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**Messages on National Observances from Assistant Secretary for Aging
Kathy Greenlee**

National American Indian and Alaska Native Heritage Month, November 2009

I join President Obama in celebrating National American Indian and Alaska Native Heritage Month. As keepers of a rich and ancient cultural heritage, American Indians and Alaska Natives continue to contribute and serve our Nation in every way possible, from caring for their children, frail elders and disabled family members to serving as role models for their communities and providing leadership in their Tribes, states and the nation.

Today, there are some 564 Federally Recognized Indian Tribes with a diverse array of languages and traditions. But there is a common thread that runs through all the communities – love of the land, respect for elders and the spirit to serve and protect their own Tribal nations and the United States.

The Administration on Aging knows that one of the more pressing concerns for their communities is the need for accessible, culturally appropriate home and community- based long term. I am committed to work with our federal partners and our national aging network of state, Tribal and community-based organizations to assist Tribes in finding better ways to bring services to American Indian and Alaska Native elders. By working together, we can improve the quality of life for our elders and ensure that all Americans enjoy healthy, happy and quality lives in their homes and communities as they age.

I encourage all of you to participate in the numerous events across the country to celebrate and acknowledge the many contributions of American Indians and Alaska Natives of all ages.

To read the Presidential proclamation, please visit:

<http://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/presidential-proclamation-national-native-american-heritage-month>

National Alzheimer's Disease Awareness Month - November 2009

Estimates indicate that between 2.4 and 4.7 million Americans have Alzheimer's disease or related dementias. This number is expected to grow as the population ages rapidly, with millions more projected to develop these tragic diseases in their lifetimes. While there is no cure yet, there are effective strategies to help persons and families coping with the impacts of these diseases.

Helping older Americans who have Alzheimer's disease and related dementias maintain their dignity and independence is central to the Administration on Aging's (AoA) mission. Access to the appropriate supports is critical in understanding and managing these diseases, especially those services that allow families to plan in the early stages of the disease and those that support family caregivers. Each year, family caregivers provide thousands of hours of unpaid care for loved ones with Alzheimer's disease and related dementias. I commend the efforts of these courageous caregivers, who share AoA's goal of helping their family members enjoy quality lives at home for as long as possible.

Recently I announced over \$10 million dollars in new funding through the AoA Alzheimer's Disease Supportive Services Program. Through this program, states and their community partners work collaboratively to expand the array of services and supports for families caring for loved ones with these diseases. With this new funding, seven states will implement evidence-based interventions that have been proven effective in helping persons with these diseases and their family caregivers, while nine states will test new models for providing an array of community supports for these families. For more information about the AoA Program and its current projects, please visit: http://www.aoa.gov/AoARoot/AoA_Programs/HCLTC/Alz_Grants/index.aspx

I encourage you to recognize National Alzheimer's Disease Awareness Month by participating in events that promote awareness of Alzheimer's disease and related dementias and support those caring for loved ones in your community.

To read the Presidential proclamation, please visit: <http://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/presidential-proclamation-national-alzheimers-disease-awareness-month>

New Mexico Aging and Long-Term Services Department Secretary Cindy Padilla to Join AoA

Assistant Secretary for Aging Kathy Greenlee recently announced that New Mexico Aging and Long-Term Services Department Secretary Cindy Padilla will join the Administration on Aging (AoA) staff in Washington, DC as Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary effective November 16. Padilla says she will focus on home- and community-based services, protection against adult abuse, neglect and exploitation and building relationships with Native American communities.

Padilla took over the cabinet post in February 2008. Before that, she was a deputy secretary in the state Environment Department and a division director with the Education Department.

ASA Greenlee Visits Local DC Senior Centers

Accompanied by Dr. Clarence Brown, Director, DC Office on Aging, Assistant Secretary for Aging (ASA) Kathy Greenlee had the opportunity meet with seniors and staff at three Washington, DC senior centers—Iona Senior Services, Vida Hispanic Senior Center and Emmaus Asian Senior Center.

