



CALIFORNIA COMMUNITY
FOUNDATION

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Contact: Namju Cho
Phone: (213) 452-6229
Email: ncho@ccf-la.org

**CALIFORNIA COMMUNITY FOUNDATION AWARDS
\$100,000 TO PROVIDE SERVICES TO SENIORS**

LOS ANGELES—A California Community Foundation initiative started by donors who wanted to contribute their social security checks to low-income seniors awarded \$100,000 on Friday to four nonprofit organizations serving older adults. The organizations include Center for Health Aging, L.A. Gay & Lesbian Center, Little Tokyo Service Center and Valley Interfaith Council, each of which received \$25,000 to provide critical services to low-income seniors.

“Older adults are no longer perceived as a helpless population in need of assistance and are more empowered than ever to be active members of our communities,” said Antonia Hernández, President and CEO at the California Community Foundation. “At the same time, we need to ensure that older adults can access services – and the Secure Seniors Fund makes this possible.”

Some of the activities the funds will support are: outreach to the elderly who are in need of support services; educational programs and activities for gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender (GLBT) seniors; a program that addresses the isolation and ethnic tensions between residents in senior housing projects in Little Tokyo; and home visits as well as an Information & Referral hotline for seniors.

The Secure Seniors Fund was established in January 2005 with the support of a Los Angeles couple, Jay and Linda Sandrich, who wanted to donate their annual social security payments to support nonprofit organizations in Los Angeles County serving older adults to help them maintain their independence.

“Often when we have received our Social Security check, we have thought about how fortunate we are *not* to be dependent on that monthly check for our basic needs,” the couple wrote in a letter soliciting potential donors to contribute to the Secure Seniors Fund. Many other donors have since given to the fund.

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The fund will assist people like Ellen (last name withheld to protect her privacy). When Ellen's mother began to have serious physical and cognitive problems, Ellen didn't know what to do. "Getting appropriate help for my mother was completely new territory for me," she said. She eventually found the Center for Healthy Aging and was able to access information and get help navigating these resources. Today, Ellen's mother is active and happily situated in an assisted living facility close to her daughter.

People are living longer today than they did when the Social Security Program was established. Older adults will represent one-fifth of Los Angeles County's population by 2030, and the demand and cost for medical care, personal in-home assistance and financial assistance are expected to skyrocket accordingly.

Established in 1915, the California Community Foundation is the largest community foundation in Southern California with assets of more than \$1 billion. The community foundation partners with donors and private and non-profit entities to support nonprofit organizations in the areas of health care, neighborhood revitalization, education, human development and the arts. The foundation awards grants of over \$100 million a year and manages more than 1,400 funds.

Grant Recipients

- 1) Center for Healthy Aging is a community-based agency founded in 1976 providing health, mental health, and social support services to older adults and their families and caregivers. www.centerforhealthyaging.org.
- 2) Little Tokyo Service Center was established in 1979 to provide linguistically appropriate and culturally sensitive social services for the Little Tokyo neighborhood and the broader Japanese American community in Los Angeles. www.ltsc.org.
- 3) Established in 1971, the L.A. Gay & Lesbian Center now serves over 50,000 people each year, providing social and legal services, advocacy and arts programs, to name a few. www.lagaycenter.org.
- 4) Valley Interfaith Council started in 1964 and now operates three multi-purpose senior centers, four adult day-support centers, Meals on Wheels and a coalition of 19 independently operated food pantries in the San Fernando Valley. www.vic-la.org.

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