

OMBUDS BULLETIN

I'm a bud, you're a bud, we're Ombuds!

April 2024
Volume 11

"I've learned that people will forget what you said, people will forget what you did, but people will never forget how you made them feel."

-Maya Angelou

A QUARTERLY BULLETIN PUBLISHED THROUGH THE LOUISIANA LONG-TERM CARE OMBUDSMAN PROGRAM

A NOTE FROM THE STATE LTCO OFFICE

It's Spring!

And with it comes celebrations and commemorations.

April includes Volunteer Appreciation Week.

May is Older Americans Month.

June brings awareness of Alzheimer's.

This second quarter of 2024 marked the completion of our revised and updated Louisiana Long-Term Care Ombud Program Manual.

It, along with everything else pertaining to the LTCOP, can now be found in one spot, easily accessible to you via the [Louisiana Ombudsman Program](#).

This site is a work in progress, so please send me any suggestions you might have for inclusion; for example, any updates to the Community Resource would be beneficial and appreciated.

I know you will find each article helpful as you continue making a difference in many lives.

Thank you all for all that you do.



Rosa Walton

STATE OMBUDSMAN

Kudos!

Ombudsmen celebrating
2ND Quarter anniversaries:



I want to recognize the anniversary dates for the following ombuds

- ✓ Carolyn Smith; Regional Coordinator, Alexandria 16TH OF MAY 1990
- ✓ Charles Campbell; Regional Coordinator, Lake Charles 10TH OF APRIL 2002
- ✓ Gary Boye, New Orleans 13TH OF MAY 2022

Did You Know?

- Louisiana has 269 nursing homes and 152 assisted living facilities.
- Approximately 35,000 residents are in Louisiana nursing homes and assisted living facilities.
- There are (to date) 25 staff and volunteer LTC ombudsmen in the LTCOP.

What's New.?

Exciting Updates Unveiled!

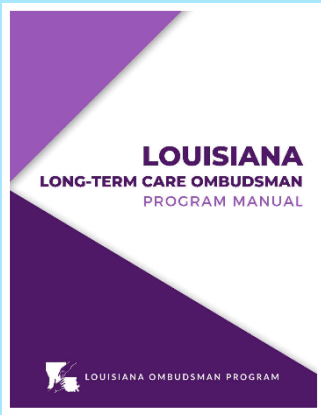
The Louisiana State Ombudsman Office announces groundbreaking tools for the Louisiana Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program

1. **Comprehensive Ombudsman Certification Training Presentation:**

Professionally recorded, this approximately 20-hour training is meticulously designed, following the National Ombudsman Resource Center training modules.

Broken into five digestible 3-plus hour recordings, the program facilitates a seamless learning experience. Trainees can follow along with a designated trainer, pause for breaks, and engage in interactive discussions, with questions encouraged at the end of each day.

2. **Louisiana Ombudsman Manual:**



A brand-new manual accompanies the classroom training presentation. Crafted on the National Ombudsman Resource Center's Federal statutes, the manual integrates Louisiana-specific information for a tailored approach.

These two latest additions are up-to-the-minute tools for the Louisiana Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program. They align with best practices nationally and incorporate locally relevant information, ensuring excellence in the field.

These advancements mark a significant stride forward, harmonizing national standards with Louisiana's unique context. Keep sharpening your ombudsman expertise with these state-of-the-art resources!

Stay Informed! ~ Stay Empowered!

LOL



Laughter is the shortest distance between two people!

- Victor Borge

Did you hear about the first restaurant to open on the moon?

It had great food, but no atmosphere!

What do dentists call their x-rays?

Tooth pics!

What did one ocean say to the other ocean?

Nothing, it just waved!

Laughter offers numerous benefits that improve both physical and mental health. Endorphins are released when we laugh, acting as natural painkillers and mood enhancers. Laughter can reduce stress hormones, lower blood pressure and improve immune function.

Laughter also enhances cardiovascular health by increasing blood flow and oxygenation while stimulating the production of antibodies and T-cells, crucial for fighting infections and illnesses.

Do you have a joke you would like to share?

Please submit it to StateOmbudsman@LA.Gov and it may appear in the next Ombuds Bulletin.





WHY I VOLUNTEER

GABY SERPAS, CAPITAL AREA AGENCY ON AGENCY, NEW ORLEANS REGION



~ GABY SERPAS TEACHES RESIDENTS KNITTING ~

A simple Google search on the benefits of volunteering reveals a plethora of positives for those who volunteer, ranging from a sense of purpose and belonging to improved health and even a longer lifespan. No wonder I feel sheepishly selfish when offering my services: I have way too much fun, it seems.

BUT ...

Does my volunteering impact the recipients as well?

Or is it only good for me?

Digging a little deeper, I found two sources asking this question: a literature review and an article (click on the links at the bottom of this page) listing several positive effects our volunteering has on the comfort and health of our recipient community.

