



# 2012

# Nationally Accredited Senior Centers



Accredited by   
National Institute of  
Senior Centers

January 2013

## Building Excellence

Meet the 17 senior centers that achieved NISC National Senior Center Accreditation in 2012.

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# NISC National Senior Center Accreditation

## Purpose

To advance the quality of senior centers nationwide, the National Council on Aging's [National Institute of Senior Centers](#) (NISC) developed [nine standards of excellence](#) for senior center operations. These standards serve as a guide for all senior centers to improve their operations today—and position themselves for the future.

## History

Among NISC's many accomplishments is the development and publication of national standards for the senior center industry in 1978. Initially, the standards were a reference tool for communities interested in developing senior centers and a guide for existing centers. The initial senior center self-assessment served as a guide for program development, assessment of program quality, and identification of areas that needed improvement. NISC has since completed revisions of the national standards in 1990, 1996, 1999, and 2010. The national standards function as a guide for developing and implementing senior center programs and serve as the core of NISC's accreditation.

## Process

The self-assessment is the first step in the accreditation process. The purpose is to evaluate how well the senior center meets the standard criteria as indicated within each of the nine standards. The senior center measures itself against the information contained in the standards section of the manual and completes a notebook containing all needed documents.

After the accreditation notebook is complete, peer reviewers conduct an on-site assessment. The peer reviewers have experience with the senior center self-assessment process in their own professional context and have been certified in conducting comprehensive on-site peer review visits. The visit provides an opportunity for the reviewer to observe first-hand the staff, programs, and services referred to in the documentation. The peer reviewer then submits a report and makes a recommendation to the NISC Accreditation Board.

The NISC Accreditation Board consists of trained and certified senior center professionals who review the report and recommendation presented by the peer reviewer and then vote on the recommendation.

## 2012 Accredited Senior Centers

The senior centers that were accredited in 2012 are a diverse group. They hail from 10 states: Connecticut, Florida, Illinois, Iowa, Kansas, Massachusetts, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, and Wisconsin. Their community sizes vary—from a small town with a population of 16,000 to a multi-site accreditation that serves the largest city in Kansas with a population of 368,000. Although each center is a unique operation, they all operate effectively from a common philosophy and adherence to the established NISC senior center standards of excellence.

To learn more about NISC National Senior Center Accreditation, please visit [www.ncoa.org/NISC](http://www.ncoa.org/NISC).

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NISC supports a national network of over 2,000 senior center professionals dedicated to helping older adults remain active, engaged, and independent in their communities. NISC is setting the standard for the future of senior centers by promoting cutting-edge research, promising practices, professional development, and advocacy. NISC also offers the nation’s only National Senior Center Accreditation Program. Accreditation provides official recognition that a senior center meets nine national standards of senior center operations. Learn more at [www.ncoa.org/NISC](http://www.ncoa.org/NISC).

## Beaver Dam Senior Center, Beaver Dam, Wisconsin



### **Mission**

*The Center promotes social, educational, leadership, recreational, and volunteer opportunities for persons age 50 and over; serving as a community resource on aging.*

Beaver Dam, with a population of 16,243, is located in Dodge County, south central Wisconsin, along Beaver Dam Lake and the Beaver Dam River. The Beaver Dam Senior Center opened in 1970 and has been operating at the same location for 40+ years. The center is part of a governmental entity and manages all park and recreation programs for the city of Beaver Dam.

The center has a hard working, experienced administrator. The center accomplishes as much as they do thanks to the efforts of 125 talented volunteers. The volunteers range in age from 50-92. The center created a Volunteer Handbook during the self-assessment process, and it has proved to be a good tool.

The center has a multitude of community partners, and they actively seek opportunities to provide information to community organizations and individuals about the center. In addition to center representatives providing representation on agency boards, the volunteers have formed a speaker's bureau and have been trained and receive continuous coaching from their fundraising consultant.

The new marketing materials are attractive and include a short video in addition to the printed materials. The center is embarking on a major \$2.9 million capital campaign and recently went public with the design of the new facility, which will be called the [WATERMARK](#).

