

**Abstract to the Plan of Services  
For The Year 2019  
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.*

**NY Connects**

Through presentations, it was determined that there were many individuals who did not know what NY Connects was or who we could serve. As a result, the NY Connects Coordinator, Lyndsay Komosinski, shifted the focus from community collaboration to public education about the program. In order to spend more time in the community, a NY Connects I & A Specialist was hired. Jordan Day started with NY Connects in March of 2018 and is contracted through DS&S. Together, Lyndsay and Jordan spent the beginning of 2018 attending many trainings including: LBGTQ, PeerPlace, Youth Mental Health First Aid, Medicaid, Pooled Trust with NYSARC Trust Services, Promoting Equality and many other webinars. The NY Connects Coordinator began the first part of the Person Centered Counseling/Options Counseling online training. This training consisted of 32 online sessions and online exams following each session. The NY Connects Coordinator completed the training in April. The next steps are to attend a 6 hour in-person session. Both Jordan and Lyndsay will attend this session in the near future. This training will allow the NY Connects Coordinator and the NY Connects I & A Specialist to provide Person Centered Options Counseling to individuals served.

NY Connects continues to remain active in Delaware County by providing information and assistance to older adults and individuals with disabilities. Throughout the first seven

months of 2018, NY Connects provided information and assistance to 1,150 individuals by way of email, phone and face-to-face appointments. The number of individuals served has increased significantly compared to last year. In addition to serving as many individuals as possible, NY Connects also provides public outreach. Through outreach events, the NY Connects staff provides public education about programs and services. Some outreach events that NY Connects has participated in are WIOX Radio Interviews with Don Mathisen, a presentation to the Senior Citizens of Franklin, the SUNY Delhi Health Fair, a presentation for the Parkinson's Support Group and presentations at each of the dining centers in Delaware County. The I & A Specialist distributes informational brochures throughout the county twice a month. The locations include Delhi, Hamden, Downsville, Andes, Margaretville, Roscoe, Roxbury, Grand Gorge, Stamford, Hobart, Bloomville, Walton, Hancock and Deposit. Informational brochures and posters are distributed to all physician offices, hospitals, nursing homes, assisted/senior living facilities, town clerk offices, village halls, libraries and mental health clinics. The I & A Specialist also distributes brochures and posters in the general stores, supermarkets and drug stores.

NY Connects hosted a booth at the Alzheimer's Caregivers Conference in June, the Delaware County Fair in Walton, Senior Fun Day at 4H-Camp Shankitunk, and the Tri-Town Health Fair in Sidney in September.

NY Connects continues to assist individuals applying for Medicaid, Medicare Savings Program and Low Income Subsidy, SNAP, Managed Long Term Care services and HEAP. The first seven months of 2018, NY Connects assisted close to 60 Medicaid applications for individuals who were applying for Medicaid for the first time. This number does not include the number of individuals who needed assistance re-certifying. 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. The NY Connects Coordinator hosts a quarterly meeting with the Delaware County Long Term Care Council. Currently, the council is trying to identify local system gaps and barriers and to brainstorm and implement a way to make positive impacts. The Long Term Care Council also provides education and trainings for several professionals involved in human services. Going forward, the council will bring to the table case scenarios to discuss and ensure that all possible services are being implemented.

NY Connects will continue to provide information and assistance, research and develop solutions for the aide shortage and lack of transportation in Delaware County.

### **Transportation**

The Office for the Aging will be losing one bus driver this fall and has been recruiting for

a replacement driver to drive one day per week and provide backup coverage for the other driver. Bus drivers must have their CDL A or B license with a passenger endorsement to drive for this system and must meet all DMV 19A Bus Certification regulations, similar to a school bus system.

The Office for the Aging's 18 passenger bus with wheelchair lift, purchased by the Delaware County Senior Council in 2016, was in an accident February 22, 2018 which took it off the road from that date until June 29, 2018. Transportation continued to be provided using borrowed buses from Arc of Delaware County and supplementing with the OFA van for smaller passenger loads. With the purchase of a new NY Connects car to meet the need of OFA staff to make home visits, the OFA has divested itself of the van; since its use has been minimal and only used for the bus system. The wheelchair lift maintenance agreement with Arc of Delaware County that was to begin in January of 2018 was postponed due to the accident with the bus. Now that the bus is repaired a maintenance schedule will be established with ARC.

OFA is still monitoring the Friday bus runs in an attempt to figure out alternate use to access more riders in the county. Plans are to contact the Meridale and Franklin/Treadwell senior clubs to identify the need there in order to edit the 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.

