

Abstract to the Plan of Services
For The Year 2018
Delaware County Office for the Aging

**Vision Statement for the Delaware County Office for the Aging
The Year 2020**

Proposed by the Delaware County Office for the Aging Advisory Board
Approved at the April 19, 2012 meeting

We see an environment in Delaware County that encourages and enables older adults to make educated life choices. We see an era of sensitivity toward our environment, diminishing natural resources and changing economy and its impact on future generations. We see barrier-free access to comprehensive health care and supportive services. We see the implementation of a transportation and communication network that supports the needs of older adults. We see Delaware County with safe, affordable and comfortable housing for older adults.

We see an environment that nurtures cross generational engagement through both human contact and technology. We see a caring support system that promotes dignity and independence for older adults. We see an environment that supports persons in care giving and other family obligations. We see older adults playing an integral part in the life of the community where they are an accepted and respected part of society.

** Since older adults impact the entire Delaware County community in all its complexity and since the entire community affects all older adults, we see this vision statement as one component of a comprehensive vision for the future of Delaware County.*

New York Connects

In June, Tamie MacDonald, NY Connects Coordinator, resigned from the Delaware County NY Connects Coordinator position. Lyndsay Komosinski, NY Connects I & A Specialist, was appointed to the NY Connects Coordinator position. Lyndsay has been working on becoming acquainted with colleagues and community partners that Tamie had connected with, as well as attending meetings and trainings. During the coming weeks, Lyndsay will receive training in Options Counseling, the NWD (No Wrong Door) Screen for PeerPlace via webinars, a NWD training at OPWDD (Office for People with Developmental Disabilities) in Binghamton, a Medicaid update training webinar, an Advance Directives training and Elder Law. These trainings will allow Lyndsay to continue to provide the service to individuals in need.

NY Connects continues to remain active in Delaware County by providing information and assistance to older adults and individuals with disabilities. From January 1, 2017 to August 31, 2017, NY Connects has provided information and assistance to close to 600 individuals by way of email, phone and face-to-face appointments. NY Connects hosted an outreach booth at the Delaware County Fair in Walton this year. The booth was staffed from 9:00am-9:00pm Sunday,

August 12 through Saturday, August 19. The booth at the Delaware County Fair was a huge success in which close to 500 individuals were provided with information and assistance. NY Connects also hosted an outreach booth at the 4th Annual Delaware County Senior Fun Day on August 23. This event was coordinated by the Delaware County Office for the Aging (OFA) and co-sponsored by the Delaware County Senior Council. Over 325 seniors attended the event with approximately 250 seniors receiving information and assistance at the NY Connects booth. NY Connects continues to participate in public outreach events including a Health Fair in Sidney during the month of September.

NY Connects continues to assist individuals in applying for Medicaid (for both Nursing Home care and in-home services), The Medicare Savings Program (MSP) and Low-Income Subsidy, SNAP, Managed Long Term Care services and HEAP. NY Connects has provided assistance with reading and guiding individuals with custody petitions, applying for Guardianship, and uncontested divorce paperwork. NY Connects has also assisted with navigating Long Term Care Insurance Plans, comparing senior apartments, assisted living facilities and skilled nursing homes as well as connecting people to services such as transportation, respite care, legal assistance, nutrition services and personal care assistance.

Another large part of NY Connects is System Reform efforts. Tamie had been involved with a number of reform efforts, some of which include the home health aide shortage, volunteerism, developing a countywide Resource Directory and Transportation. NY Connects will continue to build partnerships and facilitate discussions through the Long Term Care Council, Care Transitions committee and the New York StateWide Senior Action Council.

In the coming year, NY Connects will continue to research and develop solutions for the Delaware County Aide shortage. One idea NY Connects has is to create a partnership with The Arc of Delaware County. NY Connects vision for this program is to provide individuals with disabilities an opportunity to volunteer or receive pay for helping seniors. The help that seniors would be able to receive through the partnership would be light housekeeping and companionship (for those who are isolated). This partnership would help to provide more aides in Delaware County and could lower the number of seniors on the EISEP waiting list.

NY Connects will be attending a meeting to discuss Food and Health Access programs to build a partnership that will hopefully bring more to Delaware County. NY Connects will also continue working with the Transportation Reform Effort. The vision for this is to provide more affordable transportation for Delaware County Senior Citizens and individuals with disabilities.