### **Center Highlights:**

- Strong and creative staff and volunteer leadership.
- Strong community collaborations—organizational and individual.
- Recognition as an outstanding community asset by town officials.
- Attractive marketing materials.
- Impressive and varied programming.
- Systematic statistical reporting—duplicated and unduplicated participant numbers for each activity are available.

## Enfield Senior Center, Enfield, Connecticut



### **Mission**

*As a focal point for aging services, the Enfield Senior Center provides social, educational, and recreational opportunities to enrich the mind, body, and spirit of older adults in an open and accepting atmosphere.*

The town of Enfield, CT, is a suburban community located to the north of Hartford with a current population of 45,246. One-fourth of the population is over 55 years old. Eight years ago, the current Senior Center was built. It is a stand-alone, one-story, attractive facility.

The center has an extensive array of programs available for all interests and abilities. The center receives over 600 participants per day, who attend the various programs that are scheduled. Clearly, the center is well-known in the region for its Fitness Center, which is a “cutting edge” model. It brings in participants from all over.

The center’s annual budget is determined via the town government structure. It accounts for only 49% of the Senior Center’s annual budget. The center has done a phenomenal job seeking out funding from a diverse network of resources: The Friends of the Senior Center, state and federal grants, the Hartford Foundation, program fees, and many other fundraising events.

### **Center Highlights:**

- Beautiful building, inside and out, nice décor and floor plan, very attractive, warm and homey.
- Nice mission statement with great core values.
- [The Senior Center Facebook Page](#) and recently produced [video](#) on YouTube is wonderful marketing.
- Reaches a very large segment of the population; 600 people a day come through the doors on average.
- Open to the public 8 a.m.-8 p.m. four days a week, the fifth day is 8 a.m.-4 p.m., with programming available during all of these times.
- The Fitness Center is state-of-the-art and is a real drawing card for Enfield seniors, as well as for others in the greater Enfield region.
- Dedicated corps of volunteers of 300+ unduplicated individuals.

## The Glastonbury Senior Center, Glastonbury, Connecticut



### **Mission**

*The Glastonbury Senior Center operates as a community focal point for the coordination of multi-purpose services and programs, for persons living independently, or with families in the community. The Senior Center services individual residents aged 60 years old and over, in order to promote independence, personal enrichment, and an enhanced quality of life.*

The Glastonbury Senior Center at the Riverfront Community Center is located in the town of Glastonbury, with approximately 32,000 in population. The town is located in central Connecticut about 10 miles southeast of Hartford. The town provides a lot of funding for social and recreational services for its residents, one being the senior center. The center opened in 1976, but the current facility was built in 2005. It is located on a main road in Glastonbury and near town parks. It is near the river where other facilities are planned. The center is 25,000 square feet and includes a day services program for older adults.

The senior center provides a diverse range of programming for seniors, as well as the general public. The center offers classes based on a semester or quarter system. An asset is having the senior center, senior services, and children and youth services all under the Human Resource Department, which provides a lot of opportunities for intergenerational events and activities. They also provide programming at three off-site areas several times a week.

### **Center Highlights:**

- Tremendous town support with revenues, planning, and operations. It is apparent that the senior center/community center is an important part of the town operations, as well as the community.
- The staff is very experienced in the area of senior center operations, as well as multi-talented with great ideas for programming and collaborations. The dedication and commitment of staff is very apparent.
- The facility is wonderfully planned and well maintained, creating a safe, clean, well-organized, fun space for activities and members.
- This is a wonderful facility with great programming and is clearly an asset to the community.
- The center has a good structure of [policies and procedures](#) from which to operate.
- The center programming is very strong in intergenerational activities, which are partially a result of the senior center/community center and Youth and Family Services being under the same director, as well as having a director that is open to new possibilities. One example is the [grandparents/grandchildren's intergenerational programming](#).
- The center has extensive and impressive partners. It is clear that a lot of work has been done around partnering in the community. The staff looks for every opportunity to partner and to bring new and improved services to their constituents.



