

*We Help.
We Care*

OCCOA

OTSEGO COUNTY COMMISSION ON AGING

120 Grandview Blvd., Gaylord, Michigan 49735



Submitted by
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**RESEARCH &
VOLUNTEER
COORDINATOR**

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**INTRODUCING!
HEALTHY AGING ACTIVITIES
COORDINATOR AMANDA
DOBZIELEWSKI, CTRS!**

OCCOA Announces Healthy Aging Activities Coordinator!

It seems everywhere one turns to these days, there is some bit of advice or information about how one can age in a healthy way. On the Internet, alone, just type in "Healthy Aging" on the Google search bar and you will net 6.71 million results!

Throughout the Aging Network, "Healthy Aging" is a hot topic. Visit the home page on the National Council on Aging's website, ncoa.org, and you will find a tab for "Healthy Aging" right at the top. Click on this, and you can learn about topics that address fall prevention, chronic disease management, and senior hunger and nutrition, just to name a few.

Want to learn about healthy aging opportunities in our community, and avoid weeding through those 6.71 million Google search results? Just turn to your Otsego County Commission on Aging (OCCOA). Under the dynamic leadership of Executive Director Dona Wishart, the agency has long been an industry leader in the state, embracing and promoting the latest programs and services available for older adults and caregivers.

Wishart notes, "The agency's mission is promoting the independence and well-being of the older adults of Otsego County and supporting family caregivers. Every program, service, or activity that the agency offers, supports the OCCOA's mission. All are geared, in one way or another, to address at least one aspect of 'Healthy Aging.'"

Over the years, the OCCOA has added such healthy aging programs as Young at Heart exercise classes, A Matter of Balance workshops, Senior Project FRESH, and the Healthy Moves in-home exercise program. Wishart notes that the agency is increasing its efforts to promote healthy aging in our community, both in terms of staffing and programming. She is pleased to share that Amanda Dobrzelewski, CTRS, has been hired to fill the newly-created "healthy aging activities coordinator" position.

Dobrzelewski joined the OCCOA in late May and has been hard at work assessing the agency's current programs, activities and services, and developing new ones. A recent graduate of Central Michigan University, she has a BAA (bachelor of applied arts) in Recreational Therapy and is a certified therapeutic recreation specialist (CTRS). Dobrzelewski grew up in Lewiston and graduated from Johannesburg-Lewiston High School. She is married to Josh, and they have two dogs.

"I have been enjoying getting to know our staff and volunteers and love how everyone works as a team!" Dobrzelewski shares. She adds, "I am also enjoying getting to know the participants in the current programs, as well as our current community partners."

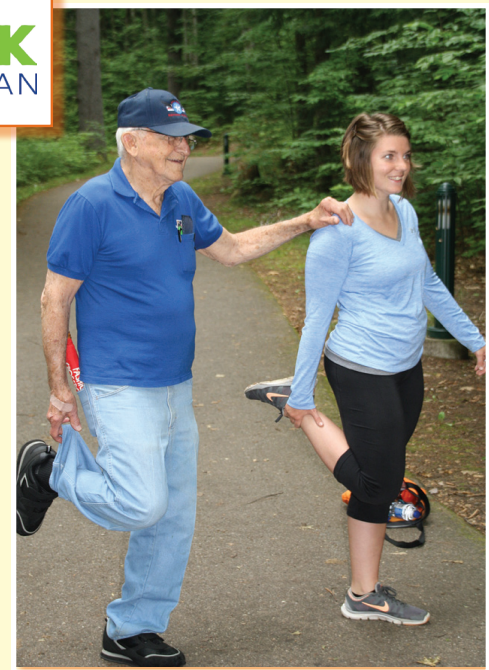


She notes that building relationships with the staff, clients, and partners are important to her, as is staying positive and motivated. Dobrzelewski notes that it is important for her to model healthy aging for the participants she will be working with. She tries to eat "fresh and clean," practices yoga, and enjoys going to local cross-fit classes. Being outside in the fresh air is important to her and provides opportunities for her to hike, backpack, and swim.

Dobrzelewski notes that developing healthy aging programs includes determining what will work for older adults, and helping them to overcome and to work with various barriers. She explains, "In particular, some have physical challenges, like decreases in flexibility, endurance, and strength." She adds that many older adults struggle with accepting the aging process and become depressed over such additional physical losses as decreased sight, hearing, mobility, and cognition. She notes, "My goal is to provide programming that will give our participants confidence, maintain their current health, and to improve it whenever possible."

Fresh on the job, Dobrzelewski recently teamed up with the Michigan Parks and Recreation Association to bring Walk Michigan to our community. Walk Michigan is an eight-week program that will allow participants the opportunity to walk on trails three times a week at various parks around the county during July and August.

Not walking much? Need some like-minded walking friends to help you stay motivated? Consider, joining the Walk Michigan group and stay tuned for more "Healthy Aging" programs coming your way through your OCCOA!



WALK MICHIGAN!
PARTICIPANT TONY MANKOWSKI AND OCCOA HEALTHY AGING ACTIVITIES COORDINATOR AMANDA DOBZIELEWSKI STRETCH BEFORE A RECENT WALK AT ASPEN PARK.

TO LEARN MORE ABOUT WALK MICHIGAN, AND OTHER PROGRAMS THAT DOBZIELEWSKI IS PLANNING, PLEASE CONTACT HER AT 989-748-4068, OR VISIT THE OCCOA'S WEBSITE AT WWW.OTSEGOCOUNTYCOA.ORG.

989.732.1122 • www.OtsegoCountyCOA.org • Advocacy 989.732.9977

IN-HOME SERVICE ~ 989.705.2574 • MEAL PROGRAM ~ 989.732.1746 • SPECIAL EVENTS ~ 989.732.4702 • VOLUNTEER ~ 989.705.2572 • WEATHER ~ 989.731.5652

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