



SENIOR
CONNECTION CENTER INC.
YOUR AGING & DISABILITY RESOURCE CENTER

2016 ANNUAL REPORT



Proudly serving
older adults,
persons with
disabilities and
caregivers
throughout
Hillsborough,
Manatee, Polk,
Highlands &
Hardee counties.



WELCOME TO SENIOR CONNECTION CENTER



Senior Connection Center is proud to be your Aging & Disability Resource Center, as well as the designated Area Agency on Aging serving West Central Florida.

Many things may have changed within the communities we have continued to serve for nearly 40 years. First of all, our senior population has skyrocketed. This is due to

a number of factors: Baby Boomers began turning 65, more people are moving into our communities and retiring here, and people are living longer. Another change all of us have experienced is that healthcare costs continue to rise and health insurance choices have become more complex. Over time, as more people choose to age in place, their day-to-day needs become more complex as well.

Our Vision:

To be the recognized community leader who connects older adults, persons with disabilities and caregivers with the information, resources and services they need.

What this means to us at Senior Connection Center is that there is an ever-growing number of seniors, persons with disabilities and caregivers who need our help. We pride ourselves in keeping our fingers on the pulse of our community, understanding and adapting to the changing needs of the people we serve. Not only are we finding new and more efficient ways to meet those needs, but we are also working to grow and diversify our funding sources so we can continue to serve our community for years to come.

Our Mission:

To help older adults and persons with disabilities live with independence and dignity.

Every day, those of us who work and volunteer at Senior Connection Center are busy connecting older adults, persons with disabilities and their caregivers with the programs and services they need. We hope you will take some time to review this report, get to know us a little better and recognize how we can serve you, your friends, neighbors and family members, as well as the greater community.

If you or someone you know needs our help, please contact our Elder Helpline at **1-800-96-ELDER** or **www.SeniorConnectionCenter.org**. We look forward to connecting with you soon!

A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT AND CEO

Thank you for your interest in learning more about Senior Connection Center, your Aging & Disability Resource Center and the Area Agency on Aging serving Hillsborough, Manatee, Polk, Highlands and Hardee Counties.



Being the President & CEO of Senior Connection Center means many things to me, including making sure we always stay mindful of our mission and vision. I am a firm believer that the way we operate as a workplace sets the tone for how we treat our clients and the community we serve. We practice our Core Values of Teamwork, Compassion, Quality, Work/Life Balance and Respect in everything we do, and it shows in the enormous amount of work we get done as well as the words of gratitude we receive from the people we serve. It is also clear that our employees appreciate our workplace environment, which led to Senior Connection Center being named one of the Top 100 Workplaces in Tampa Bay this year!

My role charges me to lead the way in helping older adults, persons with disabilities and their caregivers find and obtain the services they need. This is an awesome responsibility that brings with it many rewards, not only for me but for everyone who works and volunteers at Senior Connection Center. It also means we are made aware daily of the growing needs of our community and the challenges we face. I am fortunate to have such a supportive and hard-working team to help me strategize and move forward to make our community a better place.

As you learn more about Senior Connection Center, I hope you will find inspiration to join us in our efforts to help seniors and disabled adults maintain their health, safety, independence and dignity. Connecting people to the help they need is what we are all about. So whether you decide to volunteer at Senior Connection Center, make a donation or refer someone in need to our Elder Helpline, you are supporting our mission of helping older adults and persons with disabilities live with independence and dignity.

Once again, thank you for your interest and support of Senior Connection Center.

Best Regards,

Charlotte McHenry
President & CEO

A MESSAGE FROM THE BOARD CHAIR



In the midst of change, Senior Connection Center continues to provide vital services to meet the needs and enhance the lives of our elders, persons with disabilities and their caregivers. The caring and professional staff at Senior Connection Center is dedicated to

providing services which promote the independence, dignity, health and well-being of everyone they serve. By helping with the resolution of complicated and time consuming issues, the agency is a lifeline for our elders and persons with disabilities. A review of Senior Connection Center's website reveals the stories of individuals whose lives have been transformed with their help. Having served as a member of the Board of Directors since 2010, and now as the Chairman of the Board, it is very easy to be compassionate about the work of this agency.