November Speaking Engagements by ASA Greenlee

This month, Assistant Secretary Greenlee will continue her busy schedule. Among her engagements are:

Addressing the Board of Directors of the National Association of Nutrition and Aging Services Programs (NANASP) on November 5 (www.nanasp.org);

Representing First Lady Michele Obama at the Annual Meeting of the American Association of Homes and Services Annual Conference and Expo in Chicago, Illinois on November 8 (www.aahsa.org);

Speaking before the Virginia AARP Forum on Diversity and Aging in Richmond on Nov 12 (<http://www.aarp.org/states/va/>); and

Participating in a CDC Ethnic Media Roundtable on H1N1 and Seasonal flu in Boston, Massachusetts on November 20.

Other HHS News

HHS to Provide More Than \$2.6 Billion to States to Help Low-Income Households with Energy Costs

Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) Secretary Kathleen Sebelius recently announced the release of more than \$2.6 billion to states to help low income citizens with their heating bills during October, November and December of this year. These funds represent grants to states, tribes and territories under the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP).

For a complete list of state allocations of the funds released today go to http://www.acf.hhs.gov/news/press/2009/liheap_2010.html

Individuals interested in applying for energy assistance should contact their local/state LIHEAP agency. For more information, go to <http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/liheap/> or <http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/ocs/liheap/brochure/brochure.html>

FDA and WebMD Expand Consumer Health Information Partnership *Collaboration expands ability to reach key populations at critical times*

The U.S. Food and Drug Administration and WebMD Health Corp. recently expanded their partnership to provide increased access to FDA's consumer health information. This second phase of the partnership includes expanded content and multimedia tools at www.webmd.com/fda. WebMD is personalizing FDA health information for consumers with five new online FDA sections that will initially focus on allergies and asthma, children's health, diabetes, heart health and vitamins and supplements.

To learn more about this expanded partnership, please read the entire announcement at

<http://www.fda.gov/NewsEvents/Newsroom/PressAnnouncements/ucm188374.htm>

New FDA Website Provides the Facts on Hearing Aids

The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) recently launched a new website which provides basic information about hearing aids. The website is a resource for information on hearing loss, the different types and styles of hearing aids, benefits and safety issues, hearing aids and cell phones, how to obtain hearing aids, other products and devices to improve hearing, a checklist of steps to remember and consider before purchasing a hearing aid, and other resources. The site also addresses the importance of knowing the difference between an actual hearing aid, which is regulated by FDA to ensure safety and effectiveness for use in hearing impaired individuals, and a personal sound amplification device which is not a medical device.

To learn more, please go to

<http://www.fda.gov/MedicalDevices/ProductsandMedicalProcedures/HomeHealthandConsumer/ConsumerProducts/HearingAids/default.htm>

H1N1 Flu Fraud Widget

The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) enhanced its efforts to warn the public about potentially deceptive H1N1 influenza products and to report suspected criminal activity with the release of an H1N1 flu fraud widget. The portable application, embedded in a Web page that can be copied onto any other website or blog, will allow the public to play an active role in preventing flu fraud. The widget is available at

<http://www.fda.gov/NewsEvents/PublicHealthFocus/ucm186340.htm>

Consumers are urged to report any suspected fraudulent products or criminal activity relating to FDA-regulated products associated with H1N1 influenza virus, including the names of websites that may be offering these products for sale, to the FDA by visiting:

<http://www.accessdata.fda.gov/scripts/email/oc/oci/flucontact.cfm>

Consumers are urged to purchase and consume only FDA-approved or authorized medical products to diagnose, treat, prevent, or cure infections caused by the H1N1 virus. Consumers also are urged to contact their health care provider if they have any questions or concerns about medical products or personal protective equipment.