These benefits are, in fact, not so much different from the benefits I reap myself. If my residents' experience even one of the positive effects of this list, it makes it all worth it. I no longer have to feel selfish but can view my volunteer activities as a symbiosis, enjoyed by all involved.

- Increased sense of participation and decreased loneliness
- Strengthened self-esteem and sense of agency
- Increased self-esteem and confidence
- Better social interaction, integration and support
- Improved illness management
- Lessening of depression
- Less intense pain response
- Lessening of the burden on caregivers/educators
- Decreased anxiety
- Improved cognitive function

~ ARTICLE LINKS ~

[DOES IT MAKE A DIFFERENCE ?](#)

[THE IMPACT VOLUNTEERING HAS ON HEALTH](#)

WHY I VOLUNTEER
SANDRA BOURGEOIS; CADDO COA



~ SANDY BOURGEOIS ENCOURAGES RESIDENTS TO SELF-ADVOCATE ~

"I've found deep fulfillment in volunteering for decades. While setbacks can be discouraging, my resolve to serve remains unwavering. I'm driven by a passion to support others through life's challenges, offering a listening ear and a helping hand.

Whether it's driving food trucks for the Red Cross or teaching environmental education, I've dedicated myself to making a difference.

Like King David, I've reflected on life's fleeting nature, yet I've chosen to channel my energy into meaningful service.

Let's embrace our call to serve and uplift those in need, cherishing the moments of connection and gratitude that volunteering brings."

VOLUNTEER OMBUD DEBBIE DE LA HOUSSAYE DOES EXTRA VOLUNTEERING BY INSTRUCTING RESIDENTS ON HOW TO USE THEIR TABLET TO ZOOM.



VOLUNTEER APPRECIATION!

Thank you, volunteers, for supporting the LTCOP and for making a difference in the lives of the residents you visit.

NEW ORLEANS ...

Gary Boye
Debbie de la Houssaye
Laurie Holland

Vickie Castay
Cecile Gordon
Gabrielle "Gaby" Serpas

Briana Smith

SHREVEPORT ...

Sandy Bourgeois





MR. REMER'S SKETCH OF AN OWL IS MINDFUL OF THE WISDOM THAT COMES WITH AGING

Older Americans Month is a time dedicated to honoring the contributions and resilience of our older adult population. Spearheaded by the Administration for Community Living, this annual observance serves as a reminder of the importance of nurturing connections and fostering meaningful relationships, particularly as we age.

The theme for Older Americans Month 2024 is "Powered by Connection." This theme underscores the profound impact that interpersonal relationships and social connections have on our overall health and well-being. By emphasizing the significance of these connections, the theme highlights their role in promoting independence and facilitating aging in place. Through combating prevalent issues such as isolation and loneliness, a strong network of connections becomes instrumental in enhancing the quality of life for older adults.

"Powered by Connection," recognizes that fostering and maintaining relationships enriches the lives of older adults.

Whether it's through family bonds, friendships, community engagement, or digital connectivity, these connections provide avenues for companionship, emotional support, and intellectual stimulation.

The theme is a call to action for individuals, communities, and organizations to actively cultivate environments that prioritize inclusivity, empathy, and mutual support for older adults. By fostering a culture of connection, we can collectively address the challenges that seniors may face, ensuring that they remain integrated and valued members of society.

As long-term care ombudsmen, we play a vital role in advocating for the rights and well-being of older adults residing in long-term care facilities. Through our efforts, we can empower older adults to lead fulfilling lives, surrounded by the warmth and support of meaningful connections.

In celebrating Older Americans Month 2024, we honor our older population's wisdom, resilience, and vitality.



~ MR. ZITO'S FINISHED ART EXPRESSES WHY HE LOVES LIVING IN LOUISIANA ~

ALZHEIMER'S MONTH

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

CONTRIBUTED BY VOLUNTEER OMBUD GABY SERPAS

Did you know that Nutrition affects Alzheimer's disease?

March was Nutrition month; April is National Garden Month; May is Older American Month.

What does this have to do with Dementia and food?

Not only is dementia a cause of malnutrition, it goes both ways. Malnutrition correlates to increased and worsening dementia, according to recent studies*.



Many authorities and studies talk about the benefits of REAL foods vs processed foods, green leafy vegetables, berries, Mediterranean diet with virgin olive oil and even MIND diet.

Unfortunately, to keep the food supply safe and within certain requirements, fresh food seems to be hard to come by in long-term care facilities. Even city dwellers at home may have a tough time buying fresh with today's ever rising cost of food with limited shelf life.

So, can you bring it in from the outside? Yes. Even fresh from the garden and farm.

THERE IS HELP!

FARMERS MARKET NUTRITION PROGRAM (SFMNP) benefits are available to those over sixty (60) years of age and designed to improve access to locally grown fruits, vegetables, honey, and herbs, sold at Farmers' Markets, farms, and even roadside stands.