A campaign to distribute current bus schedules to sites in the county that seniors would frequent, such as libraries, doctor offices, designated pickup points, etc., will be undertaken. The OFA will work on a publicity campaign in 2019 for the bus service.

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** through which currently there is a limit of four rides per individual per year due to funding constraints.

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. In the future, OFA hopes to work with Rural Health Alliance of South Central NY in looking at transportation focused on medical needs and develop a possible route to transport seniors and disabled to medical services by bus and obtain funding to do this.

### **Legacy Corps**

Amy Bowie, Program Coordinator for Legacy Corps replaced Georgia Kalayjian-Murphy in March of 2018. Amy has about ten years of experience in the field of human services, accrued during her employment at Delaware Opportunities Inc. Her educational background is in psychology. Amy has experience working with diverse populations and enjoys working with the public.

During the month of May, the Legacy Coordinator attended a two day “Train the Trainer” statewide initiative of R.E.S.T. (Respite Education & Support Tools.) The information obtained through this class will enable Amy to train new volunteers and prepare them to provide respite in private homes within the local community. A wide range of material was presented. The purpose was for Trainers to focus on and select the subjects that would most effectively meet the needs of the volunteers being trained within their program.

Educating volunteers will increase their confidence and help prepare them to be successful caregivers. In pertaining to Legacy, this includes volunteers gaining information on the role of the volunteer, building positive relationships with the caregiver and care-recipient, overcoming obstacles in communication, planning and adapting activities, health/safety issues and confidentiality.

In June of 2018, the Legacy Coordinator attended a Caregiver Forum presented by the Alzheimer’s Association and the Goldberg Foundation. The conference consisted of four workshops with the focus on family caregivers of those with Alzheimer’s and other related forms of dementia. The education, information and local resources obtained will be beneficial the Coordinator, as well as Legacy Program as a whole.

In June, the Legacy Corps Program Brochure was revised. These new brochures were distributed at the Delaware County Fair and the Aug. 22<sup>nd</sup> Senior Fun Day Event. During the month of September the Legacy Coordinator will be doing a presentation to each of the seven dining centers on: “Caregiver’s of the Aging Desire Respite.....Consider Becoming a Volunteer.” The goal is to inform Delaware County residents about the Legacy Program and the services provided, as well as an outreach to recruit new volunteers.

Presently, the Legacy Coordinator plans, organizes and facilitates bi-monthly volunteer meetings for the Legacy volunteers. The meetings cover updates and general information that directly pertain to the volunteers. These meetings also include a guest speaker who provides education/training on various topics associated with the aging population,

respite and caregiving.

The Coordinator's goal for the future is to expand the Legacy Program by refocusing on the "roots" of the program. This is to provide respite for caregivers to reduce caregiver stress. Helping to prevent caregiver burnout will enable care-recipients to stay in their home for as long as is feasible. To help achieve this goal the Coordinator plans to recruit more volunteers and increase the number of clients being served within Delaware County.

### **Health Insurance Information Counseling and Assistance Program (HIICAP)**

Our HIICAP (Health Insurance Information Counseling and Assistance Program) has a new Coordinator, Yvonne Brock. She is replacing Donna Martino who resigned from the position in August of 2018. Yvonne recently passed the HIICAP counselor exam and is now a certified HIICAP Counselor.

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. The new HIICAP Coordinator is being funded 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.

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 \$445 in contributions during program year 2017-18 which was \$310 less 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 5<sup>th</sup> Annual Delaware County Senior Fun Day on August 22. Both events were a huge success in that hundreds of

seniors attended and inquired about the HIICAP program.

In September of 2018 NYSOFA changed how HIICAP is to record and report data. The HIICAP data was originally recorded in SHIP Talk. Starting September 1, 2018 the data is being reported into STARS (SHIP Tracking and Reporting System). NYSOFA did an extensive training to all HIICAP Coordinators and data entry staff on the process change prior to September 2018.

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, courteous, and no improvements needed, very helpful.” “Very knowledgeable, nice, answered many questions and clarified key points.” “Tremendous service.” “Made a very confusing situation much clearer.”

### **Language Line**

In 2018, NYSOFA changed the language interpretation provider from Language Line to Language Link. Delaware County Office for the Aging signed a contract with the new language interpretation provider Language Link (language interpretation phone line). The language interpretation provider 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 by 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 in the reception area 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 is the HEAP coordinator. DO is in the process of hiring to fill the HEAP Assistant position. 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. 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](http://www.mybenefits.ny.gov). Assistance in completing HEAP applications is available from HEAP staff located at the Delaware County Office for the Aging. OFA staff can 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.

