



Public Relations Efforts

We have a **new website**. Please view at <https://eccog.org/>

The ECC has developed the following:

- Eastern Carolina Council of Governments **UTube Channel**

Please tune in to Eastern Carolina Council of Governments UTube Channel to find the following:

- Let's Talk Tech for Seniors
- Separate videos on the Residents' Bill of Rights.

There are 16 Rights. Residents' Rights are guaranteed by the federal 1987 Nursing Home Reform Law. The law requires nursing homes to "promote and protect the rights of each resident" and places a strong emphasis on individual dignity and self-determination. Nursing homes must meet federal residents' rights requirements if they participate in Medicare and Medicaid. Some states have residents' rights in state law or regulation for nursing homes, licensed assisted living, adult care homes, and other board and care facilities. A person living in a long-term care facility maintains the same rights as an individual in the larger community.

- Faces of Dementia
- Long Term Care Ombudsmen Program
- Skilled nursing facilities
- Assisted living and group home facilities

- Information and videos on **Facebook**

Please like us on Facebook and share the information.

- Working with Curtis Media to have information disseminated over the radio throughout the year.

January	Health Awareness
February	Heart Health Awareness
March	National Nutrition Month
April	Volunteer Month
May	Older American & Elder Abuse
June	Men's Health
July	Senior Independence month
August	Dementia Awareness
September	Senior Center Month
October	Residents' Rights & Bully Awareness



November Alzheimer's Awareness & Caregiver Month

December National Influenza Month

Local Government Outreach

- Visited with Board and Manager for Town of Mount Olive and ECC Representative and Manager Town of Havelock.
- Grant opportunities emailed to the region on August 25, September 17 (NC GREAT Grant, FEMA Hazard Mitigation, Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities), and September 22.
- Protect yourself from Coronavirus scams emailed on August 25.
- Managers Meetings

The managers were surveyed (<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/LL2GQSZ>) and the majority wanted to have the meetings on the third Tuesday of the month. Several commented that they did not want in person meetings. Topics that were of importance are the following:

- CDBG-CV Grants/management
- Covid-19 and employment
- CARES Funding
- Capital Projects Police Departments - how to manage when you know nothing about being a police officer.
- A regional garbage/recycling approach, help with 160d amendments.
- Growth of a town- how to fund capital projects, projects that would improve the safety and health of a town's community
- Racial and Ethnic Diversity;
- Economic Development Planning & Land Use Advisory Board (Processes & Procedures)
- Code Enforcement for commercial structures/properties, downtown revitalization, attracting industry and business development

As stated above, the ECC hosted a series of webinars to help with CARES Funding and other unfunded mandates. On November 17th from 11:00 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. the offered COVID-19 Employer Best Practices and a Broader View of Economic Development/Recovery After the Pandemic. The meeting was conducted in person and virtually.

The ECC applied for and received an Economic Development Grant to help Towns with ordinance rewrites, ADA compliance plans, and stormwater plans. The following are Towns the ECC is working with on projects:

- Greene County
- Town of Greenevers
- Town of Grifton
- Town of Faison
- Lenoir County
- Town of Morehead City
- Town of Mount Olive



- Town of Oriental
- Town of Richlands
- Town of Rose Hill
- Town of Snow Hill

Statewide Outreach

- Appointed to Committee to represent the state COG ED for statewide 501c3 to access statewide funding for our Aging programs
- On Search Committee for NC Asheville 2-year grant for Falls Prevention Director
- NC First Transportation Commission

On October 5, 2020 Governor Cooper appointed me to the **North Carolina Geographic Information Coordinating Council (GICC)**. The Council was established by the N.C. General Assembly to develop policies regarding the use of geographic information, geographic information systems and related technologies. The GICC is an organization of volunteers whose goals are to:

- Collaborate in geographic information and systems, involving state, federal and local government agencies, academic institutions, private organizations, and individuals across the state.
- Improve the quality, access, cost-effectiveness and utility of North Carolina's geographic information and resources, and promote geographic information as a strategic resource.
- Efficiently collect, develop, and use geographic information through voluntary exchange and sharing of data and technical know-how.
- Explore, guide, and provide a framework for coordination including:
 - Developing standards
 - Planning strategically
 - Resolving policy and technical issues
 - Providing central direction and oversight
 - Advising the governor and the Legislature as to needed directions, responsibilities, and funding regarding geographic information.

The GICC achieves its goals through collaborative leadership, communication, and assistance. Leadership includes promoting GIS technology for the state and demonstrating the value of reliable geographic information for effective decision making. The GICC supports communication by providing opportunities to hear and examine issues, share ideas, and build consensus through collaborative activities. Assistance consists of standards and recommended practices, guidelines, and policies, learning opportunities, projects and initiatives that expand and improve public access to complete, consistent, current, statewide geographic information.

