



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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LEGAL SERVICES AND LEGISLATORS BRING *OLDER & WISER*® SEMINARS TO YOUR COMMUNITY

Neighborhood Legal Services Association, state legislators and volunteer attorneys partner to benefit older adults and their families

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With the help of your local state representative, volunteer attorneys and Neighborhood Legal Services Association (NLSA), *Older & Wiser*® seminars are coming to your community. *Older & Wiser*®, which was founded in 2003 by NLSA, provides free legal information seminars as a public service for aging adults and their families. Through these informative seminars, the elderly, as well as their families and caregivers, can learn how to best alleviate the legal issues they are currently experiencing as well as how to prevent new legal problems from occurring. These seminars have proved to be very successful in providing such critical information. *Older & Wiser*® seminars contain legal information presented in understandable terms about a legal matter of central concern to aging adults and their families. Current seminar topics currently include: *Protection through Powers of Attorney and Living Wills; Dealing Effectively with a Health Care Facility; Navigating Medicaid; Understanding Retirement Benefits; Last Wills and Living Trusts; and Mortgage Foreclosure and Older Adults.*

Pennsylvania State Senator Jay Costa, who has been involved with *Older & Wiser*® over the years through scheduling and promoting the seminars, describes the program as “a valuable tool to better educate our seniors”. He states, “As an attorney and a legislator, I can say that these services are a godsend to men and women looking for assistance in navigating the complicated maze of legal questions which can arise as we get older or care for our aging family members. From power of attorney questions to avoiding and dealing with senior fraud, the issues which participants bring to these meetings are complicated and stressful. Attendees leave *Older & Wiser*® seminars with more than the legal advice and information which they came looking for. They are also given peace of mind and a sense that there is a safety net to protect them. The value of that cannot be overstated.”

All residents of any age and income level are invited to attend the *Older & Wiser*® seminars, which last approximately two hours. Seminars are presented by volunteer attorneys that are knowledgeable in the subject area. Each seminar includes a PowerPoint presentation, a question and answer session and referral information for legal services, including services available at reduced fees or free of charge for income-eligible residents.

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Neighborhood Legal Services Association is responsible for preparing seminar content, recruiting volunteer attorney presenters and providing legislators with materials to promote the **Older & Wiser**[®] seminars in their districts. In turn, NLSA asks legislators to schedule seminars, provide local venues and publicize the event to the community. The benefits of cosponsoring these seminars are universal.

“The **Older & Wiser**[®] program offered through NLSA was one of the first outreach programs that we decided to offer through my office. I quickly recognized the value of the program available and have been offering several of the seminars yearly since being elected to office,” said Pennsylvania State Representative Randy Vulakovich. Vulakovich continued, “The **Older & Wiser**[®] programs are an asset to my constituents and the residents of Pennsylvania.”

Pennsylvania State Representative Dan Deasy, who has a series of seminars scheduled in the coming weeks, describes **Older & Wiser**[®] as a win-win-win for legislators, volunteer attorneys and constituents. He states, “I have witnessed individuals attend the seminars and as they enter they are a bit skeptic. How can a free event provide much information? When they realize how knowledgeable the attorneys are and how helpful the information is, they begin to ask great questions that benefit the group as a whole. The benefit to the community, my district and my staff in having partnered with Neighborhood Legal Services has been tremendous.”

The **Older & Wiser**[®] project invites legislators throughout the Commonwealth to participate in cosponsoring a series of seminars. With legislators already having scheduled sessions, as well as many others planning on scheduling dates in the coming weeks, the program continues to flourish. **Older & Wiser**[®] answers a universal call of aging adults in communities across Pennsylvania. “The fact that this information is needed is clear – whenever we schedule a presentation, the room is packed with people. And we get calls afterwards from seniors wanting us to schedule another presentation immediately,” said Representative Pennsylvania State Representative Dan Frankel. “I feel lucky to have a program like this, which educates our older Pennsylvanians about those issues that people may not always want to talk about, but which seniors themselves are clamoring for information on.”

For more information on the **Older & Wiser**[®] program and an updated list of scheduled seminars, please visit www.nlsa.us/about/older.html.

The Older & Wiser[®] project was founded in 2003 by Neighborhood Legal Services Association (NLSA), a non-profit corporation that provides free civil legal services to low-income individuals in its four-county service area in southwestern PA. The mission of NLSA is to meet the civil legal needs of the poor and vulnerable in our community through effective legal representation and education.