NY Connects will continue to provide education and training through the Long Term Care Council Meetings held quarterly as well as coordinate trainings for staff at Delaware County Office for the Aging. Once Lyndsay is fully trained in all areas, she will confidently jump into much more!

Transportation

The Office for the Aging's new 18 passenger bus with wheelchair lift, purchased by the Delaware Senior Council in 2016, is now in its second year of service in Delaware County. OFA still has their back-up van for the smaller rider loads where wheelchair access is not needed. Our Tuesday bus runs have been switched from Tuesdays to Fridays with a new run that goes through the Bloomville, Kortright, Hobart, Stamford, Harpersfield and Davenport areas taking seniors once a month to Albany. In the future, this trip may change to bimonthly trips to Albany and bimonthly trips to Binghamton per the request of senior riders in this area. The remaining Tuesday bus runs, now going out on Fridays, will travel through Meridale, Treadwell and Franklin, going to Oneonta once a month and to Binghamton twice a month. The Oneonta run still is poorly used so OFA is watching this and will make more changes in the runs as needed. Plans are to contact the Meridale and Franklin/Treadwell senior clubs to identify the need there in order to edit their Friday bus runs further. The bus runs for Thursday through the Eastern half of the County and those for Wednesday through the South Western half of the county, are still being well utilized. All bus runs start in Delhi at 8:05 am and travel to various sites such as Sidney, Oneonta, Albany, Binghamton and Kingston depending on the day of the month and the area of the County the bus run is covering. Passengers are picked up at designated pickup points or en route at their homes.

For several years the Office for the Aging has encouraged seniors to take advantage of using the bus service to get to medical appointments; however, riders' appointments need to be scheduled in the time allotted at these destinations since this is a fixed route system and not a demand response service. The Medical Answering Services (MAS) system continues to provide medical transportation service for those on Medicaid and the Office for the Aging provides a demand response service using volunteers for transporting non-Medicaid clients to medical services.

Once the agency is relocated and service brochures are updated to reflect the new address, a campaign to distribute current bus schedules to sites in the county that seniors would frequent, such as libraries, doctors' offices, designated pickup points, etc., will be undertaken. The OFA will work on a publicity campaign in 2018 for the bus service.

The OFA is a member of a countywide group that is looking at transportation issues and obstacles in Delaware County. This group has been established

through a Rural Health Alliance of South Central NY grant received by Delaware Opportunities Inc. (DO) and is being led by DO. The purpose of this group is to come up with some strategies and ideas for solving any one of the transportation obstacles identified through the group and moving forward on the implementation of these ideas.

Legacy Corps

Kit Marshfield, Program Coordinator for Legacy Corps the past 12 years, retired in June of 2017. Georgia Kalayjian-Murphy, Promotion and Marketing Specialist for Legacy Corps, was promoted and took over the reigns as the Program Coordinator. Following retirement, Kit will continue coordinating the Balancing Incentive Program (BIP) Caregiver Support Program obligations through the end of September 2017 when the program grant funds come to an end. Kit will continue to be available for volunteer trainings as needed.

New York State Office for the Aging (NYSOFA) approved a BIP Caregivers grant in September of 2016. This grant has seen great results for several Medicaid residents and their caregivers in Delaware County who, without this grant, were living with substandard conditions in their home without the time or money to correct the situations. From collapsing ramps being replaced, to a “ceiling lift” installed for a father that could no longer lift his paraplegic daughter out of her bed, this grant saw immediate and gratifying results to all it could help.

Georgia and Kit attended the 2-day “Train the Trainer” statewide initiative of R.E.S.T. (Respite Education & Support Tools). After the completion of the course, we are now Registered Trainers, which gives us the tools to effectively and efficiently train all new volunteers. The goal is to use the methodology of R.E.S.T., combined with information on the local level, to give our new volunteers the best training available. Currently we have eighteen volunteers serving seniors and eight students volunteering at a senior assisted-living facility.

