 43 percent of participants are Asian.

Computer classes are offered in Chinese and English. Bilingual volunteers have been identified at each senior center who are willing to translate for non-English speaking guests.

Setting The program is offered on an on-going basis in multiple senior centers in suburban and rural areas of Somerset County. An average of 3,200 meals are served per month to 640 participants.

“Computer classes are offered in Chinese and English. Bilingual volunteers have been identified at each senior center who are willing to translate for non-English speaking guests.”

Promotional/Outreach By playing ethnic music, including ethnic decorations and having participants help plan multicultural events, word is spreading that the centers feature these types of opportunities and the numbers of ethnic participants is growing. The Somerset County Public Information Office prepares press releases for all special events and sends them to local and ethnic newspapers, cable and radio stations.

The Somerset County Graphics Office prepares large posters and fliers to attract senior center participants. Active participants are encouraged to invite friends to attend and senior club leaders and churches help promote the events. E-mail will also be employed to promote participation.

Somerset County Office on Aging

Partnerships An East Indian Women's Organization provides cultural programs. Senior center participants are active with the staff in providing cultural programming representative of their culture. The partners vary according to the special events offered. Local municipalities are partners for educational instruction.

Cost/Source of Funding The cost of enhancement of senior center meals and activities varies according to the special event offered. Each center raises funds to support special activities. Meals are funded via the Older Americans Act (OAA) with state and county funds.

Some health promotional activities have a small cost to clients. Somerset County has partnerships with local municipalities that pay for instructors, such as those for ESL.

Barriers Staff resistance was experienced and addressed through participatory staff training and by providing clarification of the goal of increasing diversity in relation to targeting requirements of the OAA. Initially all staff felt challenged to plan themed cultural events. Introduction of interactive training seminars featuring brainstorming game sessions with prizes for ideas and suggestions was helpful.

Center staff were given clear goals based on census data for each center and calendar planning forms. Need for funding sources is often a barrier, and events needed to be offered at minimal or no cost to centers. Participant resistance was noted when one culture was featured, not their own, and they felt slighted. It was helpful to involve clients in planning events to offset resentment.

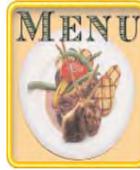
Somerset County Office on Aging

Evaluation There was no formal evaluation. However, clients have demonstrated an increased eagerness in recent years to learn about each other's customs. An example of participant reaction was forwarded in a letter to the center: "Among the Asian Indian members of the senior center, the manager has been trying to create a lot of interest and incentive to come to the center by allowing them to display their culture and way of life including their food, thereby promoting more friendship between the Asian Indian and American members of the center."

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Suburban Essex Nutrition Program

FOCUS Hispanic Center for Community Development

New Jersey

Target Population(s) African American and Hispanic seniors.

Goal The program is designed to encourage physical fitness, good nutrition, and improvement in a senior's quality of life.

Description The FOCUS Senior Nutrition Café and Health and Fitness Program provides Latino meals, promotes active lifestyles and healthy behaviors and encourages multicultural participation. Activities such as trail walking, indoor golf lessons, Tai Chi exercises and participation in (and transportation to) the Senior Olympics are offered to stimulate interest in active lifestyles. The program also offers healthy breakfasts, blood pressure and weight checks. Latino meals prepared in the Hispanic kitchen administered by FOCUS, are developed with the advice of Essex County's registered dietitian. Bilingual staff are employed in the program.

“The seniors, many who are in their mid-eighties, are transported to the annual Senior Olympics to participate in the statewide competition.”

Setting The program operates at a single site in an urban senior center/community room that is rented from an East Orange, NJ church on an on-going basis. Approximately 6,900 meals are served per month, and 120 seniors participate in the health and fitness program.

Promotional/Outreach The program is promoted by the seniors themselves sharing their experiences with their peers in the senior facilities where they live. The nutrition program director is active in the community and the program also posts flyers, newspaper articles, and contacts the media.

Partnerships The Essex County Division on Aging encouraged the program to develop using some of their Older Americans Act (OAA) operational funds. Significant community support includes a volunteer retired golf professional who offers golf instruction, and local businesses have donated equipment.

