



Modernizing the Older Americans Act: The Age4Action Network's Road to Reauthorization

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Presenters

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Age4Action Overview

Our Vision

People 50+ will strengthen society and improve communities through their active engagement and valuable contributions as dynamic advocates, valued workers, committed volunteers and lifelong learners.

Our Mission

Age4Action engages, informs, connects and mobilizes organization and networks to increase opportunities for people 50+ to work, serve, learn and lead.

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Age4Action Steering Committee

American Association of People with Disabilities
Community Experience Partnership
Council for Adult and Experiential Learning
Gerontological Society of America
Experience Wave
Experience Corps
National Civic League
National Caucus and Center on Black Aged
National Council on Aging

The OASIS Institute
Union for Reform Judaism
Partnership for Public Service
Portland Community College
Southeast Asian Resource Action Center
Twin Cities Public Television
Rose Community Foundation
The Vital Aging Network
UC Berkeley Retirement Center

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Process for Generating Ideas Around the Issues of Work, Serve, Learn, and Lead

- Idea Forums
- Survey
- Conversations with Age4Action member organizations



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Idea Forums Overview

Forum Attendance		
City	Theme	Approx. Attendance
Las Vegas	“Nutrition Programs, Older Workers and Volunteers”	190
Philadelphia	“Building Strong Transitions to Service, Work, and Learning”	40
St. Paul	“Furthering Civic Engagement for Individuals age 50+”	125
Denver	“A Community Dialogue on Civic Engagement and the Older Americans Act”	50
St. Louis	“Increasing Opportunities for Service, Work, and Learning”	150
Los Angeles	“Expanding Opportunities for Service, Learning, and Leadership”	200
Total		755



Idea Forums Overview Cont.



<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qzOVPITSLwY>

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Idea Forums Overview Cont.

■ Non-Presenter Testimonies

- “Modify the SCSEP eligibility requirements to allow severely underemployed individuals the opportunity for enrollment.”
-Paul Anderson, Employment & Training Coordinator, Experience Works
- “I wish more people would recognize volunteering as a central way to stay healthy and active. Organizations need to acknowledge older adults as resources as well as service recipients, and offer opportunities that fit with expectations of today’s volunteers.” –St. Paul, MN Forum Attendee
- Technology is what is out there. We especially need training in computers. Although I’m up in age, it would be good to know computers. I’m willing to learn. I have had two job offers where you need a certain skill, like PowerPoint. I tell them that I can do everything else and would be glad to learn on the job. I’m a fast learner, but they want someone who already knows. –St. Louis, MO Forum Attendee

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Idea Forums Overview Cont.

■ Presenter Testimonies

- “Both because of our current economy and improvements in older adults’ health and life expectancy, we are seeing many more older adults who want to continue working. Older workers need guidance in identifying possible positions and then help in finding appropriate preparation (sometimes including training) to get ready for them ready for the positions they seek.” -Phyllis Snyder, Vice President, CAEL
- “My name is Clara Pittman and I am a volunteer with the Experience Corp. Until recently I was not aware of the OAA and the many programs and services areas provided by them; but what is genius about the concept is that by providing comprehensive programs and services to older adults, many of those helped, can in turn, through such programs, provide comprehensive services to others in need. That is a win-win situation.” - Clara Pittman, Experience Corp volunteer

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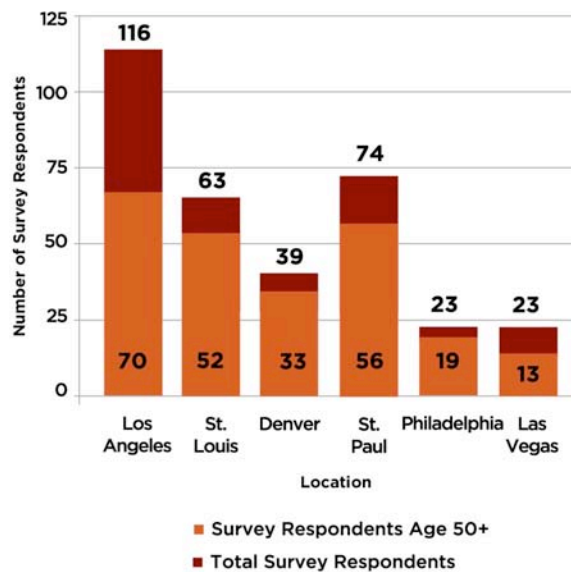
Idea Forums Overview Cont.

- Themes
 - Adults age 50+ want to stay engaged and serve their communities
 - Collaboration between government agencies, nonprofit organizations, and the private sector
 - Adults age 50+ often need to work longer, so job training is essential
 - Volunteer opportunities must be well suited to the individual

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Forum Survey

**Number of Survey Respondents
by Location and Age**



- Survey designed in partnership with Washington University Brown School of Social Work
- Total Respondents: 338
- 71.9 percent of respondents age 50+
- Unrepresentative sample, but asked respondents about experiences of others “they knew”



Forum Survey Cont.