Ben Darby, Board Chair

SENIOR CONNECTION CENTER CORE VALUES

TEAM WORK

Innovate, problem solve and achieve excellence through effective team work.

COMPASSION

Serve others from a place of compassion.

QUALITY

Reach high performance standards through accountability and responsibility.

WORK/LIFE BALANCE

Understand and support the prioritization between work life and personal life.

RESPECT

Honor each other and those we serve by always showing respect.

MANY PEOPLE IN OUR COMMUNITY NEED OUR HELP

588,208

seniors (60+) live in our 5-county service area. That's nearly 24% of the population.

115,639

local seniors are over the age of 80

89,025

live below 125% of the Poverty Level

More than 135,000

are living alone

180,768

have at least one type of disability, such as hearing or vision loss or are just too frail to adequately care for themselves

**Source: Florida Department of Elder Affairs - 2016 Profile of Older Floridians.*





In order to demonstrate how we assist people every day, we would like to present you with a case study of a 76-year-old man named Oscar.

Oscar was visiting his doctor at a local community clinic when he saw a flier for the Senior Connection Center. Oscar read the flier and saw that Senior Connection Center sometimes helped people with paying electric bills. He was very interested in learning more because he was finding it harder and harder to make ends meet, especially paying his electric bill.

The next morning, Oscar called Senior Connection Center's Elder Helpline by dialing 1-800-96-ELDER, explained his situation to the Elder Helpline Specialist, and requested assistance with paying his electric bill. The Elder Helpline Specialist then asked Oscar a few more questions and discovered that Oscar's fixed income and the high cost of his medication were certainly making it difficult for him to cover his electric bill. In fact, he didn't have enough money to do other essential things, like paint his house. Oscar became emotional when he spoke about how proud he was of the home he had lived in for the past 40 years. Not being able to keep it up anymore was almost as painful as his arthritis.

Senior Connection Center's Elder Helpline Specialist connected Oscar with the following Community Services:

- HOME IMPROVEMENT SERVICES
- UTILITY PAYMENT ASSISTANCE

The Elder Helpline Specialist also connected Oscar with the following Senior Connection Center Services:

- **SHINE (Serving the Health Insurance Needs of Elders)** Oscar was connected with a SHINE Counselor who reviewed his income and assets and determined he would qualify for Medicare financial assistance programs. Enrolling in this program would reduce Oscar's Medicare Part A and B premiums by \$348 per month.

The SHINE counselor also found that Oscar had never signed up for Medicare Part D / Prescription Drug coverage. It seems Oscar had been intimidated by the monthly premiums associated with the plans. The counselor explained to Oscar that he would qualify for the Extra Help Program, which would cover his monthly Part D premium. This gave Oscar with the drug coverage he needed to pay for his arthritis medication.

- **LONG-TERM CARE SCREENING**

Oscar was screened for eligibility for assistance with medication management, transportation and homemaker services through various government funded programs.

- **HEALTH & WELLNESS CLASSES**

Oscar was referred to Senior Connection Center's Health & Wellness Department where he enrolled in a class to help him better manage the effects of his arthritis. He also enrolled in a class to improve his balance and help prevent falls, which Oscar had admitted was a growing concern since his arthritis had worsened.

Two weeks later, Oscar's Elder Helpline Specialist followed up with him to see if he received the assistance he needed. Oscar reported that *Paint Your Heart Out* was scheduled to paint his home the next day. A few weeks later, Oscar sent a thank you note to Senior Connection Center with a picture of his newly painted house.



He also expressed tremendous appreciation for the help he received in covering his Medicare costs and utility payments. He also noted that after taking the Health & Wellness classes and being able to afford his arthritis medication, his mobility had improved and he was in a lot less pain.

Oscar originally called Senior Connection Center to get assistance with paying his utility bill, but he got help with much more than that. As a result of this assistance, Oscar can continue to live independently and with dignity in his own home.