## Hanover Township Senior Center, Bartlett, Illinois



### **Mission**

*With respect, innovation, and a dedication to excellence, Senior Services is committed to facilitating programs and services that promote independence, a sense of community, and well-being for mature adults in Hanover Township.*

Hanover Township Senior Center is situated in Bartlett, a northwest Chicago suburb and in Hanover Township, which is the northwestern-most township in Cook County. The center, which is located next to the Township administrative offices and independent and assisted living communities, was dedicated in 2005 and is an attractive facility on several acres of land.

Approximately 100,000 people live in Hanover Township, and the senior population (over the age of 55) has increased 60% in the last decade. Hanover Township takes pride in their delivery of services with their logo being, “Where great service happens.” Illinois Townships are mandated to offer only highway maintenance, General Assistance and the Clerk’s office. Hanover Township has eleven departments; Youth and Family Services, Welfare Services, Office of Community Health, Department of Emergency Services, Community Relations and Veterans Affairs. The Senior Services Department is one of the departments under the supervision of the township administrator who works for the elected Township Board and Supervisor.

### **Center Highlights:**

- The facility is beautiful, nice, and located next to senior living apartments, with beautiful grounds for walking and even swans in the back pond.
- Having the Community Health Department co-located is a plus.
- The self-assessment process was accomplished with internal and external committees. The “internal” self-assessment committee consisted of the center director, program and support staff, and the township administrator. The “external” committee was comprised of participants, partners, and community members. This process worked well and was done at the right time for completion of policies and procedures, as well as bringing people together.
- Great level of volunteers and the township is adopting the center’s idea of volunteers trained as auxiliary staff in their other departments.
- The volunteer manual is one of the best the peer reviewer had seen.
- The program receives great support from the township not only in revenues, but in other ways as well.
- Many great services offered and constantly “raising the bar” in them, as well as leadership of the agency.
- The Center’s Program Committee, which is made up of participants, meets monthly and assists the Program Manager, in planning events and programs; see their [video](#).

## The Heritage Center of the Jewish Community Center, Overland Park, Kansas



### **Mission**

*The mission of the Jewish Community Center of Greater Kansas City is to enrich our diverse community by cultivating an inclusive environment built upon Jewish values, heritage, and culture. We offer programs of excellence that enhance wellness, meaning, and joy from generation to generation.*

The Heritage Center of the Jewish Community Center is situated within the city of Overland Park, KS, a prominent suburb of the Kansas City metropolitan area. The Jewish Community Campus was built in 1999. The predominant focus is on Jewish older adults. However, in the last couple of years, the JCC has opened up to individuals of all faiths. The minimum qualifying age for participation in the Heritage Center programs is 65. The youngest participant is 65, while the oldest is 101. The majority of participants fall between the ages of 76-85 years old. The client population is 64% female and 36% male. The average daily attendance is 85.

The Heritage Center has access to the larger Jewish Community Campus for the programming, which includes meeting/classrooms, fitness rooms, pool, gymnasium, chapel, indoor track, and tennis and racquetball courts.

The Jewish Community Center is a nonprofit agency and does not receive federal funding for the operation of its senior programs. The Heritage Center's primary funding sources include grants, endowments, and donations. Secondary funding comes from agency support, program fees, and sponsorships.

### **Center Highlights:**

- Wonderful facility with beautiful grounds and amenities such as a pool, theatre inside, and complete access to other rooms in the JCC.
- A user-friendly volunteer computer system (VsysOne) for volunteers to log hours.
- Programs open to individuals of all faiths.
- Number of sponsorships and community connections.
- Transportation is provided five days per week to and from the Heritage Center. This door-to-door service meets the needs of low-income individuals and/or those no longer able to drive.
- Healthy meals served five days/week offering Kosher lunches, as well.
- Competent and caring staff.
- Scholarship assistance to those experiencing financial hardships.
- A very comprehensive volunteer handbook and manual.



