



Vital Aging Network
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August 2005 Bulletin

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August 9 VAN FORUM...

Getting There! Transportation for Vital Aging

Presenters:

Kathy Freund, Independent Transportation Network®

Mary Morse, HourCar™

Mark Hossier, DARTS (Dakota Area Resources and Transportation for Seniors)

Time and Place: Tuesday, August 9 from 10 AM to Noon, at DARTS, 1645 Marthaler Lane, West St. Paul, Hoover Room.

Mobility and transportation has been identified as the top unmet need for older adults in Minnesota. At the August 9th forum, you'll hear about:

- The need,
- New innovations that help to meet the need, and
- Ways of influencing changes in the state/regional/local transportation systems

Kathy Freund, Founder of Independent Transportation Network®, will talk about her national model for consumer-oriented, community-based senior transit using both paid and volunteer drivers to provide door-to-door service, 7 days a week, 24 hours a day. Kathy will also discuss the National Highway Transportation Safety Administration (NHTSA) DriveWell project and her role as one of the 16 selected experts from around the country. Mary Morse, Executive Director of Neighborhood Energy Consortium, will discuss HourCar™, the recently launched nonprofit car share program in the Twin Cities. Mark Hoisser, Executive Vice President of DARTS, will provide perspective on specialized transportation for seniors and adults with disabilities including current state and local planning efforts in coordination.

Directions: From the North take I-94 to Highway 52 south to Thompson / Wentworth. Turn right onto Thompson. Go one block to Oakdale and take a left. Go one block to Wentworth and take a right. Go one block to Marthaler lake and take a left. DARTS is on the right ½ blocks down.

From the South take I-494 to Robert Street north to Wentworth and take a right (by Wal-Mart). Go one block to Marthaler Lane and take a right. DARTS is on the right ½ blocks down.

Questions? Need a ride? Call VAN at 612-626-5555. Everyone is welcome. There is no charge for VAN's monthly forums.

UM RECEIVES GRANT TO SUPPORT VAN

Minneapolis (July 2005) – The Vital Aging Network (VAN) has received a grant of up to \$650,000 over three years from The Atlantic Philanthropies. With this award, VAN will focus on raising awareness of older adult civic engagement potential across Minnesota and fostering vital communities across the state.

Currently, VAN directs several initiatives to foster and support vital aging. Monthly VAN forums are held the second Tuesday of the month, and a Web site (www.van.umn.edu) and electronic newsletter provide a continual stream of information of interest to vital agers across Minnesota, and beyond.

Since its launch five years ago, VAN has been affiliated with the College of Continuing Education with support from University Provost (now President) Robert Bruininks. Dr. Janet Hively, senior adviser to VAN, provided the conceptual framework for VAN's mission to promote self-determination, community involvement, and personal enrichment for and with older adults through education and advocacy.

"This grant means that VAN can promote the concepts of vital aging statewide," said Barbara Muesing, Assistant to the Dean and VAN liaison. "We'll also be in a position to expand existing programs such as the VAN Speakers Bureau, and strengthen the Advocacy Leadership for Vital Aging certificate program." Pilot communities across Minnesota will have the opportunity to test strategies to foster vital aging as a way to ensure community vitality.

About The Vital Aging Network

The Vital Aging Network consists of individuals who share strengths to promote and support the self-sufficiency, community participation, and quality of life of older adults. Vital agers, loosely defined as those 55 and older, benefit from VAN resources including a Web site, educational programs, and multiple community partnerships.

About The Atlantic Philanthropies

The Atlantic Philanthropies are a group of Bermuda-based charitable foundations whose grant investments are focused internationally in four program fields: Aging, Disadvantaged Children and Youth, Population Health, and Reconciliation and Human Rights.

Media Contacts:

Heather Skatter, 612-624-7770, hskatter@cce.umn.edu

THE AGE & DISABILITIES ODYSSEY 2005 **Building Together**

Join the Vital Aging Network at several presentations and events at the Minnesota Board on Aging and Minnesota Department of Human Services' Age & Disabilities Odyssey 2005.

Jan Hively will facilitate a roundtable called "Public Policies to Promote Vital Aging," where participants will look at the proposals for public policies (rules, regulations, procedures) to support vital aging (self-determination, community participation, personal enrichment) that have been submitted since VAN began collecting ideas in May. The roundtable participants will work through a process to prioritize the importance for advocacy at the December National White House Conference on Aging. Jan Hively has been appointed to serve as a delegate for Minnesota at the National Conference.

Pat Samples will lead a roundtable to discuss the work of the Minnesota Creative Arts & Aging Network (MNCAAN) and describe opportunities for individuals to get involved. Pat will highlight the next statewide "Event" to be held in the spring of 2006.