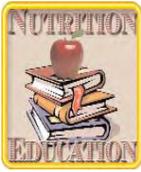
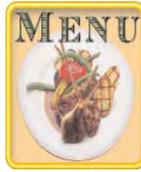
FOCUS Hispanic Center for Community Development

- Cost/Source of Funding** The program is supported through OAA and state funding. No additional financial support has been available for the various activities.
- Barriers** An upgraded facility such as a senior center with adequate space for exercises and activities and room for expansion is needed.
- Evaluation** The project continuously evaluates client satisfaction and reviews progress through surveys. The senior participants' health status is also monitored for positive outcomes.
- Additional Information** This program was selected as a model in a recent publication entitled "Blueprint for Healthy Aging in New Jersey" published by the NJ Department of Health and Senior Services.

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Targeted Outreach Planning (TOP)

AgeOptions - Area Agency on Aging for suburban Cook County

Illinois

Target Population(s) Indian, Pakistani, Bangladeshi and Chinese seniors.

Goal The goal is to improve service and outreach to the growing ethnic, minority and limited English speaking populations in suburban Cook County by providing congregate meals to specific ethnic populations.

Description AgeOptions held a focus group luncheon on January 16, 2002, with leaders from various ethnic/minority communities to brainstorm ways to enhance service delivery and increase involvement of the various populations in the aging network. Based on data and information collected at the focus group, AgeOptions issued requests for letters of intent to the focus group participants, agencies and all registered providers. The letters of intent outlined funding available for various programs, one of which was congregate meals. Two organizations submitted successful proposals to provide congregate meals to specific ethnic populations.

“Nearly 100% of the participants in these programs had never participated in a congregate meal program in suburban Cook County before these two programs were established.”

Metroplitan Asian Family Services established a program at one of their senior centers in north suburban Cook County to serve meals geared toward Indian, Pakistani and Bangladeshi seniors. The menu is planned and prepared according to ethnic and religious traditions. Meals are prepared on site 6 days a week. Clients who gather at the senior center for the luncheon meal are able to socialize in familiar surroundings. Agency staff implements activities, exercise, support services and health education. The staff has a network of resources, referrals and support services. AgeOptions provides additional information, which staff translates into the appropriate language. In fiscal year 2006, more than 10,500 meals were served at this center. In addition, participants were able to access information regarding additional programs and services for which they may be eligible.

AgeOptions - Area Agency on Aging for suburban Cook County

Xilan Association created a program to serve an appropriate ethnic meal to Chinese seniors. The meals are provided several days a week at two different Chinese restaurants in north suburban Cook County. Each restaurant has set aside a specific section of their dining area where the seniors share their meals together. One restaurant utilizes a menu specially designed for the senior nutrition program; the other restaurant uses their full Chinese buffet. Meals are provided on specific days of the week at specific meal times. In fiscal year 2006, more than 12,400 meals were served to senior clients. Other family members are also welcome to enjoy meals with the seniors, and many provide transportation for the seniors. Xilin Association staff and volunteers are available during the meal service to assist their senior clients in accessing information on additional senior programs and services. Health education, exercise (such as Tai Chi), resources and referrals are provided in the Chinese language by staff from the Xilin Association.

Setting Multiple senior centers, nutrition sites and restaurants in suburban communities. More than 1,900 meals are served per month. The yearly unduplicated client count is 1,531 participants.

Promotional/Outreach AgeOptions worked with Metropolitan Asian Family Services and Xilin Association to promote outreach to their communities, religious groups and leaders by means of flyers, mailings, word-of-mouth, etc. AgeOptions informed service providers and other community partners about these new programs at meetings, through newspaper articles, mailings and other publications.

Partnerships Partners include Metropolitan Asian Family Services and Xilin Association.

Cost/Source of Funding \$117,648 per year. Sources of funding include federal and state, agency match, and client donation.

Barriers AgeOptions procedures and protocol were not familiar to Metropolitan Asian Family Services and Xilin Association. AgeOptions staff worked very closely with these organizations to educate them on the standards and guidelines necessary to follow reporting procedures and meet program requirements.

AgeOptions - Area Agency on Aging for suburban Cook County

Evaluation Nearly 100% of the participants in these programs had never participated in a congregate meal program in suburban Cook County before these two programs were established. Programs are monitored every three years by AgeOptions staff to insure that providers follow fiscal and programmatic standards.

Additional Information 100% of AgeOptions funding (not the full cost of the meal) is provided through the Older Americans Act (OAA), Illinois Department on Aging General Revenue Funds and Nutrition Services Incentive Program (NSIP). All such funds are distributed through the Illinois Department on Aging to AgeOptions. Local agencies are required to provide at least 20% match for the full cost of the meal in the form of in-kind or local cash. In addition, clients are asked to contribute to the cost of the meal, with a suggested donation of \$2.00 to \$3.00 per meal.

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