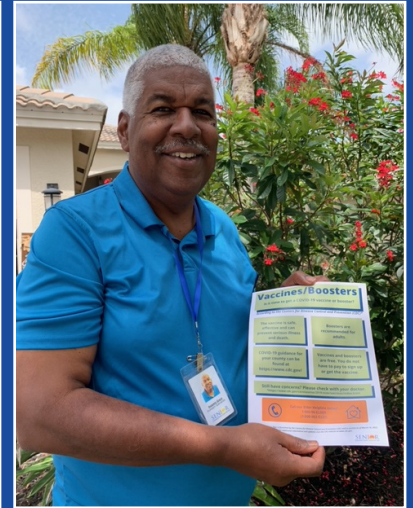
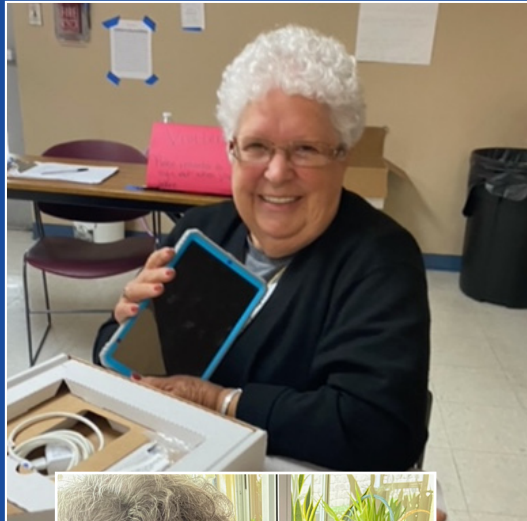


# AGE YOUR WAY



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

## A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT & CEO

Once again, we are wrapping up a year that has been both eventful and challenging, but also extremely rewarding. Our staff and volunteers continued to navigate through yet another year of the ongoing Covid pandemic, along with a devastating hurricane, but we never lost sight of our mission – to help older adults and persons with disabilities live with independence and dignity. We also witnessed the importance of flexibility and the value of innovation as we found new ways to fulfill that mission and address the unmet needs of local seniors.

Our Outreach team and Elder Helpline specialists found innovative ways for keeping local seniors up-to-date with Covid and vaccine information, as well as connecting them to the other resources they needed. Our Long Term Care team worked tirelessly to connect our most at-risk seniors with services that allowed them to safely remain in their homes, while our Telephone Reassurance program allowed us to stay connected to many older adults who are living alone. We also identified and implemented technologies to further assist local seniors by providing much-needed support to caregivers, offering virtual Health & Wellness classes, and providing an array of educational and engaging online offerings, including classes to train seniors to safely use emerging technologies. I am especially proud of the advancements we have made that allow us to further expand our Veterans Self-Directed Care program to serve even more disabled veterans of all ages.

We also utilized technology to present our annual Rise & Shine fundraiser as a virtual event. The donations we raised went to support our Crisis Funds, which we used in part to assist many seniors whose lives were turned upside down by Hurricane Ian. And, for weeks after the hurricane passed, we continued to provide staff to work at the Disaster Recovery Centers so we could assist those older adults whose lives continue to be impacted by the hurricane.

As I look toward 2023, I find it fitting that this year's theme for Older Americans Month is "Aging Unbound." We at Senior Connection Center have seen how being flexible, creative, innovative and open to new ideas has allowed us to better serve our clients and the community.



Our Salt & Pepper Outstanding Senior award recipients demonstrated how they could achieve amazing accomplishments by breaking down the stereotypes of what older adults are capable of doing, thereby demonstrating the value they bring to our entire community.

As you read through this report, I hope you are inspired and impressed with the strides we have made, and continue to make, as we work to serve the older adults and persons with disabilities who live in our community.

