

# OFFICE OF THE STATE LONG-TERM CARE OMBUDSMAN

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## NEW YEAR MESSAGE FROM THE STATE LONG-TERM CARE OMBUDSMAN

**HAPPY NEW YEAR! 2017 HERE WE COME!**

We hope you all had a wonderful holiday season and we are wishing you the best in the New Year. A celebrity once said that the New Year is “another chance for us to get it great...” The New Year has always been a time for looking back at our accomplishments over the past year, and more importantly forward to the coming year. It is the time to reflect on the changes we want and need to make and pledge to follow through on those changes. We look at 2017 as an excellent opportunity to strengthen and improve an already great Ombudsman Program. This year we are committed to highlight a different aspect of volunteer involvement in-depth each month. Each program has a different view of volunteer involvement in their areas, and know the value of the contributions of their volunteers. Please share with us your volunteer stories so that we can spotlight their work on behalf of residents.

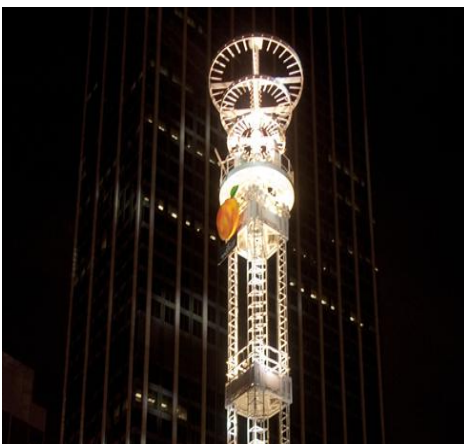
## Volunteer Spotlight

Each newsletter in 2017 will include a Q&A with one of the Volunteer Ombudsman Representatives. It is important to know and appreciate these volunteers who make a difference in their community. Please ask your volunteers the questions below and send their responses to us.

How many years have you been involved in the Ombudsman Program?

What does volunteering and advocating for resident’s rights in facilities mean to you?

What has changed the most in the facility since you first got involved?



*Peach Drop 2017*

## Program UPDATES

### 2017: JANUARY TRAINING AT A GLANCE

#### **Kennesaw State University**

The Office of the State Long-Term Care Ombudsman presented information about the Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program at Kennesaw State University on January 10, 2017 from 1:30 pm to 3:00 pm. Dr. Lois Ricci, Nurse Professor introduced Melanie McNeil and Lin Chao to the students in the gerontology class. The class is made up of professionals in different fields, including nursing, social work, para-legal, aging services, and others interested in a career change.

#### **Volunteer Training**

West Region Ombudsman Program Volunteer Training was conducted on January 24, 2017 from 9:00 am to 3:30 pm. Training modules included: overview of the long-term care ombudsman program, facilities, residents' rights, facility access issues, conflict of interest, confidentiality, facility assignments and local facility tours, and documentation and reporting.

Volunteers made these comments about the training:

"I am interested in participating in the Ombudsman Program because it expresses the care and concern for people that are in need and lets them know we are another group that will be there for them. My love and willingness to help others can be shown in an official way." LT

"I am very grateful for the exemplary introductory training for volunteers provided by Georgia's Long Term Care Ombudsman Program Coordinator and Senior Staff. Becoming a volunteer with this important agency represents a logical next chapter in my life. Throughout my professional life, I've worn many hats in disciplines that demanded the skills of critical thinking, problem-solving, negotiation, and conflict resolution." DC



#### **WebEx Training**

Sexual Rights of Long-Term Care Residents with Diminished Capacity was the topic of a WebEx training conducted January 26, 2017 from 10:00 am to 12:00 pm. Deanna Clingan-Fischer, Iowa State Long-Term Care Ombudsman and Tonya Amos, Iowa Local Long-Term Care Ombudsman were the presenters.

During this session, participants explored the complex issues surrounding the ability of long-term care residents with diminished capacity to consent to sexual activity, and protection of residents' rights. The session also included recommendations and strategies for establishing effective partnerships, protecting rights, and addressing the challenges of Dementia-related illnesses. Thirty-eight Ombudsman Representatives

participated including several from the Texas Houston-Galveston Area Council Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program.