Most people connect with us by calling our **Elder Helpline at 1-800-96-ELDER.**

Our Elder Helpline Specialists listen carefully to each caller, and we ask follow-up questions, to ensure we identify their needs and address their concerns.
We also answer hundreds of inquiries through our web site: www.SeniorConnectionCenter.org
These resources provide information and assistance to local seniors, as well as peace of mind to their long distance relatives and caregivers.
We connect seniors and their families to the most appropriate resources available, such as:

MANY SENIORS LEARN ABOUT US AT COMMUNITY OUTREACH EVENTS.

Our Team of Outreach Staff and Volunteers spend hundreds of hours every year, informing seniors, business professionals and other community partners about the many services we offer, as well as enlightening them about the dangers of elder abuse and exploitation.

70,000
This year, more than 70,000 calls came into our Aging & Disability Resource Center through the Elder Helpline. We treat every caller with the care and respect they deserve.

Please contact Senior Connection Center if you would like to arrange for a speaker to come to your business, civic or community group meeting or place of worship.

Call Patricia at 813-676-5609

Consumer Protection
•••
Transportation Providers

Adult Day Care
•••
Utility Payment Assistance

Legal Assistance Providers
•••
Retirement



Screening and Medicaid Eligibility Assistance

9,949
Our outreach team attended 171 events in 2016, reaching 9,949 seniors with information about available resources and services.

Rental and Housing Assistance

In Home Services
•••
Nutrition and Meal Programs

Senior Employment
•••
Volunteer Opportunities

We are here to help: 1-800-96-ELDER



Here's what some of our Elder Helpline callers have to say...

- "The lady that spoke with me was so professional and helpful. She never made me feel dumb or uncomfortable no matter how many questions I asked. The information I received is exactly what I was looking for. This service has been a life saver for my family. Thank you so much for everything!"
- "The Elder Helpline is a great service for me and many elderly people, so keep up the good work! Thank you!"
- "The person I spoke with was very nice, and very patient with me. I give her an A+"



The gateway for low-income, frail and at-risk seniors to secure Long Term Care Services in their homes.



Long Term Care services, which are state and federally funded, can include home-delivered meals, personal care, adult day care, medical transportation, homemaker services and care-giver respite.

Senior Connection Center staff work to educate seniors and their caregivers about these services. We screen them for eligibility and then notify and enroll them when funds become available, but funding for these programs is very limited. And since these services are not covered by Medicare, the number of frail seniors on the waiting list for these programs is at an all-time high.

Although we assist many frail elders, there are many more waiting for help.

In 2016
we helped needy seniors by funding:

- 964,367 Meals
- 100,421 Hours of Homemaker Services
- 57,972 Hours of Personal Care Services
- 74,955 Trips to Doctor Visits, Meal Sites and other important appointments

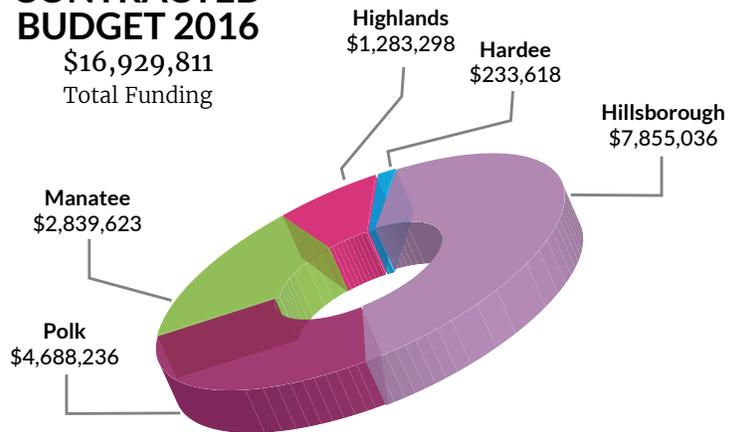
Approximately 19,000 at-risk seniors in our 5-county service area are waiting for LTC services.

