

# National Center on Elder Abuse NEWSLETTER

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## **The Baton Is Passed, National Center on Elder Abuse Reorganizes**

By Sara Aravanis, Director, Center for State Action on Elder Rights, National Association of State Units on Aging

On behalf of the National Association of State Units on Aging (NASUA), as the baton is passed to the newly reorganized National Center on Elder Abuse, I want to thank the many people who helped us to design, build, and develop the national prototype and national focal point for elder abuse prevention and response.

In particular, sincere appreciation is extended to the U.S. Administration on Aging for the vision, commitment, and oversight to help move the nation steadily toward the goal of elder justice.

To our subcontractors and partners—the American Bar Association Commission on Law and Aging (Lori Stiegel, JD), the National Adult Protective Services Association (Kathleen Quinn), the National Committee for the Prevention of Elder Abuse (Randy Thomas), and University of Delaware (Karen Stein, Ph.D.)—I express deep appreciation. All contributed significant expertise in assisting national, state, and local prevention professionals, policymakers, researchers, academics, and advocates to expand response capabilities, enhance staff capacity, and promote interdisciplinary, cross-agency collaboration.

Communication has long been recognized as essential to the work that we do. Over the years, the emphasis of our public outreach efforts at NASUA has focused on a simple message: Elder abuse can happen to anyone, at any time. Recognize it, report it, prevent it...help is available.

Much appreciation is due the team at NASUA, Susan Coombs Ficke, Director of Communications and Development, Senior Editor, *NCEA E-News*, and Suzanne Stack, Elder Rights Program Associate, responsible for promising practices and requests from the public for information and assistance. Passion, commitment, professionalism, teamwork, and conviction characterize the many years of work both have devoted to elder abuse prevention.

Statewide systems development for elder abuse prevention has long been and will continue to be an important part of the NASUA mission and our work in the Center for State Action on Elder Rights. In the coming weeks the NASUA Web

sites <http://www.nasua.org/elderrights.cfm> and <http://www.elderabusecenter.org> will be combined to serve as the primary dissemination vehicle for new activities and information. Please note that [www.elderabusecenter.org](http://www.elderabusecenter.org) will be temporarily undergoing revisions.

For more information about NASUA and the Center for Elder Rights, please visit <http://www.nasua.org> . We look forward to a productive and continued partnership and collaboration with our colleagues in the field. Please feel free to contact us any time.

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## THE NEW NATIONAL CENTER ON ELDER ABUSE

By Stephanie Whittier, Director, National Center on Elder Abuse, U.S. Administration on Aging

Since its inception, the National Center on Elder Abuse (NCEA) has operated as a unique, multi-disciplinary consortium of partners with expertise in elder abuse, neglect, and exploitation. Over the years, the NCEA collaborators have worked towards assisting the nation better address and respond to elder abuse, neglect, and exploitation. Not only have the NCEA collaborators come from various professional fields, the NCEA has proven a valuable resource to many professionals working in some way with victims of elder mistreatment and those at risk, including: adult protective services; national, state, and local aging networks; law enforcement; health care professionals; domestic violence networks; and others.

A national resource center is not born overnight. There are countless hours dedicated to developing materials and website content, responding to inquiries, providing training and technical assistance, and organizing everything so people can quickly find accurate and relevant information to help them in the work or in caring for a loved one. The Administration on Aging is proud of the organizations who have collaborated in making the National Center on Elder Abuse the preeminent federal source of information on elder mistreatment, and we would like to thank the National Association of State Units on Aging and their partners, including the ABA Commission on Law and Aging, the National Adult Protective Services Association, the National Committee for the Prevention of Elder Abuse, and the University of Delaware, for their commitment and steadfast work to address the issue of elder mistreatment.

Now and into the future, the NCEA will continue to tailor its activities to meet the special needs of disadvantaged populations, including limited-English speakers and other underrepresented groups such as Native Americans. It will continue to incorporate the latest technology to generate and disseminate knowledge that can build and strengthen elder rights networks and enhance the effectiveness of state and community-based elder abuse prevention and intervention programs. Furthermore, the NCEA will remain a national clearinghouse of information for elder rights advocates, law enforcement, legal professionals, public policy makers, researchers, and others working to ensure that all older Americans will live with dignity, integrity, independence, and

without abuse, neglect, and exploitation.

For more background on the reorganization of the NCEA, visit:

<http://www.aoa.gov/doingbus/fundopp/announcements/2007/NCEA.doc>

To learn more about the NCEA, its history, activities, and available materials please visit: <http://www.ncea.aoa.gov>.