## Iowa City/Johnson County Senior Center, Iowa



### **Mission**

*The Mission of the Senior Center is to promote optimal aging among older adults by offering programs and services that promote wellness, social interaction, community engagement, and intellectual growth. The center serves the public through intergenerational programming and community outreach.*

[The Center](#) in Iowa City, IA, is a municipal senior center in a 100-year-old historical U.S. Post Office, located in the center of the city. It opened in 1981. This granite building with mosaic floors, carved wooden doors, and large fan-shaped windows provides a beautiful environment with 25,000 square feet on four floors.

The center currently has 1,595 registered members and serves ages 59-85+, but 63% of participants are aged 65-84. It has approximately 285 visitors daily.

The center is owned and operated by Iowa City. Operational expenses are supported by local tax dollars, participant cost sharing, donations, and a generous grant from the Johnson County Board of Supervisors.

Its programming is interesting and diverse. The center provides a wide variety of scheduled and unscheduled programs and activities with the noted use of their Building Supervisor Program to expand open hours to 45+ hours weekly on a regular basis, including regular Saturday and Sunday hours.

### **Center Highlights:**

- An excellent process to prepare for accreditation, including an operational assessment, development of goals and objectives, and a strategic plan.
- Multiple collaborations with community partners.
- Great utilization of new marketing materials and efforts to brand the organization.
- Excellent [Volunteer Handbook](#) and expansion of hours with volunteer building supervisors.
- Interesting, diverse, and remarkable quantity of programs and activities, showcased in an exceptional [Program Guide](#).
- Opportunities for volunteers to produce videos of senior center programs on [cable TV](#).
- Important stewardship of a historic building in the community.

## Johnston Senior Citizen's Center, Rhode Island



### **Mission**

*The Johnston Senior Center is a multipurpose community facility where older adults and adults with disabilities come together for services, activities, and programs that promote physical, emotional, and economic well-being.*

*The center supports the self sufficiency of all its members by providing opportunities for socialization, recreation, nutrition, education, information and referral, volunteerism, health and fitness, and all aspects of social services.*

*As a community facility, the center is a resource for its members, their families and friends, and all those who care for the older/disabled residents of Johnston.*

Johnston Senior Center is located in Johnston, RI, a city of approximately 28,000. It is located just outside of Providence, the state capital. The city has about 7,000 older adults. The center lists 3,000 members, with its clientele primarily of Italian heritage, with a small Hispanic contingent.

Johnston Senior Center was originally established in 1983 in an old city garage building. The current director worked with the city and the community to run a successful building campaign. The new center was constructed and opened in 2007.

A nonprofit organization operates the center, but the building is owned and maintained by the city. The mayor appoints the members of the nonprofit board and the senior center director.

The center has excellent community relationships and support and agreements with numerous agencies to provide services. A staff member serves as an Information & Referral program specialist, providing individual assistance to clients as part of "The Point," Rhode Island's ADRC program. An active SHIP program is in operation. The center does income tax assistance through AARP, has an RSVP program, is involved with Time Banks Rhode Island, and has several city departments that come in and offer services.

### **Center Highlights:**

- Very modern, attractive center building with practical, functional amenities.
- Very knowledgeable, engaged, and resourceful staff.
- Involved and supportive volunteers.
- Excellent community relationships and support.
- Well-developed strategic plan with timelines and follow-up measures.
- Good variety of program offerings.
- Philosophy of constantly seeking opportunities to improve the center.

## Mayerson Jewish Community Senior Center, Cincinnati, Ohio



### **Mission**

*The Senior Adult Center provides social, educational, nutritional, transportation, wellness, and fitness programs designed to help maintain independence and improve the quality of life for seniors in the Greater Cincinnati community.*

Founded in the early 1900s, Mayerson Jewish Community Center is located in Northeast Cincinnati. The JCC opened the new facility in 2009. The community center is an amazing 140,000 square-foot facility with three levels, making it a state-of-the-art center.

The senior center is a division of the Mayerson Jewish Community Center. 5,000 square feet is solely dedicated to senior center operations. Staffing includes six full-time, 14 part-time, and 189 volunteers. It has a governing board of 16 members and eight standing committees. The senior center has a 15-member advisory board called the ASK Board. ASK is the primary membership organization for the seniors.

