NANASP 2019 Year-End Report
Submitted By: Robert Blancato, Meredith Whitmire, Pam Carlson, and Scott Carlson

Despite what can only be called a tumultuous year in Washington, D.C., we are pleased to report that NANASP had a strong and productive year with a number of significant accomplishments. Our efforts helped to secure a $30 million increase in funding for the Older Americans Act nutrition programs for the fiscal year that began October 1. This was the third consecutive year of increased funding. We also made important contributions to the House-passed Older Americans Act reauthorization. We produced a successful convening of experts in Washington, D.C. on the future of congregate nutrition programs.

Our revenues continue to increase on all fronts and we are pleased to say that NANASP now serves an estimated 4 million older adults in our member programs.

Advocacy

Appropriations
In December, Congress approved a final $30 million increase for Older Americans Act nutrition programs, bringing the program total to $936.7 million, and increases for other OAA programs, including a $5 million increase for the Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP) and a $5 million increase for the Home and Community-Based Services program.

Previously, in June, the full House had approved a bill proposing $1 billion total in FY 2020 funding for OAA nutrition, which would have been a $93 million increase over FY 2019 and a historic first for the program. The Senate draft bill released in September contained flat funding for OAA nutrition programs. We are disappointed the House levels did not prevail but pleased that the programs saw increases. Over the past seven fiscal years, the nutrition program has seen about $169 million in increases—or, over 22 percent since FY 2013, considerably higher than other OAA programs.

Older Americans Act Reauthorization
Reauthorization was scheduled for 2019. The House has passed its version of a reauthorization bill which has many proposals that NANASP supports, including a five-year reauthorization with significant funding increases and screening for malnutrition. The Senate released a draft bill for comment by organizations early in June and Sens. Susan Collins and Bob Casey introduced a Senate bill in December which also contains the funding increases and malnutrition screening. Both bills retain
voluntary contributions and separation between the C1 and C2 (congregate and home-delivered
nutrition) programs, among other provisions.

Previously, NANASP submitted a detailed list of recommendations to Senate and House staff in March. We also submitted recommendations concerning the Senate draft bill in June and recommendations on the Collins/Casey draft bill in November. Meredith Whitmire participated on behalf of NANASP in a principals’ meeting with Reps. Bonamici and Scott. We have also worked with the Leadership Council of Aging Organizations and Meals on Wheels America, and Meredith has had meetings with the Senate and House committee staff as well as several members on the House Education and Labor subcommittee responsible for the OAA’s reauthorization.

**Pneumonia Vaccines**

In 2014, Medicare began covering PCV-13, an improved pneumonia vaccine, largely because the CDC’s Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP) recommended the vaccine after strong advocacy from NANASP. On June 26, the CDC’s Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP) voted on whether to keep their recommendation in place which stated that all older adults ages 65+ should receive an improved pneumonia vaccine, PCV-13. This issue was the basis of one of our 2019 resolutions.

NANASP ran a digital advocacy campaign, with articles in various publications, tweets, and Facebook ads. Thirty NANASP members submitted comments to the CDC through Regulations.gov, and NANASP as a whole also submitted a comment letter. NANASP also signed on to multiple letters from other groups. Bob Blancato attended the June ACIP meeting where the vote was held. Ultimately, ACIP did not fully rescind its recommendation. ACIP members decided to recommend that the vaccine be administered under “shared clinical decision-making,” meaning that patients and their doctors together will decide if they need the vaccine on a case-by-case basis. In response, NANASP released a press statement and has been working with the CDC to ensure that this decision be as clear as possible to healthcare providers. We are also working to ensure continued Medicare coverage for PCV-13.

**Healthcare Issues**

NANASP has been active in the healthcare costs space. This year, we polled seniors from some of our member programs to get their input on some of the current healthcare cost reduction proposals. We have also been monitoring the rebates and out-of-pocket costs debates and we sent a letter to the Chairs and Ranking Members of the House Ways and Means and Energy and Commerce committees in the spring. At the 2019 training conference, NANASP members also passed a resolution supporting the final adoption of rebate reform while urging simultaneous final adoption of policies which would avert significant premium increases. In July, NANASP issued a statement expressing disappointment with the Administration’s withdrawal of their rebates proposal. We are closely watching currently pending prescription drug legislation.
Washington Bulletins
A total of 23 Washington Bulletins were disseminated in 2019. A major focus of Bulletins has been NANASP’s ongoing advocacy work, especially regarding federal funding and budgets, healthcare, and older adult malnutrition.

