

Living Boldly

News and notes brought to you by the
DC Department of Aging and Community Living

Volume 3

Issue 3

A Newsletter for DC Seniors

March 2023



ACTING DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE

By Charon P.W. Hines

Dear Seniors,

As the newly appointed Acting Director for the Department of Aging and Community Living, it is my pleasure to write my first Living Boldly column in the *Beacon*. My name is Charon P.W. Hines, and I am a proud third-generation Washingtonian who has been serving our city for many years. Before I share a little more about me, I want to express my gratitude to Mayor Bowser for this appointment and her unwavering commitment to our city's prosperity. I am incredibly thankful for her leadership in ensuring our city continues to thrive and for entrusting me to serve all of you.

As I step into this critical position, I must honor the exceptional leaders who you have all come to know before me, including E. Veronica Pace, Jearline Williams, Dr. Clarence Brown, Donna Duntston, Dr. John Thompson, Brenda Donald, Laura Newland, and most recently, Jessica Smith. Their legacy is a testament to the importance of DACL's work in our communities.

My career has been defined by a deep commitment to service, particularly for those who are often underserved or marginalized. For the past four years, I had the privilege of serving our city's youngest residents as the Senior Advisor to the DC Public Schools Chancellor, Dr. Lewis D. Ferebee. Before that, I was the Director of the Mayor's Office on Community Affairs, also affectionally known as MOCA, where I had the opportunity to serve all 700,000 residents of our city, including seniors.

As the daughter of a disabled Gulf War veteran, I have a personal connection to the programs and services DACL provides to our residents, and I want to ensure that older adults like you have access to information about senior housing, tax benefits/relief, transportation, nutrition, wellness and social events. We want to keep you connected and engaged.

I recognize that there is much work to be done, but I assure you that our commitment to older residents has not and will not change. We will continue to ensure your most critical needs are met daily, while working together to build stronger communities for tomorrow. Over the past several weeks, I have had the opportunity to meet many of you in your neighborhoods and at our senior wellness centers and community dining sites. In the weeks and months to come, I look forward to meeting more of you and learning more about your priorities, ideas, and how we can serve you better. Until then, thank you for your support, and I cannot wait to see all that we will achieve together.

Sincerely,

Charon P.W. Hines

Become the Next Ms. Senior DC!



Are you a DC resident age 60 or older interested in representing your peers as Ms. Senior DC 2023?

Are you actively involved in your community?

Consider becoming a contestant in the
Ms. Senior DC Pageant 2023.

Apply to be a contestant today!

Visit bit.ly/SeniorDCpageant for more information.

Applications due by Friday, March 17, 2023

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DACL Celebrates Valentine's Day with the 7th Annual Cupid's Kids Initiative



The 7th Annual Cupid's Kids Initiative was a great success, bringing joy and love to seniors across the District. Acting Director Hines personally visited all six senior wellness centers on Valentine's Day to hand-deliver handmade cards created by DC Public and Charter Schools students. In addition, over 2,500 home-bound seniors received a Valentine's

Day card in their home-delivered meals during the week of Valentine's Day. This initiative not only brought smiles to the faces of seniors, but also allowed the younger generation to show their appreciation and care for the older generation. The success of this initiative is a testament to the power of love and kindness in our communities.

Acting Director Hines visits Community Dining Sites, Lamond Recreation Center & Plymouth at North Capital

Last month, Acting Director Hines made a visit to two community dining sites, Lamond Recreation Center and Plymouth at North Capital, to meet with seniors and receive their valuable feedback about the nutrition services provided. During the visit, Director Hines took the time to get to know the seniors at each site, listening to their concerns and suggestions. The seniors were grateful for the opportunity to share their thoughts and ideas, and Director Hines was pleased to re-



ceive their feedback. This visit underscores the DACL's commitment to providing quality nutrition services and ensuring that seniors' voices are heard and valued.

Mayor Bowser Hosts Senior Budget Engagement Forum

Mayor Bowser kicked off the FY24 Budget Season by hearing from seniors at the annual Senior Budget Engagement Forum. During the forum, Mayor Bowser and her senior team had the opportunity to hear directly from DC older residents. Participants were able to share their budget ideas, priorities and hopes for DC's future. To learn



more about the budget process, visit budget.dc.gov.

IONA Senior Services and their Weekly Art Classes



Each Thursday, freshly painted canvases drying on a St. Alban's window ledge create an impromptu gallery. The artists step back to admire each other's work and to marvel at their own. Although a few participants have had some prior training, most are new to painting. Guided by Dominique, their gifted and patient instructor, they are discovering latent talent and new opportunities for self-expression.

Studio art is Thursday's afternoon activity at St. Alban's Church, Iona's community dining site located at the corner of Massachusetts and Wisconsin Avenues NW. The dining program provides DC residents with a free nutritious lunch each weekday, as well as opportunities for fitness each morning and creative expression every afternoon. Whether it's improv or cooking, watercolor or Bollywood dancing, there's an opportunity for everyone to explore their creative side in the company of neighbors and friends.

Dominique Hughes has been

leading art classes for Iona since 2019. A favorite among participants, Dominique is praised for her patience and dedication, gently guiding even the most novice of artists to creating their own masterpieces. At St. Alban's, older adults retired from professional art careers sit next to people who are holding their first pastel. Learning from each other as much as the instructor, they bond over lunch and a shared joy from painting.

Rose, who bikes each day to St. Alban's from Southwest, recently mused as follows: "I can't believe I never painted in 60 years. But I don't know whether I would have experienced it with so much joy if I had done so earlier. I was a workaholic and a perfectionist. Now, I'm creating without judgment. It's like a new world has opened up for me." This type of enthusiasm is contagious and keeps her and her fellow artists learning and growing into their later years.