*Best regards,*

*Charlotte McHenry*

*President & CEO*



***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.*

***Our Mission:*** *To help older adults and persons with disabilities live with independence and dignity.*

***Our Core Values:***

*Respect, Compassion, Teamwork, Quality, and Work / Life Balance.*

***Our Team:***

*More than 150 dedicated employees and volunteers uphold these core values every day, as we work together to fulfill our mission.*

***Our Hope:***

*That we can work together with you to improve the lives of local seniors, persons with disabilities, and their caregivers.*

**Either way, we are just a call or click away...**

**1-800-96-ELDER**

**SeniorConnectionCenter.org**



## OUR AGING & DISABILITY RESOURCE CENTER IS HERE TO HELP!

**Senior Connection Center's Aging & Disability Resource Center (ADRC)** is comprised of our **Elder Helpline, SHINE** and **Long Term Care** teams, who work cooperatively to make sure local seniors are connected to the programs and services they need to maintain their independence and dignity.

### ELDER HELPLINE

For many seniors, as well as their caregivers and long-distance family members, their first experience with Senior Connection Center happens when they call or email our Elder Helpline.

**1-800-96-ELDER**  
**SENIORCONNECTIONCENTER.ORG**

Our highly trained Elder Helpline Specialists listen carefully to each caller and ask follow-up questions to make sure we identify their needs and address their concerns. And, for those who prefer email, we are happy to answer their questions that way as well. We pride ourselves in identifying the best available resources to assist each person, which may include our own programs, such as Long Term Care / Medicaid Eligibility assistance, SHINE / Medicare counseling, or Health & Wellness classes. We also connect callers to countless community services such as transportation providers, rental and housing assistance, utility payment assistance, nutrition and meal programs, and in-home services.

**More than 121,000 calls came into Senior Connection Center's Elder Helpline and Aging & Disability Resource Center in 2022.**

### SHINE – SERVING HEALTH INSURANCE NEEDS OF ELDERS

SHINE counselors provide local seniors with unbiased advice and assistance regarding anything Medicare-related, from understanding original Medicare to picking the right prescription drug plan, de-cyphering Medicare claims, or applying for programs that can lower their Medicare costs.

When the pandemic first hit and our SHINE volunteers could not safely provide face-to-face counseling to local seniors, we continued to provide SHINE services by phone and we offered clients the option of meeting via Zoom. During 2022, our SHINE Counselors were quite excited to be able to begin safely meeting with clients in person once again,

including office visits and community events. We decided, however, to continue to offer phone and virtual meeting options, which can be especially helpful to those who have transportation challenges, health issues, or scheduling conflicts. And, as always, our SHINE counselors will continue to prepare consumers to make the best decisions about Medicare based on their own personal circumstances.

In 2022 ...

- Our SHINE volunteers and staff documented nearly 8,000 client contacts.
- More than 4,000 were low-income
- 900 had disabilities
- More than 2,300 were over the age of 75
- 650 needed assistance in a language other than English
- We helped over 700 low-income individuals apply for Medicare Savings Programs, leading to a combined annual savings of more than \$1.1 million
- We also assisted these low-income individuals apply for the Extra Help Program, which saved each client about \$5,000 annually on their prescription drug expenses.



Open Enrollment Period for Medicare, which takes place from mid-October to early December, is the time when most Medicare beneficiaries select their Medicare plans for the upcoming year. In 2022, Senior Connection Center's SHINE team **hosted 46 live and virtual Open Enrollment events** throughout our 5-county service area and **assisted more than 2,000 Medicare beneficiaries to select and enroll in their 2023 Medicare plans.**

### LONG TERM CARE SERVICES

Senior Connection Center is the gateway for frail and low-income seniors to secure Long Term Care (LTC) services, including Medicaid Managed Care. These services allow at-risk senior to safely remain living in their homes and avoid premature nursing home placement. In 2022, Senior Connection Center helped local seniors-in-need by funding:

- 1,254,397 meals, both home-delivered and congregate
- 21,885 rides to medical and other important appointments
- 59,102 hours of personal care services, such as bathing and dressing.
- 112,882 hours of homemaker services.

