



Happy Valentine's Day

There is lots to love about our village movement this Valentine's Day as you'll discover in this issue. From Village Movement California's new Board of Directors to a wide range of interesting and important conferences and webinars, we start off 2020 with an array of growth opportunities for all of us who'd love to see a village in every community.

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From the Executive Director



Charlotte

Happy New Year and Happy Valentine's Day to all! 2020 is going to be an auspicious year for our movement. We are engaged in shaping California's Master Plan for Aging which will lay out the landscape of aging for the next decade, and we've launched an exciting new project to grow and sustain our villages through partnership with healthcare. We recently seated a Board of Directors that will lead us through our incorporation with 501©3 status. Please read this month's articles for up-to-the-minute information.

For me, Valentine's Day is a celebration of connection with the people in our lives. It's a day to acknowledge the love born from community and interdependence. Our villages are a visible expression of love. Village Movement California seeks opportunities to grow loving communities around the state through seeding new villages and joining forces with organizations that help older adults stay in charge of their lives in the places

they call home. With funding from the Long Foundation, we will produce a video, portfolio of photographs, and a social media campaign to support your village's outreach efforts.

February is Black History Month. I encourage you to take advantage of events honoring black history. A group of villagers might attend a lecture, movie, art exhibit, or host a discussion. Black history is American history, and the more we know about it, the richer our perspective will be, and the more skilled we will become in welcoming African American members and volunteers to our villages.

Our new Board of Directors recently made advancing diversity, equity, and inclusion a priority goal for 2020. One way to get working on this goal is to educate ourselves.

Every year, I read at least one book by an African American author during Black History Month. This year I am reading *Just Mercy* by Bryan Stevenson. I invite you to read it with me or see the movie, and then join me on March 12 from 10:00am – 11:00am for a video call to discuss it. Register [here](#). The call is limited to 10 people.



Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. said “We are caught in an inescapable network of mutuality, tied in a single garment of destiny. Whatever affects one directly, affects all indirectly.” We understand the interdependence Dr. King articulates, and we look forward to expanding our movement to include more older Californians from the rich diversity of experiences they bring to the enterprise of aging.

Village Movement California Seats a Board of Directors

We finalized our incorporation late last year, and we are now awaiting word on our 501c3 status. Once this process is completed, Village Movement California will operate as its own organization and separate from San Francisco Village, our fiscal sponsor for the past three years.

In anticipation of this shift, we assembled and seated a Board of Directors last month. During their first meeting, they established several priorities including fund development for Village Movement California and the development and implementation of a Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion plan. These priorities co-exist with the important work that has been funded – the Healthcare Partnership and video, photography, and social media projects.



Front: Dave Kuykendall (SLO Village), Jan Montague (San Clemente Village), Charlotte Dickson (Executive Director), Kate Hoepke (San Francisco Village), Andra Lichtenstein (Ashby Village), Back: Leza Coleman (CA Long Term Care Ombudsman Association), Sheila James (Federal Liaison from Office of the Undersecretary, HHS Region IX), Patrick Brown (Villages of San Mateo), Bea Kirkman (AgingNext Village), Sue Kujawa (Pasadena Village).

Healthcare Partnership Plan Gains Traction

In our December 2019 newsletter, Village Movement California announced the generous grant received from Carestar Foundation to help us partner with healthcare insurers and/or providers to support village sustainability. Partnership and participation in the broader healthcare payment and delivery system have been at the forefront of Village Movement California's purpose since our founding.



We are actively working with the nationally known firm, [Anne Tumlinson Innovations](#) (ATI), to learn more about the services and value we bring to the healthcare sector, and to assess options for growth. We are focused on building partnerships with healthcare insurers and providers in village regions. The project will take place over the next five months and include these activities and benchmarks:

- Phase I - Research on village services and potential healthcare partners, January – February 2020

- Phase 2 – Identification of two or three specific strategies to build a beneficial partnership with healthcare, March – April 2020
- Phase 3 – Development and selection of one strategy and implementation plan, May – June 2020

Future newsletters will contain information about progress and benchmarks. Please reach out to Charlotte if you have questions: 510-900-6380 or charlotte@villagemovementcalifornia.org.

In the News: Medicine for Loneliness?

What if loneliness were an illness that could damage our bodies, make us more vulnerable to other diseases, and actually shorten our lives? One genomics researcher studied molecules of white blood cells taken from very lonely people. What Steve Cole saw was the blood cells responding as they would to a bacterial infection. He co-published his findings in 2007 and was astounded at the correspondence he received from ordinary people supporting his work and its value.



It turns out that loneliness is “...more dangerous to our health...than obesity, and it’s the equivalent of smoking 15 cigarettes a day.” As census data tells us, we are becoming a more isolated society. While people who live alone, are unmarried, or childless are not necessarily lonely, limited contact with others can cause extreme loneliness. Do healthy lonely people become unhealthy or do unhealthy people withdraw from social connections and become lonely? Studies find that you can be healthy or unhealthy but if you are more socially connected, you live longer.

Much of the scientific and behavioral conversation about the significance of loneliness is defining what loneliness is. There is a difference between being alone for an evening and living by yourself and not speaking to anyone for days. The UCLA Loneliness Scale helps researchers define loneliness on a continuum from slightly to extremely lonely and was developed as a questionnaire that asks respondents about feelings related to loneliness. The resulting data is then used in studies investigating the effects of loneliness.