Last year, the senior center served 1,181 individuals, and the average daily attendance was 100.

### **Center Highlights:**

- A state-of-the-art facility. Seniors utilize eight of the program rooms on the main floor, which include a soundproof music room and a well-equipped art studio. A large auditorium that can accommodate up to 800 people is also on the main floor. There are 10 different exercise rooms, full size gym, walking track, spa, and aquatic center. There is also an outdoor walking track and swimming pool.
- The choices provided by the meals program are impressive.
- The transportation program provides excellent service. Three drivers provide transportation for 40-50 seniors for the noon meal and activities.
- In addition to many exercise options, the following are samples of the evidence-based programs offered:
  - **A Matter of Balance:** Emphasizes practical strategies to reduce the fear of falling and increase activity levels.
  - **Arthritis Foundation Tai Chi Program®:** Designed to improve the quality of life for people with arthritis using sun style Tai Chi.
  - **Active Living Every Day:** Helps seniors find energy, feel good, and be healthy through active living.

## The Miramar Center, Miramar, Florida



The Miramar Center is situated in southwestern Broward County, FL, population 122,000. Miramar is 14 miles in length from east to west and 2.5 miles in width, making it the third largest city in Broward County.

The Multi-Service Complex site is part of the new city building complex that incorporates many city services (senior center, social services, health, fire and police). It is a lovely site with plenty of parking, public transportation access, and all the social service departments that the city provides right in the same building as the senior center. The second site is part of a community center with beautiful facilities inside, including a state-of-the-art fitness center, gymnasium, and smaller spaces for multiple activities.

The staffing pattern for the center provides 13 full-time and six part-time employees plus a connection to very deep social services.

### Center Highlights:

- The incorporation of the senior center in the same building as the city's social service department.
- Programmatically, there is tremendous collaboration with other city departments, as well as Social Security, Nova Southeastern University, Department of Veterans Affairs, Broward Meals on Wheels, Broward County Health Department, several health-related groups, and local businesses. Various fitness and health-related classes (Enhance Fitness, Aerobics of the Mind, Line Dancing, Chair Jazzercise, Sunshine Steppers Mall Walkers) are held on a continuing basis.
- [Dental services](#) are provided in the center through Southeastern University. The partnership with Nova Southeastern University's Dental School was a fantastic example of community collaboration. The program consisted of setting up a free dental clinic right in the senior center.
- Easy access to transportation as needed. The city owns and operates much of the transportation network for people 60+, so shopping, medical appointments, rides to the centers, and trips are easily scheduled.



## Northeast Senior Center & Orchard Park Senior Center Senior Services, Inc. of Wichita, Kansas



### **Mission**

*Senior Services, Inc. of Wichita provides advocacy, information, and services to people age 55 and better, their families, friends, and everyone in the community who cares about them and the issues they face.*

Both Northeast Senior Center and Orchard Park Senior Center are located in Wichita, the largest city in Kansas with a population of 368,630. It is located in the southeast region of the state. A river separates two very distinct east and west neighborhoods and an interstate separates from north to south. Wichita's history includes being part of the Chisholm Trail & the Santé Fe Railroad and was instrumental in opening up the West.

Wichita's Senior Services, Inc. (SSI) is the parent organization, which oversees most of the primary aging services for Wichita & Sedgwick County. These services include Roving Pantry, Information & Assistance, Senior Employment, Neighborhood Connection, In-Home Respite Care, Meals on Wheels, and operating four senior centers.

The two other centers, Downtown Senior Center and the Linwood Senior Center, achieved national accreditation in September 2011. With Northwest and Orchard Park's achievement, these four centers become the first multi-site accreditation in the state of Kansas.