## SENIOR CONNECTION CENTER FACES THE CHALLENGES OF COVID AND HURRICANE IAN

**A**s we entered the third year of the pandemic, Senior Connection Center continued to identify new and effective ways to help older adults and persons with disabilities deal with the health and social pressures they continued to face. Then, at the end of September, Hurricane Ian hit Florida's West Coast, leaving a trail of destruction as it traveled across the state. Every county within SCC's service area felt the impact, but Hardee County was hit especially hard. Here are some examples of the types of assistance Senior Connection Center was able to provide in response to the needs of local seniors during these especially difficult times.



Prior to any storm, Senior Connection Center works along with our provider network to ensure our clients are prepared to survive the storm and get through the subsequent days by providing them with such supplies as shelf stable meals and drinking water. Afterward, we work with community partners to follow up with clients and coordinate the delivery of additional food, water, and other supplies they may need. Senior Connection Center would like to thank our dedicated team of staff and volunteers, the Florida Department of Elder Affairs, our provider network, and countless other community partners who worked with us to quickly provide relief and hope to the victims of Hurricane Ian.



Immediately following Hurricane Ian, SCC, along with our network of community partners and

providers, coordinated the distribution of nearly 5,000 Ready-to-Eat meals and 300 cases of water to local seniors who were severely impacted by the storm.

As Disaster Recovery Centers (DRCs) were set up throughout Hardee, Highlands, Polk, Manatee, and Hillsborough counties, Senior Connection Center immediately assigned team members to staff each DRC to focus on helping those



older adults and persons with disabilities who survived the storm, but were now living in shelters and hotels. We provided them with gift cards to purchase such necessities as groceries, water, coolers and ice. We provided gas cards to those whose cars survived the

storm, and replaced cell phones, tablets and household items. And, of course, we helped them to access any available community resources.







There are times when a senior calls the Elder Helpline for assistance with an unexpected problem they cannot afford to address and which, if left unresolved, would lead to a serious crisis. When we cannot find a resource to fix their problem, especially when a relatively small amount of money would resolve the issue, we can turn to our Crisis Funds to help. The majority of SCC's Crisis Funds are raised at the Rise & Shine fundraiser, with some additional assistance provided by the Florida Blue and Amazon Smile Foundations. **During 2022, Senior Connection Center assisted 27 individuals with \$15,420 in Crisis Funds, thereby preventing their situations from escalating to a crisis.** We have paid for such things as vehicle repairs and utility bills. We paid rent for one senior after their bank account was drained in an internet scam, and for another who had multiple medical emergencies that consumed their entire savings. In most instances, we are able to divert a person's crisis for less than \$1000.

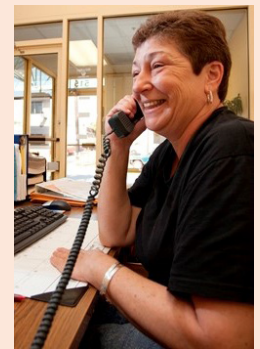
After Hurricane Ian, we used Crisis Funds to help storm victims with tree and debris removal, as well as emergency energy, housing, and transportation assistance. Here are a few more examples of how Crisis Funds were able to help...

As Hurricane Ian was approaching and Mrs. J was preparing to evacuate from her home, she did not realize she had left her dentures behind. When she returned, she was devastated to find them in pieces on the floor. Thanks to SCC Crisis Funds, we were able to pay for her replacement dentures.

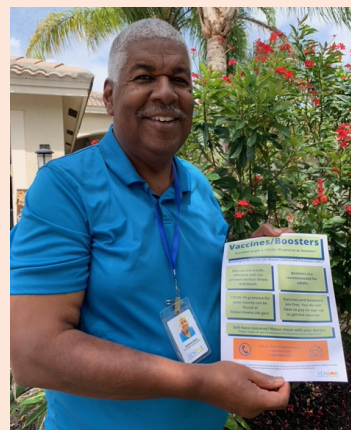
After the hurricane, Mr. M was staying at the Red Cross Shelter until his home could be repaired. Every day, Mr. M walked 6-miles, round trip, from the shelter to his home and back, so he could do the repair work himself. Thanks to just \$260 in Crisis Funds, we were able to tow Mr. M's RV home closer to the shelter and eventually to its new location.

