Training designed to strengthen ministry outreach to HIV/AIDS community

Faithful TEACH is a six-week training program for faith leaders whose faith communities want to learn about HIV/AIDS in order to effectively minister to people living with the virus. The program instructs participants about faith-centered healing, ministry, advocacy, treatment and education. Philadelphia FIGHT, a comprehensive health services organization for people living with HIV/AIDS and those at high risk, sponsors the program. The next training series will begin in February (date to be determined). For information about the FAITHFUL TEACH course or joining the Philadelphia FIGHT faith-based advisory committee, call Carlenthia Dowdy, Ph.D., Philadelphia FIGHT director of faith initiatives, at 215-585-4448, ext. 253, or email her at cdowdy@fight.org.

PTSD symptoms can surface in later years

Post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) is a mental health condition that’s triggered by a terrifying event—either experiencing it or witnessing it. Symptoms may include flashbacks, nightmares and severe anxiety, as well as uncontrollable thoughts about the event. Older adults may experience the delayed onset of symptoms from earlier traumatic experiences. Events in later life, including aging-related experiences such as the loss of friends and loved ones, cognitive impairment and reduced income, can also trigger PTSD. Help is available through the Philadelphia Department of Behavioral Health & Intellectual Disabilities. (See “Mental health” on page 2).

PC A Clergy-Aging Interfaith Coalition

Mission:
Recognizing the contributions of faith-based organizations in the social services and the importance of spirituality in the lives of older adults, PCA formed the Clergy-Aging Interfaith Coalition in 1998. The coalition is interfaith, intercultural and multi-ethnic in makeup. It includes clergy, lay leaders, senior constituents and professionals from agencies that serve Philadelphia seniors and their families. The coalition advises PCA on the needs of older adults in their communities and helps raise awareness of, and increase access to, PCA services.

Goals:
+ Assist religious leaders with building senior programs within their congregations and strengthening existing community-based programs
+ Enhance the ability of clergy and religious organizations to function as service providers
+ Enable clergy to better identify isolated older adults and communicate unmet needs in their congregations and communities
+ Build a stronger coalition to advocate on behalf of older adults
+ Provide tools to guide decision-making by older adults and families

Philadelphia Corporation for Aging (PCA), a private, nonprofit Area Agency on Aging, was established in 1973 to coordinate social services for Philadelphia residents who are older or who have disabilities and to assist them in achieving optimum levels of health, independence and productivity. One of the region’s largest nonprofit organizations, PCA is funded in part by the federal Older Americans Act and the Pennsylvania Lottery, channeled through the Pennsylvania Department of Aging, and Medical Assistance, through the Pennsylvania Department of Human Services.

For information on PCA’s services and programs, call the PCA Helpline at 215-763-9030 or visit www.pcaCARE.org.

To submit comments or suggestions for publication, contact:
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Fall 2017

Fall Clergy & Seniors Day held

Fall Clergy & Seniors Day 2017 focused on “Empowering Clergy: Understanding the Challenges & Issues for the Alzheimer’s Caregiver.” Held October 5 at the Courtyard by Marriott Philadelphia City Avenue (4100 City Ave.), it featured presentations on ways the clergy can be part of the family caregiving team.

Participants also had the chance to learn about aging services in the resource room. More than 220 clergy, lay leaders, and senior-serving professionals attended. Sponsors included Always Best Care, Cigna HealthSpring, Gateway Health and Health Partners Plans.

Save the date: Spring Clergy & Seniors Day 2018 will take place June 5, once again at the Courtyard by Marriott Philadelphia City Avenue (theme to be determined).

Law center offers presentations

SeniorLAW Center (SLC) offers presentations on legal issues related to landlord-tenant disputes, veteran services, elder abuse prevention (including financial abuse prevention), family violence and kinship care grandparents and other relatives raising children whose biological parents are unable to care for them). For these presentations, SLC requires at least 35 attendees.

