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## **NANASP in 2016: Activities and Accomplishments**

*Submitted by: Robert Blancato, Pam Carlson, Scott Carlson and Meredith Ponder Whitmire*

2016 was another eventful year for NANASP and its members! NANASP staff members continue to maintain and use a working knowledge of significant developments and trends in the field of aging while advocating for federal funds to support senior nutrition programs. From advocacy to grants, here's a look back at what NANASP has done this year.

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### **Advocacy in Action: OAA Funding, Reauthorization and Election 2017**

NANASP submitted testimony in spring 2016 **supporting increased funding levels** for Older Americans Act nutrition programs and the SCSEP program to the Labor-HHS-Education Appropriations Subcommittees in the **House** and **Senate**. NANASP also worked in partnership with Meals on Wheels America to submit **letters** to the House and Senate supporting the President's budget levels. Ultimately, the Senate's appropriations bill provided flat funding for nutrition programs and a \$34 million cut to SCSEP, while the House bill provided the President's suggested increases for nutrition programs and flat funding for SCSEP.

In October 2016, a **Continuing Resolution** was passed to fund the government through December 9, 2016. All programs received a slightly less than 0.5 percent across the board cut to stay within the FY 2017 budget caps, which are lower than FY 2016's caps. On December 9, another CR was passed to fund the federal government through April 28, 2017. NANASP will continue to work for the highest possible funding levels for the duration of the 2017 fiscal year post-CR.

**The Older Americans Act Reauthorization Act**, S.192, officially passed the House and Senate in March 2016, and was signed by the President in April 2016. The OAA expired in 2011 and efforts to renew it had been underway ever since. The reauthorization is for three years and contains authorizations for funding increases for OAA programs. NANASP worked to have some key provisions for nutrition included in this act, including:

- Providing for long-overdue higher reauthorization levels for the Older Americans Act of more than six percent over the life of the bill.
- Retaining the key elements of the nutrition programs, including separate authorizations for congregate and home-delivered meals and continuation of the policy of voluntary contributions from participants.
- Calling for greater utilization of registered dietitians in the nutrition programs.

- Calling for the use of locally-grown foods in meal programs where feasible, as well as the identification of potential partnerships and contracts with local producers and providers of locally-grown foods.
- Retaining the National Resource Center on Nutrition and Aging.

In November, the **2016 national election** resulted in Donald Trump becoming President-elect and Governor Mike Pence becoming Vice-President elect. It also represents the first time since 2010 that one party will control both the White House and Congress, as the Republicans maintained their majorities in both the Senate and the House.

NANASP sent out a **special bulletin last week** to discuss what to expect in 2017 and how members can engage with the new Congress and Administration through local, state and national advocacy efforts.

In the coming weeks, more information on the new Trump Administration including policies and **appointments** will be forthcoming. NANASP will be especially interested in those appointments which will impact aging policy over the next years, including key appointments in the Department of Health and Human Services, Department of Labor and the Department of Agriculture.

**Senate committee chairs and ranking members** for the 115<sup>th</sup> Congress have been selected. Below are the relevant committee chairs/ranking members for NANASP advocacy. Senators new to the position are **highlighted**.

<b>Committee</b>	<b>Chair (R)</b>	<b>Ranking Member (D)</b>
Appropriations	Sen. Thad Cochran	<b>Sen. Patrick Leahy</b>
Health Education Labor & Pensions (HELP)	Sen. Lamar Alexander	Sen. Patty Murray
Agriculture	Sen. Pat Roberts	Sen. Debbie Stabenow
Aging	Sen. Susan Collins	<b>Sen. Bob Casey</b>
Finance (CMS issues)	Sen. Orrin Hatch	Sen. Ron Wyden
Judiciary (elder justice)	Sen. Chuck Grassley	<b>Sen. Dianne Feinstein</b>
Budget	Sen. Mike Enzi	Sen. Bernie Sanders

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## **Malnutrition and Older Adults**

NANASP continued to be highly involved with the issue of senior malnutrition in 2016. Executive Director **Bob Blancato** and Federal Policy and Advocacy Manager **Meredith Ponder Whitmire** presented at many conferences this year across the country on this topic.

