

# Annual Activity Report

July 1, 2015 - June 30, 2016

Center  of Concern

1580 N. Northwest Highway, Suite 310

Park Ridge, IL 60068

847.823.0453 Fax: 847.824.8437

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

[center@centerofconcern.org](mailto:center@centerofconcern.org)

**The Mission of The Center of Concern, a nonprofit social service agency, is to provide housing solutions, support services and counseling for seniors, disabled and others in need, enabling them to live with dignity and independence.**

The Center is a 501(c)3 not-for-profit organization established in 1978 by a Park Ridge woman and four friends who saw the need for a "listening post" a central information service for local seniors. It quickly expanded to meet this area's growing elderly needs. Today, the Center offers integrated senior support, affordable housing options, and practical community services.

## New Programs and Services:

In the past Fiscal Year, The Center of Concern has successfully implemented several strategic goals and objectives to better serve the needs of seniors by strengthening existing partnerships and attempting to cultivate and develop new ones. Recent major accomplishments include:

"Connecting for Good" engage new and existing volunteers in helping bridge the digital divide for homebound seniors. The goal is to teach seniors to use technology to communicate with their family, read about senior issues and in general become connected from their homes to the community and family with technology. The program focuses on recruiting local high school students and pairing them with our senior clients to learn one-on-one, become comfortable communicating regularly with their families and grandchildren using current and new technologies (cell phones, computers using - Skype, Twitter, Facebook and other online tools). As new technology and technological advances play an increasingly vital role in today's world, the lack of computer usage among seniors is making it harder for them to be part of the community. Seniors, in general, show a resistance or anxiety to learn, personal fears, inability or knowledge of how and where to access the needed equipment to access the internet. So, in response, we created "Connecting for Good".

Seniors 24/7 – Recently implemented by the Center of Concern, the use of new technology to provide more direct access to in-house supportive services, counseling, and housing solutions for the elderly plus independent, unbiased referrals to effective resources. Seniors and their families will be able to access resources and support 24 hours a day, 7 days a week within the newly implemented -Seniors 24/7 program using two updated systems of contact: 1) Senior Help Line Online Assistance Tool targeting family caregivers and seniors to apply for services, submit a question to an experienced case manager, and learn about local resources from an independent, non-profit, social services agency and 2) a Senior Helpline with dedicated phone intake hours five days a week allowing callers access senior case managers who are direct link to senior services, including subsidized or low-cost services not associated with for-profit service providers.

Medical Transportation – The Center of Concern entered into a partnership agreement with FISH of Park Ridge, a 501(c)3 organization, to provide senior transportation services. The Center of Concern and FISH are now providing reliable volunteer-based transportation to and from medical and dental appointments for seniors. Volunteer management, phone intake/scheduling of services and program administration are provided by the Center of Concern.

Senior Humanities Discussion Group – When a local senior service organization closed, the Center of Concern agreed to be the new home for the Senior Humanities Discussion Group. The group meets twice a week to discuss issues of the day and bring seniors together.

Art Therapy for Homebound Seniors – Another partnership with the Park Ridge Cultural Arts Society and the Brickton Art Center is an exciting collaboration to brighten the lives of homebound seniors with gifted artists sharing meaningful art activities in seniors’ homes.

### The Numbers:

Last year, the Center of Concern received over 7,743 requests for help and assistance. The Center Concern also provided over 3,500 units of service to residents including services to 884 clients. Nearly all elderly, disabled, impoverished individuals and families we serve have been able to remain in their homes because of our services and assistance, gaining stronger stability, a deeper sense of dignity, independence and belonging in their community.

Senior Support and Geriatric Counseling offers support to the seniors, disabled and families coping with decisions regarding the senior care. In FY2016 the Center of Concern provided ongoing case management to 341 seniors and 189 family members, provided 256 personal counseling sessions to seniors to alleviate depression and help with a wide range of difficulties, 1,230 individuals and family members received short-term advice and referral. The Center of Concern continues to offer two Support Groups: Alzheimer’s Caregivers and a Senior Humanities Group both free to the public and facilitated by our staff counselors.

Housing Options and Homeless Prevention includes: Home Sharing, Housing Counseling, Homelessness Prevention Services and Transitional Housing for the homeless. In FY16, we counseled 354 inquiries about home sharing and other housing options and provided over 4,518 nights of shelter to our transitional housing residents, and provided over \$100,000 in rent and utility assistance to area households.

Community Services: The Center of Concern offers a wide range of free or minimal cost professional counseling sessions to help seniors and their families. Employment Counseling, Financial Counseling, Legal Counseling, Medicare & Senior Health Insurance Program (SHIP), Income Tax Assistance, and Blood Pressure and Sugar Testing

Our 300 volunteers help serve clients with a variety of services and are an integral part of the services provided by the Center of Concern.