### TELEPHONE REASSURANCE: KEEPING PEOPLE SAFE

Early in the pandemic, SCC and our network of provider agencies established a routine of calling those seniors who were living alone and/or otherwise at risk for feeling isolated and lonely. After witnessing the value of this service and the opportunity it provided us to address these clients' unmet needs, we decided to continue the service. **During the first week following Hurricane Ian, 1,000 Telephone Reassurance Calls were made to local storm victims, allowing us to confirm their health and safety and provide any help they needed.**



### SENIOR CONNECTION CENTER REACHES OUT TO THE COMMUNITY



*Augie Grace, Community Outreach and Health Education Specialist*

When the Covid vaccine first became available, Senior Connection Center hired a team of outreach workers to disseminate vaccine information by going door-to-door to the homes of seniors, as well meeting them at community events and foodbanks. This initiative allowed us to

provide more than 3,000 older adults with accurate vaccine information and assistance with appointment scheduling and transportation.

## MORE ABOUT SENIOR CONNECTION CENTER'S PROGRAMS AND SERVICES...

### BRINGING PEOPLE TOGETHER WITH TECHNOLOGY

**S**enior Connection Center has implemented several senior-friendly, tech-based initiatives that encourage socialization, promote learning new skills and information, support health and wellness, and make seniors' homes safer. These initiatives have proven to be easy to use as well as effective, and we are continuing to offer them to older adults and their caregivers living in our 5-county service area.

#### GETSETUP

Senior Connection Center has partnered with GetSetUp to provide hundreds of live online classes to local seniors so they can remain mentally, physically, and socially active. These classes are interactive, easy to join, offered day and night, and free to seniors and caregivers living in our service area.



their TV or tablet as an interactive communication tool. Uniper offers a variety of activities that members can enjoy in real time including Health & Wellness classes, support groups, and video-chats with friends, family, and healthcare providers.

#### UNIPER

Uniper is a social engagement platform that allows members to use

#### COMPANION PETS

We have partnered with Ageless Innovations to offer robotic "Companion Pets" as an alternative to traditional pet therapy. These dogs



and cats are designed with soft fur that feels real, and they have sensors that respond to touch and sound, allowing them to interact like real cats and dogs. These pets can be especially comforting to people with Alzheimer's and other forms of dementia.

#### ALEXA TOGETHER

SCC has partnered with Amazon to offer their Alexa Together services. This program provides qualifying older adults with a Ring doorbell and an Echo Show 8 Alexa

device to improve their personal security and video chat with off-site caregivers.

*[Please visit SeniorConnectionCenter.org](https://SeniorConnectionCenter.org) and click on [Helpful New Offerings](#) for more information about these initiatives.*



### SENIOR CONNECTION CENTER'S VETERANS DIRECTED HOME & COMMUNITY BASED SERVICES PROGRAM



Senior Connection Center manages the local Veterans Directed Home & Community Based Services Program, which provides disabled veterans of all ages the flexibility to manage their own care budgets

and hire family caregivers. The veterans enrolled in this program range in age from a 29- to 102-years old, and we are excited to report that the program has grown from serving 100 veterans in 2021 to serving 165 in 2022, and the number of women veterans in the program has grown to seven. We are also proud to report that over the course of 2022 these veterans received a total of more than 200,000 hours of caregiver and other needed services, which has allowed them to remain living at home with their loved ones.



# SENIOR CONNECTION CENTER, INC. 2022 ANNUAL REPORT

## SENIOR CONNECTION CENTER REACHES OUT TO THE COMMUNITY

Senior Connection's Outreach team continued to inform the public about our programs and services. In addition to meeting individually with more than 500 seniors at dozens of community events, we also conducted hundreds of surveys to help identify the unmet needs of these people and their neighbors and referred many to the Elder Helpline for additional assistance.

Among the many challenges we faced during Covid was making sure we safely delivered Health & Wellness classes to local seniors in order to help them get healthy and stay healthy. We tackled this challenge by utilizing various social media platforms and senior-friendly technology to deliver information and workshops virtually, and we will continue to do so in order to reach more people with the important information we want to share.