National Outreach

I am thrilled to share with you that the Eastern Carolina Council of Governments (ECC) staff received three prestigious National Awards. June 2020, I submitted nominations for the National Association of Development Organizations Impact Awards. The merits of the nomination and the services provided were vetted by a national committee and awards were given to organizations who developed and implemented



programs having pronounced and lasting impacts on a community. To answer the question what does the ECC Aging staff do for a community, please read the programs the ECC provides to our adults over sixty. I hope you will find the intrinsic worth as much of an asset to the community as the national committee deemed it beneficial.

Regional Dementia Education and Supportive Training

The Eastern Carolina Council of Governments Area Agency on Aging (ECCAAA) provides simulation training to improve service to adults with dementia. The workshop includes an interactive experience for participants to step in the shoes of an adult with dementia. Participants include first responders, employees of long-term care facilities, local government employees, and caregivers.

The ECCAAA partners with local Crisis Intervention Officer Training Certification Programs to provide first responder training to include Dementia Simulation Training and Crisis Training when addressing an individual with dementia and their caregivers. Through the training programs, individuals learn successful communication skills that improve services for individuals diagnosed with dementia and their caregivers in their community during interactions and crisis. ECCAAA Family Caregiver Specialist January Brown and the Regional Long-Term Care Ombudsmen Angela Pridgen and Colby Smith have partnered to facilitate a unique opportunity for fire department staff, long-term care facility staff and families, and community healthcare professionals. Participants gain a greater awareness and understanding of the constant struggles (24/7) affecting persons with dementia. Using specialized gear within a safe setting, participants experience a real-life simulation of what feels like to live day to day with dementia. Participants also receive dementia awareness training, caregiver crisis training, and elder abuse training. Training of first responders can improve outcomes and provide support to individuals living independently in our communities. First responders are becoming more aware of the need for dementia training, information, and interaction processes to help them best respond to the needs of individuals with dementia in their community.

Additionally, the ECCAAA created two mobile “Faces of Dementia”, traveling exhibits that have been displayed at local events, meetings, and other public gatherings to build awareness and education of dementia in our communities. The exhibit features individuals along with a brief bio to include celebrities and local individuals who have lived with dementia. The “Faces of Dementia” exhibit pays homage to individuals living with dementia and has become a lasting tribute to these incredible legacies. Individuals diagnosed with dementia touches all of our community. They are family, friends, neighbors, co-workers, colleagues, clients, and customers.

The ECCAAA’s Ombudsmen Angela Pridgen and Colby Smith facilitate Elder Abuse Awareness Campaigns throughout our nine-county region to promote the education, awareness, detection and prevention of abuse, neglect, and exploitation of older adults.

June 15th is designated as World Elder Abuse Awareness Day each year. North Carolina recognizes from Mother’s Day to Father’s Day each year as Elder Abuse Awareness Month. The ECCAAA Ombudsman Program has held annual “Elder Abuse Awareness Walks” to recognize these significant dates during the months of May and June. The ECCAAA held events in Onslow County for the past six years, in Lenoir County for the past five years, Greene County for the past four years, Craven for the past two years, and



Duplin County for the past two years. The goal of the Elder Abuse Awareness Walks is to educate the community on what constitutes Elder Abuse, how to prevent abuse, who to report allegations of abuse to, and to provide national and state statistics on abuse. This past year, the ECCAAA developed elder abuse awareness steering committees to plan the events. These committees consist of representatives from law enforcement, local Department of Social Services, banking industry, local hospitals, senior centers, home health agencies, and other community groups. The 2019 year was our most successful year thus far because of the work of these committees. We met several months prior to the event dates to plan and prepare for each event. We held our first Elder Abuse Awareness Walk in Duplin County on May 15, 2019 with 300 registered participants during the Senior Center's Annual Fun Day. Onslow County held an awareness walk and health fair at the Onslow Senior Services on May 29th. We had a record high of over 100 participants at this year's event. Lenoir County held their event at Pearson Park. Entertainment was provided by the local Senior Dance team to go along with the Walk on June 14th with a total of 100 participants. Greene County's walk was held on June 14th at the Greene County Senior Center and had 200 participants. We created signs to line the path of the "Walks" with state and national elder abuse statistics printed on each sign. To make these events successful and to incorporate other age groups, we coordinated volunteers from local high school ROTC programs and law enforcement.

In Wayne County, we teamed up with the Peggy M. Seegars Senior Center to conduct an Elder Abuse Symposium on June 12th with 100 participants in attendance. Speakers included local law enforcement, Adult Protective Services staff, and a representative from the North Carolina Secretary of State. We coordinated with Carteret County DSS to run a full-page article on Elder Abuse Awareness. The article ran for four consecutive weeks. We set up a booth for Elder Abuse Awareness at the Jones County Health Fair and provided t-shirts to over 50 participants. Our goal for 2019 was to provide elder abuse awareness throughout our nine county regions.