Beginning in the summer of 2016, Georgia began meeting with SUNY Delhi Faculty to create interest in a program that would enable students to become Legacy Volunteers and work with Delaware Seniors. At the same time, Georgia had meetings at “Senior Living of Stamford”, (a 65-room, assisted-living facility) with the possibility of bringing college students for friendly visits with the seniors. It was very evident that seniors in an assisted living or a nursing home venue can be as lonely, if not lonelier, than seniors that are living independently. Fast forward to today and a class taught at SUNY Delhi, “Recreation for Special Populations”, has embraced this program! All eight students completed volunteer applications, were trained by Legacy Corps and now are visiting seniors at “Senior Living of Stamford” bi-weekly until the middle of December 2017. And indeed, it takes a community! The college arranged to bus the students as well as pay for the students’ dinner which will be provided by “Senior

Living of Stamford”. The staff at “Senior Living of Stamford” will be prepping the seniors for visitors and opening up all of their resident gathering places. It truly is a wonderful site and all parties look forward to the remainder of this semester and beyond! Legacy will be at the Student Activities Fair in September, again, recruiting students to join Legacy in the many different volunteer capacities offered.

Along with the Office for the Aging, Legacy Corps took a front seat in putting together the OFA Volunteer Recognition Luncheon in September 2017. Arranging this celebration of our volunteers is done with deep gratitude for all of the ways Delaware County volunteers support seniors and the community as a whole.

On October 25, we will be offering a CPR class for all Legacy volunteers. This class will be open to others for a small fee. Legacy will continue our bi-monthly trainings for all volunteers and staff that wish to attend.

HIICAP (Health Insurance Information Counseling and Assistance Program)

Donna Martino started her sixth year as the coordinator for the HIICAP (Health Insurance Information Counseling & Assistance Program) program through a subcontract with Delaware Support and Services. The HIICAP program has a part-time HIICAP assistant, Diane Kolenda, who works three days per week during the open enrollment period and a volunteer, Gail Ekloff, who volunteers one to two days per week during open enrollment. Both Diane and Gail recently passed the HIICAP counselor exam making them certified HIICAP Counselors.

The HIICAP program continues to be grossly underfunded and oversubscribed. There continues to be a tremendous increase in demand for counseling services which will only continue to grow over the next several years as the baby-boomers continue to reach 65 and/or retire. HIICAP started out as a volunteer program, but as it became more and more complex OFA had to resort to paid staff. OFA is attempting to keep the HIICAP Coordinator and part-time seasonal assistant employed through State HIICAP funding.

The HIICAP program assists people with long term care insurance, Medicare Part D, Medicare supplement insurance packages and health insurance issues. There is an increase in demand for this service during the open enrollment period which runs from October through the beginning of December. The HIICAP program is extremely busy because people are coming in to compare their current Medicare Part D policies with new and more efficient Medicare Part D policies that may be more cost effective or comprehensive for them. It is all consuming. There is a constant parade of people coming in. The agency has never seen so many people before and in many cases this is the only contact

some seniors have with the agency. It's a real challenge to schedule and meet with all the seniors during open enrollment. In 2016 the HIICAP Coordinator enrolled 209 seniors to a Medicare D program, of which 106 were enrolled during open enrollment (enrolled 236 seniors in 2015). The HIICAP Coordinator received close to 4,100 phone calls (500 less phone calls than in 2015). The total savings for seniors in 2016 was close to \$143,915. This was a decrease of \$90,000 in savings compared to 2015. The decrease in savings is due to the increase in pharmaceutical prices. In 2016 HIICAP assisted 71 applicants in applying for MSP. Donna recognized with an award from NYSOFA (New York State Office for the Aging) for having completed the most MSP applications in New York State in the 2016-17 program year.

Since the HIICAP program is funded in part by federal and state dollars, grant regulations require OFA to provide an opportunity for HIICAP participants to make voluntary contributions to the program. Each HIICAP participant is given a HIICAP contribution letter which gives the recipient the opportunity to make a donation to the HIICAP program. All contributions are confidential and voluntary and are used to expand the program. The recommended donations for HIICAP services are \$10 per session. The contribution letter continues to be well received. The OFA HIICAP program received \$755 in contributions during program year 2016-17 which was \$105 more than the previous program year. HIICAP was able to do outreach through the Office for the Aging booth at the Delaware County Fair. HIICAP also had an outreach booth at the 4th Annual Delaware County Senior Fun Day on August 23. Both events were a huge success in that hundreds of seniors attended and inquired about the HIICAP program.

The HIICAP program allows each participant to respond to a satisfaction survey. Some of the comments from the survey are as follows: "The coordinator was prompt, efficient and clearly knew her subject matter." "Very professional." "Extremely helpful." "Qualities that the HIICAP Coordinator provides are so valuable to an older person like myself."