Panels created by older adults in four metro settings will be shown at the Art of Aging exhibit in the Exhibit Hall. The Art of Aging exhibit highlights the national campaign to engage the creative expression of older adults – led by the national Creative Aging Network nationwide and in Minnesota by MNCAAN. One of the panels will be featured at the National White House Conference on Aging.

For more information on The Age & Disabilities Odyssey visit the Minnesota Board on Aging's website at www.mnaging.org or call the conference hotline at 1-800-882-6262.

DIRECTOR OF VAN INITIATIVES

The College of Continuing Education and Vital Aging Network welcome qualified individuals to apply for the recently funded Director of VAN Initiatives position funded by the Atlantic Philanthropies.

CCE expects that the grant and the Program Director position will be for three years (September 2005-June 2008). The Director of VAN Initiatives will have overall leadership and coordination responsibility for the work outlined in the proposal funded by The Atlantic Philanthropies.

The Director will oversee the development and implementation of a VAN communication plan to include identifying/working with consultants to focus the VAN message, producing promotion materials, organizing a Speaker's Bureau training program, recruiting volunteers, and helping to evaluate

results.

A second major responsibility will be to oversee the Vital Community initiative to include coordinating the field projects for students enrolled in the Advocacy Leadership for Vital Aging (ALVA) program, refining the ALVA field book, developing/testing a Vital Communities Tool Kit, and helping to evaluate results.

The Director will have resources to engage faculty from across the University's academic disciplines to ensure a strong research base for all VAN activity. The Director will work with the VAN Leadership Group and the Principal Investigator on the grant project to ensure alignment of work with the goals identified in the proposal and policies/procedures of the University.

Applications will be reviewed beginning August 15 and will be considered until a suitable candidate is selected. An application should include a letter of interest, a resume, and a list of 5 references. Send application materials to: Barbara J. Muesing, Assistant to the Dean; College of Continuing Education; University of Minnesota; 201 Coffey Hall; 1420 Eckles Ave; St. Paul MN 55108.

For more information, including duties and qualifications, visit the University of Minnesota at

<http://www1.umn.edu/ohr/employment/openings/job131139.html>

LIVABLE COMMUNITIES

There are a number of recently published survey questionnaires that invite older adults to respond to the basic question, "Does your community have what it takes for you to live there as long as you want, and remain actively engaged?" One such questionnaire is part of the Vital Communities Toolkit found by clicking on the "Advocating for Vital Aging" pathway on the VAN website (www.van.umn.edu).

You can rate your community in an interactive quiz as part of the "Livable Communities Evaluation Guide" by AARP. Visit www.aarp.org/beyond50 and respond to the questions that cover housing, shopping, recreational and cultural activities, health services, support services, safety, transportation and walkability. The format is easy to use and works well by summarizing your responses and providing commentary on the results.

DATES TO PUT ON YOUR CALENDAR

Let VAN know if you have events in your community for vital agers...email van@umn.edu



August 10 @ 10:00AM – 12:00 Noon

VAN Monthly Forum: Getting There! Transportation for Vital Aging.

Join a panel of presenters at DARTS (Dakota Area Resources and Transportation for Seniors) as VAN learns about transportation that supports vital aging.

Location: DARTS

August 18 @ 10:30AM – 12:00 Noon

Ripening: Thoughts on Aging and Ageism

Join the Twin Cities Gray Panthers as they present their video *Ripening: Thoughts on Aging and Ageism*. The video is centered on ageism at work. It interviews individuals who have experienced ageism and slows them to tell their stories. The video focuses on how social services can combat ageism and how our own ageist beliefs reflect on the clients we serve.

Location: Wilder Foundation

Register: For more information visit www.graypantherstwincities.org

August 22 – 24

The 2005 Age & Disabilities Odyssey: Building Together

Join the Minnesota Board on Aging and Minnesota Department of Human Services, Aging and Adult Services and Disability Services Divisions at the 6th annual *Age and Disabilities Odyssey Conference: Building Together*. This year we will highlight programs and services that support older adults and people with disabilities. Help us explore the possibilities to learn from each other and build together. The conference offers training and learning opportunities for county public health and social service agencies, aging and disability services providers, caregiver support organizations, health and long term care providers, policy makers, housing providers, advocacy organizations, students, volunteers and others.

Location: Duluth Entertainment Convention Center, Duluth MN

Register: For more information visit www.mnaging.org or call 1-800-882-6262

VAN connects older adults with education to promote and support their self-sufficiency, community participation, and personal enrichment. VAN is supported by the University of Minnesota's College of Continuing Education. Visit the VAN Web site at www.van.umn.edu



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