For more information on the H1N1 Flu, please go to:

FDA 2009 H1N1 (Swine) Flu Page

<http://www.fda.gov/NewsEvents/PublicHealthFocus/ucm150305.htm>

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention – 2009 H1N1 Flu (Swine Flu)

<http://www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu/>

Fraudulent 2009 H1N1 Influenza Products List

<http://www.accessdata.fda.gov/scripts/h1n1flu/>

Influenza Antiviral Drugs and Related Information

<http://www.fda.gov/Drugs/DrugSafety/InformationbyDrugClass/ucm100228.htm>

The Federal Government's Influenza Web site

<http://www.flu.gov/>

New Tips to Prevent Medical Identity Theft and Medicare Fraud

In a joint press conference, Secretary of Health and Human Services (HHS) Kathleen Sebelius and Assistant Attorney General Tony West highlighted the Obama Administration's work to fight Medicare Fraud and released new tips and information to help seniors and Medicare beneficiaries deter, detect and defend against Medical identity theft. Assistant Secretary for Aging Greenlee also participated in the press conference as did SMP volunteer Joanna Gibson of Felton, Delaware.

The new tips and a printable brochure were produced by the HHS Office of the Inspector General (OIG) and are available now at www.StopMedicareFraud.gov and www.oig.hhs.gov/fraud/idtheft

Enhanced Online Tools Make Comparing Medicare's 2010 Prescription Drug and Health Plan Options Easier

The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) recently announced that people with Medicare and family members can begin to review their 2010 coverage options through Medicare's improved online tools. Beneficiaries will

find several new enhancements on the *Medicare Health Options Compare* and *Prescription Drug Plan Finder* located at www.medicare.gov

Improvements to the plan ratings, search features and plan coverage descriptions will make it easier for beneficiaries to compare their drug and health plan coverage for 2010. Beneficiaries will be able to make changes to their Medicare health and drug coverage during the **open enrollment period, which begins on November 15 and ends December 31.**

CMS Establishes New Requirements for DMEPOS Suppliers

Effective October, certain suppliers of durable medical equipment, prosthetics, orthotics and supplies (DMEPOS) must meet Medicare's quality standards and become accredited by October 1 and obtain a surety bond by October 2, 2009.

These new supplier requirements will help to ensure that people with Medicare get high quality medical items and services from qualified suppliers while helping to prevent fraud in the Medicare program.

Medicare beneficiaries should ask their suppliers if they are approved by Medicare so they can continue to get their equipment and supplies covered by Medicare and to avoid any interruption in services. If a beneficiary's supplier isn't going to meet the new requirements, they will have to look for another Medicare-approved supplier in order for Medicare to pay for their equipment and supplies.

Information on Medicare's new accreditation and surety bond requirements for DMEPOS suppliers may be found at http://www.cms.hhs.gov/Partnerships/03_DMEPOS_Toolkit.asp#TopOfPage

National State-by-State Medicaid Statistical Information System (MSIS) Tables on the CMS website

The CMS website, www.cms.hhs.gov, has been updated with the new 508 compliant National State-by-State Medicaid Statistical Information System (MSIS) Medicaid eligibility and claims tables for federal fiscal years 2005 through 2008 for 31 states. Individual or groups of tables may be selected using the identified dynamic list options. The direct link to the data on the CMS website is:

<http://www.cms.hhs.gov/MedicaidDataSourcesGenInfo/MSIS/list.asp> The tables are found under CMS Home/Research, Statistics, Data and Systems/Medicaid Data Sources – General Information/MSIS Tables.

The standard MSIS fiscal year tables will be updated periodically as additional states submit their data for the full fiscal year reviewed and the data has been approved through the standard quality reviews.

The Fiscal Year 1999 – 2004 full year document of all 25 tables is still available on the CMS website and can continue to be located at the direct link: http://www.cms.hhs.gov/MedicaidDataSourcesGenInfo/02_MSISData.asp CMS will continue to work to convert the prior Fiscal Year tables under the new format.

Questions concerning the data should be directed to the MSIS e-mail box at msis@cms.hhs.gov.

NIA Extends Research on Health, Economics of Older Americans

Recovery Act Funds Will Enhance Long-Term Research Project

The National Institute on Aging (NIA), part of the National Institutes of Health, recently announced the award of four grants totaling more than \$19 million over the next two years to expand the Health and Retirement Study (HRS), the nation's premier long-term study and data resource on the combined health, economic, and social factors influencing the well-being of Americans over age 50.