Medically, our human psychology seems to feel loneliness as a threat and produces an inflammatory reaction in those white blood cells. That inflammation then causes the brain to become “irritable, suspicious, prone to negative emotions and fearful of meeting new people and making new friends.” Indeed, people who are extremely lonely are frightened and worried and don’t sleep well.

So, how do we respond to the disease of loneliness? Medical research is on-going, particularly in the areas of reducing inflammation, and using antidepressants to alleviate the social threat of loneliness. Socially, just being around other people isn’t enough to lessen loneliness. What is critical for our well-being is connecting with others who share our values and life experiences, as we do in our villages.

Lynn Darling explores loneliness as a disease in AARP The Magazine, December 2019/January 2020. Read the full article [here](#).

For a great village model that combats loneliness and social isolation, read the introduction to the Hotel Oakland Village that follows and be sure to watch the video.

Tales From the Village



Hotel Oakland Village

Hotel Oakland Village, formed in 2011, is the first low-income senior village to join our organization. With almost 400 residents in the historic Hotel Oakland, the village is focused on combatting the negative health effects of senior isolation.

In collaboration with Stanford, UC-Berkeley, Johns-Hopkins, AARP, and senior health professionals this village provides a wide range of valued medical and social services to all village members. The many programs offered and the high rates of participation have successfully reduced isolation among the Hotel Oakland Village residents. Their motto is "Participation = Good Health".

Take a look inside this unique village by watching their introductory video [here](#).

Update: California Master Plan for Aging



If you are tuning into the California Department of Aging's (CDA) Wednesday Webinar series, you're aware that villages and Village Movement California have been highlighted several times as a successful strategy supporting healthy aging in community. We thank all of you who have joined the webinars and spoken up for villages.

Village Movement California continues to work diligently to position villages as an important strategy within the California Master Plan for Aging. To that end, we:

- Submitted a letter to the State highlighting our movement's value to older adults across California
- Helped to plan and implement the CDA's roundtable in Nevada County held in December where leaders of Sierra Foothills Village led a discussion on volunteerism and weighed in on the topics of transportation needs and disaster preparedness
- Engaged in planning for an April rural roundtable in Humboldt County with the CDA, Assembly member Woods, and the Redwood Coast Village

Take Action! We encourage you and your village members to engage with the Master Plan process. Here are some suggestions:

- **Log into** www.EngageCA.org, and then use [this link](#) to sign up for updates. **Share your ideas** about the plan. Follow [this link](#) to complete the official Master Plan for Aging survey. Write about villages and rank your priorities. We want dozens of villagers to weigh in.
- **Tune into the Master Plan's Wednesday Webinars** to learn more about the Plan and to contribute your thoughts about how villages address a variety of needs. Use [this link](#).
- **Meet with** your city council members, Supervisors, and legislators to educate them about the village. We will schedule a webinar to share best practices during the second quarter of 2020.

Stay in touch! Contact Charlotte Dickson with your own updates and questions: 510-900-6380 and charlotte@villagemovementcalifornia.org

Upcoming Events – Conferences



Spirituality Conference 2020: Vision of Diversity

Workshop: "The Village Movement: An Antidote to Social Isolation and Loneliness", March 5, 2020, All Day

Hoag Hospital, Newport Beach, CA

For further information contact Susan Johnson at Susan.Johnson2@hoag.org or 949-764-6594



BRAVO Meeting

BRAVO Meeting, Oakland, CA hosted by Hotel Oakland Village

March 26, 2020

9:45am – 1:30pm

Hotel Oakland Village Tea Room, 270 13th Street, Oakland

RSVP to megan@langeliercompany.com

Take BART to the 12th Street station. If driving, park near Lake Merritt and walk to the Hotel.



Aging Into the Future Conference

Village Movement California is a partner of [Aging Into the Future](#) (AIF), a conference in Southern California that connects older

adults and family caregivers with the newest technology solutions that make everyday life better. Check out Village Movement California's booth, visit the Tech Expo to try out smart home and voice-assisted devices, get your iPhone and computer questions answered, discover the latest apps to keep you connected with friends and family...and so much more. Participate in a co-creation session and be a part of the product design

process: test new technologies and offer feedback to product designers – make your voice heard!

Saturday, April 4

Los Angeles Convention Center

8:00am – 3:30pm

Village members can register at the discounted rate of \$15. Register now at

www.agingintothe future.com/register .

Webinars



Findings and Discussion of 2019 Annual Member Survey

Featuring the Village Movement California Data and Evaluation Team.

March 18, 2020

10:00am – 11:00 am

VMC Members Only Register [here](#)



Weekly Master Plan for Aging Wednesday Webinars

Sponsored by California Department of Aging

Wednesdays, 9:30am – 1:00pm

See schedule [here](#).



Community Care Corps

[Community Care Corps](#) is a new program funded by the Federal Administration for Community Living. Community Care Corps seeks proposals for innovative local programs in which volunteers work directly with older adults or adults with disabilities to provide non-medical assistance to help maintain their independence, or assist family caregivers. The application is due on April 3, 2020. Informational calls will be held at 10:00 am on February 25, and March 17. Information about these calls is available in the RFP [here](#). FAQs are [here](#).

All newsletters are archived [here](#)

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