To request presentations on landlord-tenant disputes, kinship care issues, or veterans’ issues, email Cateria McCabe at cmccabe@seniorlawcenter.org. To request presentations on elder abuse, financial exploitation or family violence, email Dana Goldberg at dgoldberg@seniorlawcenter.org.

You can also call the center at 215-988-1244 to request presentations on any of the above topics.

SeniorLAW Center’s (SLC’s) homeownership rights team seeks venues, including faith organizations, for presentations on legal issues related to home ownership, such as mortgage issues and reverse mortgages. While the agency will make presentations throughout the city, it is especially targeting ZIP codes 19120, 19124, 19131, 19138, 19140, 19143 and 19152 – areas especially hard hit by foreclosure. For more information, email Elizabeth Shay at bshay@seniorlawcenter.org.
Did you know: Helpful resources are at your finger tips

- **Caregiver support:** PCA’s Caregiver Support Program offers assistance to primary unpaid caregivers who provide routine care to a friend or relative. The program aims to help ease stress related to caregiving by providing assistance to access resources, education, and information related to caregiving; care management services, financial assistance to help caregivers who qualify pay for respite services such as personal care and adult day centers, caregiving supplies, assistive devices, and home modifications. Caregivers include those caring for individuals over age 60 with a functional need and/or individuals age 18-59 with a diagnosis of Alzheimer’s disease or chronic dementia. The program also assists grandparents and relative caregivers age 35 or older caring for individuals with a disability age 18-59, and children age 18 and under who reside in the same residence. For more information, call the PCA Helpline at 215-765-5904.

- **Food assistance:**
  - **Coalition Against Hunger:** The Coalition Against Hunger has a Senior Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP). Hotline – 215-430-0556 – to help people enroll in SNAP (formerly known as food stamps) and connect to food pantries, soup kitchens and other food assistance programs. Information on food resources is also available at PhillyFoodFinder.org.
  - **Community breakfast:** United Christ Ministries, Inc., 626-630 N. 21st St., sponsors a community breakfast Mondays, Thursdays and Saturdays from 8 to 10 a.m. Food is available on a first-come, first-served basis.

- **Heat:**
  - **The Heater Hotline:** Operated by the Energy Coordinating Agency of Philadelphia (ECA), the Heater Hotline can assist eligible low-income homeowners whose heaters need immediate repairs costing no more than $2,000. Applicants must own and occupy a single family residence. Call the ECA at 215-568-7190 for more information or to apply.

- **LIHEAP:** The Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) has opened for the 2017-18 season. LIHEAP distributes federal funds that help many eligible Pennsylvanians, including seniors and people with disabilities, remain safe, healthy and warm by assisting them with energy costs. LIHEAP offers assistance in the form of a cash grant that is sent directly to the utility company, or a crisis grant for households in immediate danger of being without heat. During the 2016-17 season, more than 350,000 Pennsylvania households participated in the program; and more than $33 million was distributed statewide, with individual households receiving an average of $985 towards their home heating bill. For information, contact the local county assistance office, go to www.dhs.pa.gov/citizens/heatingassistance/leheap or call the LIHEAP hotline at 1-866-857-7095, Monday through Friday. Individuals with hearing impairments may call 711.

- **Mental health:** The city’s Department of Behavioral Health & Intellectual Disabilities (DBHIDS) helps Philadelphians access and navigate mental health and intellectual disability services. “We are committed to providing services and supports that are designed to enhance the development of the whole person – both physical and mental health,” says Mary Harper, DBHIDS manager of faith and spiritual affairs. Services are available regardless of an individual’s ability to pay. Sensitive, trained staff provide information and referral to resources. Call 1-888-545-2600 for assistance.

- **United Way Helpline:** The United Way of Greater Philadelphia and Southern New Jersey offers a 24/7 helpline to provide information and referrals to local health and human services. Call or text 2-1-1.

Education and support groups for health, fun, safety available

**Parkinson’s disease**
The Parkinson’s Disease Foundation seeks to form support groups within African-American faith institutions. For information, contact John Greveling at john@careerresourcemsmt.com.