NANASP Advocacy Website
In 2019, NANASP has continued to use the Take Action webpage created to assist our members in their advocacy efforts. Highlights of this page include:

- Our Issues – Issues important to NANASP and the older adults we serve
- Congressional Directory including - Directory; Leaders; Committees; Demographics; & a Guide to Congress.
- Bills – Listing Key Legislation
- State Election results including – President; U.S. House; U.S. Senate; State Senate; State House

Training & Education

Webinars
NANASP successfully executed six webinars in 2019 which were all well attended/received:

Tuesday, February 19, 2019 - 2:00 - NANASP Retirement Research Foundation Grant Project Webinar

February 13, 2019 - 1:00 - Scott Silknitter, Founder of Caregiving 101 presented Caregiving 101 "Preventing Accidents and Visits to the ER"

In honor of Older Americans Month in May 2019, Bob Blancato, Executive Director, NANASP and Ellie Hollander, President and CEO, Meals on Wheels America presented A United Front – A Conversation with Meals on Wheels America and NANASP

Monday, July 22, 2019 - 1:00 - NANASP & Elior Present: Using Food Education to Positively Impact Your Seniors - Sherie Nelson, MBA, RDN, LD and Chef Mario Reyes, CEC, FWMCS – 72 Registrants

Thursday August 22, 2019 at 12:00 ET - NANASP Presents A Special Member Only Webinar: Leveraging New Opportunities to Address Social Determinants of Health - Carol Zernial, Laura Cisneros and Bob Blancato – 98 Registrants

Friday, September 13, 2019 at 1:00 ET NANASP & United Healthcare Presents A Special Member Only Webinar: Working with Medicaid and Medicare Organizations in an Evolving Policy Landscape – 76 Registrants
2019 Annual Training Conference
The NANASP 2019 Full Steam Ahead Annual Training Conference was certainly a historic event—this year’s NANASP conference was held at the Queen Mary in Long Beach, CA for an unforgettable experience! NANASP welcomed over 170 attendees, including 78 first time attendees.

Overall, the conference included 16 breakout sessions, including sessions on social determinants of health, business acumen, and more. All of the conference materials are available on the NANASP 2019 Conference App sponsored by WellMed at https://conventionready.com/nanasp2019/, and a full recap can be found here.

During the NANASP Business Meeting and breakfast on Friday morning, the 2019 Resolutions were adopted. They focus on protecting vaccine access for older adults, the Older Americans Act reauthorization, funding for federal FY 2020, prescription drug proposals, and senior malnutrition.

We thank our generous conference sponsors:

Planning is underway for the 2020 Annual Training Conference “Changing the Tune of Aging Services” which will be held June 3-5, 2020 at the AT&T Conference Center in Austin, TX.
Grant Income and Activities
NANASP’s income from grants continued to be strong through 2019. These grants help NANASP to do its education work and to give back to our members through direct grants. NANASP wishes to sincerely thank PhRMA, Abbott, Pfizer, Elior (now TRIO Community Meals), and The Retirement Research Foundation for their ongoing support of NANASP, its mission, and the work of its members.

National Resource Center on Nutrition and Aging Subgrant Work
In October 2018, NANASP received a subgrant from the National Resource Center on Nutrition and Aging (NRCNA) for a year-long project focusing on congregate nutrition programs. In March, we held a convening in Alexandria, VA with over 45 attendees and staff from across the country. Uche Akobundu from NRCNA and Meredith Whitmire gave a keynote presentation at the NANASP conference to discuss this project. Two “virtual summits” were held to solicit more feedback from the aging network at large, as space at the convening was limited, some invitees were unable to travel, and many more providers wish to share their thoughts. A presentation was given at the Meals on Wheels America conference in August.


Retirement Research Foundation Grant
Over the past three years, NANASP has received funding from The Retirement Research Foundation (RRF) in July 2016 exclusively to conduct some of the first research to understand the value of socialization for older adults who participate in congregate nutrition programs under the Older Americans Act (OAA). NANASP has surveyed over 3,800 older adults who participate in congregate
nutrition programs. NANASP Executive Director Bob Blancato has also had more than 400 in-person conversations over the three years with older adults at nutrition sites about the importance of socialization in their lives. Infographics describing our findings from Year 1, Year 2, and Year 3 (Oregon, Wisconsin, Washington) are on the NANASP website.

On his visits to nutrition sites, Bob was joined by multiple members of Congress and staff so that they could see the importance of congregate programs first-hand. This year, Bob was joined on a visit by Rep. Suzanne Bonamici (D-OR), the Chair of the House committee responsible for renewing the OAA. Staff from Sen. Michael Bennet (D-CO) and Sen. Mike Enzi (R-WY) also joined in on visits this year. In Year 2, Bob was joined by staff from Sen. Richard Burr (R-NC), Sen. Bernie Sanders (I-VT), and Rep. Raja Krishnamoorthi (D-IL).

