

Celebrate Older Americans Month in May at the Senior Expo

Senior Beat

Carol Higgins Taylor



May is almost here and that means it's time to celebrate seniors with Older Americans Month.

For the last 10 years, Eastern Area Agency on Aging has honored this generation by holding the Senior Expo. That's right. This is the 10th anniversary for this important event.

The Senior Expo has been held in a variety of locations over the last 10 years, but it all began at the Dyke Center for Family Business at Husson College (at that time). The first

Expo was a small event with about 20 tables, but oh how it has grown.

Well, EAAA is going back to its roots, so to speak. This year, the Senior Expo will, again, be held at Husson University, 1 College Circle, Bangor. It's like coming home. Expo won't be in the Dyke Center this time, but in the Newman Gymnasium. So, mark your calendar for Thursday, May 19, from 10:00 to 3:00. All attendees will receive an official bright green Senior Expo tote bag.

Newman Gymnasium is a fantastic space, all on one floor with very easy access. The students

will be gone for the semester so there will be lots of close parking options. But, all the parking lots on the campus are available to Senior Expo attendees, so you can park where

ever you like. Don't worry about having to walk too far because the EAAA van and the Sunbury Village luxury bus will be circling all the parking lots to give you a ride right to the door if you want one.

There will be 75 exhibitors who will be displaying everything from home health care to senior college to medical supplies to insurance options to senior housing. Lots to see and do.

Each attendee who fills out a registration ticket will be entered in the door prize drawing to win one of four \$25 gift cards. Here's a tip: If you have address labels, bring them. It is easier to stick these on entry forms than writing your address multiple times.

We are planning on having numerous health screenings, such as blood pressure checks, hand-strength and stroke risk screenings, glucose tests and fall-risk assessments. These assessments, performed by Eastern Area Agency on Aging, put you through the paces to determine your risk level for taking a tumble and then give you information to take to your health care provider.

There will be films on aging being shown at the beautiful Gracie Theatre next door, and breakout sessions. Watch this space for more on that.

And new this year is one-on-one tech support for your electronic devices. The Information Technology (IT) department at EAAA is going to give personal instruction to anyone who brings in an electronic device that they need help

with. Not sure how to use it? Bring it in. I know every time my smartphone installs a new upgrade, I end up feeling dumber. I may have to visit them myself.

Also on hand, will be the Penobscot County Triad Drug Drop-Off box where you can deposit your expired medications. Bring all the medications that you no longer use so they can be disposed of properly. It is very important to get these prescriptions out of the house, lest you take them by mistake or a grandchild gets into them. Please don't flush them because it is dangerous for the environment.

There will also be free coffee available for Expo attendees. The 10th anniversary promises to be a great event. Lots to do and see and it's all free.

The Senior Expo is brought to you by Eastern Area Agency on Aging and the following sponsors: Brookings-Smith Funeral Homes, Penobscot Community Health Care (PCHC), Camden National Bank, Emera Maine, LiveSAFE RossCare, Rudman Winchell, St. Joseph Healthcare, AARP, Winterberry Heights Assisted Living and Memory Care, New England Home Health Care. Westgate Center for Rehabilitation and Alzheimer's Care is a sponsor of the gorgeous tote bag.

Don't miss the Senior Expo. And bring your friends.

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Bangor AmeriCorps member receives Exemplary Service Award

Alexis Dunham, a Bangor AmeriCorps Opportunity Collaborative Member, was recently named a recipient of the Exemplary Service Award at the 2016 Governor's Awards for Service and Volunteerism at the Hall of Flags in Augusta.

The Governor's Awards for Service and Volunteerism was founded in 1987 during the Governor McKernon administration has a mechanism to celebrate and recognize the outstanding work of Maine's citizens. These awards have consistently recognized individuals who, in turn, inspire others to follow in their footsteps.

Dunham's host site in Bangor Housing where she has assisted with creating marketing materials, including a newsletter; identifying and sharing success stories; coordinating and hosting orientation sessions and tracking the success of various recruitment activities; and raising awareness about the Family Self Sufficiency program within the Greater Bangor Area. She also has helped Bangor Housing shape their volunteer management plan, which included forming a volunteer team of residents who assist other organizations in the community with their volunteer needs. She has consistently brought a passion for National Service to her many projects, setting a great example for her fellow AmeriCorps members, as well as the residents she is serving.

In the past year, Dunham has generated eight new volunteers who served 58 hours of community service, assisted 11 training participants and mentored over 100 youth in our area.

The Bangor AmeriCorps Opportunity Collaborative at Eastern Maine Development Corporation (EMDC) is a collection of non-profit partners in the Bangor area aimed at assisting individuals with obtaining employment through a variety of programs/services.

PCHC recognized as leader in LGBT health care

Penobscot Community Health Care has been recognized for the sixth year in a row as a Leader in LGBT Healthcare Equality" by the Human Rights Campaign (HRC) Foundation, the educational arm of the country's largest lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) civil rights organization. The honor is given to facilities that meet LGBT-inclusive benchmarks that are part of the HRC Foundation's Healthcare Equality Index, a unique survey that encourages equal care for LGBT Americans by evaluating inclusive policies and practices related to LGBT patients, visitors and employees.

Penobscot Community Health Care earned top marks in meeting non-discrimination and training criteria that demonstrate its commitment to equitable, inclusive care for LGBT patients, and their families, who can face significant challenges in securing the quality health care and respect they deserve.

"PCHC and our employees are committed to the health and wellbeing of all patients and the community. We

strive to provide an environment that is inclusive, patient-centered, and welcoming to all," said Kenneth Schmidt, PCHC president.

Penobscot Community Health Care is one of a select group of healthcare facilities nationwide to be named Leaders in LGBT Healthcare Equality. Facilities awarded this title meet key criteria, including patient and employee non-discrimination policies that specifically mention sexual orientation and gender identity, a guarantee of equal visitation for same-sex partners and parents, and LGBT health education for key staff members.

"Despite all the progress we've made, far too many LGBT people still lack inclusive and affirming healthcare. Leaders in

LGBT Healthcare Equality are helping to change that, and, in the process, making the lives of LGBT patients and their families better each and every day," said Chad Griffin, president of the HRC. "LGBT people have a right to be treated equally in all aspects of our lives, and HRC celebrates Penobscot Community Health Care for its tireless work to create an inclusive and welcoming environment for all patients."

The Healthcare Equality Index offers healthcare facilities unique and powerful resources designed to help provide equal care to a long-overlooked group of patients, as well as assistance in complying with new regulatory requirements and access to high-quality staff training.



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