**PCA health workshops**
PCA offers four workshop series, each six weeks long, to help older adults manage chronic conditions and be proactive about their health. The series include falls prevention and self-management for chronic health conditions, chronic pain and diabetes. All are open to Philadelphians 60-plus and are offered at sites throughout the city, including senior centers and libraries. Community organizations are always needed to serve as host sites. For information, including on hosting a workshop series in your faith institution, call 215-765-9000, ext. 5119, or email Diane.Brown@pcaCare.org.

**Quitting class**
Bible Ministries Fellowship Church, 425 E. Chelten Ave., (continued on next page)

Education (continued from previous page) holds a free quitting class Thursdays from 2 to 4 p.m.

Materials are provided, or participants can bring their own. Call 215-482-4011 for information and registration. To view photos from the class and some of the quits produced, go to BenFiquits.blogspot.com.

**Senior safety**
Victim assistance officer Tracy Lewis of the Philadelphia Police Department conducts presentations on senior safety. To schedule a presentation, call 215-685-1188 or email benfiquits@outlook.com.

**Special occasions celebrated**

*The Bethel Golden Club of Bethel Presbyterian Church (1900 York St.), celebrated its 40th anniversary with an “Empowering Women Together” event. The April 24 celebration featured speakers and resources on topics such as human trafficking, domestic violence, and educational opportunities, along with health information. This senior women’s club offers topical speakers, games, lunch and/or breakfast “chat-and-chews,” and occasional trips.*

*Masjidullah, Inc. Center’s Jewels of Islam presented an exploration of Caribbean culture May 6. Festivities held at the center (7401 Limekiln Pike) included an island costume contest, regional music, line dancing and a halal Jamaican buffet. The group for women 50-plus meets regularly for talks on aging and enjoys exercise, classes, and trips.*

*Chestnut Hill Church of God & Christ, (1159 E. Chelten Ave.), and Bishop Leonard Goins, celebrated their 35th church anniversary June 25.*

**Milestones newspaper**
Milestones newspaper, published by PCA, has a readership of nearly 170,000 older Philadelphians each month. This free newspaper is aimed at reaching senior citizens with news, features, and information on activities and opportunities for involvement. Copies are distributed at more than 900 locations throughout Philadelphia, including senior community centers, senior living facilities, libraries, doctors’ offices, pharmacies, houses of worship and conveniently located honor boxes. Milestones is available for free delivery to faith institutions that order 50 or more copies. Contact PCA at 215-765-9000, ext. 5050.

Free app helps seniors get online

Generations on Line (GoL), a nonprofit dedicated to helping seniors tackle the digital divide, has launched a free application, or “app,” that’s designed to get older adults online more easily by using small, portable computer “tablets.” The app is called Easy Tablet Help for Seniors. It is available both in the Apple App Store and in Google Play.

A $25,000 community grant from Philadelphia’s Digital Literacy Alliance for 2017-18 will enable GoL, in collaboration with PCA, to introduce Easy Tablet Help for Seniors to thousands more of the city’s older adults. GoL is continuing to partner with senior centers and expanding to partner with houses of worship, senior housing facilities, and other senior-serving organizations for this initiative.

The app “walks a novice or older technophobe step-by-step through the basics of using a tablet device to do things like use email, search the web, view videos and take pictures,” said Tobey Dichter, GoL founder and CEO. “Instructions display in large type and familiar, age-friendly language.” Easy Tablet Help for Seniors can be downloaded for free on Apple iPad and Android tablets. While it will work on a smartphone, the screen is too small to be practical, Dichter said.

Easy to use
Organizations can host training sessions, including with GoL, Sip & Swipe Cafés, with volunteers as coaches. Seniors can also learn to use the app on their own at home. For a senior who wants to learn at home, it’s recommended that a family member familiar with computers, like a senior’s child or grandchild, download the app and be available to help with initial learning efforts.

For more information, including on GoL, Sip & Swipe Cafés and other trainings, or to request a training for your organization, call 215-222-6400, email KButler.GoL@ comcast.net or go to generationsonline.org.