NANASP also launched a grassroots advocacy campaign this year to provide older adults and program leaders with paper plates to share their stories about socialization with their Members of Congress. We sent over 2,400 paper plates to congregate sites, and those plates in turn were filled out and sent to 23 Senators and Representatives. This happened as Congress was considering funding for OAA nutrition programs, which are ultimately expecting an increase. We will use our findings from this project to encourage further investments in the program by local, state, and federal governments as well as by private individuals and foundations. This is especially important as reauthorization of the OAA is taking place and funding for FY2020 is being decided.

NANASP 2019 Medicare Open Enrollment Micro-Grant

NANASP had the opportunity to once again provide state-specific micro-grants to increase awareness about Medicare Open Enrollment. Through grant work from the following NANASP Member organizations, over 300,000 older adults were educated about Medicare open enrollment:

- WellMed Charitable Foundation
- Philadelphia Corporation for Aging
- Centralina Area Agency on Aging
- Benjamin Rose Institute on Aging
- Onondaga County Department of Adult and Long Term Care Services
- FeedMore WNY
- Meals on Wheels South Florida
- Serving Seniors
- Hillsborough County Aging Services Department
Leadership & Administration

NANASP Board
At the Business Meeting in May 2019, elections for board executive positions were held. Mary Beals-Luedtka was voted in as the new Chair of the Board of Directors of NANASP, Linda Miller as 1st Vice Chair/Chair Elect, Tara Ellis as Vice Chair of Governance, Jeff Klein as Vice-Chair of Finance, Lisa LaBonte as Vice Chair of Education, Laura Cisneros as Vice Chair of Membership and Doug Beach as Secretary.

We also honored outgoing board members Karen Jackson Holzhauer, Tony Sarmiento, Maria Mahar and Shirley Chao. In July 2019 Holly Hagler resigned from the board.

On October 1, 2019, NANASP proudly welcomed new board members who were orientated at an in-person meeting in Phoenix, Arizona at the beginning of November.

- **Dabney Conwell**, Benjamin Rose Institute on Aging, Euclid, OH
- **Gerald J. Patesel**, Peninsula Agency on Aging, Newport News, VA
- **Vanessa Merlano**, MS, RDN, Santa Clara County Social Services Agency, Department of Aging and Adult Services, San Bruno, CA
- **Gary Officer**, CEO of Senior Service America, Inc., Silver Spring, MD

NANASP in the News
Executive Director Bob Blancato has been written and been quoted in numerous news articles and blog posts this year, including:

- [Congress Takes a New Look at the Safety Net](#)
- [Threats to Medicare Continue in 2019](#)
- [Expert: Women age 75-80 living alone prime scam targets](#)
- [Pneumonia Vaccine: How Things May Change for People 65+](#)
- [Two pneumonia shots safest for seniors despite new advisory, advocacy group says](#)
- [The Trump Administration Is Literally Pushing Workers Around](#)
- [2020 Election: Where Are the Debate Questions About Aging?](#)
- [It’s Time to Make the Elder Justice Act More Effective](#)

NANASP Presentations
NANASP has been across the country this year giving presentations about nutrition issues. Here are just a few of the conferences and events NANASP attended this year:

- American Society on Aging’s Aging in America conference
- New England Nutrition Conference
• Washington Association of Senior Nutrition Programs
• Association of SNAP Nutrition Education Administrators (ASNNA)
• National Black Nurses Association
• Age + Action Conference
• Southeastern Association of Area Agencies on Aging (Se4a)
• Area Office on Aging of Northwestern Ohio
• National Hispanic Council on Aging (NHCOA)
• Village to Village Network
• NJ4A
• National Silver Haired Congress
• TIRR Clinical Nutrition Symposium
• NYS Aging Services Conference
• Norther Arizona Council of Government (NACOG) Conference
• W44
• Aging & In-Home Services of NE Indiana
• Food & Nutrition Conference Expo (FNCE)
• NY State Society on Aging
• Consumer Voice

**NANASP News/ Action Alerts 2019**

Caregiver Teleconnection – Ongoing monthly
March is National Nutrition Month: Materials Available
NANASP 2019 Membership Survey
NANASP 2019 Membership Survey Prize Winners
Safe Medications
Virtual Summit Announcement
Action Alert: ACIP
2019 Call for Board of Directors
ACIP Update
Twitter Chat Reminder
National Immunization Awareness Month (NIAM)
2020 RSVP Competition of Funding Opportunity
Senior Center Month
Malnutrition Awareness Week: September 23rd -27th
TRIO Announcement
Medicare Open Enrollment
NANASP Action Alert OAA House
RRF Wrap-up