The awards were made possible through the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act. They will supplement the cooperative agreement between the NIA and the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor, which conducts the study. "Since it began in 1992, the HRS has provided a wealth of information on the physical and economic health of older Americans," said NIA Director Richard J. Hodes, M.D., who added "With this infusion of Recovery Act funds, we can augment the quality of the data we are collecting, expand minority participation in the study cohort and add genetic analysis to the study."

To read the entire press release announcing the grants or to learn more about the focus areas of the awards, please go to <http://www.nih.gov/news/health/oct2009/nia-29.htm>

Consumer-Friendly Resources in Spanish Provided by AHRQ

The Department of Health and Human Services' Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ), now provides in Spanish a variety—printed materials, podcasts and videos—of useful and consumer-friendly information covering a wide variety of health concerns.

AHRQ also offers a template for newsletter content describing these resources for consumers.

To review the list of available materials or to access the template, please go to <http://www.ahrq.gov/consumer/espanoix.htm>

HHS Report on Health Insurance Reform and Breast Cancer

Announcing the release of a new Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) Report, *Health Insurance Reform and Breast Cancer: Making the Health Care System Work for Women*, HHS Secretary Kathleen Sebelius noted "Thousands of women and their families are impacted by breast cancer. We are fighting for health reform that will help improve treatment for women with breast cancer and doing all we can to encourage women to take the simple steps that can help prevent this disease."

The new report highlights the problems in the health care status quo that significantly impact women who are diagnosed with breast cancer or are breast cancer survivors.

To read the entire report, please go to <http://www.healthreform.gov/reports/breastcancer/index.html>

Federal Funding Opportunities

AoA to Fund LGBT National Resource Center

On October 21 HHS Secretary Kathleen Sebelius announced plans to establish the nation's first national resource center to assist communities across the country in their efforts to provide services and supports for older lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) individuals. The LBGT Resource Center will help community-based organizations understand the unique needs and concerns of older LGBT individuals and assist them in implementing programs for local service providers, including providing help to LGBT caregivers who are providing care for an older partner with health or other challenges.

The Administration on Aging will award a single Resource Center grant at up to \$300,000 per year, pending availability of funds. Eligible entities will include public-private nonprofit organizations with experience working on LGBT issues on a national level. To view the program announcement, please go to <http://www.aoa.gov/AoARoot/Grants/Funding/index.aspx>.

For additional information regarding this announcement please contact Greg Case at greg.case@aoa.hhs.gov.

CDC to Fund Communities Putting Prevention to Work

CDC's Procurement and Grants Office has published a funding opportunity announcement entitled, "American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009: Communities Putting Prevention to Work". Approximately \$373 million will be available in fiscal year 2009 to fund thirty to forty awards. The purpose of this FOA is to create healthier communities through sustainable, proven,

population-based approaches such as broad-based policy, systems, organizational and environmental changes in communities and schools.

The application deadline is December 1, 2009.

To learn more about the proposal requirements, please go to <http://www07.grants.gov/search/search.do;jsessionid=yY1pKnvTFvQhxp16nD2WjKMfQbKgwDGhvt6PNkyw4yYT9JMMQQp7!-1163459943?oppId=49571&mode=VIEW>

CDC to Fund Healthier Communities

The purpose of the program is to create healthier communities through sustainable and innovative population-based approaches such as broad-based policy, systems, and environmental changes. The U.S. Territories and jurisdictions funded under this FOA will work collaboratively to promote and sustain policy change efforts of sufficient intensity and duration to help achieve the “Healthy People 2010” objectives related to nutrition, physical activity, and tobacco control. It is recommended that the U.S. Territories focus the interventions on populations who suffer disproportionately from the burden of disease.

The application deadline is November 24, 2009.