But, we began getting feedback from many seniors that they really preferred in-person classes, and they wanted to resume doing so ASAP! With Covid restrictions loosening up, SCC decided to respond by cross training our Outreach team from throughout our



5-county service area to also deliver our most popular in-person Health & Wellness workshops. These Community Health Education and Outreach Specialists can now begin offering our most popular classes including A

Mattter of Balance, Bingocize, Tai chi for Arthritis for Fall Prevention, and Diabetes Education Empowerment Program.

*In recognition of World Elder Abuse Awareness Day, Senior Connection Center joined forces with other Florida Area Agencies on Aging to present a Facebook Live event Elder Abuse: It's More Than Scams. Topic experts from around the state provided useful information on this alarming topic.*



### 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)
- Enhanced Home Care for the Elderly (EHCE)
- Home Care for the Elderly (HCE)
- Local Services Program (LSP)

### Programs Administered by Department of Elder Affairs (DOEA) Through Area Agencies on Aging in response to COVID-19:

- American Rescue Plan (ARP)
- Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act (CARES Act)
- EHEAP American Rescue Plan Act (EHEAP ARP)

### Other Grant Awards and Services Provided by the Area Agency on Aging:

- Aging and Disability Resource Center (ADRC)
- Elder Helpline (OAA) Older Americans Act Title III-B and III-E
- Serving Health Insurance Needs of Elders (SHINE)
- Medicare Improvements for Patients and Providers (MIPPA)
- Senior Medicare Patrol (SMP)
- Health & Wellness (OAA) Older Americans Act Title III-D
- Elder Abuse Prevention (OAA) Older Americans Act Title VII
- Veterans Directed Home and Community Based Service Program (VD-HCBS)

### Other Grant Awards for the Area Agency on Aging in response to COVID-19:

- ADRC CARES Act No Wrong Door
- Coronavirus Consolidated Appropriations Act (CCAA)

### Services Added to OAA and ARP Programs by the Area Agency on Aging in response to COVID-19:

- Bingocize • Gerontological Counseling (Group/Individual)
- Healthcare Navigator • Pet Support Services • T-CARE
- Technology • SAVVY Caregiver • Shopping Assistance
- Telephone Reassurance

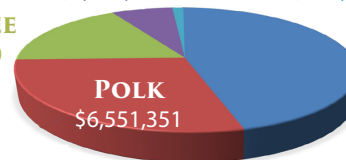
## CONTRACTED BUDGET 2022

**\$22,858,959 TOTAL FUNDING**

**HIGHLANDS \$1,593,907 HARDEE \$285,109**

**MANATEE \$4,011,550**

**HILLSBOROUGH \$10,417,042**



### COVID related funding:

Program	Contract Year	Contract Total*
ADRC CARES Act No Wrong Door**	7/1/2020 – 9/30/2022	\$338,414.12
Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act (CARES Act)	3/01/2022 – 9/30/2022	\$269,967.00
EHEAP American Rescue Plan Act**	11/01/2021 – 3/31/2023	\$494,439.00
Coronavirus Consolidated Appropriations Act (CCAA)**	2/1/2021 – 6/30/2023	\$1,435,763.00
Expanding COVID-19 Vaccinations via the Aging Network		\$427,310.00
American Rescue Plan (ARP)**	9/1/2021 – 9/30/2024	\$8,737,034.67
<b>Total Funding:</b>		<b>\$11,702,927.79</b>

Special Programs	Contract Year	Contract Total*
Enhanced Home Care for the Elderly (EHCE)	11/01/2022-10/31/2023	\$4,157,284.36

\*The contract totals do not include SCC Admin.

\*\*These contract ending dates were extended from the original ending dates.