100 percent of the participants agreed that “The training workshop fulfilled my reason for participating”. Other comments included: “The webex was really good.” “Thanks for arranging this. It was most helpful since the issue has come up and I like the idea of being proactive with my facilities.”

## **SOWEGA COA**

Elaine Wilson, Ombudsman Representative Coordinator from South Ombudsman Program, reported that destructive weather hit the South Georgia area twice in January. All ombudsman representatives from the South Ombudsman Program checked on long-term care facility residents in the areas they serve were safe. According to Elaine, some Ombudsman Representatives helped residents even though their own homes were affected by the storms, stating “The Ombudsman Representatives put others first and themselves last.”

Ombudsman Representatives participated in the Be There 4 Seniors Rally on January 23<sup>rd</sup> at the Capitol. In describing to the crowd the plight of older adults and individuals with disabilities who live in the area affected, Elaine Wilson said, “I thanked all law enforcement and first responders who came to our rescue. I thanked the elected officials and legislators who were there for us. I thanked Governor Deal for coming to our city to make certain we had the aid needed to begin recovery. I did not say this then, but I say it now: “The floods came, and the ill winds blew, but the rain did not dampen the spirits of the Home and Community Based Service Workers, nor did the winds blow them off course. The Home and Community Based Service Workers fulfilled their duties and responsibilities to the citizens we serve. Just know this one truth, no storm or tragic event will prevent the Home and Community Based Service Workers from being there for Seniors.”



Be There 4 Seniors January 2017

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## **EVENTS & SAVE THE DATES**

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LTCOP Quarterly WebEx Meeting  
Risk Management for Your Volunteer Program  
Thursday, April 6, 2017

- Benefits of Risk Management
- Essential Elements for Your Risk Management Program
- Where Do You Start?
- What Should Your Policies Look Like?

South Ombudsman Program Volunteer Appreciation Luncheon  
April 27, 2017 11:00 am – 2:00 pm  
SOWEGA Council on Aging

## RESOURCES

### Contact Us

#### Georgia Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program

2 Peachtree Street, NW, 33rd Floor

Atlanta, GA 30303

1-866-552-4464, option 5

[www.georgiaombudsman.org](http://www.georgiaombudsman.org)

The 2017 National Seasonal Preparedness Messaging Calendar & key messages provides you with content to promote preparedness all year.

[HTTPS://WWW.FEMA.GOV/MEDIA-LIBRARY-DATA/1481653732722-A720FDE85D91C2CA5BC6B1EB2CEEDC76/FEMA\\_CALENDAR2017.PDF](https://www.fema.gov/media-library-data/1481653732722-A720FDE85D91C2CA5BC6B1EB2CEEDC76/FEMA_CALENDAR2017.PDF)

NASHVILLE PUBLIC TELEVISION PRODUCE A DOCUMENTARY ON ALZHEIMER'S ABOUT PEOPLE LIVING WITH DEMENTIA RATHER THAN THE CONDITION ITSELF.

[HTTP://WWW.WNPT.ORG/AGINGMATTERS/HOME/ALZHEIMERS-DEMENTIA/](http://www.wnpt.org/AGINGMATTERS/HOME/ALZHEIMERS-DEMENTIA/)

#### LONG-TERM CARE OMBUDSMAN PROGRAM BY BECKY KURTZ, JD – SOCIETY OF CERTIFIED SENIOR ADVISORS JOURNALS

[HTTPS://C.YMCDN.COM/SITES/WWW.CSA.US/RESOURCE/RESMGR/DOCS/JOURNALS/JOURNAL\\_67/J67\\_OMBUDSMAN.PDF](https://c.ymcdn.com/sites/www.csa.us/resource/resmgr/docs/journals/journal_67/j67_ombudsman.pdf)

#### ASK State Ombudsman

Our State Ombudsman Melanie McNeil, Esq. is always available to answer your questions

Please send your questions to [Melanie.McNeil@osltco.ga.gov](mailto:Melanie.McNeil@osltco.ga.gov)

#### Feedback

We welcome your feedback on:

- Questions or comments regarding the current issue;
- Ideas for future newsletter content; or,
- Corrections.

