

# 2018- 2019 ANNUAL REPORT



EMPOWERED AGING

**Ombudsman**

**SERVICES** *of Contra Costa  
Solano and Alameda*

A stylized sunburst graphic composed of numerous light teal, elongated rectangular bars radiating from a central dark teal circle, positioned on the left side of the page.

# Our Mission

Ombudsman Services of Contra Costa, Solano and Alameda empowers individuals and their families as they navigate the aging continuum, through person-centered advocacy, education and collaborative leadership.

We work every day to realize our vision of creating communities where all can age with dignity, justice and respect.



# Expansion Through Innovation

Message from Nicole Howell, Executive Director



This is an exciting letter to write, as I am privileged to share with you our expansion that has been made possible in large part due to your generous support. We were able to debut two new programs—Healthcare Career Pathway and The Elder and Dependent Adult Justice Program—that are already producing impressive results. We launched these additional programs while maintaining a deep commitment to our core services to seniors in Contra Costa and Solano counties, specifically those living in long-term care settings. I am particularly excited to share that beginning in December 2019 we will be delivering services to long-term care residents in Alameda County as well, bringing with us a proven and tested approach to advocacy.

The common thread through all of these new developments is that we are taking our real-world understanding of the issues that impact long-term care residents and addressing them in new and innovative ways, while sustaining our commitment to partnerships and collaboration.

“We are taking our real-world understanding of the issues that impact long-term care residents and addressing them in new and innovative ways, while sustaining our commitment to partnerships and collaboration.”

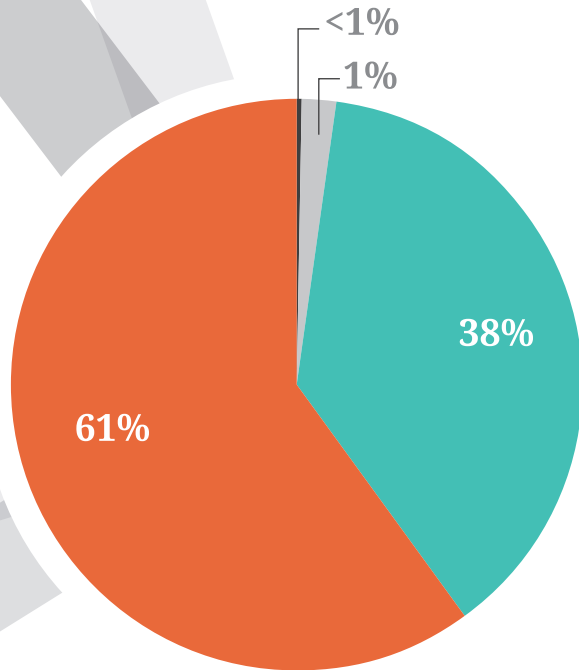
For example, financial and physical crimes against the elderly are nothing new. What is fresh is how The Elder Justice Program provides coordinated support by bringing together services and agencies to work on behalf of the victim.

We approach our work with an entrepreneurial spirit, seeking to test our assumptions and refine our approach so our programs effect positive change in our communities while maintaining a responsive spirit. This is especially important as we move into new areas and communities.

Your support is what has allowed us the freedom to develop and implement innovative ways to address the needs of seniors today, while also preparing for the monumental changes that will impact our communities as the older adult population grows over the next few decades.

