Aging in Connecticut

Did you know:
- Connecticut has more than 472,000 residents over the age of 65 (US Census Bureau).
- Connecticut is the 7th oldest state in the nation.
- Connecticut's older adult population is expected to increase by 64% from 2006 to 2030.

In January, the Council embarked on a new 2-year project, the Connecticut EngAGEment Initiative, a partnership between the Council, Grantmakers in Aging (GIA) and six of your fellow funders. The emerging "age wave" prompted the Council to bring this issue to the attention of the Connecticut philanthropic community. The changing profile of a growing older population will impact the issues that many funders in the state already address - health care service, housing, transportation, and the economic vitality of the community.

Guided by a Leadership Team* composed of Council members, we hope to increase awareness and encourage funders to take an active interest in aging issues in their communities. Funders can use their convening power, influence, knowledge and resources to assist in finding creative and viable solutions.

To determine Connecticut funders' "aging" awareness and activities, the Council developed a baseline survey which was distributed in June, 2011 to 105 members and 170 non-member funders. Thirty-five organizations (25 members and 10 non-members) responded with a majority of responders representing community and family foundations.

We learned that 31% of responders identified funding aging issues as a priority for their organization and that 26% of responders do not fund any programs related to the issue of aging. However, 41% reported that they are likely to fund programs for older adults within the next 3 years. The low response was an indicator that there is not high interest in this funding area. To read a summary of survey results, please click here.
With the help of the Leadership Team, we have hosted two programs to learn more about the government and nonprofit support for older adults in Connecticut as well as the opportunities and challenges presented by this population change. We also learned about roles for philanthropy in this area.

Next in our plan is a program, Aging Ready Communities: Challenges, Opportunities, National and Local Models, which will be held November 30, 2011 at the New Haven Lawn Club. You are invited to join your colleagues along with public and private leaders in the aging community to hear from national experts in the field of “aging in place”. You’ll learn about components of “aging friendly” communities as well as promising practices from around the country.

You may follow the work of the EngAGEment Initiative and access important aging information and resources on our website.

*Aging Leadership Team*
Carol O’Donnell, Connecticut Community Foundation
Penny Canny, The Community Foundation for Greater New Haven
Sharon O’Meara, Hartford Foundation for Public Giving
Nancy von Euler, Fairfield County Community Foundation
Nancy Heaton, The Foundation for Community Health
Rick Porth, United Way