

Senior Housing Weekly: Recap of LeadingAge Updates

November 13, 2020

LeadingAge celebrates growth and creativity of housing members – In the November 13th Housing Celebration Reception, LeadingAge staff presented the first annual “silly but heartfelt” awards to several housing members who embody the spirit of the broader LeadingAge membership. The virtual reception, hosted as part of the LeadingAge annual meeting, began with intention setting led by Karyne Jones of the National Caucus and Center on Black Aging. The reception then featured a tour through a member community’s garden at The Pines in Maine, where raised beds were cultivated by residents to help combat isolation during the pandemic.



Reception participants then took part in an art exercise shared by COVIA out of San Francisco, mirroring activities coordinated with senior residents during the pandemic. The reception guided participants through the writing of “What If” poems and shared a resident video.

The event concluded with the first annual awards ceremony; this year’s “silly but heartfelt” award recipients include:

- “Bullhorn Award” - Jerry Brown, COVIA
- “Legacy Award” – Pam Monroe
- “Photography Award” – Les Finke, Albert Einstein Residence Center
- “Self Starter Award” – Nancy Evans, CSI Support and Development
- “Problem Solver Award” – Vida Wojewski, Catholic Charities
- “Sky is Falling Award” – Catherine Evans, Lesley Senior Communities
- “Sticky Award” – Toby Halliday, HUD

Monday, November 16, 12:30 – 1:30pm ET, Housing Advisory Group call on RAD for PRAC. Special guests from National Church Residences will join us to discuss all things RAD for PRAC: Megan Kelly, Vice President of Public Policy & Government Relations, Eric Walker, Director of

Affordable Housing Development, and Stephanie Rhodes, Project Leader. National Church Residences just closed the first RAD for PRAC deal and we're thrilled they can join us to talk about this preservation success, the RAD for PRAC program, and what's next for them. If you are not a member of the Housing Advisory Group and would like access to the call, email lcouch@leadingage.org.

HUD, CDC, and CMS host flu vaccine webinar – Join the agency on Tuesday, Nov 17th at 1pm ET for a panel discussion on access to flu shots during COVID-19. The Elderly Housing Development & Operations Corporation (EHDOC), a LeadingAge member, will share their experience in the webinar. More details TBA.

Agency Review Team: LeadingAge met with members of the [Biden-Harris Transition Agency Review Team](#) for HUD on November 13. The teams, including the one assigned to HUD and the Federal Housing Finance Agency, were established the week of November 9 to preparing President-elect Biden and Vice President-elect Harris and a to-be-nominated cabinet to hit the ground running on the first day of their administration. LeadingAge stressed affordable senior housing issues such as COVID-19 relief, expanding the supply, adequate rents and reserves, the connection between housing and services, the need for more Service Coordinators, funding for wireless internet in apartments, and housing quality.

Senate HUD Funding Bill. On November 10, the Senate released its FY21 HUD funding bill. LeadingAge hopes a final FY21 HUD spending bill can be enacted before December 11, when the current Continuing Resolution expires. The [Senate bill](#) acknowledges LeadingAge's priorities and provides funding for new Section 202 housing and new Service Coordinators, but not to the extent LeadingAge would like to see. The bill would also extend HUD's IWISH demonstration for two years, another of LeadingAge's priorities.

RAD improvements in Senate bill: In addition to funding, this week's Senate FY21 HUD appropriations bill would make [positive changes to RAD](#) for senior housing. Changes in the bill include allowing rents upon conversion to the Section 8 platform to be above the Section 8 cap in order to continue critical services for the older adults and prevent a reduction of project funding. The bill would also expand RAD to include Senior Preservation Assistance Contracts.

LeadingAge annual meeting features HUD, industry experts – During the first week of the LeadingAge Annual meeting, LeadingAge hosted three housing-specific sessions. The first session, titled "Resiliency in Senior Housing through COVID-19," featured an interview between LeadingAge housing staff and HUD's Director of Asset Management and Portfolio Oversight, Toby Halliday. During the conversation, Halliday shared updates on timing for CARES Act funding and updates about HUD staff adjustments to remote work. Two further housing panels featured Tom Davis of HUD and Vince O'Donnell of POAH, as well as Andrea Rattray from the Local Initiatives Support Corporation. Attendees were able to ask questions in the chat box and connect afterward with the speakers.

Finding Safe Solutions for Thanksgiving. This hot topic remains at the top of the dialogue with members, as the biggest family-centric holiday of the year approaches. Today, we released an article that reviews [Member Solutions for a COVID-Safe Thanksgiving](#) and, very soon, a companion article on [CDC and States Guidance for Thanksgiving: Travel and Gatherings](#) will follow (link provided, but not yet live.) We continue to gather members' ideas and solutions for this complex and multi-faceted challenge: how to encourage families to reconnect and reunite safely over the holidays, without unduly exposing the people we serve to COVID 19.

Letter to Biden COVID Task Force Co-Chairs. On November 10, LeadingAge sent a [letter to the three co-chairs of the newly named Biden Transition COVID-19 Advisory Board](#) – David Kessler, Vivek H. Murthy, and Marcella Nunez-Smith. In the letter, after introducing the co-chairs to LeadingAge and its members across the continuum of aging services, Katie Sloan commended the Biden-Harris Transition Team for setting up the Advisory Board. She pointed out that LeadingAge members serve the population most at risk of COVID-19. She suggested that aging and geriatrics experts could enhance the work of the Board and offered any assistance LeadingAge can provide.

New Center on Aging and Trauma. The Jewish Federations of North America announced the launch of a new JFNA Center on Aging and Trauma. Using a grant from the Administration on Community Living, the Center builds on the lessons learned from serving Holocaust survivors to develop innovations in person-centered, trauma-informed (PCTI) care for Holocaust survivors and other populations with a history of trauma and their family caregivers as well. There are resources included on PCTI approach and much more on the [Center's website](#).