Since LTC programs can postpone and even prevent frail elders from going into a nursing home, they actually provide a savings to taxpayers.

The average annual cost of care for a senior enrolled in Community Care for the Elderly is just \$8,046 compared to \$64,770 for nursing home care.

CONTRACTED BUDGET 2016

\$16,929,811
Total Funding



Programs Administered by Department of Elder Affairs (DOEA) Through Area Agencies on Aging:

- Older Americans Act Programs (OAA)
- Nutrition Services Incentive Program (NSIP)
- Emergency Home Energy Assistance Program (EHEAP)
- Community Care for the Elderly (CCE)
- Alzheimer's Disease Initiative (ADI)
- Home Care for the Elderly (HCE)
- Local Services Program (LSP)
- Statewide Medicaid Managed Care Long Term Care (SMMC LTC)
(This program is jointly administered by DOEA and the Agency for Health Care Administration)

Other Grant Awards and Services of Senior Connection Center:

- Aging and Disability Resource Center (ADRC)
- Elder Helpline (OAA)
- Serving Health Insurance Needs of Elders (SHINE)
- Medicare Improvements for Patients and Providers (MIPPA)
- Health & Wellness (OAA)
- Elder Abuse Prevention (OAA)
- Veterans Directed Home and Community Based Service Program (VD-HCBS)
- Chronic Disease Self-Management Program (OAA, Florida Health Network & Humana Foundation)
- Geriatric Workforce Enhancement Program (University of South Florida)

EDUCATING SENIORS: The first step to empowerment

At Senior Connection Center, we believe in providing seniors and caregivers with the information they need to make the best decisions possible.



SHINE is here to guide Medicare beneficiaries, their caregivers and loved ones through the confusing maze of Medicare. Senior Connection Center's team of 50+ SHINE Counselors help educate and empower people to make the best decisions about Medicare and other health insurance benefits, including understanding original Medicare, picking the right prescription drug plan, decyphering Medicare claims and applying for programs that can lower their Medicare costs. SHINE Counselors are trained to provide unbiased advice and assistance with anything Medicare-related, so people have the information they need to make the best choices.

In 2016,
our SHINE Counselors
documented 25,221
client contacts

- 13,394 were low-income
- 6,013 were disabled
- 7,731 were over the age of 75, 2426 of those were 85+
- 1,821 needed assistance in a language other than English

We helped 1,119 low-income individuals apply for Medicare Savings Programs, leading to a combined savings of approximately \$200,000 annually for these clients.

The 876 low-income individuals we helped apply for the Extra Help Program saved about \$4000 each annually on their prescription drug expenses

In 2016, our 50+ SHINE volunteers touched the lives of an additional 21,772 seniors and their caregivers through education & information sessions and outreach events.

If you have a passion for helping seniors and would like to volunteer for Senior Connection Center, please contact Kyrie-Leigh Chambliss at 813-676-5593

A MESSAGE FROM THE VOLUNTEER MANAGER/ SHINE LIAISON



Kyrie-Leigh Chambliss
Volunteer Manager/SHINE
Liaison

Even in my second year serving as the Volunteer Manager/SHINE Liaison at the Senior Connection Center, I am continuously awestruck by the incredible volunteers on our team. I am so very blessed to get to work with such dedicated, intelligent and compassionate individuals. Not only do they provide me with inspiration each and every day, but they spark hope, love and gratitude in so many members of our community. It is an honor to speak with clients we've assisted and hear how much a SHINE volunteer has touched their life, improved their situation, or just made them feel important and cared about.

I said it last year and I'll say it again: *SHINE Counselors do not simply answer questions and run plan comparisons, they provide kindness and peace of mind to many who may otherwise feel lost or overwhelmed.* It's true that we may be able to help people save thousands of dollars a year, but the humanity our volunteers provide to their communities is priceless.

