



OTSEGO COUNTY COMMISSION ON AGING

120 Grandview Blvd., Gaylord, Michigan 49735

*We Help.
We Care*

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Submitted by
Eileen Godek
RESEARCH &
VOLUNTEER
COORDINATOR

OCCOA ~ Mission Driven!

Since its inception over 30 years ago, the Otsego County Commission on Aging (OCCOA) has been on a mission to promote the independence and well-being of the Older Adults of Otsego County. During that time, several generations of older adults have come and gone, their changing needs dictating the kinds of programs, services, and activities the agency would offer. As we continue along in 2010, things are still changing; some programs have been put to bed, the interest in them no longer what it once was. Others have been enhanced to meet slightly different needs of those who utilize them, and still others are in their infancy, the result addressing newly-identified needs.

Current mission statement has been enhanced!

Periodically, the agency conducts strategic planning sessions within its management team meetings and board of director meetings. Such sessions began in December 2009 and will carry into the next several months as the agency seeks to provide programs, activities, and services that will meet the needs of those people it serves in Otsego County.

OCCOA, which has prided itself as an innovative leader among similar types of agencies, recently revamped its mission statement in a way that would reflect the most accurate reason for the agency's very existence. The agency's board of directors unanimously approved the new mission statement at its December 2009 meeting. The management team, after much reflection and discussion, acknowledged that the changing needs of the older adult population in Otsego County necessitated a change in the current mission statement.

OCCOA Executive Director Dona Wishart recently shared with me, "In our strategic planning sessions, we realized that our current mission statement needed to be enhanced to include the support of family caregivers." She noted, "Our new mission statement now states that the mission of OCCOA is to promote the independence and well-being of older adults of Otsego County and support family caregivers." She reflected, "Our mission statement is invaluable as it guides us in everything we do from program planning and development right down to our everyday work."

Wishart added, "Our new mission statement is now more detailed. We not only want to say what our reason for existence is, but also how we do what we do." She explained, "Our mission is accomplished by providing a diverse range of services that target nutritional, wellness, educational and social needs. We do this by employing both a professional, caring staff and enlisting the help of a volunteer corps, while diligently developing public and private funds to support the work of the agency in a proactive, progressive and cost efficient manner."

New vision statement also approved!

Wishart noted that in addition to approving the agency's enhanced mission statement, the board of directors also approved new vision and value statements for the agency at the December board meeting. She noted, "OCCOA's vision statement is 'Otsego County - A Michigan Community for a Lifetime!'" She noted, "There is a strong sense by both board members and staff that our agency is a positive force in our community. Furthermore, the strength of the agency and the services provided by OCCOA contribute to people of all generations (including the older adults and family caregivers), making our community a viable place to live - for a lifetime!"

Influencing the OCCOA vision statement, Wishart shared, was the Michigan Community for a Lifetime Recognition Program, a pilot project in Otsego County. She detailed, "It identified assets necessary for a community to be viewed and valued as a community for a lifetime to include: walk-ability/bike-ability, supportive community systems, accessible healthcare, safety and security, available and affordable housing, modifiable and maintainable housing, transportation, commerce, enrichment and inclusion." She noted, "The agency's vision statement supports the importance of these assets that allow the opportunity for the aging in place of all generations in Otsego County."

OCCOA's Values

*We will be compassionate,
empathetic, sincere,
respectful, kind,
approachable, friendly,
professional, innovative,
proactive, and ethical
in our helping and caring
for older adults
and family caregivers!*

Our values reflect who we are!

The board of directors also approved a set of value statements that were proposed by the management team. Wishart observed, "Our values are a benchmark that our staff observes in their day-to-day work and include: being compassionate, empathetic, sincere, respectful, kind, approachable, friendly, professional, innovative, proactive, and ethical in our helping and caring for older adults and family caregivers." She summed it up simply, "Our value statements reflect who we are!"

Going forward in the spirit of helping and caring!

In looking down the road over the next five years, Wishart envisions the agency continuing to go forward in the spirit of helping and caring. "This will influence the evaluation of current programs and services," she noted, "as well as the creation of new ones and the way they are administered."

IF YOU ARE INTERESTED IN LEARNING MORE ABOUT OCCOA AND THE PROGRAMS, SERVICES, AND ACTIVITIES IT OFFERS, PLEASE CALL (989) 732-1122 OR LOG ONTO OUR WEBSITE AT WWW.OTSEGOCOUNTYCOA.ORG.

OCCOA's Mission

The mission of the Otsego County Commission on Aging is promoting the independence and well-being of older adults of Otsego County and supporting family caregivers.

OCCOA's Vision

Otsego County ~ A Michigan Community for a Lifetime!

989.732.1122 • www.OtsegoCountyCOA.org • Advocacy 989.732.9977

Fax: 989-731-2739 • occoa@occoaonline.org • Weekdays 8:00 am to Noon and 12:30 to 4:00 pm

120 GRANDVIEW BLVD. ✧ GAYLORD, MICHIGAN 49735