

Older Americans Month

Powered by Connection

May is Older Americans Month — a time to recognize the contributions, wisdom, and resilience of older adults across our communities. The Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program joins this national observance in honoring the residents we serve and the relationships that sustain them.

Connection — to family, to community, to purpose — is among the most powerful forms of care. It supports renewal, restores dignity, and reminds every resident that they are seen, valued, and heard.

This month, let's pause and recognize the lives behind every visit: the stories shared, the trust earned, and the quiet acts of advocacy that shape a resident's day. Together, we carry forward a tradition of compassion, presence, and care.

With gratitude for the lives, voices, and stories of those we serve.

Coffee & Cases

Our monthly Community of Practice gatherings strengthen knowledge, connection, and the shared work of advocacy. Join us for May's conversation — a space to share questions, experiences, and insights from the field.

Join us: Monday, May 4, 2026 · 9:30 AM · Zoom

Community Connection

A Legacy of Advocacy

Ombudsman team members recently participated in a community outreach event in St. John Parish, joining caregivers, older adults, and local leaders.

Tanya Hayes, Louisa Pollard, and Beverly Gianna represented the program.

A highlight of the event was Ms. Tish Taylor, who continues her father's work through Concerned Citizens of St. John Parish—advocating for clean air and the health of the community.

"Advocacy is not bound to a role or setting—it is carried forward through generations."

A Simple Reminder

The work of advocacy is often made up of ordinary moments.

- A knock on a door
- A chair pulled close for conversation
- A question asked with care

These moments may seem small—but they build trust.

And trust is where advocacy begins.

Elder Justice Awareness

June 15 marks World Elder Abuse Awareness Day (WEAAD)—a global effort to raise awareness about elder abuse and promote the dignity and safety of older adults.

Ombudsmen play an important role in recognizing concerns, supporting residents, and helping connect individuals to appropriate resources.

👉 Learn more: ncea.usc.edu/WEAAD

Resilience in Practice

Making It Work, One Day at a Time

During a recent visit, an ombudsman spent time with a resident who had recently moved into the facility after several life changes.

She talked about what had been difficult—the loss of her home, changes in routine, and getting used to new surroundings. But she also shared what she was starting to figure out.

She had found a seat she liked in the dining room. She knew which staff member to ask when she needed help. She was beginning to recognize familiar faces in the hallway.

"I'm learning how to make it work," she said.

That is resilience. Not something dramatic—but something steady.

Adjusting, figuring things out, holding on to who you are while adapting to something new.

As ombudsmen, when we listen and support, we help residents find their footing and make their new environment work for them.

Staying Professional as a Long-Term Care Ombudsman

Professionalism is the foundation of effective ombudsman advocacy. It builds trust, strengthens relationships, and ensures residents' rights remain at the center of every interaction.

- Stay neutral and respectful when navigating concerns among residents, families, and facility staff
- Protect confidentiality to maintain trust and uphold program requirements
- Communicate clearly and calmly, especially during difficult conversations
- Maintain healthy boundaries to keep the focus on advocacy and resident empowerment
- Document objectively and promptly to support accurate casework
- Model professionalism through preparedness, courtesy, and appropriate conduct in every facility visit
- Commit to ongoing learning to stay informed and effective in your role

Professionalism isn't just how we work—it's how we strengthen the voice of every resident we serve.

Professional Development Opportunity

Working effectively with family members and representatives is an important part of ombudsman advocacy. A national webinar will explore communication strategies, common challenges, and perspectives from both ombudsmen and family members.

May 14, 2026 · 2:00–3:00 PM (ET)

👉 Register: [\[Registration Link\]](#)

Certificates of participation are available for attendees.

Looking Ahead — As we move through May, let us carry the spirit of Older Americans Month into every visit — listening closely, advocating steadily, and honoring the connections that sustain the residents we serve. ***Strength that endures, hope that refreshes.***