Language Line

In 2012, Office for the Aging signed a contract with Language Line (language interpretation phone line). Delaware County Office for the Aging continues to have a contract with Language Line which allows the agency to provide outreach and accessibility to persons with limited English proficiency who may be seeking services. We also have the capability to contact the local Department of Social Services for interpreter/translator service for those who are Spanish speaking. The community is made aware of the availability of free language line interpretation for Office for the Aging through the agency website, brochures, flyers, articles in the "Dispatch" and posting of signs at each congregate meal site. A flyer is posted showing various languages at the front desk for clients to

observe upon entering the agency office when inquiring about services.

Home Energy Assistance Program (HEAP)

The Delaware County Department of Social Services (DSS) continues to contract with Delaware Opportunities (DO) to provide HEAP services to Delaware County's senior population. Mary Johnson, the coordinator for the HEAP Program, has a new assistant this year, Ruth Hughes. Both positions are full-time during the HEAP season. OFA continues to be very concerned about low income seniors and their ability to adequately heat their homes during the winter months. The HEAP program will be working out of the DSS office until OFA moves into its new location. They will continue to provide HEAP assistance to qualifying seniors 60 years of age and older. Households have the opportunity to apply for regular HEAP benefits by submitting applications electronically through MyBenefits at www.mybenefits.ny.gov. Assistance in completing HEAP applications is available from HEAP staff. OFA staff also make home visits to seniors who are homebound to assist them in the application process.

Non-Emergency Medical Transportation

Because there is no public transportation in Delaware County and because of the remote nature of living in the area, assisting people without transportation to secure non-emergency health care presents itself continually to be a major problem for service providers. Although OFA has a budget for this service, the budget would be unable to support this program if it weren't for volunteer drivers and client donations.

In 2017, the "GetThere" call center was introduced into Delaware County through Mobility Management of South Central New York. This has been an asset to the county in that "GetThere" has been able to provide transportation services to those clients in underserved areas of the county in which volunteers are unavailable to serve.

In 2018, the OFA will continue its efforts to expand its list of volunteer drivers for this service. Articles in "The Dispatch" and in the general news media will be produced to recognize current volunteers and encourage potential volunteer drivers. OFA currently has eighteen volunteer non-emergency medical transportation drivers of which six are new drivers to the program. These dedicated volunteers have been busy transporting 132 seniors to necessary medical appointments in the 2016-17 program year. Six months into the current program year (2016-17) the agency has already served 96 seniors through this program. With more and more people taking advantage of this program, the demand for this service will undoubtedly continue to increase.

Emergency Response System (Link to Life)

The Emergency Response program which started in 1983 at OFA continues to be a valuable service to this area's frail seniors and non-seniors, summoning help for those in distress and saving lives. The program provides services currently to 311 subscribers in Delaware County residing in 307 households. This number has stayed constant over the past two years despite not moving forward with investing in newer equipment technology that can accommodate cell service or GPS service. Due to the fact that OFA can only ask a donation for this service and not charge a fee for service as long as funds to operate the program come from the Older American's Act, it is not financially feasible to lease equipment that costs more per month for monitoring. In this program 275 of the current units are owned and were purchased in the past through fund raising efforts by the Delaware County Senior Council. Recently 17 owned units have been shipped back to the company for repair with no assurance that they can be repaired. If these units cannot be repaired they will have to be removed from service and added to the four units that were removed a year ago that were not repairable.

OFA has four trained volunteers that have continued to support the program with weekly installations, equipment swaps and removals when needed. The OFA staff continues to rotate weekend and holiday on call responsibility for the emergency response system.

OFA is still in agreement with Delaware County Office of Long Term Care (OLTC) for authorized Medicaid clients (currently seventeen, down six cases from last year) to receive PERS service paid through the Medicaid program. Of the four Medicaid Managed Long Term Care programs now operating in Delaware County - icircle, VNSNY, VNA Home Care Options and Fidelis, OFA is contracting for PERS service from both Fidelis and VNA Home Care. VNSNY will not contract with OFA for PERS and OFA has not set up a contractual arrangement with icircle. Fidelis clients have grown in number from 13 in 2015 to 22 in 2016 and then plateaued at 23 in 2017. There are now two VNA Home Care Options clients on the program; previous years there was none. VNA Home Care and Fidelis are paying for the monthly cost for these 25 Medicaid clients to have this service. More of these Medicaid Managed Long Term Care cases have continued to grow as more Medicaid clients are transitioned from the OLTC's Medicaid service.