NANASP also participated in the activities of Malnutrition Awareness Week™, sponsored by A.S.P.E.N., as part of the **Defeat Malnutrition Today coalition** to hold a briefing and Hill visits.

The briefing, which featured Blancato and Ponder, as well as representatives from the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics, A.S.P.E.N., Feeding America, and the Latino Integrative Nutrition Initiative Project, was held in the U.S. Senate and was widely attended, with an audience of

almost 80 people. The Hill visits had almost 60 participants visiting 50 Congressional offices to discuss senior malnutrition awareness and the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics' proposed quality measures to address malnutrition in hospital and healthcare settings.

For all the materials from the day, including the briefing slides, the quality measures sign-on letter to Congress, an article explaining the quality measures, and an infographic about senior malnutrition, please visit [defeatmalnutrition.today](http://defeatmalnutrition.today).

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## 2016 Annual Training Conference

**NANASP's 2016 Annual Training Conference** was held at the Mirage Hotel in Las Vegas, NV. A total of **203 attendees, exhibitors and staff** attended the 2016 Conference with revenues up 7%.

Highlights included a Pre-Conference Site Tour at Zappos and importance of great customer service. Executive Director **Bob Blancato** opened the conference with some of NANASP's "greatest hits" from the past year, including the passage of the Older Americans Act, increased funding for nutrition programs, and our vaccine outreach program. Blancato and President/CEO of the National Council on Aging **Jim Firman** then held the popular Washington Update in the form of a Q&A session moderated by **Paul Downey**. They discussed the OAA, the upcoming presidential election, and more! **Mary Beth Arensberg**, Director, Health Policy and Programs, Abbott Nutrition, and **Meredith Ponder Whitmire** presented talks on malnutrition, and **Jeff Klein** presented on advocacy and reframing senior services.

Thursday's programming began with a general session led by **Connie Benton Wolfe**, former Executive Director of NANASP, on the changing landscape of the aging network. The day also included some valuable networking time with our terrific sponsors! Afternoon sessions included Delivery System Reform and Nutrition Providers: Finding Your Niche and Adding Value, Closing the Senior SNAP Gap, HHS and USDA 2015-2020 Dietary Guidelines and Their Effect on the OAA Nutrition Programs, A Closer Look at the Aging Mastery Program, and Helping More Seniors Use the Internet through Community Partnerships.

During the NANASP Business Meeting on Friday morning, the 2016 resolutions were passed and Board of Directors officer elections were held. **Tony Sarmiento** was voted in as the new Chair of the Board of Directors of NANASP. Presentations and resolutions are available at [www.nanasp.org](http://www.nanasp.org).

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## 2017 Annual Training Conference

NANASP entered an agreement with the National Council on Aging's (NCOA) National Institute of Senior Centers (NISC) to collaborate on a Joint Conference in 2017 in Chicago, IL. A joint conference committee was formed and planning is well underway for this much anticipated event.

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## NANASP Webinars

*NANASP presented seven web-events in 2016, including the 3-Part Directors Training Event:*

- **Washington Update: What's Coming in 2016? Teleconference - January 28, 2016** Bob Blancato shared insights about what is in store for the last year of the 114th Congress and Barack Obama's presidency.
- **Nutrition Directors Training Webinar 3-Part Series Thursdays - October 6, 13 and 20, 2016** Holly Greuling, RDN, National Nutritionist, Administration on Community Living/Administration on Aging, Washington, DC and Pat Bohse, President, Bohse & Associates Middletown, NJ presented on the network structure • develop strategies to work with program staff, local AAA's, State Units on Aging and Senior Centers. • highlight the uniqueness of each state and local needs • get back to basics, incorporating the challenges and opportunities your programs are facing in these difficult economic times and help you to create the ideal nutrition program and senior center.
- **"Senior Volunteers – Brave New World" Webinar Event - September 20, 2016** Presented by Jill S. Thomsen, CVB, Volunteer Specialist, City of Culver City
- **Election 2016 - What Do the Results Mean for Aging Policy? Webinar Aired Wednesday November 30, 2016** - NANASP Executive Director Bob Blancato and Federal Policy and Advocacy Manager Meredith Ponder Whitmire discussed the 2016 election results and their potential impact on aging policy and programs as we move into 2017. This webinar addressed the new Administration, the new Congress and what lies ahead in the new year for aging programs.