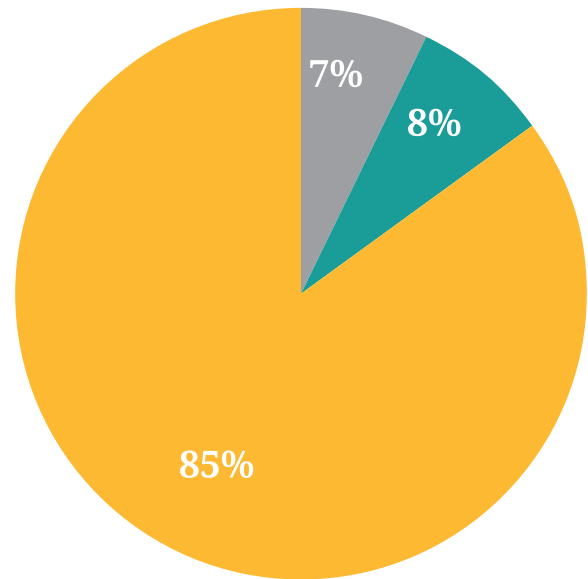
*Thank you for your support of our mission.  
I look forward to our continuing partnership.*

# 2018–2019 Financials



## Revenue

Government  
Foundations  
Individuals  
Businesses



## Expense

Program  
Management/Administrative  
Development/Fundraising




## By the Numbers

# 488,297 Seniors

in Contra Costa, Solano & Alameda Counties



4,650 Ombudsman  
Facility Visits

1,400   
Facility Consultations



Consultations  
to Individuals:  
Solano—891  
CCC—2,039

19   
Community  
Education  
EVENTS

130 REP Clients Served

2,454  
Volunteer Hours

71 Skilled Nursing  
Facilities in  
Alameda County

2,176 Complaints  
Resolved by  
Ombudsman  
in Contra Costa County

336 in Solano County

95% of   
Cases Closed  
to the Satisfaction  
of the Residents

# The Elder & Dependent Adult Justice Program

## A New Paradigm for Delivering Support

In March of 2019, we launched one of our most important initiatives with **The Elder and Dependent Adult Justice Program** in Solano County. Envisioned as a way to better help older adults who have been the victim of crime in Solano County, the program has created an integrated and coordinated response to elder abuse in our community.

### Empowering Victims of Abuse

Rather than leave victims to navigate the maze of available support on their own, The Elder Justice Program delivers holistic support by coordinating with agencies and organizations to provide a range of services each individual needs to help them recover and heal from the crime and/or abuse they've suffered.

Assistance can range from reducing barriers to accessing the legal system to advocating for those who may need protection from an abuser through a restraining order. This is especially important for those who have memory impairment or do not feel comfortable addressing the court. The program also provides counseling, meal services, safety evaluations and more.

Each victim we help is connected with multiple partner agencies and many receive multiple services from each agency—showing how essential integrated support is for recovery. The grateful feedback we have received indicates that many of these elders and dependent adults could not or would not have changed their situation without the program's support. And we are

particularly happy that they report an improvement in both their physical and mental state since receiving help from The Elder Justice Program.

### Many Agencies Working as One

A cornerstone of the program is the multidisciplinary team (MDT) that meets monthly to exchange ideas and develop care plans for complex cases of crime and abuse. The willingness of team members to come together and build partnerships shows that Solano County was ready for collaboration.

Meetings have become standing-room only as more than 40 people from 20+ agencies work like a think tank to develop innovative ways to serve victims in our community. The MDT also identifies gaps in support and brainstorms ways to address them.

A surprising result of the monthly MDT meetings is how bringing collective knowledge to one forum is changing minds and changing culture when it comes to delivering support. It is readily apparent that everyone has a part to play in helping victims recover. There is genuine excitement among these professionals as they share their approaches and learn from one another, and explore new methods of providing services and working with each other.

Making “the whole county available to serve one person” is a model that may have far-reaching impact as other agencies and organizations discover the benefits of holistic support for them and their clients.

*Two thousand purple flags—and a sign explaining that each one represented a reported case of elder abuse in Solano County—helped raised awareness outside of this year's Elder Justice Forum.*

## Working to Decrease Abuse

We are also excited to begin training for The Elder Justice League in November 2019. Seniors in the community, organization leaders and more will learn to become skilled listeners and learn the signs of financial, physical and emotional abuse or extreme neglect. We are particularly interested in having elders and dependent adults join the League, as they can speak with victims peer-to-peer. The more people we can train, the more advocates we will have—giving elders and dependent adults a voice when they are being mistreated.