The Dispatch

The agency newspaper, "The Dispatch," will be entering into its 43rd year, communicating with and educating the county's senior population. The newspaper, published and distributed bi-monthly, reaches close to 8,500 readers. In the January 2017 issue of "The Dispatch" it was mentioned that the suggested goal for subscriber donations for "The Dispatch" was set at \$7,000. As

of August, subscribers have donated \$5,080. OFA has also received an outpouring of notes and letters requesting that we keep up the good work. Audrey and Dave Thorington wrote, "Thank you for all your good work and dedication gathering the information compiled in your newsletter. My husband and I truly appreciate receiving all the guidance and direction as we have reached that age. It is important to us to learn of all the programs out there." Betty Kniskern wrote, "I truly enjoy reading 'The Dispatch'."

OFA continues to consult with the printer, Decker Advertising Inc., to perk up the appearance of "The Dispatch", adding color at times and changing the font and format, etc. In 2018 plans are to continue to publish articles that are especially pertinent to the senior population such as retirement planning, wills and estates, health insurance, Language Line, Legacy, nutrition, scams, New York Connects, upcoming events, etc., to help seniors make wise choices and decisions for their retirement years. Plans to publish articles about volunteer opportunities that are available to persons who are finding that they have some extra time in their retirement will also continue.

Legal Services

The Delaware County Office for the Aging continues to contract with Legal Aid Society of Mid-New York, Inc. to provide legal services to those Delaware County residents who are 60 years of age and older. The Legal Aid Society of Mid-New York is a not-for-profit law firm that serves residents of Delaware County. The purpose of the legal services program is to assist those persons 60 years of age or older who do not have access to an attorney and who require legal advice, counseling or representation and are not income eligible for regular legal aid services.

Qualified attorneys and paralegals are available to assist with a variety of situations and problems. This program provides legal assistance with wills and simple estate planning; drafting power of attorney, health care proxy, and living will documents; defense against creditors, and assistance with foreclosure and divorce; assistance with employee and tenant rights; and answers to legal questions.

All referrals for legal services must be made through the OFA. Under the Older American's Act there is no fee for this service. Contributions are greatly appreciated and will be used to expand the program. During the 2016-17 program year legal services was projected to serve 60 seniors. A total of 48 seniors (unduplicated count) were served and a total of over 120 seniors were served (duplicated count). During the 2017-18 program year, legal services is projected to, once again, serve 60 seniors.

On June 29, 2017, the Elder Law and Special Needs Law Clinic offered a half hour legal consultation from an attorney at no cost. The clinic was sponsored by the Legal Aid Society of Mid-NY and the New York State Bar Association's Elder Law and Special Needs section. The clinic was held in Otsego County at Elm Park Church in Oneonta and was open to Delaware County senior residents. Legal Aid Society of Mid-New York Attorney Carol Malz, who served both Delaware and Otsego County seniors, resigned in June of 2017. Currently Legal Aid Society of Mid-New York is seeking applications for an attorney. Alice Decker, an attorney from the Binghamton branch office, is currently serving Delaware County clients until a new attorney is hired.

Expanded In-Home Services for the Elderly Program (EISEP)

The EISEP Program is our most effective tool in assisting non-Medicaid homebound clients in remaining in their own homes. Unfortunately, due to rising program costs and funding cuts, the funding was not sufficient to provide for a significant increase in personal care services. Following a national trend, we are not always able to secure personal care aides for our clients through our subcontractors even if funding is available. There is an extreme shortage of both home health & personal care aides which creates a major challenge in providing in-home services. NY Connects has facilitated discussions on this issue through the Long Term Care Council, Care Transitions committee, and the New York State Wide Senior Action Council. In April of 2017, the beginning of the EISEP program year, OFA currently went from 4 to 3 contracted EISEP agencies of which only 2 of the contracted agencies are providing both PCA levels 1 & 2. In 2017, the EISEP program currently has 50-60 active clients with 15-20 clients on a waiting/pending list to receive EISEP services.