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## Grant Income

NANASP's income from grants continues to grow annually, with **over \$1 million** in grants received since 2012. 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, the UnitedHealth Group, the UnitedHealth Foundation, and the Retirement Research Foundation** for their ongoing support of NANASP, its mission, and the work of its members.

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## Vaccine Awareness Member Grants

In 2016, NANASP partnered with Pfizer to promote awareness of the importance of vaccinations in older adults. NANASP helped to reach **over 55,000** older adults in person via placemats, flyers, and informational sessions, and **almost 100,000** older adults via websites, social media, newsletters, emails and newspaper articles.

NANASP gave away \$23,000 in grants to these members in key states to assist with these efforts:

- Meals on Wheels for Western New York, Inc.
  - Lifespan of Greater Rochester Inc
  - Senior Citizens Activities Network
  - Serving Seniors
  - Northern Arizona Council of Governments
  - Centralina Council of Governments
  - Meals on Wheels-Senior Outreach Services
  - Senior Resources of Guilford
  - New Opportunities, Inc
  - MAMOW
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## **NANASP 2016 Medicare Open Enrollment Micro-Grant**

NANASP had the opportunity to provide some state-specific micro-grants to increase awareness about Medicare Open Enrollment. NANASP member recipients were:

- City of Irvine
  - Serving Seniors
  - Meals on Wheels for Western New York
  - Meals on Wheels and Senior Outreach Services
  - Area 12 Agency on Aging
  - NU-HOPE Elder Care Services, Inc.
  - Meals on Wheels of the Monterey Peninsula
  - SeniorServ
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## **2017 New Year Grants**

Since 2013 when sequestration was first imposed, NANASP has provided End of Year Grants to our members who were the hardest hit by cutbacks. These grants have allowed additional meals to be served. Thanks to generous grants of support from our corporate donors including PhRMA, Pfizer and Abbott, we are pleased to extend this program to start 2017 and make them Start of Year Grants. To help us determine how best to distribute these awards to begin the New Year, a survey request will be sent out to members for completion by mid January, 2017 so that awards in early February.

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## **NANASP Coalition Work**

As part of the Leadership Council of Aging Organizations (LCAO), NANASP is active in LCAO efforts. **Meredith Ponder Whitmire** is currently the co-chair of the Community Services committee. NANASP participated in LCAO campaigns to get the OAA reauthorized and to increase funding for OAA programs. In February, LCAO sponsored **Seniors Decide 2016**, the nation's only forum where all of the presidential candidates are invited to address issues that are important to America's older adults. Whitmire helped to plan this event.

In January, NANASP signed onto a [letter](#) asking that the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) provide stability and security for the more than 17 million seniors who have selected a Medicare Advantage health plan. This was part of NANASP's work with the Better Medicare Alliance.

NANASP has also submitted comments with the Defeat Malnutrition Today coalition to the Senate Finance Committee's Chronic Care Working Group on their [policy options document](#). To read the comments, click [here](#). Other [comments](#) to CMS by DMT include comments on their discharge planning proposed rule.

NANASP is part of the LCAO, the Elder Justice Coalition, the Food Policy Working Group, the Defeat Malnutrition Today coalition, the Better Medicare Alliance, the National Alliance for Nutrition and Activity (NANA), and is a partner of the National Resource Center on LGBT Aging.

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## **The NANASP Board: New Positions, New Members**

In 2016, the following members joined the NANASP Board:

### **Laura Cisneros**

WellMed Medical Management, Inc.  
San Antonio, TX

### **Denise Niese**

Wood County Committee on Aging  
Bowling Green, OH

NANASP is deeply grateful to our retiring Board member in 2016: **Ann McLone Cooper**, past Chair of NANASP, who has provided the leadership and guidance which has helped to make NANASP the association it is today. NANASP will always be grateful to Ann for her service to our association. After perusing another job opportunity **Joe Granados** resigned from the board. We also appreciate his contributions and ideas.