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## **MEET THE NEW GRANTEES**

### **UNIVERSITY OF DELAWARE**

#### **"National Public Awareness Campaign"**

By Sharon Merriman-Nai, University of Delaware Center for Community Research and Service

The Clearinghouse on Abuse and Neglect of the Elderly of the University of Delaware's Center for Community Research and Service (CANE-UD) was recently awarded a cooperative agreement to participate as a collaborator in the next iteration of the National Center on Elder Abuse. Under the new agreement, CANE-UD will continue to maintain a comprehensive library of elder abuse literature. It will also take on the challenge of spearheading the NCEA national public awareness campaign to raise the visibility of elder abuse, neglect, and exploitation.

The Center will begin efforts to engage a national spokesperson to shine a light on elder mistreatment and ageism. At the same time, community figures will be enlisted to relay the message that elder mistreatment is a real problem with debilitating and life-threatening consequences. The voices of local leaders and "hometown heroes" will help people of all ages to recognize the possibility that someone he or she knows is being mistreated.

To bridge the generations, NCEA will tap into the creativity and enthusiasm of young people by launching a "Youth Movement." Educating and raising awareness among the young now will sew the seeds of prevention for future generations. NCEA will partner with national youth and education organizations to create learning opportunities. For example, NCEA will conduct an arts competition (poetry, essay, poster, etc.) with themes promoting respect throughout the lifespan and post the award winning entries on a newly created web page. Winning entries may be adapted for use in creating public awareness materials, such as bookmarks, placemats, etc.

In addition, the Center will make use of technologies most effective for reaching younger individuals; for instance, we will create and test pilot a podcast on elder abuse and post it on sites frequently visited by youths, like YouTube. Another idea under consideration is to engage students in creating a public service movie trailer, similar to the anti-teen smoking message conceived by students at Cab Calloway School of the Arts.

Perhaps most importantly, the campaign will amplify the voices of seniors

themselves, through public service announcements and other vehicles. Older individuals speaking out against abuse could have limitless impact, and is intended to empower other seniors to reach out for help.

To inform the campaign, NCEA will rely on key informants across disciplines and around the country for input regarding the needs of older individuals, including diverse and isolated populations, and those frontline professionals who serve them. This network will also be vital to establishing the necessary partnerships on local community levels to deliver the public service messages; an effective campaign will require pooling available resources across sectors.

In addition to the *NCEA E-News*, CANE-UD will also create and disseminate public and professional awareness materials such as fact sheets and issue briefs on relevant topics.

These efforts are intended to effect *change*: initially, in societal awareness, but ultimately in channeling this awareness into the implementation of policies, programs, and practices that enhance the rights, well-being, and safety of older individuals.

*CANE-UD was established in 1986 with funding from the U.S. Administration on Aging with the task of collecting peer-reviewed elder abuse and neglect literature to support the development of training and research initiatives. Since its inception, it has grown to an archive of over 6,000 references on multiple aspects of elder mistreatment and senior victimization. In 2002, the data base was posted online; it has been accessed by thousands of worldwide users including aging, health and social services practitioners, policy analysts, legal specialists, researchers, educators, students, and the public. CANE has been a participant in every subsequent national elder abuse center.*

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## NATIONAL ADULT PROTECTIVE SERVICES ADMINISTRATION "Advancing Knowledge Through Training"

By Kathleen Quinn, Executive Director, National Adult Protective Services Association

As the award recipient for Option II: Training of the new National Center on Elder Abuse, the National Adult Protective Services Association (NAPSA) will work to increase the ability of older Americans to live free of abuse, neglect and exploitation. This will be done primarily through improving the elder abuse training available to professionals who regularly come into contact with older persons from five fields: criminal justice, health care, victims' services (including APS), aging services and financial services, in order to increase professionals' ability to *recognize, report, and respond* to elder abuse, neglect, and financial exploitation.

To achieve this goal, NAPSA will:

- Conduct a national needs assessment to identify both the elder abuse

training needs of, and the currently available training for, professionals in the five targeted fields, utilizing key informants from each profession to provide insight into their field and to review materials;

- Develop a feasible, long range strategic plan for the NCEA to efficiently and effectively target NCEA training efforts and to begin to address the gaps identified in the needs assessment;
- Continue to maintain and expand the national elder abuse/APS training library, to transition the library to all electronic holdings, and to develop and disseminate training materials for personnel engaged in preventing, identifying, and treating elder abuse, neglect, and exploitation;
- Conduct four annual national Web casts on elder mistreatment to disseminate information and training for the targeted professions;
- Annually prepare and distribute an annotated bibliography of recent research on elder abuse

Strategies will utilize NAPSA's multidisciplinary strengths, its national reach through elder abuse professional members in every state, and its experience in training and in conducting national surveys. NAPSA will partner with organizations and expert key informants from the targeted professions; utilize Web technology to improve the cost effectiveness and distribution of all products; and advance the elder abuse and APS fields in order to better protect seniors. Products will include the needs assessment report; the NCEA Training Strategic Plan, Web casts and APS training modules.