In 2017 -18, Office for the Aging will pursue looking into the Consumer Directed In-Home Services Program (CDIS) in hopes of reducing the client waiting list. The CDIS program has several requirements that a consumer must meet in order to be eligible for services. One major requirement is that the consumer must be self-directing. In preparation for this, OFA's Case Workers are identifying potential candidates that are currently on the EISEP waiting list or being served that would meet this criteria.

Delaware County Senior Council

The Delaware County Senior Council, an organization that has been in existence since 1973, continues to meet the second Monday of each month and is responsible for the creation of Delaware County's OFA. Since that time, both organizations have worked together to develop and enhance programs that have an impact on Delaware County seniors. The Senior Council consistently works towards raising funds to purchase equipment and enrich under-funded programs for seniors.

The key fundraiser for 2017 was the Big Wheels Golf Tournament. It continues to be their most lucrative event. The Big Wheels Committee, comprised of local citizens, several of whom are seniors, worked hard to make this activity a success. The French Woods Golf and Ski resort, located in the Town of Hancock, donated a two night stay and eighteen holes of golf for four people to be raffled off as part of the Big Wheels event. The French Woods Golf and Ski resort raffle brought in close to \$210. The Big Wheels committee was able to raise close to \$7,000.

The Delaware County Senior Council's motto is "Seniors Helping Seniors". They once again lived up to this motto through their different fundraising efforts such as the Council's annual Pancake Breakfast and the Corned Beef and Cabbage dinner sponsored by the SUNY Delhi Hospitality program both in March, the June Barbeque and Pie Auction at the American Legion where one homemade pie went as high as \$140, the September Harvest Fest where apples, cider and any dessert that is made with apples are sold and lastly, the annual quilt raffle running from May through September.

The Delaware County Senior Council co-sponsored the fourth Annual Delaware County "Senior Fun Day", with OFA. The Council made a donation of close to \$2,500 towards this event.

The Delaware County Senior Council made a matching donation of \$40,000 to Delaware County in support of the new OFA office that is relocating to 97 Main Street in Delhi.

Health and Wellness:

Senior Fitness Directory: During 2017 the distribution of five hundred copies of the January 2016 revised Senior Fitness Directory continued. These were distributed within Delaware County at different OFA events such as the Senior Fun Day and the Delaware County Fair as well as in the informational packets that go out to new seniors about services in Delaware County. Distribution will continue in 2018. These directories provide seniors with a resource of fitness centers that offer fitness and exercise programs geared toward seniors as well as indoor walking space available to the public at various schools.

Matter of Balance: Currently the Matter of Balance Program is on hold due to the boom of the Tai Chi for Arthritis program and the increased number of seniors wanting the Tai Chi program. OFA has focused their time on the Tai Chi for Arthritis program. In total, ten Matter of Balance programs were offered in Delaware County since its start in 2014, serving 131 seniors.

Tai Chi for Arthritis: Funding from the Rural Health Alliance grant has again been awarded to OFA for the Tai Chi for Arthritis program to supplement federal

funding from Title IIID. Tai Chi for Arthritis is a one hour, twice a week program which runs for eight weeks for a total of sixteen classes that result in better balance and reduced falls. Through movement control, weight transference and integration of mind and body, this activity helps seniors by increasing flexibility and muscle strength; increasing heart/lung activity; aligning posture; improving mobility, coordination and balance and increasing confidence. The Center for Disease Control and Prevention recommends this program for fall prevention in older adults. With two new volunteers trained this year through Broome County Public Health, the program now has a total of eight certified instructors. Each instructor has received their certification and is CPR qualified. Three instructors are employees of Catskill Recreation Center and operate the program out of that site in Arkville; another instructor is in contract with OFA to conduct the program at other designated sites in Delaware County based on OFA locating and matching available qualified sites to waiting list demand; three volunteer instructors who just started instructing the program this year have taught two full programs in Sidney at the Moose Lodge. The beginners' classes are free to Delaware County senior attendees who commit to attending the sixteen classes in the series. This has been an incentive to get the seniors engaged in this exercise activity. The incentive has worked and there has been enough interest to have advanced classes, too. In 2017, OFA is asking a suggested donation of \$20 for the advanced series. Currently, Tai Chi classes are being offered in Arkville, Hancock, Andes, Stamford and an advanced series in Walton. Class size ranges from 10 to 18, some dependent on size of class room. Going forward, in October of 2017, classes are being set up in Andes, Stamford, Walton and advanced series in both Arkville and Franklin. Classes are mostly filled for all five sites. Meanwhile, a beginner's series is underway in Arkville at Catskill Recreation Center. OFA's goal is to conduct two series every eight to ten weeks at Catskill Recreation Center in Arkville and another four to five series in different areas of Delaware County where senior interest has been acknowledged.