Department of Agriculture and Forestry
State of Louisiana

[USDA FARMERS MARKET NUTRITION PROGRAM](#)

[LOUISIANA FARMERS MARKET NUTRITION PROGRAM](#)

2024 APPLICATIONS NOW BEING ACCEPTED!

CALL YOUR LOCAL COUNCIL ON AGING (COA) to fill out an application. FIFTY DOLLARS buys *a lot of goodness*. FIFTY DOLLARS is more than most long-term care residents receive in a month. Share this tip with your friends. As a caregiver, instead of (or in addition to) holiday sweets, bring some berries in a salad. Every nursing home is required to allow food brought in by family and provide food safe storage options.

[DOES NUTRITION AFFECT ALZHEIMER'S DISEASE PROGRESSION?](#)



Louisiana is one of only three state Long-Term Care Programs that train residents to advocate for themselves and their PEERS.

In 2000, Pennsylvania was the first state to train nursing home and assisted living residents in their PEER (Program for Empowering Every Resident) program. In 2020, Colorado trained their CO-PEERS. And in 2022 Louisiana graduated its first LA PEER. Two nursing homes in New Orleans and one in Shreveport now boast LA PEERS in their facility.

For More Information on LA PEER, contact Vickie Castay at phone number [504.261.2505](tel:504.261.2505) OR e-mail at v.castay@capitalaaa.org.

COFFEE & CASES ...



Ombuds attending each monthly Coffee & Cases receive 1.5 hours of in-service training credit. By participating in all Coffee & Cases, ombuds can receive their 18 hours of credit needed annually.

Mark your calendars for the first Monday of each month 9:30 A.M. – 11:00 A.M.

On the first Monday of each month, ombuds across the state come together virtually to discuss cases and get input from each other. Some months, we have special guests.

Be sure to add 1.5 hours of State-sponsored in-service training in LORS each month.

Please send your ideas for discussion topics and suggestions for guest speakers.

LOUISIANA LONG-TERM CARE OMBUDS

Louisiana Ombuds advocates for 35,000 residents in 400 nursing homes and assisted living facilities.

ALEXANDRIA REGION, Cenla AAA

✚ Coordinator: Carolyn Smith

✚ Ombud: Rose Waguespack

BATON ROUGE REGION, Capital AAA

✚ Coordinator: Peggy Essick

✚ Ombuds: Mavis Lee, Anne Miller, Alrina Ponville, Glenda Teagle

LAFAYETTE REGION, Cajun AAA

✚ Coordinator: Dana Adams

✚ Ombud: Amanda Kerner

LAKE CHARLES REGION, Calcasieu COA

✚ Coordinator: Charles Campbell

MONROE REGION, Cenla AAA

✚ Coordinator: Anna Horne

✚ Ombud: La'Trichelle "Lockie" Chisley

NEW ORLEANS REGION, Capital AAA

✚ Coordinator: Tanya Hayes

✚ Ombuds: Barbara Soniat, Beverly Gianna

✚ Volunteer Ombuds: Cecile Gordon, Laurie Holland, Gary Boye, Vickie Castay, Briana Smith, Debbie De La Houssaye, Gaby Serpas

SHREVEPORT REGION, Caddo COA

✚ Coordinator: Casandra Cesare

✚ Ombuds: Beverly Parker, Lucinda Thornton, Beverly Jones, Reta Stewart, Faye "Ollie" Gaskin

✚ Volunteer Ombud: Sandy Bourgeois



Only certified ombudsmen have access to LORS. Case documentation and activities should be entered into LORS, as soon as practicable but no later than the 5TH day of the following month.

HAVE A QUESTION OR COMMENT?

What's happening in your region?

Share tips, information, and success stories in your region to include in this newsletter.

E-Mail: StateOmbudsman@LA.Gov

Call: 504.782.6640

Web: [Louisiana Ombudsman Program](http://LouisianaOmbudsmanProgram.com)

RECRUIT A VOLUNTEER

Research shows that volunteering has many biological and psychosocial benefits:

- ✓ Helps stay physically and mentally active
- ✓ Reduces stress
- ✓ Make new friends and contacts
- ✓ Increases social and relationship skills
- ✓ Adds job skills
- ✓ Increases self-esteem and life-satisfaction
- ✓ Increases the level of happiness
- ✓ It's Fun!

WHERE DO I FIND VOLUNTEERS?

In nursing homes | visiting family and friends

In neighborhoods | people we know

In the community | through public speaking and media interviews

The Louisiana Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program offers many volunteer opportunities for people within the state.

Volunteer-certified ombuds positions are needed, but there are other opportunities to serve, such as a photographer, contributor to this newsletter and other communication vehicles, and tech-savvy volunteers willing to teach residents how to email, text, and Zoom.

Bring your ideas and talent to the table and apply to volunteer!

To access information on volunteering with the LTCOP, follow these easy steps:

Click on the following link: <https://goea.la.gov>.

- Once on the website, navigate to the Louisiana Ombudsman Program section.
- Scroll down the page to find the video that provides an enjoyable overview of volunteering with the LTCOP.

To apply as a volunteer, use the online application provided, which is quick and easy to complete.

AS A REMINDER!