OUR HEALTH & WELLNESS PROGRAMS HELP SENIORS GET HEALTHY AND STAY HEALTHY

Senior Connection Center conducts several Health & Wellness Classes for seniors who want to get healthy and stay healthy. Tai Chi and “A Matter of Balance” classes help prevent falls, which is the major cause of injury and hospitalization for older adults. *Living Healthy* and *Healthy Eating Every Day* classes are proven to be effective in improving the health and well-being of participants who are suffering from such chronic conditions as diabetes and hypertension.



Thanks to a grant from the Humana Foundation and the support of community leaders, we were able to expand our Health & Wellness programs into the East Tampa Community. This project has been met with tremendous community support and participation.



In 2016, we served 763 people in our Health & Wellness programs, but we couldn't have done it without the help of many community partners, such as churches, clinics senior living facilities and senior centers, who host our classes and help to recruit participants.

We also greatly appreciate our Community Lay Leaders who have been trained and certified to teach these evidence-based programs and volunteer their time to deliver them.

“I enjoy watching peoples’ lives and behaviors change through MOB classes. SCC’s ability to train us to help make a positive impact on people’s lives has an impact beyond measure.”

Diana Cross,
Community Lay Leader

SOME THOUGHTS ON THE CLASS CALLED: “Living Healthy”

“For me, it started as a way to give moral support to my daughter, who just had a major heart attack and was taking this class. The instructors knew their subject and presented it in a positive and pleasant way. All the class members were friendly and were active participants as we covered the day’s assignments. When it came to the brain storming, everybody contributed to the subject. The “Living Healthy with Chronic Conditions” workbook is GREAT. It offers so many positive and helpful ideas on such varied but important ways to live with chronic conditions and diseases. This class ended up being helpful, informative and fun for all of us!”

MFB, Class Participant



“I feel very fulfilled in my role as the Program Coordinator for the Humana Foundation grant, Combat Chronic Diseases, in East Tampa. It is rewarding to arrange the Health & Wellness classes and support groups that provide skills and tools to empower those 60+ and their caregivers. Our motto is “Take Back Your Health East Tampa”, and we are honored to bring such educational services into the community.”

Bardine Hicks, Program Coordinator



“Overcoming challenges. Regaining balance.

Coping with difficult emotions. Consuming more fruits and vegetables. Walking one mile for the first time in years. Taking better care of one’s self. These are accomplishments that our participants experience with every program that we offer. We provide quality health and wellness programs that are proven to help people build on small successes that lead to major life sustaining behaviors”.

Jamie Baker-Doughlin,
Director, Healthcare Initiatives



ELDER ABUSE PREVENTION

It is estimated that more than a half million older Floridians are the victims of abuse each year. The perpetrators of this abuse are oftentimes the very people who have been entrusted with the care of that older adult. Types of abuse can include financial exploitation, physical and sexual abuse, malnutrition, dehydration, medical neglect, broken bones and burns. Senior Connection Center

works diligently to raise awareness and educate the community about this serious issue. We also train the employees of companies that serve seniors about how to identify and report this horrific problem.

Our Elder Abuse team reached more than 3,600 seniors with information about protecting themselves from becoming victims of abuse and trained 205 professionals about how to identify and report elder abuse.



Senior Connection Center staff members wear purple in solidarity to commemorate World Elder Abuse Awareness Day 2016.

SENIOR CONNECTION CENTER – FIGHTING FOR VULNERABLE SENIORS & CONNECTING HEROES WITH SERVICES

Senior Connection Center manages the local Veterans Directed Home and Community Base Service Program, a service which gives disabled veterans the flexibility to manage their own care budgets, including hiring family caregivers. This service allows many veterans to remain living at home with their loved ones. We are proud to report that Senior Connection Center is providing ongoing assistance to 73 disabled veterans, more than any other such program in the country.



LETTER FROM VA CLIENT

Dear Senior Connection Center:

I am writing to you to let you know how much I appreciate the Veterans Directed Program. This program allows me, a Veteran who is not elderly, to remain in my home and be as active as possible. I was injured at 43 years old and suffer from chronic pain. The Veterans Directed Program allows me to pay for on-going physical therapy, which I will always need. My PT Program includes Yoga, which has stretches and teaches mindfulness, both of which lower my PTSD, Anxiety and Fibromyalgia pain.