### **Highlights for Both Centers:**

- Mission statement for parent organization (SSI) promoted visibly in both Northeast and Orchard Park senior centers, as well as several SSI promotional materials.
- The parent organization has many other services, such as the Roving Pantry, Information & Referral, which provide a supportive network and easier access to center members.
- The SSI parent organization has developed an excellent collaboration with Wichita State University related to implementing a comprehensive needs assessment, evidence-based exercise programs in their senior centers, and providing student interns. In 2012, WSU students taught computer classes and staff the Downtown Center Lab weekly for walk-in assistance.
- SSI parent organization received a unique grant for purchasing iPad tablets to start new technology classes with senior-friendly equipment at all of their four senior centers.
- The parent organization appears to have widespread support in the community as evidenced by the annual fundraiser, the partnerships, and board membership.



**Orchard Park Center Highlights:**

- The Orchard Park Senior Center has a great staff member that is an asset to the center. She has a lot of energy, a can-do spirit, creativity, as well as professional training. She is a great strength for the center.
- The Orchard Park Senior Center has a great spirit, engaged support, and positive attitude as experienced by peer reviewer during the site visit.
- The center, although small, appears to have a variety of programming over the course of a year.



**Northeast Center Highlights:**

- The Northeast Senior Center has a great staff member that is an asset to the center. She has a lot of energy, creativity, is personable, and it is obvious that she organizes a great program that is valued by the members and community. She has been a great strength for the center.
- The Northeast Senior Center has a sense of warmth and welcome and engaged members and volunteers as experienced by peer reviewer during the site visit.
- The Northeast facility is a great facility specific to senior center programming. It provides a good model for partnering with a housing organization around the operation of a senior center.
- The center appears to have a variety of programming over the course of a year. The center is encouraged to continue working on variety of programming for each month, as well as programming to attract new generations of older adults.

## Senior Adult Activities Center of Montgomery County at Norristown & Ambler, Pennsylvania



### **Mission**

*Montco SAAC is a community focal point for adults 50 or better and a place of opportunities where programs and services support positive aging.*

The Senior Adult Activities Center at Norristown and at Ambler are both operated by Montgomery County Senior Adult Activity Centers (Montco SAAC). Montco SAAC was founded in 1965 by seven elderly women in Norristown who were concerned about the low-income frail elderly in the county. In 1999, Ambler was opened.

Norristown, the county seat of Montgomery County, is approximately six miles northwest of the city limits of Philadelphia on the Schuylkill River.

Norristown serves adults 50 years and older from Norristown and the surrounding townships and municipalities. There are approximately 30,000 adults over 50 in the catchment area. The center has a membership of 1,251.

The senior center staff includes six full-time employees and two part-time employees and more than 100 volunteers. The adult day care program, which is housed in a separate wing of the building, has one full-time staff member and 10 part-time staff.

### **Norristown Center Highlights:**

- The center exudes a marvelous spirit. Staff and volunteers are caring, creative, and welcoming.
- Members express their gratitude for having a safe and comfortable place to spend time with friends. One of the members stated: “The center is an answer to a prayer for many.”
- Programming takes place within the center and in individual homes for seniors with varying physical and mental abilities. The adult day program incorporates community groups wishing to volunteer. The Center Without Walls gives seniors the ability to call in and listen to specific programs, providing outreach to the homebound. Health and wellness programs such as Zumba and Silver Sneakers are available for the active elderly and chair exercise programs are available for the frail.
- A Thrift Shop provides revenue and volunteer opportunities for the seniors and serves as a community resource.



**The Ambler Center** was opened in 1999. Today, it serves adults 50 years and older from the surrounding townships and municipalities. There are approximately 27,500 adults over 50 in Ambler's catchment area. The center has a membership of 358.

The county gave the organization a 50-year lease for \$1 a year to operate the senior center. In 2007, the center opened Boomer U as a major program aimed at those 50 years or better who want to engage in lifelong learning, pursue civic engagement, and enjoy social connections.

The senior center staff includes four full-time employees and four part-time employees and more than 75 volunteers. Administrative functions are handled at the Norristown headquarters.