OFA has been awarded close to \$2,000 funding with "Get There" through South Central New York Rural Health for program year 2018. The funding will be used to help cover the costs, of enhancing and expanding the volunteer non-emergency medical transportation program.

In 2019, 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 fifteen volunteer non-emergency medical transportation driver of which two are new drivers. These dedicated volunteers have been busy transporting 151 seniors to necessary medical appointments in the 2017-18 program year. Five months into the current program year (2018-19) the agency has already served 83 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 300 subscribers in Delaware County residing in 291 households. This number has ebbed and peaked 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 an attempt to get more client donations in on a routine basis an annual contribution letter as a reminder is being sent out to all clients receiving this service or to their designated caregivers, along with a client satisfaction survey. A system is being set up for automating these mailings on a routine basis. In this program 275 of the current units are owned equipment by OFA and were purchased in the past through fund raising efforts by the Delaware County Senior Council. Despite removal of any owned, non-repairable equipment, CST "Your Link to Life" is honoring that the first 275 installed units are billed at the lower monitoring rate, while additional units installed are billed at the higher leased rate. We have had a good working relationship with Link to Life since transitioning service from Lifeline in 2000.

OFA is down to two trained volunteers from four that have continued to support the program with weekly installations, equipment swaps and removals when needed. The OFA plans on recruiting for additional volunteers. 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 to receive PERS service paid through the Medicaid program. During the past year there were 21 OLTC PERS cases paid by Medicaid. Of the four Medicaid Managed Long Term Care programs now operating in Delaware County - iCircle, VNSNY, Nascentia Health Options (*which used to be VNA Home Care Options*) and Fidelis, OFA is contracting for PERS service from both Fidelis, Nascentia Health Options and now iCircle. VNSNY will not contract with OFA for PERS. Fidelis clients have grown slowly in number from 13 in 2015, 22 in 2016, 23 in 2017 to 27 over the past year. This past year there were four Nascentia Health Options clients on the program; the previous year there were two. Nascentia Health Options and Fidelis are paying for the monthly cost for these 31 Medicaid clients to have this service. So far, OFA has received no PERS cases from iCircle yet.

### **The Dispatch**

The agency newspaper, “The Dispatch,” will be entering into its 43<sup>rd</sup> 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 2018 issue of “The Dispatch” it was mentioned that the suggested goal for subscriber donations for “The Dispatch” was set at \$8,000. As of August, subscribers have donated \$4,486. OFA has also received an outpouring of notes and letters requesting that we keep up the good work. Larry and Susan Goberman wrote, “Excellent publication. Many informative articles.” Florence Terry wrote, “Thank-you for the great information in 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 2017-18 program year legal services was projected to serve 60 seniors. A total of 32 seniors (unduplicated count) were served and a total of over 58 seniors were served (duplicated count). During the 2018-19 program year, legal services is projected to, once again, serve 60 seniors. Both the unduplicated and duplicated count for seniors receiving legal services was down for the 2017-2018 program year. The reason for a decline in legal services was due to the lack of lawyer availability through the Legal Aid Society of Mid-New York for a number of months during this program year.

On June 26, 2018, 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.

Attorney Carol Malz, who served both Delaware and Otsego County seniors, resigned in June of 2017. Alice Decker, an attorney from the Binghamton branch office, served Delaware County clients in the interim until a new attorney was hired. In March 2018 they hired a new attorney, Anita Ribeiro-Ebosele.

### **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. There continues to be a nationwide shortage of both home health & personal care aides which creates a major challenge in providing in-home services. We are not always able to secure personal care aides for our clients through our subcontractors even if funding is available. NY Connects has facilitated discussions on this issue through the Long Term Care Council, Care Transitions committee and the New York Statewide Senior Action Council. In 2018 OFA is currently contracting with four EISEP agencies of which only two of the contracted agencies are providing both PCA levels one & two. In 2018 one EISEP contracted agency has requested that they be reimbursed at an additional cost for a client's initial assessment and the every six month aide supervision by their nurse supervisor. In 2018, the EISEP program currently has 45-50 active clients with 15-20 clients on a waiting/pending list to receive EISEP services.

In 2018-19, 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 Caseworkers 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 2018 was the Big Wheels Golf Tournament. It continues to be their most lucrative event. There was a major change in the Big Wheels Committee in 2018 due to personal reasons. The committee has several new committee members. The 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 \$310. The Big Wheels committee was able to raise close to \$8,000.