## WELCOME TO RISE & SHINE 2022... SENIOR CONNECTION CENTER'S ANNUAL FUNDRAISER AND AWARDS CEREMONY.

**E**ven though the pandemic prevented us from hosting a live and in-person event, we were able to capture the inspiration and excitement of the awards ceremony with a virtual event. Proceeds from Rise & Shine are used to support



*Special thanks to our Emcee, Matthew McClellan from Fox 13 News*

Senior Connection Center's Crisis Fund and Mini-Grant initiatives. Both of these initiatives were developed by Senior Connection Center to address the unmet needs of local seniors and to prevent a negative situation from escalating into a crisis. More can be found about these initiatives throughout this report.

### ABOUT THE SALT & PEPPER AWARDS...

Senior Connection Center initiated the Salt and Pepper Awards in 2008 as our way of recognizing the amazing achievements and acts of service performed by older adults who live right here in our community. Every year, we continue to be amazed and inspired by each and every nomination we receive.

When we selected the name "Salt & Pepper" we were certainly alluding to those flecks of gray that tend to appear in our hair as we age. But the name was also chosen as a tribute to the late, Honorable Claude Pepper, who was instrumental in crafting legislation that continues to help older Americans today, including Social Security and Medicare. Claude Pepper continued to represent and serve the residents of the State of Florida in Congress until he passed away at the age of 88.

As always, this year's Salt & Pepper Award winners would certainly make Claude Pepper proud. And they embody the theme of this year's Older Americans Month, Age Your Way! These talented and generous people have chosen to lead meaningful and fulfilling lives, and it is our pleasure to share their stories with all of you as we honor them with the 2022 Salt & Pepper Outstanding Senior Awards!

### PHILANTHROPIST OF THE YEAR **Charlie Burdette**

According to the dictionary, a philanthropist is someone who donates their time, money, experience, skills, or talent to help create a better world. That pretty much sums up our 2022 Philanthropist of the Year, Charles "Charlie" Burdette.



Charlie spent more than 30 years volunteering for various organizations in Maryland, where he received the Governor's Outstanding Volunteer Award in 2004. When he moved to Lakeland in 2005, he became involved in numerous nonprofit and civic organizations in his new community, actively volunteering his time and donating his own personal funds to help people in need. Among the organizations that benefit from Charlie's generosity include Talbot House Ministries, Rath Senior ConNEXTions Center, Retired Senior Volunteer Program, Volunteers in Service to the Elderly, Lakeland Volunteers in Medicine, and the Good Samaritan Clinic. Charlie also supports Elder Point Ministries, the United Methodist Temple, and the Faith Lutheran Church in Lakeland. It would be impossible to count the tens of thousands of hours of service Charlie has donated to his community over the years.

### BUSINESS & ENTREPRENEURSHIP **Ana Rivera**

In the early 2000's, many small Hispanic businesses in Polk County were looking for a leader to give them a voice, help them grow their businesses, and better reach the Hispanic community. Ana Rivera's diverse experience, high energy and enthusiasm provided the background necessary to take on the challenge. In 2007, Mrs. Rivera launched the Puerto Rican Hispanic Chamber of Commerce of Polk County, where she continues to provide support, leadership and a voice for her business community.





## MEET THE 2022 SALT & PEPPER OUTSTANDING SENIOR AWARD WINNERS

### COMMUNITY SERVICE & VOLUNTEERISM **Carol White**

When Carol White retired from her career in social work and nursing, she decided to combine her professional skills with her personal experience of having a loved one with dementia, and volunteer with the Alzheimer's Association. Carol serves in a number of different volunteer roles including Program Promoter, Support Group Facilitator, and Community Educator, and she serves on the Alzheimer's Association's National Care and Support Volunteer Advisory Committee. Carol has educated several thousand individuals in these various roles.



### ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT **Bill Hodges**

Bill Hodges is a passionate advocate for veterans, an active member of several Tampa veteran's organizations, and a strong communicator who uses the written word and his voice to educate and lift the spirits of his audiences. In 2018, Bill launched the Veterans Corner Radio program on Sun Radio WSCQ-FM to increase veterans' awareness of their benefits. In 2020 he launched the Veterans Corner podcast which, in 2022 reached a milestone of 25,000 downloads by listeners in all 50 states and 28 countries around the world. Bill and his wife, Phyllis also operate Freedom Floats, a program that provides pontoon boat rides to veterans.