The current **NANASP Executive Committee Members** are:

### **Chair**

**Tony Sarmiento**  
Silver Spring, MD

**Vice-Chair, Operations & Finance**  
**Shirley Chao, PhD, RD, LDN, FAND**  
Boston, MA

### **1st Vice-Chair/Vice Chair of Governance**

**Holly Hagler**  
Anaheim, CA

**Vice-Chair, Education**  
**Linda Miller**  
Charlotte, NC

### **Secretary**

**Karen Jackson, RD**  
Southfield, MI

## Washington Bulletins

- A total of **20 Washington Bulletins** were disseminated in 2016, including the Seven Weeks of Recess Series. A major focus of Bulletins was NANASP's ongoing advocacy work, especially regarding OAA Reauthorization, Federal Funding, Vaccine Awareness, Malnutrition and Election 2016.
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## NANASP Advocacy Webpage

In 2016 NANASP launched [\*\*Take Action\*\*](#), a webpage created to assist our member 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
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## NANASP Newsletter

Following the February 2016 issue, NANASP moved to an online E-Newsletter format, *NANASP News*, producing **five NANASP News issues** in the second half of the year.

- 4th Annual Senior Report
  - Elder Advocates call for More Social Services
  - Pneumococcal Disease
  - Healthy Aging in Action report
  - Family Caregivers & Their Loved Ones
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## NANASP Blogs and Articles

Executive Director Bob Blancato has been published multiple times on the **Huffington Post** and **Next Avenue** in 2016. Here is a sampling of his posts and articles:

- [\*\*A Medicare Issue We Can All Agree On\*\*](#)
- [\*\*Start Getting Your September Shots! Raising Awareness About Adult Vaccinations\*\*](#)
- [\*\*Value-Based Purchasing Is On Target, But Is It A Value To Older Adults And Their Families?\*\*](#)
- [\*\*The Big Campaign Issue That Has Yet to Pick Up Steam\*\*](#)
- [\*\*Boomer Questions for the Presidential Candidates\*\*](#)
- [\*\*The Older Americans Act Finally Clears Congress\*\*](#)
- [\*\*Long-Term Care: The Ignored Issue in the 2016 Election\*\*](#)
- [\*\*What We Don't Know About Trump's Medicare Reforms\*\*](#)



## NANASP Recognitions

Executive Director Bob Blancato became the Board Chair of the American Society on Aging (ASA) this year. The announcement is [here](#) on the ASA website. This is a voluntary position with a two-year term. Blancato was also named to the National Board of AARP, which is also a voluntary position.

Blancato received the 2016 Kit Clark Award from the Massachusetts Meals on Wheels Association and was named one of Next Avenue's Top 50 Influencers in Aging for 2016.

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## NANASP Presentations

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

- Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics' Food and Nutrition Conference and Expo (FNCE) – presented poster on Defeat Malnutrition Today
- Tufts University National Nutrition Council
- National Resource Center on Nutrition and Aging: Focus on Nutrition and Aging Webinar – February 11
- American Society on Aging conference – March
- National Medical Association conference – March
- New England Regional Elderly Nutrition Programs Conference – April 8
- Nutrition and Healthy Aging: How You Can Address Senior Malnutrition Webinar, Defeat Malnutrition Today – May 19
- America's Health Rankings Senior Report: Health of Tomorrow's Seniors Webinar, United Health Foundation - June 10
- Florida Council on Aging conference – August 9
- n4a conference – July
- NY State Society on Aging conference – October 26
- NY State Senior Nutrition Conference – October 27
- CCOA conference – November
- c4a conference – November
- Gerontological Society of America conference – November 18

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## Social Media



896 Page Likes/45 Posts in 2016  
Reaching just over 20,000



468 Twitter followers. Tweeted 75 in 2016  
Received over 38,000 views/likes/retweets.