#### **Ambler Center Highlights:**

- Program instructors are first-rate.
- Home-delivered meals program operates efficiently.
- Boomer U is attracting a number of younger seniors for both activities and educational programs.
- There is an LGBT Support Group.
- Facility is spacious, bright, and airy. Furniture is well placed for socialization and comfortable.
- Planning for an Intergenerational Art Center on the third floor with various community leaders.

#### **Highlights for Both Centers:**

- Community collaborations are very strong.
- Board members are talented and engaged.
- The Board Manual is comprehensive and a model for centers.
- The executive director is creative, talented, a strong leader, and advocates for seniors in the county. She is passionate about her work. She has established a strong team. Personnel policies are comprehensive. The centers have an energetic volunteer corps.
- Centers provide programming for a wide range of ability groups.
- Board members are committed to working on fundraising. A layaway plan has been established for seniors enabling them to plan ahead to participate in costly events.
- The Policy Manual is extensive and includes a section on Social Media, clear expectations of members, and reasons for exclusion.

## Stephen Palmer Senior Center, Needham, Massachusetts



### **Mission**

*The mission of The Needham Council on Aging is to respond to its older residents' needs by providing a welcoming, inclusive, and secure environment where individuals and families benefit from programs, services, and resources that enhance their quality of life and provide opportunities for growth.*

In 1999, the Stephen Palmer Senior Center was the first center in Massachusetts and the 19th in the country, to be accredited by NISC. The center was reaccredited in 2004 and again in 2012.

The Stephen Palmer Senior Center is a municipal suburban senior center in Needham, MA, a suburb of Boston. The center is located on the first floor of a municipal building where upper floors serve as senior housing. The center includes approximately 6,400 square feet of dedicated space, including a catering kitchen, office space for staff, a conference room, and several program/activity rooms.

### **Center Highlights:**

- Well-organized notebook and very diverse accreditation committee.
- Excellent collaborative efforts and good solid relationships in the community.
- Visually appealing newsletter, the [Senior Compass](#).
- Very organized volunteer program with excellent opportunities for volunteer leadership development. Great performance review process.
- Great intergenerational programming, especially those with the local public school, including Senior to Senior and [Sages and Seekers](#).
- Excellent advocacy work in passing a building project during tough economic times. The new building will increase both visibility and programming options in the community.
- It was noted by the peer reviewer that she reviewed the new building project plans that were recently passed. This accreditation will follow the center as it moves to an upgraded facility. When the center moves, the name will change from the Stephen Palmer Senior Center to The Center at the Heights (pictured below).





## Surrey House, Surrey Services for Seniors, Berwyn, Pennsylvania



### **Mission**

*Surrey Services helps older adults to live at home with independence and dignity and to continue as active members of the community.*

Surrey House is located in Berwyn, PA, with a population of 3,631. It is considered part of the Main Line. The Main Line is an unofficial historical and socio-cultural region of suburban Philadelphia. It is comprised of a collection of towns built along the old Main Line of the Pennsylvania Railroad, which ran northwest from downtown Philadelphia.

Surrey House is the senior center program administered by Surrey Services. Surrey Services was started by a local individual, became a nonprofit in 1981, and provides care management, assistance with activities of daily living, transportation, companionship, and money management, as well as programs at Surrey House and three other senior centers.

The center opened in December of 2000 and contains a fitness center, a computer lab, and a kitchen. It is open 43 hours per week including Saturdays. Volunteers provide many of the services of Surrey Services.

### **Center Highlights:**

- Members of the Governing Board and Members Advisory Group are a wealth of information and skill and can provide varied support to the organization.
- Policy and procedures in the areas of human resources and administration of the agency are well thought out and carried out in a very professional manner.
- Main Line School Night is the type of program that provides programming at Surrey House and at the same time helps the community learn about Surrey House.
- The Volunteer Handbook is a good example of a concisely written document with the important information presented in a professional manner.
- Volunteers seem to be engaged in all aspects and levels of the organization.
- Good use of space that poses challenges. Café has a great atmosphere—bright and colorful.
- Café and food choices are of the type that appeals to a wide audience.
- Evaluations are extensive and varied.
- Strategic planning process helps the agency analyze and plan for future of the organization.