*You can watch the 2022 Rise & Shine virtual awards ceremony on Senior Connection Center's YouTube Channel! Thank you to our Rise & Shine sponsors who make this event possible:*

### HEATH & WELLNESS **Izora Bullock**

Izora Bullock promotes health and wellness in so many ways, including teaching fall-prevention classes, such as Tai Chi and A Matter of Balance to older adults. She actively recruits her enthusiastic class participants to become instructors as well, thereby opening up these services to broader audiences. Izora is also the founder and President of LIFE Limbs, Inc., a non-profit organization that provides community-based Health & Wellness education as well as Community Health Worker training opportunities.



### SENIOR-FRIENDLY BUSINESS OF THE YEAR **Network Eye**

Every year, Senior Connection Center recognizes a local business that excels in providing quality care and services to older adults by presenting them with our Senior-Friendly Business of the Year Award. This year's winner, Network Eye, launched an innovative initiative in the Tampa area to identify and address the most common and treatable causes of preventable blindness in older adults, macular degeneration and diabetes. They made their retina clinics affordable and more accessible to seniors and their caregivers by locating them into a retail pharmacy setting, and they constructed a mobile eye clinic in order to bring these services to senior living communities throughout the Tampa Bay area.



*Rebecca Davis, CMO, accepts the Senior Friendly Business of the Year Award on behalf of Network Eye*

**Humana**

**MOFFITT**  
CANCER CENTER

**ACADIA**

**BKS PARTNERS**

**Suncoast**  
Credit Union

**AARP** Real Possibilities  
Tampa Bay

## HIGHLIGHTS AND HAPPENINGS

*Senior Connection Center strives to keep our workforce engaged and excited to come to work every day, and to serve older adults and persons with disabilities with respect and patience. Once again, Senior Connection Center is recognized as one of Tampa Bay's Top 100 Workplaces!*

**HOW HAVE WE REMAINED A TOP WORKPLACE FOR 7 CONSECUTIVE YEARS???**

By adhering to our Core Values in everything we do...

- Teamwork
- Quality
- Work/Life Balance
- Respect
- Compassion

**SENIOR CONNECTION CENTER INC.**  
YOUR AGING & DISABILITY RESOURCE CENTER

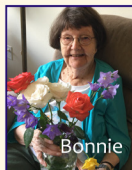
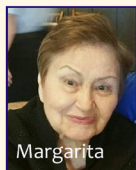
We appreciate our team of dedicated employees who work together to fulfill our mission of helping older adults and persons with disabilities live with independence and dignity.

**SeniorConnectionCenter.org**

*Michelle Branham, Florida's Secretary of the Department of Elder Affairs, paid a visit to Senior Connection Center to present service awards to two SCC team members: Frank Wagoner, Director of MIS, for his instrumental contribution to Senior Connection Center, F4A and the DOEA during the eCIRTS conversion and Clairedine Senat, Senior Program Planner & Contract Manager, for providing her leadership, problem-solving skills and guidance to staff and providers alike during the eCIRTS transition. Congratulations!*



### WHY WE WALK



*Senior Connection Center's team Forget-Me-Nots honored our loved ones as we participated in this year's Walk to End Alzheimer's.*

*SCC's Mini-Grants are awarded on a competitive basis to local organizations that offer innovative and cost-effective solutions to isolation and loneliness, poor nutrition, or the declining condition of seniors' homes. In 2022, SCC Mini-Grants were awarded to Sterling Place to develop a Computer Lab for local seniors, Faith in Action to enhance food and transportation services, the Osprey Observer to publish a senior-focused column, and Hillsborough County Department of Aging Services for their highly innovative Silver Screen Outdoor Mobile Movie Project (pictured above) that provided local seniors with much-needed entertainment and socialization during the pandemic.*



*Florida was the hosting state for this year's conference of the Southeastern Association of Area Agencies on Aging, where Senior Connection Center took an active role in making it an all-around successful event for our colleagues and counterparts throughout the Southeast.*



