

Press Release

To: Area Media

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Note: The additional attachment is the Presidential Proclamation of Older Americans Month

For Immediate Release

Older Americans Month
Age Strong! Live Long!

May is Older Americans Month—a tradition dating back to 1963 to honor the legacies and ongoing contributions of older Americans and support them as they enter the next stage in life. Siouxland Aging Services, with a mission of enabling older Iowans to live with maximum dignity, well-being and independence, recognizes the seniors whose contributions have strengthened our workplaces, communities, state and nation.

This year's Older Americans Month theme—*Age Strong! Live Long!*—recognizes the diversity and vitality of today's older Americans who span three generations. They have lived through wars and hard times, as well as periods of unprecedented prosperity. They pioneered new technologies in medicine, communications, and industry while spearheading a cultural revolution that won equal rights for minorities, women, and disabled Americans. These remarkable achievements demonstrate the strength and character of older Americans, and underscore the debt of gratitude we owe to the generations that have given our society so much.

But the contributions of older Americans are not only in the past. Older Americans are living longer and are more active than ever before. And with the aging of the baby boomer generation—the largest in our nation's history—America's senior population is expected to number 71.5 million by 2030. While keeping the growing population of older Americans healthy and active will increase the demand for senior services, what is remarkable is the extent to which older Americans themselves are supporting each other. As the new generations of seniors become better educated and more financially secure than their predecessors, they are spending more time making significant contributions in their communities through civic and volunteer opportunities.

In fact, older Americans are a core component of service delivery to seniors—embodying and modeling the drive to *Age Strong! Live Long!* At Siouxland Aging Services, they volunteer at group meal sites and deliver food to homebound seniors; they provide vital counseling and information about preventing, detecting, and reporting healthcare fraud, scams and identity theft through the SMP (Senior Medicare Patrol); serve as Board members and Advisory Council representatives to anticipate and advocate for the best means to meet senior needs; and soon will be acting as counselors for SHIIP (Senior Health Insurance Information Program) assisting their peers to make informed decisions about Medicare and other health coverage. Within other volunteer organizations within their communities, they act as escorts and provide transportation for older adults who cannot drive; they help peers with home repair, shopping and errands; and provide friendship and companionship to their peers. Their energy and commitment reminds all Americans—not just senior citizens and their caregivers—to do their part to enhance the quality of life for older generations.

The annual commemoration of Older Americans Month is our opportunity to recognize the past, present and continuing contributions of older citizens and join them in providing services and support that empower the elderly. Americans of all ages and backgrounds can volunteer with programs that improve health literacy, offer access to food and nutrition services, provide information relevant to seniors, sponsor social activities and community engagement, and more. Siouxland Aging Services provides a wide variety of programs for seniors age 60+ and for those who care for seniors, including nutrition (congregate meals, Meals on Wheels, and frozen meals), case management, transportation, housing, advocacy caregiver support, and more. Contact Siouxland Aging Services by visiting www.siouxlandaging.org or calling 712.279.6900 or 800-798-6916 to find out what you can do to strengthen services for older Americans, this month and all year round.