To learn more about the proposal requirements, please go to <http://www07.grants.gov/search/search.do;jsessionid=yY1pKnvTFvQhxp16nD2WjKMfQbKgwDGhvt6PNkyw4yYT9JMMQQp7!-1163459943?oppId=49672&mode=VIEW>

More Aging News

Employment Opportunity with the Vermont Department of Disabilities, Aging and Independent Living

The Vermont Department of Disabilities, Aging and Independent Living is currently seeking qualified applicants for the Director of the Division of Disability and Aging Services. The Division of Disability and Aging Services supports older Vermonters and Vermonters with disabilities to live as they choose, pursuing their individual goals and preferences within their chosen communities and is responsible for community-based long-term services and supports for older Vermonters, individuals with developmental disabilities, traumatic brain injuries and physical disabilities. The Division Director oversees the work of 78 dedicated staff and a budget of \$400 million.

The position reference number is 26223. Applications are due no later than November 16, 2009 and must be submitted on-line through the State of Vermont Department of Human Resources at <http://humanresourcesvermont.gov/>

Questions about this employment opportunity may be directed to Joan Senecal, Commissioner, Vermont Department of Disabilities, Aging and Independent Living by phone at 802.241.2401 or by e-mail at joan.senecal@ahs.state.vt.us.

Brookdale Foundation to Fund 30 New Seed Grants for Its Relatives as Parents Program

The Brookdale Foundation is seeking applications for its Relatives as Parents Program (RAPP) Local, Regional and State Seed Grant Initiatives for the year 2010. RAPP is designed to encourage and promote the creation or expansion of services for grandparents and other relatives who have taken on the responsibility of surrogate parenting when the biological parents are unable to do so.

The deadline for the submission of local and regional proposals is **Thursday, December 3, 2009**. The deadline for the submission of state proposals is **Thursday, January 7, 2010**. Selected applicants in all categories will be invited and required, as a guest of the Foundation, to attend the National Orientation and Training Conference to be held April 30 - May 1, 2009 in St. Louis, MO.

To learn more about RAPP and the application requirements, please go to <http://www.brookdalefoundation.org/RAPP/rapp.html>

American Cancer Society Marks the 34th Great American Smokeout®

This November 19 will mark the 34th anniversary of the American Cancer Society Great American Smokeout®. The campaign is designed to challenge smokers to quit smoking or to smoke less and to help promote a society free of tobacco smokers.

To learn more about the Great American Smokeout® or to learn about tools to help smokers quit, please visit the American Cancer Society's Great American Health Challenge website at <http://www.cancer.org/docroot/subsite/greatamericans/Smokeout.asp>

November Is National Hospice and Palliative Care Month

During the month of November there are many opportunities to support hospice and palliative care at both the local and national level.

To learn more, please go to the following websites:

National Hospice Foundation:

<http://www.nationalhospicefoundation.org/i4a/pages/index.cfm?pageid=200>

National Hospice and Palliative Care Organization:

<http://www.nhpco.org/templates/1/homepage.cfm>

To get information on accessing hospice and palliative care, please go to <http://www.caringinfo.org/>, the Caring Connections website, which was created by the National Hospice and Palliative Care Organization (NHPCO) to provide free, easy-to-understand resources on a variety of issues.

Falls Prevention among Older Adults

The Senate resolution which designated September 29, 2009 as National Falls Prevention Awareness Day highlighted the need for increased efforts to prevent the leading cause of fatal and nonfatal injuries to older adults. Endorsed by the National Falls Free Coalition, the resolution was sponsored by Senator Herb Kohl (D-WI), Chairman of the Special Committee on Aging; Senator Mike Enzi (R-WY), Ranking Member of the Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions (HELP) Committee; Senator Barbara Mikulski (D-MD), Chairman of the HELP Subcommittee on Retirement and Aging; Senator Patty Murray (D-WA); Senator Bob Casey (D-PA); and Senator Bernie Sanders (I-VT).

In addition, 22 states joined in celebrating National Falls Prevention Awareness Day. For more information on the States Coalition for Falls Prevention, please go to

<http://www.healthyagingprograms.org/content.asp?sectionid=98&ElementID=746>

The Falls Prevention Awareness and Advocacy Committee continue to maintain a website with a variety of tools and resources for states and communities to use to promote falls prevention. To view this information, please go to

<http://www.healthyagingprograms.org/content.asp?sectionid=149>

For information on the National Falls Free Coalition, please go to

<http://www.healthyagingprograms.org/content.asp?sectionid=113&ElementID=243>

Interactive DRI for Healthcare Professionals

Have you ever wondered how many calories you eat daily, or how much sodium or calcium? Do you know how to individualize dietary recommendations?

