For 50 years, Senior Service America, Inc. (SSAI) has leveraged workforce development to bridge older workers into new jobs and careers,” said Gary A. Officer, SSAI President and CEO. “Since our inception, we’ve trained approximately 474,412 older Americans for their next career in life.”

The cornerstone of SSAI’s efforts has been the Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP). This is the only federal program targeted to help low-income older workers. The SCSEP program provides eligible low-income older workers age 55 and older experience and paid training that leads to permanent employment. Senior Service America has placed an estimated 12,610 older workers into permanent employment through the SCSEP program over its long history.

SSAI has expanded its mission in the last year, and now serves 50+ workers nationally, by pursuing new partners and programs in addition to its long-standing ones. Senior Service America works through a network of local partners delivering various career training programs for 50-plus-year-old workers in 34 states. These long-term, local partners are a key to the strength of SSAI, and provide the systems to train older Americans into strategic advantage for employers and the Country.

Growing Employee and Skill Needs
Workers 55 and over are projected to make up 25 percent of the civilian labor force by the year 2020. This happens as the number of younger workers in America is set to decrease within a few years.

In addition to new employees, there is a need for skills to support emerging industries and growing economies. In particular, science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) skills are at a premium to sustain economic growth.

Older Workers as a Strategic Advantage
SSAI serves all groups of Americans, including military veterans. Since its inception, SSAI has trained over 53,561 veterans. Advocates for veteran employment often say “Hiring Veterans is not goodwill. It’s good business.” The same can be said for hiring older workers.
Older workers are a mature, skilled group of talent, and research shows a multi-generations workforce makes better business decisions together.

**Fight to Continue SCSEP**

Supporters of SCSEP (employers, host agencies, participants, grantees, aging advocates, and more) won a significant victory in March of this year when Congress provided level funding to SCSEP in the FY19 budget. Initially, the Administration had proposed elimination of SCSEP. However, the celebrations were short lived, as in its FY20 budget proposal, the Administration again proposed the elimination of SCSEP. It is difficult to understand why a program that has worked so well for 50 years and is so needed, given that those 55 and older will comprise 25% of the workforce in two years’ time, continues to be targeted for elimination.

SSAI deeply appreciates the leadership of NANASP in its constant and consistent support of SCSEP. NANASP gets SCSEP and its many benefits:

- When older adults stay engaged with work, they experience healthier aging and can live at home longer;
- Nutrition and Senior Center programs, which are key to breaking isolation of seniors, rely on the work provided by numerous SCSEP participants;
- A job can transform a person’s life.

The SCSEP Community continues to educate elected officials nationally about the value, benefits, and importance of SCSEP. Please join us in this effort by hosting an event where your elected officials can meet the nutrition program participants as well as the SCSEP participants and hear their stories of what these vital programs mean to them.

For more information about SSAI and SCSEP, visit [www.seniorserviceamerica.org](http://www.seniorserviceamerica.org).