The Veterans Directed Program allows me to use the resources for my various needs, rather than the rigid limits that most home health companies can provide. Recently, my mother was hospitalized in New Jersey and my caregiver was able to travel with me to visit her. That would not have been possible with a traditional home health aide.

My caregiver helps me manage my daily needs, like bathing, meal preparation, house cleaning and driving me to appointments and activities. This program gives me the flexibility to truly take care of my needs. I'm not confined to my bed. Instead, it allows me the ability to manage my health while trying to preserve the most active life possible.

Sincerely,
Pat Colbert, Gulf War Veteran



2016

Highlights & Happenings

Tampa Bay Times named Senior Connection Center one of Tampa Bay's Top 100 Workplaces for 2016.



This is a reflection of our commitment to treating our employees with the same respect, consideration and dignity that we extend to the clients we serve every day.

Our Rise & Shine Annual Awards Breakfast took place on May 25th at the Embassy Suites Tampa – USF. The event raised more than \$20,000 (net) in sponsorships and donations. We are reinvesting these funds in our community through Crisis Funds and Mini-



Grants for innovative and practical projects that address the issues of isolation and hunger among older and disabled adults.

Thanks to Suncoast Credit Union for your ongoing support of our Elder Abuse Prevention efforts by funding educational sessions for banking and other professionals to help seniors protect their assets.



Suncoast
Credit Union

Abuse
Prevention

SCC hosted three Community Conversations throughout our service area in 2016. Our goal was to listen to and learn from local seniors and representatives from organizations that work with seniors. We discussed issues affecting older adults and brainstormed about possible solutions.



Thanks to a grant from the Humana Foundation, SCC is holding Health & Wellness workshops in East Tampa. Participants are learning to live healthier lifestyles, including shopping for and eating healthier food, increasing their exercise and reducing stress. Program graduates are rewarded with personal garden boxes so they can continue those healthy eating habits.

Humana
Foundation

Thanks to a grant from the Junior League of Tampa, SCC was able to purchase air-time to promote our SHINE program on local Spanish radio and TV stations. Calls from Spanish-speaking seniors and their caregivers more than doubled during the two months of this promotion, compared to the previous year. Our SHINE program was able to assist approximately 1800 Spanish-speaking seniors this year!



Senior Connection Center greatly appreciates every one of our community partners. We could not accomplish all we do without the hard work, cooperation and support of our Service Providers, Business Sponsors and Volunteers, including SHINE and Elder Helpline Volunteers, Advisory Council and Board Members.

From the entire team of employees at Senior Connection Center...

Thank You!

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Pehling, Vice Chair

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A Message from the Advisory Council Chair

It all started when I was a young teenager with a church youth group. One Saturday, the group leader took us to a nursing home to do yard work; mowing, weeding, trimming, etc., in the hot summer heat. When the work was done, we were tired and exhausted and just wanted to go home. Instead, we were invited in to have lunch with the residents. Their gratitude at watching us work shone through their cheery faces and smiles. That experience left an impression on me that has never gone away. It's all about giving your time and talents, especially when it's for free. I have learned that the rewards for helping seniors leave a bigger impression on the giver than the receiver. Now, as a volunteer for the Senior Connection Center's Advisory Council, it brings me joy to have the opportunity to propose new ideas that can truly help others.



Sherry Reeder, Advisory Council Chair

We gratefully acknowledge
the generous support of our sponsors:



CHAPTERS
HEALTH SYSTEM

GOOD SHEPHERD HOSPICE • LIFEPAH HOSPICE
HPH HOSPICE • HPH HOME HEALTH • PALLIATIVE CARE



Proudly serving older adults, person with disabilities and their caregivers
throughout West Central Florida



8928 Brittany Way, Tampa, FL 33619
Phone: 813-740-3888 Fax: 813-623-1342
Elder Helpline: 1-800-96-ELDER

SeniorConnectionCenter.org