- Content:
 - Demographic questions such as gender, age, race, residential location, education, and employment status
 - Questions covered involvement in work, service, and learning, and barriers to engagement
 - Open-ended additional comments section asked respondents on how the OAA can improve access to work, service, lifelong learning, and leadership



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Findings

- Forum Survey
 - 82% of all survey respondents volunteer in a formal setting, and 76% volunteer informally
 - 63% of survey respondents age 50+ knew someone who experienced transportation as a barrier to working
 - 59% knew someone for whom transportation was a barrier for volunteering and 31.2% knew someone for whom cost was a barrier to volunteering



Findings Cont.

- Forum Survey: Additional Comments
 - “Volunteer opportunities need to be meaningful and well organized – a good use of volunteer’s time and energy.”
 - “Outreach to recently retired individuals with an offer to match their skills and interests with public service needs would be great.”
 - “Promote funding for culturally appropriate senior education seminars-ensuring the seminars are in languages and on topics that are relevant to particular communities.”

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OAA Recommendations

- Three overarching categories:
 - **Develop a National Strategy:** make permanent civic engagement (CE) resource center by moving to title II, improve CE research, enhance AAA referral services
 - **Strengthen the Capacity of Older Workers:** technology training, incorporation of SCSEP into Long-Term Care Ombudsmen Programs
 - **Promote Sustainable Volunteering:** volunteer management and safety, focus on preventing elder abuse

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OAA Recommendations Cont.

- Develop a National Strategy
 - **Recommendation 1:** Move the civic engagement resource center from Title IV to Title II of the Older Americans Act. Authorize the AoA, CNCS, and SCSEP administrators to work together to create a national strategy to tap older volunteers as a source of social capital to meet critical community needs.
 - **Recommendation 2:** Authorize and fund projects for qualified institutions to collect and analyze data on the impact of work, service, learning, and leading on both the clients and communities receiving service, as well as on the adults 50+ providing service.
 - **Recommendation 3:** Enhance volunteer and SCSEP referral resources at Area Agencies on Aging.

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OAA Recommendations Cont.

- Strengthen the Capacity of Older Workers
 - **Recommendation 4:** Enhance quality technology training opportunities for SCSEP participants.
 - **Recommendation 5:** Allow SCSEP programs to include elder abuse prevention and volunteer support for the State Long-Term Care Ombudsman Programs.
 - **Recommendation 6:** Modify SCSEP program measures to account for durational exits.



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OAA Recommendations Cont.

- Promote Sustainable Volunteering
 - **Recommendation 7:** Target resources towards establishing volunteer management programs that will train and place volunteer managers who are age 50+ in Area Agencies on Aging, senior centers, or other community based organizations.
 - **Recommendation 8:** Make safety and liability measures such as driver's license checks and criminal background checks an allowable use of funds under Title III.
 - **Recommendation 9:** Include in the programs overseen by the Administration on Aging a targeted focus on preventing elder abuse, promoting elder justice, and providing services to victims of elder abuse.

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Reauthorization & 112th Congress

1. OAA Reauthorization

- House Education & Labor Committee Subcommittee on Healthy Families and Communities
- Senate Health, Education, Labor & Pensions (HELP) Subcommittee on Retirement & Aging

2. OAA Appropriations

- Labor-HHS-Education Appropriations Subcommittee

3. Income Supports, Poverty Measure, Benefits

- House Ways & Means Committee
- Senate Finance Committee

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Recommendations in Action

1. Contribute to the report by writing a comments on the Age4Action Blog

2. Take Action

- tell congress support strengthening society by engaging people 50+ in works, service, learn and lead
- spread the word by downloading brochures and factsheet to add to your materials

3. Learn more

- sign up for our newsletter
- watch the videos of the forum

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2. Take Action

- tell congress support strengthening society by engaging people 50+ in works, service, learn and lead

Write

- Send letters to members of Congress through the **Age4Action website**

Call

- **Capitol Switchboard:** (202)224-3121
- "Please tell Senator/ Representative to support

Meet

- **August Recess**
- Attend an event/ town hall meeting
- Invite them to meet your program
- Schedule a district meeting

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Advocacy Best Practices

Facts

- Include constituent information
- Leave behind factsheets

Storytelling

- From a constituent
- Short & to the point
- Exemplify the need for work, serve, learn and lead legislation

Thank You

- Thank legislators for what they have done
Send a thank you and follow-up promptly
- Pass along more Age4Action resources



Questions will be selected from the chat room.



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