On October 28, 2015, OFA offered their first Tai Chi for Arthritis series held in Arkville at the Catskill Recreation Center with two other series to follow, one in Downsville and one in Delhi, both starting in November 2015. Since last October's Public Hearing, OFA has held nineteen beginner's and four advanced Tai Chi for Arthritis series, serving 243 Delaware County seniors in beginner's classes and 56 in advanced classes. Since the start of these first three series in 2015, the Office for the Aging has held a total of 29 beginner's and seven advanced Tai Chi for Arthritis series, serving 412 seniors in beginner's classes and 94 in advanced classes. Of the beginner's series, nine series have been held in Arkville, one in Downsville, five in Delhi, one in Hamden, three in Walton, two in Franklin, five in Hobart/Stamford, two in Sidney, one in Bovina, one in Andes and one in Hancock. In addition, seven advanced series were held (two in Arkville, two in Delhi and three in Walton) for those seniors who wished to continue to pursue this form of exercise and learn more moves and perfect what

they had learned in their first series. All advanced attendees must have taken the beginner's series first.

OFA now has a waiting list of 169 interested seniors wanting to take the program. This waiting list continues to increase as more seniors replace those who come off the list to enter the program. This program has been enthusiastically received by the senior population of Delaware County and has been and will be our focus for our Health and Wellness projects in 2018.

Senior Fun Day - Delaware County's Fourth Annual Senior Picnic

Senior Fun Day was a huge success. The total attendance was close to 450 participants of which about 325 were Delaware County seniors. Almost every township had representation of seniors. The event took place at the Delaware County 4H Camp Shankitunk on Arbor Hill in Delhi, held on Wednesday, August 23 from 9:30 am to 3:00 pm.

There were 45 exhibitors present under the exhibitor tent. The exhibitor tent was "just buzzing" with seniors interacting, inquiring and asking the exhibitors about their different services for seniors. Among the exhibitors present were homecare agencies, skilled nursing facilities, assisted living and local hospitals located in Delaware and Otsego Counties, Managed Medicare/Medicaid Insurance plans, NYS EPIC, Senior Council, OFA, Legacy, and more. Seniors left the event with bags filled with goodies they'd collected throughout the day. It's like they went on a trick-or-treat spree. One exhibitor stated, "I attend many events similar to this event throughout New York State. I have to say this is the best senior event in New York State. It was another wonderfully planned event by the Senior Fun Day Committee. Thank-you for the hard work and effort it took to make it a special day for Delaware County Seniors."

There were four buses that ran continuously, shuttling seniors from the SUNY Delhi parking lot "G" to registration at Rice Hall. Three of the four buses brought in seniors from further regions of the county such as Sidney, Downsville and Grand Gorge. SUNY Delhi Golf Course donated two golf carts to be used for the event. The golf carts were staffed by senior volunteers who assisted those who were unable or had difficulty in ambulating. They transported participants to the exhibitor or dining tent, line dancing, Tai-Chi for Arthritis, Chair Yoga, Bingo and restrooms. The golf carts were continuously in motion.

The Dairy Princess court was in attendance and offered each senior a mid-morning snack, a container of Chobani yogurt. Chobani is manufactured locally in New Berlin. They donated 400 containers of a variety of yogurt flavors. The yogurt was absolutely refreshing.

Throughout the morning, seniors had the opportunity to play bingo, try Tai-Chi for Arthritis, chair yoga, and line dancing.

Once again delicious picnic fare was prepared by Rick Angerer, Senior Dining Project Director, and JoAnn Dewitt, Assistant Project Director. The menu included barbeque chicken by Wilson Bros., baked beans, salads and beverages. Seniors stated, "Wilson's Bar-B-Q chicken was absolutely delicious. Keep the same menu for next year. Food was plentiful and good." Huff Ice Cream in Sidney donated ice cream for dessert.

There was dinner music played by Bob Mesmer. The day ended with music by Country Express playing classic country tunes and God Bless the USA. The dance floor was filled with seniors the entire time. They enjoyed waltz, round, slow and line dancing. Those who did not participate in dancing were watching and enjoying the music.