*SHINE volunteer, José Concheiro was chosen to receive this year's Arnie Abrams (SHINE) Volunteer of the Year Award. José has been volunteering for SHINE since 2013, providing counseling in both English and Spanish throughout SCC's five-county service area. In spite of the challenges we faced with*

*COVID, José has provided SHINE counseling services to approximately 200 Medicare beneficiaries every year!*



## BOARD OF DIRECTORS 2022

### REPRESENTING

#### HILLSBOROUGH COUNTY

Janice Bayruns ..... *First Light Home Care*  
Dr. Amber Gum ..... *Florida Mental Health Institute, USF*  
Emma Hemness, Treasurer. .... *Hemness Faller Elder Law*  
Gil Machin ..... *Retired*  
Gabriel Mbulo ..... *Edward Jones*  
Lori Rogovin, Vice Chair ..... *USF School of Social Work*

### REPRESENTING

#### MANATEE COUNTY

Kim Borsheim ..... *Lakewood Ranch Hospital*  
Terry Gubbins ..... *Retired*

### REPRESENTING

#### POLK COUNTY

Jean Berken ..... *SHINE Counselor*  
Belenda Cypress, Secretary ..... *Retired*  
Ben Darby ..... *Darby Law Group*  
Georgiana Goodson, Chair ..... *Senior Helpers*  
Jahlinda Miller ..... *Ensure Financial Group*

### REPRESENTING

#### HIGHLANDS / HARDEE COUNTIES

Becky McIntyre, Former Chair ..... *Advent Health*

## ADVISORY COUNCIL 2022

### REPRESENTING

#### HILLSBOROUGH COUNTY

Mary Ann Davis ..... *Retired*  
Evelyn Johnson-Taylor, PhD. .... *Evelyn J. Taylor Ministries*  
Hana Osman, PhD. .... *Retired*  
Elizabeth Provenzano ..... *James A. Haley VA Hospital*

### REPRESENTING

#### MANATEE COUNTY

Ana Guillermo-Santiago ..... *Home Helpers Home Care*  
Kay Ward ..... *City of Sarasota*

### REPRESENTING

#### POLK COUNTY

Izora Bullock ..... *Retired*  
Leslie Jamesson ..... *YMCA of West Central Florida*  
Joy Poteet ..... *Consultant with Life Limbs*

### REPRESENTING

#### HIGHLANDS / HARDEE COUNTIES

Liz Chango ..... *The Palms of Sebring*

## SOME CLOSING THOUGHTS FROM OUR BOARD CHAIR, GEORGIANA GOODSON

Greetings,

I became familiar with Senior Connection Center (SCC) several years ago, as my profession involves helping older adults age in place. Right away, I was amazed by the resources they provided through their Elder Helpline and the patient assistance they offered while guiding seniors through the Long Term Care application process. I also marveled at the dedicated SHINE volunteers who assisted seniors during Medicare open enrollment. Then, after attending the 2016 Rise & Shine Awards Breakfast, and seeing the life-changing impact their Crisis Funds have on vulnerable seniors, I knew I wanted to get more involved with this organization. I am proud to now serve as the Chair of Senior Connection Center's Board of Directors!

The past few years presented SCC with unique challenges, but the leadership team, staff, and volunteers have responded with creative solutions and perseverance to connect seniors to the services they need to live their best lives. They introduced innovative programs to help older adults stay engaged and active during times of social isolation. They responded quickly to assist hurricane victims in our service area, and the staff continues to show the same patience and attention I observed years ago as they address the day-to-day needs of every client.

I want to thank each of you who supports SCC in fulfilling our mission of helping older adults and persons with disabilities live with independence and dignity. Whether you are a volunteer, a business sponsor, a donor, or someone who encouraged a senior to call the Elder Helpline, your efforts help make this organization strong, effective, and relevant for those vulnerable members of our community who need help today. Together, this ongoing support will allow us to provide the reliable resources and tangible support these adults and their families will continue to need in the future.

Blessings, *Georgiana Goodson*



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