## Wallingford Senior Center, Connecticut



### **Mission**

*The mission of the Wallingford Senior Center is to provide services and programs for older adults of the Wallingford Community that promote their well-being, support their independence, and encourage their involvement in community life.*

Wallingford Senior Center is located in the town of Wallingford, CT, a mostly suburban picturesque community of roughly 39 square miles located along Interstate 91, approximately halfway between New Haven and Hartford, with about 45,000 residents. The senior center is a gorgeous, spacious, open, and well-lit 20,000 square foot facility, now approximately 12 years old. It is a free-standing, sprawling, one-story building. There is a butterfly garden trail at the center, as well as a patio area.

### **Center Highlights:**

- There are [two options for lunch](#): The Congregate Lunch serves 40 people, and the unique Lakeside Café serves 100 people a day with a full [luncheon menu](#) made fresh daily by a separate group of employees and volunteers. The café, which also provides catering, is located by a lake on the center grounds and boasts large glass picture windows with a spectacular view.
- The staff is a very cohesive unit, all very dedicated and committed to the cause. Most have been there for several years, and they have experienced very little turnover.
- The center is open to the public 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. four days a week; the fifth day is 9 a.m. to 8:30 p.m., with programming available during all of these times.
- The Computer Lab is state-of-the-art and is an effective way to draw in Wallingford seniors.
- Phenomenal dedicated corps of volunteers of 160+ unduplicated individuals.
- Very involved, committed, and dedicated Board of Directors which works closely and effectively with town officials to create a winning senior center operation.
- Tremendous variety and quantity of programs. Just for Men Breakfast Club, Let's Do Lunch Bunch, Art Appreciation Class, Brain Health Fair are just some examples.
- The [Passport Around the World Program](#) is a fun planning theme, where every month of 2012 focused on the heritage and culture of a different country.
- The Wallingford Senior Center used part of the self-assessment process for long-range planning. With the help of many community leaders, they engaged in a [SWOT Analysis](#), which helped create a 5-year Long-Range Plan for 2011-2016.

## Westerville Senior Center, Westerville, Ohio



### **Mission**

*The purpose of the Senior Center is to provide senior adults of the community with an organized program of educational, recreational, and social activities, along with services appropriate to senior adults' needs. The Senior Center will be an informational resource for senior adults in the community.*

The Westerville Senior Center is located in Westerville, a suburb located 15 miles north of Columbus, OH. The senior center is located near Westerville's restored "Uptown" historic district with brick sidewalks and Victorian storefronts.

The Westerville Senior Center resides in a 9,467 square foot, stand-alone facility operated as part of the city's Park & Recreation Department. It is for adults aged 55 and over. The center is open between 45 to 54 hours per week with seasonal evening hours and some events on weekends. There are four full-time staff and eight part-time staff. There are 1,807 members with an average 157 people attending daily.

### **Center Highlights:**

- Parks & Recreation Department, city, and senior center have developed excellent planning documents that are comprehensive and very professional.
- Senior center has an excellent relationship with its community, including partnerships with businesses, senior housing facilities, aging network, and other city departments through sponsorships, in-kind services, and sharing facility space.
- Location of senior center is next to a main thoroughfare, so it is very visible to the community, next to a fire station, close to an access to a very popular exercise trail.
- Senior center has a very welcoming environment both in appearance and with the interactions of staff, volunteers, and members.
- Senior center operates a very impressive transportation service with four buses and a very caring team of staff that go the extra mile.
- Excellent self-directed volunteer groups that lead several programs and classes, including exercise, digital photography, theater group, and computer classes.
- Impressive and highly involved senior advisory council and senior association foundation, which provides partial funding to the center.
- Pleasantly surprised to see a higher percentage of male involvement at this senior center in a field that is usually dominated by women both in staff and participants.
- Westerville has a very successful tax levy system that insulates them from some of the economic downturns experienced by other cities. They have also benefitted by being more sustainable in their budget without having to cut major services and programs.
- Successful improvement and implementation of their city's confidentiality policy for paid staff and volunteers.