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 \$165; 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 fifth Annual Delaware County "Senior Fun Day" with OFA. The Council made a donation of close to \$1,500 towards this event.

### **Health and Wellness**

Senior Fitness Directory: During 2018, the last of the five hundred copies of the January 2016 revised Senior Fitness Directory were distributed. OFA used NY Connects staff to update the Directory in preparation of having 500 more copies made so they would be available for the county fair and "Senior Fun Day." They will continue to be inserted in the informational packets that go out to new seniors about services in Delaware County. 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: In total, ten Matter of Balance programs were offered in Delaware County since its start in 2014, serving 131 seniors. Currently the Matter of Balance Program is on hold due to the loss of trained coaches for the program and the boom of the “Tai Chi for Arthritis” program with increased numbers of seniors wanting the Tai Chi program. OFA has focused their time on the Tai Chi for Arthritis program.

Tai Chi for Arthritis: Funding from the Rural Health Alliance of Delaware County grant, CDCHP and Fidelis has supplemented NYSOFA Title IIID funding for evidence based health and wellness programs. 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 five new volunteers trained this year through NYSDOH Older Adult Falls Prevention grant and through the Administration for Community Living, the program now has a total of eleven 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 only, under a contract with OFA; one volunteer instructor has been instructing the program (both beginners and advanced classes) this year in Sidney at Tri Town Regional Hospital; four newly trained volunteers are in various stages of doing their first classes and will be available going forward in conducting classes in different parts of the county; another instructor only available after work hours is in contract with OFA to conduct the program at a limited number of sites near Delhi; an additional two contracts will be established the fall 2018 with one instructor in Walton doing classes at her yoga studio and another instructor being available at designated sites in Delaware County. Sites established for Tai Chi programs is based on OFA locating and matching available qualified sites to waiting list demand. 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. Currently a suggested donation of \$20 is asked for the advanced series. Class size ranges from 10 to 20, some dependent on size of the class room. OFA’s goal is to conduct two series every eight to ten weeks at Catskill Recreation Center in Arkville and another six to nine 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 the 2017 October Public Hearing, OFA has held eleven beginners and three advanced Tai Chi for Arthritis series, serving 150 Delaware County seniors in beginner’s classes and 27 in advanced classes. Since the start in 2015, the Office for the Aging has held a total of 42 beginner’s and ten advanced

Tai Chi for Arthritis series, serving 576 seniors in beginner's classes and 117 in advanced classes. Of the beginner's series, ten series have been held in Arkville, one in Downsville, ten (10) in Delhi, one in Hamden, four in Walton, two in Franklin, six in Hobart/Stamford, four in Sidney, one in Bovina, two in Andes and one in Hancock. In addition, ten advanced series were held; three in Arkville, two in Delhi, three in Walton, one in Franklin and one in Sidney; 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 beginners series first.

OFA now has a waiting list of 164 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 Fifth Annual Senior Picnic**

Senior Fun Day was a huge success. The total attendance was close to 400 participants of which about 275 were Delaware County seniors. Almost every township had representation of seniors. The event took place at Delaware County 4H Camp Shankitunk on Arbor Hill in Delhi, on Wednesday, August 22 from 9:30 am to 3:00 pm.

There were nearly 50 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, HIICAP, Legacy, funeral directors, and more. Lourdes Mobile Mammography offered free digital screening mammograms for women 60 years of age and older. John Cochran from NYSOFA attended and interacted with both exhibitors and seniors. 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 three buses that ran continuously, shuttling seniors from the SUNY Delhi parking lot "G" to registration at Rice Hall. One of the four buses brought in seniors from further regions of the county such as Margaretville and Grand Gorge. Big M donated bottled water. Door prizes were donated by area merchants. 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, food tent 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 Patty Warfield, Senior Dining Project Assistant. 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." Dessert was ice cream donated by Huff Ice Cream in Sidney.

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 staff does an excellent job putting the Senior Picnic together." "The event was absolutely wonderful." The committee makes the picnic look absolutely flawless." "I look forward to attending next year's picnic." 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 sixth annual Senior Fun Day for 2019. The tentative date is Wednesday, August 21, 2019.

### **Budget**

The total budget for OFA for 2018 is \$2,028,447. The percentages of funds for this budget are received from the following sources:

|                     |       |
|---------------------|-------|
| State Government–   | 36%   |
| Federal Government– | 15%   |
| County Government–  | 40.5% |
| Client Donations–   | 8.5%  |