The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), Food and Nutrition Information Center (FNIC) has launched the *Interactive DRI for Healthcare Professionals* at <http://fnic.nal.usda.gov/interactiveDRI>. This new online tool calculates an individual's daily nutrient recommendations based on the Dietary Reference Intakes (DRIs). It is intended for healthcare professionals such as registered dietitians, doctors, nurses and others who may have an interest in using these values for dietary planning.

The website also provides links to information on the Dietary Reference Intakes, the Dietary Guidelines, and tools to help plan food choices to meet nutritional requirements such as the Dietary Approaches to Stop Hypertension (DASH) Eating Plan and MyPyramid.

The website is the result of collaboration between the USDA National Agricultural Library and the Department of Health and Human Services Office of Disease Prevention and Health Promotion.

Nutrition.gov on Twitter

The Food and Information Center (FNIC) of USDA has launched a Twitter account as an adjunct to the Nutrition.gov website, <http://www.nutrition.gov/>. Twitter users can find and follow at @Nutrition_gov. Consumers receive many potentially conflicting food and nutrition messages across various information media, including Twitter; FNIC staff will provide followers with an accurate, credible option for nutrition information. @Nutrition_gov followers will find information on topics such as MyPyramid or the Dietary Guidelines for Americans, general nutrition and fitness information and new government resources.

NCOA to Offer Webinar Series on How to Connect Older Volunteers with Organizations in Need of Help

This month, the National Council on Aging (NCOA) will kick-off a three-month Webinar series on how to engage older volunteers in professional-level roles to help organizations accomplish more. Speakers are grantees from the NCOA RespectAbility Models of Significant Service program.

All Webinars are free, but space is limited and a separate registration is required for each.

For a listing of the topics and Webinar Dates, please go to <http://www.ncoa.org/content.cfm?sectionID=65&detail=2949>

Groups Conduct Survey to Assess Long-Term Care of Older Adults Who Are LGBT

The National Senior Citizens Law Center, Lambda Legal, the National Center for Lesbian Rights, the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force, the National Center for Transgender Equality, and Services & Advocacy for GLBT Elders (SAGE), are working together to raise awareness of the issues facing older adults who are lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (“LGBT”) and live in nursing homes, assisted living facilities and other long-term care facilities. The hope is to identify areas where policy changes will improve care, and to find other older adults, advocates and providers interested in these issues.

The 6-questions survey takes about ten minutes to fill it out. The survey completely protects your confidentiality. *(However, the groups are looking for volunteers willing to be interviewed, which can be noted on the form.)*

To complete the survey, please go to

http://www.surveymonkey.com/s.aspx?sm=UPQXC5Gub99IvdRNz83Hwg_3d_3d

The completed survey can also be mailed to:

Nancy Arevalo
National Senior Citizens Law Center
1330 Broadway, Suite 525
Oakland, CA 94612

The deadline for responding to the survey is December 15, 2009.

Planning for Your Elder Years

In a recent online article, *Planning for Your Elder Years*, the National Care Planning Council focused on three primary concerns older persons have about the quality of life as they age—(1) remaining independent in the home without intervention from others, (2) maintaining good health and receiving adequate health care and (3) having enough money for everyday needs and not outlive assets and income—and simple steps that can be taken to ensure effective long term care.

To read the entire article, please go to

http://www.longtermcarelink.net/a13information_article.htm

Submit a Story!

Do you have a story aboutClick on the link below to share your story with us, and it may appear on our website or in this enewsletter!

http://www.aoa.gov/AoARoot/Press_Room/For_The_Press/medadv/Share_Story.aspx

Conferences

Stay up to date with the latest aging meetings and conferences by visiting the AoA events calendar at:

http://www.aoa.gov/AoARoot/Press_Room/events/events_List_Day.aspx#title

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