In 2020, in-person awareness events were cancelled due to the COVID-19 pandemic. As a result, we transitioned our awareness efforts to a virtual platform and sponsored a social media awareness campaign. The campaign included elder abuse awareness ads that were presented on Facebook in Craven, Lenoir, Onslow, and Wayne Counties. The social media campaign garnered exceptionally good reactions with triple the average "click" rate as other similar campaigns.

Assistive Technology AAA Program

With the growth of technology "aging in place" is becoming more of a reality for older adults. According to recent AARP research, the technology market for adults over age fifty is growing rapidly. Older adult consumers are expected to spend \$84 billion on technology products by the end of the next decade.

Keeping up with products and their potential uses can be a challenge. Technological advancements have been focusing more on older adults. Products are focusing on ways to address the challenges that contribute to social isolation, communication with caregivers, safety monitoring, artificial intelligence, telehealth, and smart home devices. Technology is not all about electronic devices but rather devices that can assist in a manner that accomplishes a task and can assist with independence. Over the past year the ECCAAA has embraced the idea that technology can make a real difference in the lives of older adults. This has been done in several ways. First, the Family Caregiver Support Program (FCSP) lead by



Janurary Brown has incorporated the use of robotic animal technology to support caregivers and individuals with cognitive impairment to improve quality of life by providing companionship, interaction, and emotional support. Secondly, the ECCAAA continues to provide updated information, education, and training on the latest technological advances to include devices, apps, and other equipment available to help older adults and adults with disabilities to remain as independent as possible. Finally, as a response to COVID-19 and the social distancing recommendations, the ECCAAA facilitates caregiver support groups virtually.

Currently, there are two active virtual support groups meeting once a month. Participation has grown and there are caregivers that participate outside of our region. We have learned that even when services return to in person, it will be important for us to continue to offer the virtual support group option.

The ECCAAA presented Older Adult and Caregiver Technology 101 educational trainings throughout the region. The Technology 101 training has been presented to older adult and caregiver community workshop presentations, support groups, informational sessions, and professional trainings. The ECCAAA FCSP has also presented workshop sessions at the North Carolina FCSP state meeting, the Southeastern Area Agency on Aging Training Conference, NC Activities Directors Conference, and the NC Support Groups quarterly round table event. In addition to assisting Area Agency on Aging (AAA) across North Carolina, the ECCAAA has assisted AAAs in Kentucky and California with development of technology education and information for their clients that they serve.

For FY 20-21 there are two projects the ECCAAA hopes to accomplish successfully to advance our technology initiative. First, ECCAAA is currently building a technology lending library to be piloted throughout the region. Finance Director Jenny Miller has helped secure funding and has begun ordering materials. Secondly, FCSP Coordinator Janurary Brown will continue to host online workshops/training for older adults, caregivers, and professionals.

Please join me in congratulating the staff at the ECC for their nationally recognized value to Eastern North Carolina.

Educational Opportunities

The ECC did a series of virtual webinars. These events were aimed to help local governments efficiently and effectively manage some of the toughest challenges and unfunded mandates that lie ahead of local government leaders in the months to come. Below are the topics

Wednesday, October 7

Chapter 160D: What Does It Mean to Me?

The clock is ticking to revise existing land-use ordinances to comply with North Carolina rules and better unify your development regulations. Learn more about Chapter 160D, when the deadlines are, and how it affects your community.



Wednesday, October 14

Risk and Resiliency Planning 101

Get ahead and be proactive by planning for wet-weather events through CCTV data and modeling. Also, learn how to meet state and federal mandates for AWIA, EPA Risk Assessments, Emergency Response Plans, and ADA Transition Planning.

Wednesday, October 21

The Benefits of Trenchless Technologies

Disruptions to traffic, business, and communities: Water and wastewater system work can be rough on cities and towns. But trenchless technology makes replacement and rehabilitation work much less painful. Hear from the engineers who revolutionized the City of Greensboro's program.

Wednesday, October 28

Embracing Proactive Infrastructure Planning

Is your infrastructure dying a slow death? How Asset Management Planning, Prediction Modeling, Capital Improvement Plans and Rate Setting can help your community in the present while properly preparing for the future.

Wednesday, November 4

COVID-19 Got Your Finances Down?

Are you looking for creative ways to keep capital projects and initiatives moving? We will share ideas on grants and loans, financial analysis and modeling, rate adequacy and setting, and business analytics and proactive planning.

Activities

SOG Economic Development Class

EDD Cares Act Supplemental- Post Award Management Conference Call

Greene County 160D Kick-off

Greenevers 160D Kick-off

New Employee Aging Orientation

Webinars Attended

DHHS COVID-19 Healthcare Coalition

Rural Development Hubs: Innovation Infrastructure for Rural America

Legislative Virtual Summit ‐ A Legislative Update Preparing Special Districts for the New Normal



Festival & Events- What Will They Look Like in the Future?

NC Inclusive Disaster Recovery Network - Monthly Meeting

SERDI Annual Conference Online

Submitted by
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