## Agency Partners

- Solano County Environmental Health
  - Faith in Action
  - Vacaville Police Department
  - Shelter Inc.
  - Ombudsman Services of Contra Costa, Solano and Alameda
  - Solano County Older and Disabled Adult Services
  - Solano County Family Justice Center
  - Solano County Resource Management
  - Solano County Code Compliance
  - Solano County Public Health District Attorney's Office
  - Community Care Licensing
  - Kaiser Vallejo/Vacaville
  - North Bay Health Group
  - Sutter Solano Medical Center
  - Food Bank of Contra Costa in Solano
  - Meals on Wheels
  - Legal Services of Northern California
  - Choice in Aging
  - Solano Transportation
  - Alzheimer's Association
- ...and more to come!*



# Improving Health Outcomes Through Innovative Job Training



Rarely does one program address two intractable challenges so effectively, but that is the magic of **Healthcare Career Pathway (HCP)**.

By helping students with addressable barriers enter the medical field, HCP sets them up for a bright future with enormous growth potential. At the same

time, these trained professionals are helping to resolve the chronic shortage of skilled caregivers that impacts the quality of life for seniors who live in long-term care facilities. It's a win for the students, the residents and the community.

## A Collaborative of Diverse Partners

One of the things that make HCP unique is that agencies and organizations that ordinarily would not intersect are coming together to resolve this critical need in our community. Ombudsman Services is partnering with Mt. Diablo Adult Education, Opportunity Junction and other long-term care industry leaders to improve the lives of students and seniors. In addition to this core partnership, the Collaborative is also working with Loaves and Fishes and the Food Bank of Contra Costa and Solano to ensure the students and their families have access

to nutritious foods on campus and at home. The Healthcare Career Pathway was made possible through the support of John Muir Community Health Fund.

From these diverse partners, students receive the variety of support they need to succeed. Many come from challenging circumstances, so tuition waivers, food support and case management are essential in opening the door and creating an environment where they can learn. Students receive not only medical skills as part of their training, but also “soft” skills such as interpersonal dynamics, time management, accountability, and working with challenging residents and difficult situations, while delivering person-centered care.

HCP is designed to continue supporting participants over time. The Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA) training program currently offered at Mt. Diablo Adult Education is just the first step. HCP will continue to help graduates build skills, confidence and capacity, so they can earn additional medical certifications—and money—while offering a vital service to the community.

With more CNAs and paid caregivers, we can reduce the instances of unwitnessed falls, unanswered call lights, unnecessary use of antipsychotics and other negative impacts that are the result of understaffed care facilities.

“Training one group of underserved members of the community to help another underserved group benefits us all.”

# Healthcare Career Pathway

## Early Success Hints at Greater Things to Come

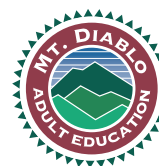
Our first class of students graduated in May 2019 and every one of them earned their CNA certification, and most are working in the long-term healthcare system. A new class is getting ready to follow in their footsteps and there will be many more to come as HCP develops a workforce of desperately needed paid caregivers.

The positive impact on these students' lives can resonate throughout their families for generations. And they are already making an important difference in Contra Costa, where a care facility that had eliminated 50 beds due to understaffing has just reopened 25 of those beds thanks to HCP graduates.

We are greatly encouraged by this success and will continue to explore innovative methods and partnerships that create sustainable paths for serving both job seekers and long-term care residents. Because training one group of underserved members of the community to help another underserved group benefits us all.

## HCP Supports Students With:

- Tuition Waivers
- Streamlined Application Process
- Food and Transportation
- Direct Connections to Employers
- Job Placement Assistance
- Continuing Education Opportunities



# Master of Social Work Internships: **Training a New Generation of Advocates**



Students want their internships to be meaningful experiences where they can develop important skills and positively impact the lives of those they serve. And that's particularly true of students working on their Master of Social Work. To attract the best and brightest, Ombudsman Services designed an internship that provides full training, hands-on experience advocating for long-term care residents and even a resumé-worthy certification.