The mission of NAPSA is to improve the quality and availability of protective services for disabled adults and elderly persons who are abused, neglected, or exploited and are unable to protect their own interests.

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## NATIONAL COMMITTEE FOR THE PREVENTION OF ELDER ABUSE "Expanded Multidisciplinary Elder Abuse Network Building Effort"

by Randy Thomas, President, National Committee for the Prevention of Elder Abuse

The National Committee for the Prevention of Elder Abuse (NCPEA) will be responsible for encouraging and enhancing the development of comprehensive elder justice systems by supporting the creation and promoting the sustainability of multidisciplinary local and state elder abuse networks and by disseminating promising practices and information on federal and state laws. This will be achieved through 4 activities.

- **Elder Justice Local Development Networks.** NCPEA will award 10 mini-grants of \$10,000 each in Year 1, and up to 10 more in Years 2 and 3 at \$5,000-\$10,000 each to assist communities in developing multi-disciplinary approaches to addressing elder abuse. The project will target collaborations made up of organizations that serve older adults

and victims of abuse, such as Area Agencies on Aging; Adult Protective Services; Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program; law enforcement; prosecution agencies; health and mental health services; legal services; aging organizations; and service providers. Technical assistance to mini-grant awardees will be provided through on-site trainings, teleconferences, and e-mail.

- **TA to States and AAAs.** Technical assistance will also be provided through trainings, teleconferences, phone calls, and e-mail to state agencies and AAAs to promote the widespread development, implementation, and sustainability of new or existing local and state elder abuse networks. In Year 1, two regions with the highest numbers of mini-grantees from among the 10 AoA regions will be asked to participate in a 1-day training session at their respective AoA regional headquarters. In Year 2, training will take place in four other AoA regions, and during Year 3, in the remaining four AoA regions. Two national Web casts will be conducted annually on topics aimed at building and promoting sustainability of local and state networks.
- **Promising Practices Clearinghouse.** NCPEA will continue collecting information for the NCEA Promising Practices Clearinghouse. Every effort will be made to push out those practices that can have an impact of local networks.
- **Statutory/Legislative Analysis.** NCPEA will develop analyses of state statutory issues each year. We will also track federal laws that impact elder abuse detection, intervention, and prevention and disseminate that information.

*The National Committee for the Prevention of Elder Abuse (NCPEA) is an association of researchers, practitioners, educators, and advocates dedicated to protecting the safety, security, and dignity of America's most vulnerable citizens. It was established in 1988 to achieve a clearer understanding of abuse and provide direction and leadership to prevent it. The mission of NCPEA is to prevent abuse, neglect, and exploitation of older persons and adults with disabilities through research, advocacy, public and professional awareness, interdisciplinary exchange, and coalition building.*

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### NCEA Gets a New Web Address, New Look

The NCEA's Web address will soon officially change to <http://www.NCEA.aoa.gov>. The new revamped Web site will debut September 30<sup>th</sup>.

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### Notice to Readers: New Telephone Number and Email Address

The new phone number for NCEA is 302-831-3525. The new e-mail address is [ncea-info@aoa.hhs.gov](mailto:ncea-info@aoa.hhs.gov).

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## If You Wish to Update Your Current E-News Subscription

The National Center on Elder Abuse will continue to publish news of its activities and networking, as well as relevant developments. If you wish to update your current subscription or change the e-mail address at which you receive NCEA E-News, please [click here >>](#)

### NCEA PARTNERS

- [National Association of State Units on Aging](#)
- [American Bar Association Commission on Law and Aging](#)
- [Clearinghouse on Abuse and Neglect of the Elderly, University of Delaware](#)
- [National Adult Protective Services Association](#)
- [National Committee for the Prevention of Elder Abuse](#)

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Points of view or opinions expressed in this publication do not necessarily represent the official views of AoA/HHS or any of the NCEA's affiliated partners.

### NATIONAL CENTER ON ELDER ABUSE

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