Comments such as these were heard from those who attended this year's picnic, "The event was absolutely wonderful." "It was absolutely a perfect day." "I can't wait to attend next year." Seniors took advantage of the day for socialization, enjoying the good food, entertainment and just getting together to have a good time. "Office for the Aging does a great job in putting the picnic together. Keep it up." The Senior Fun Day Committee has already started meeting and is planning for the fifth annual Senior Fun Day for 2018. The tentative date is Wednesday, August 22, 2018.

Volunteer Recognition

There are 5 reasons why one should consider volunteering:

1. Volunteers live longer and are healthier. Volunteers are happier than non-volunteers. Older people who volunteer remain physically functional longer, are more alert mentally and live longer.
2. Volunteering establishes strong relationships. Working alongside people who feel as strongly as you do about supporting a particular cause creates a path to developing strong relationships with others. Volunteering alongside other members of your family strengthens family bonds based in "doing" your values. These benefits have a ripple effect - grandchildren who volunteer with their grandparents are more likely to become adults who volunteer.
3. Volunteering is good for your career. It is viewed as a way to create new connections that lead to career opportunities.
4. Volunteering is good for your community. You make a valuable contribution to your community. For instance, the Office for the Aging may not be able to deliver Senior Meals to several hundred seniors a day without its volunteers.

5. Volunteering gives you a sense of purpose. It is not well-understood why volunteering provides such a profound health benefit, a key factor is assumed to be that volunteering serves to provide opportunities to carry out one's sense of purpose.

On September 21, 2017, a Volunteer Appreciation Luncheon was hosted by Delaware County Office for the Aging, at The Castle on the Delaware in Walton. Guest speaker was Barbara Stubblebine, Chief of Staff at the New York State Office for the Aging (NYSOFA). Dr. Kenneth Penny was recognized as Volunteer of the Year.

Delaware County has close to 120 volunteers which range from thirteen to 98 years of age. Close to 75 of those volunteers attended the luncheon and were recognized with a Certificate of Appreciation. Each of the volunteers was recognized for their tremendous support that they provide as volunteers and donation of their time that benefits the Delaware County's senior population. Collectively, this past year, the volunteers gave 7,326 hours of service valued at \$109,890. The efforts of Delaware County Office for the Aging are enhanced by their generosity. Some of the volunteer opportunities include: data entry, driving seniors to non-emergency medical appointments, installing Link-to-Life units, supporting caregivers, health insurance counseling, Big Wheels Golf Tournament fundraising, Advisory Board membership, Senior Council membership, AARP Driver Safety instructors and AARP Tax Counselors. Delaware County Office for the Aging welcomes volunteers of all ages, but encourages those 60 years of age and older to stay engaged and involved through volunteer service.

Budget

The total budget for OFA for 2017 is \$2,361,996. The percentages of funds for this budget are received from the following sources:

State Government – 34%
Federal Government – 14%
County Government – 44.5%
Client Donations – 7.5%

Relocation of Office for the Aging

In late March, OFA was notified by the United Ministry of Delhi that they had a potential buyer for the "Luce Center" which is the building that currently houses OFA.

The move could not have come at a more perfect time.

The new location will be at 97 Main Street in Delhi. The new office will enhance the services and programs that OFA has to offer. The kitchen and dining area has been renovated to accommodate the Delhi Senior Dining Center. The dining center will be able to prepare and serve its meals on site vs. transporting the cooked meals to another location. OFA will once again be able to have a Senior

Center there. There will be a handicapped accessible conference room on the first floor. It is the goal of the agency to provide Tai Chi for Arthritis classes, AARP Tax Preparation sessions, and many more services on site, as well as, host its program meetings in the first floor conference room. With the office being located on Main Street in Delhi, it will allow for easy accessibility and the office will be more visible to the community. The new office will allow for private interview areas which will allow clients their right to confidentiality and a receptionist to greet customers as they walk into the office.

After 39 years at the same facility it's going to be sad, but at the same time it is an exciting time for the agency. OFA has been very fortunate to have had such a wonderful landlord as United Ministry. At this time no exact date has been set as to when the office will be relocating. However, we anticipate being in our new office space by mid-October.

The Director and staff are excited about transitioning to a new office and look forward to serving Delaware County seniors at its new location.

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