The MSW internship program is now in its fourth year and has distinguished itself as a unique learning opportunity for emerging social workers. Hailed for its professionalism, our internship program is turning out job-ready applicants with excellent advocacy skills—the heart of social work. In fact, we are happy to share that Ombudsman Services recently hired a former intern after her graduation.

As more individuals pass through the program, we are helping to ease the shortage of qualified ombudsmen for older adults both today and into the future.

“The MSW internship program...has distinguished itself as a unique learning opportunity for emerging social workers.”





# Helping Seniors Express Their Wishes for Care

**Resident Empowerment Program (REP)** is a partnership between Ombudsman Services and Contra Costa Senior Legal Services (CCSLs) that was originally forged to fill the gap for long-term care residents who have no care planning documents, such as advance healthcare directives and durable power of attorney. After a pilot program in January 2017, we have refined our approach to better serve residents, and worked together to create new outcomes, while expanding our services to all of Contra Costa County.

But we're not stopping at just helping residents of care facilities. REP now strives to get this legal assistance to seniors before they need long-term care. Reaching seniors early on can help ensure that their wishes are carried out for the rest of their lives. REP is working with Meals on Wheels, Older Adult Mental Health and other organizations to identify any of their clients who could also benefit from the program.

Helping people put critical safeguards in place before they are incapacitated or unable to express their wishes helps ease the strain on the seniors themselves, as well as their families and the community. REP will continue to look for new ways to help people with limited income, support or capacity to put these guardrails in place by documenting their healthcare wishes.



**Resident  
Empowerment  
Program**



**66%**  
**of U.S. adults  
have not completed  
an advance directive**

Source: Perelman School of Medicine,  
University of Pennsylvania



# A Foundation for the Leading Edge

A Message from Board President Emily De Falla

When I became President of the Board five years ago, we served residents of one county, Contra Costa. We were in a “rebuilding” phase, with a modest budget and a program in transition. Job one was to create a new strategic plan—looking at where we wanted Ombudsman to be in five years. It felt so far in the future! But it went by fast, and now five years later I’m very proud, and a little amazed, at all that our dedicated board and staff have accomplished.

Under the visionary leadership of executive director Nicole Howell, we’ve moved into new offices, expanded our services to Solano and Alameda counties, introduced groundbreaking programs and approaches, built dynamic community partners, transformed our funding sources, and very significantly increased our budget. Most importantly, our promotion of person-centered care is beginning to impact and improve the way that long-term facility residents are treated and cared for.

Our infrastructure has grown quickly to match our program expansion—we now have offices in three counties’ offices and 20 team members. And we’re proud that during this time of rapid development we’ve remained committed to maintaining a work-environment based on values, supporting our team members and making space for personal development. What makes us unique is not only what we do but how we do it—highlighting shared leadership and engaging different voices across our entire team.

Ombudsman’s diverse team of board members offers the organization broad knowledge and expertise. We are committed to adopting and implementing best practices for non-profit governance, to ensure adequate funding for our core mission and current programs, and to allow us to continue to implement exciting new initiatives. We plan to stay at the forefront of leadership in advocating for and improving the lives of long-term care residents.

Our board and staff have a collective, far-reaching vision. That partnership nurtures and supports creativity, and guides proposed innovation into reality. I continue to be energized by the significant impact of the organization we are building, the support shown by our generous funders, the advances we have already made and those yet to come. Stay tuned!

## 2018-19 Board of Directors

Emily De Falla, *President*  
Michael S. Ball, *Secretary/Treasurer*

Geoff Addey  
Susan Frederick  
Michelle Hasan  
Ivette Santaella

# Special Thanks

Recognizing gifts made to Ombudsman Services of Contra Costa and Solano between July 1, 2018, and June 30, 2019.

## Individuals and Businesses

### \$10,000+

Beswick Ombudsman Fund  
at the East Bay Community  
Foundation

### \$1,000–\$9,999

Celia Mason  
Emily De Falla

### \$500–\$999

Mike & Karen Ball  
Susan Frederick  
Michelle Hasan  
HC Financial Advisors  
Horizon Elder Law  
New York Life  
Arthur B. O'Connor  
Samual Yoshioka

### \$250–\$499

AppexCare  
Faith in Action  
Frede Hammes  
Hillendale Home Care  
John Maitland  
Karen Yapp

### Up to \$249

AccentCare  
Sheila Duffy  
Ronald Glass  
Reijer Groenveld  
David Moore  
Dawn Moses  
& Daniel Levy  
Mathew Mullins  
Pathways Hospice  
Sean Poynter  
Doris Rosen  
SafeQuest  
Peter Sardelich  
Johanna Scherrer  
Clif Taylor  
Priscilla Tudor  
Visiting Angels  
Grala & Lou Warren

## Foundations

Dean and Margaret Leshar Foundation  
John Muir Community Health Fund  
Lafayette Community Foundation  
Thomas J. Long Foundation  
May and Stanley Smith Charitable Trust  
The Callison Foundation

## Government Supporters

Community Development Block Grant—  
City of Antioch  
Community Development Block Grant—  
City of Concord  
Community Development Block Grant—  
County of Contra Costa  
Community Development Block Grant—  
City of Walnut Creek  
Concord/Pleasant Hill Healthcare District  
Contra Costa Employment &  
Human Services  
Los Medanos Community  
Healthcare District  
Napa/Solano Area Agency on Aging

Every effort has been made to ensure the accuracy of this listing. Please contact us if we have made any errors or omissions.



# Priorities for 2019–2020

# 1

## **Extend Our Services to Alameda County**

via Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program.



# 2

## **Continue Shaping the Workforce**

supporting older adults through the **Healthcare Career Pathway** program and our **MSW** internship program.



# 3

## **Continue Our Leadership in Elder Justice**

through active participation in statewide initiatives and by pioneering new ways to help victims of elder abuse get the support services they need.



# 4

## **Support the State's Master Plan on Aging**

by offering expertise, resources and assistance to help develop a plan that represents the interests of long-term care residents and ensures their voices are heard.



# Many Ways to Help

We all have a part to play in seeing that older and dependent adults remain empowered regardless of their abilities or resources. Here are some ways you can pitch in:

## Volunteer

Whether you want to do some work in our offices, set up at events, teach people about elder abuse or even train to become a field ombudsman, we would love your help.

## Make a Gift


You can donate online or mail a check to our office.

## Stay Informed

Don't miss out on the latest news, trends and upcoming events impacting and benefitting seniors. Visit our website or call us to learn more and to subscribe to our new e-newsletter!

**925.685.2070**

**[www.ccombudsman.org](http://www.ccombudsman.org)**

Follow us!  

2255 Contra Costa Blvd., Ste. 204  
Pleasant Hill, CA 94523



**The need  
is great** and the  
impact of volunteering  
can be life changing  
for you and those  
you serve.



EMPOWERED AGING

**Ombudsman**

**SERVICES** *of Contra Costa  
Solano and Alameda*

phone: 925.685.2070

fax: 925.685.2049

2255 Contra Costa Blvd., Ste. 204

Pleasant Hill, CA 94523

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

## **Solano County**

We serve  
**3,546** residents  
in Solano County's  
**150** long-term care  
facilities.

## **Contra Costa County**

We serve **9,653** residents in  
Contra Costa County's  
**423** long-term care  
facilities.

## **Alameda County**

We are expanding to serve  
**15,000** residents in  
Alameda County's **350**  
long-term care facilities.