

# Serve, Care, Succeed!

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Fulton County  
Department of Senior Services

*Annual Report*  
2020 - 2021



# Message from the Director

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The Fulton County Department of Senior Services (DSS) is very proud of its accomplishments during the unforeseen challenges raised by the COVID-19 pandemic. Although older adults across Fulton County and the U.S. were among the most impacted by the pandemic, the Department remained ready to serve and maintained its connection with seniors in spite of facilities closing and social distancing.

This annual report represents an opportunity to reflect on our programs, services and impact across 2020 and 2021. Key service areas during this time that continue today are home-delivered meals and transportation. Virtual programming began and continues, which allows seniors to utilize technology in different and innovative ways. DSS also collaborated with other organizations and departments across the County to help ensure that essential services stayed intact.

Our shared efforts to support independence, health and delay cognitive decline through programs for seniors and caregivers throughout the community is unprecedented. We accomplish this by providing programs in group and individual settings through preventive, intervention and supportive services. New community-based partnerships were also established and existing partnerships were reinforced.

Although our resolve was tested over the past two years, we continue our efforts to connect Fulton County seniors who have been most resilient during these times, with the right resources that aid and support aging in place with respect, quality and dignity.

We invite you to support Senior Services by spreading the word about programming within our facilities, which have reopened. We invite you to engage in our virtual programming model. We urge you to continue to tell others about the impacts highlighted within this report that reflect the ongoing needs of Fulton County's rapidly growing senior population.



**Ladisa Onyiliogwu, CPM**  
*Director*

# People

## *212 Degrees*

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Our people are dedicated. They offer a warm and caring outlook to seniors who may be navigating complex systems, homebound or facing life's challenges. DSS team members are compassionate, resourceful and accomplished.

### **The Boiling Point: Action, Persistence, Results**

We expect all staff to go the extra mile. One degree is the difference between hot water and the steam used to power a train.

Team members listed below reached 212 degrees by stepping up and engaging in special projects like the 2020 Transdev food operations project.



*Anthony Bailey*  
*Donald Bolton*  
*Nikole Brookins*  
*Kendra Clayton*  
*Meletta Clayton*  
*Brenton Etuk*  
*Kenyatta Eugene*  
*Shawanda Holt*  
*Jamal Jones*

*Anne King*  
*Sonia Miller*  
*Antron Morgan*  
*Rafael Patterson*  
*Brenda Porter*  
*Antoinette Portis-Coston*  
*Andrew Puerto*  
*Tiffani Robinson*  
*Janet Stockdale*

*Deandre Thompson*  
*Kenn Vanhooose*  
*Callie Williams*  
*Kimberlie Wright*  
*Jamario Walker*  
*La Tanya D. Walker*  
*Lila Womack*  
*Masadi Wynn*  
*Singrid Yelverton*

# People

## *Distinguished Service*

### Promotions

*Asya Simmons*, promoted from Cook to Head Cook, Darnell Multipurpose Facility

*Toi Thompson*, promoted from Administrative Specialist, Adult Day Health to Administrative Specialist, STARline

*Sheila Usry Sayles*, promoted from Administrative Coordinator II to Bowden Facility Manager

*Aya Wynn*, promoted from Lifeguard to Program Evaluation Specialist, Quality Assurance



# People

## *Achievements*

### **New Certified Professional Managers**

*Donna Beard*

*Milrinette Nelson*

*Ciara Simone*

*Sherita Bennett*

*Brenda Russell*

*Julathra Smith*

### **CPMs in Progress (2021)**

*Quentin Boswell*

*Metroya Carruthers*

*Kendra Clayton*

### **Achievements in Education**

*Sheila Usry Sayles*, Master of Business Administration

*Jamario Walker*, Master of Public Administration

*La Tanya D. Walker*, Bachelor of Science, Interdisciplinary Studies (Business and Religion)

*Aya Wynn*, Master of Arts, Gerontology



**Senior Services filled 12 new positions since 2020. These positions will guide service delivery, programming and expansion efforts into 2022 and beyond.**

*Nathalie Brandon*, Head Cook, Bowden Multipurpose Facility

*Carol Dorsey*, Administrative Clerk

*Deborah Frisch*, LPN, Adult Day Health

*Joby Green*, Cook, Bowden Multipurpose Facility

*Vickie Hammond*, Nutrition Services

*Shumyala Haroon*, Administrative Clerk, Darnell Multipurpose Facility

*Bimal Pathak*, Technical Liaison

*Andrew Puerto*, LPN, Adult Day Health, Bowden

*Kweli Rashied-Henry*, Deputy Director

*Janet Stockdale*, Administrative Tech, Bowden Multipurpose Facility

*Melinda Wells*, LPN, Adult Day Health

*Lauren Williams*, Administrative Specialist, Mills Multipurpose Facility

# Because We Care, We Serve

## Vaccination efforts in Senior Multipurpose Facilities

Fulton County Government began offering COVID-19 vaccines to senior residents age 65+ and caregivers on January 11, 2021. A week later, the Fulton County Board of Health implemented a pilot that involved Senior Services efforts and multipurpose facilities. DSS team members called seniors using a randomized process and scheduled appointments for the Moderna vaccine. Fulton County also worked to ensure barrier-free access to vaccines for all residents over age 65 and the Department of Senior Services temporarily adjusted its transportation program to support the effort.

By March 10, 2021, Senior Services had placed 5,190 calls to Fulton County seniors. Of that number, 51% answered and 882 seniors scheduled an appointment to receive the Moderna vaccine.

## Georgia Senior Farmers' Market Nutrition Program encourages healthy eating

In August 2021, DSS partnered with the Atlanta Regional Commission to make produce more readily available to seniors across the County. The Georgia Senior Farmers' Market Nutrition Program also connected Georgia farmers (Georgia Roots Urban Farm) with seniors at Neighborhood Senior Centers and Senior Multipurpose Facilities. Up to 300 seniors were able to drive up and receive produce. This story was also highlighted by Fulton County News at <https://fultoncountyga.gov/news/2021/08/25/happening-in-fulton-senior-services-farmers-market>

882

vaccines  
scheduled

300

seniors receive  
farm produce

3,920

in-home services  
provided

103k

meals  
delivered

# Adult Day Health

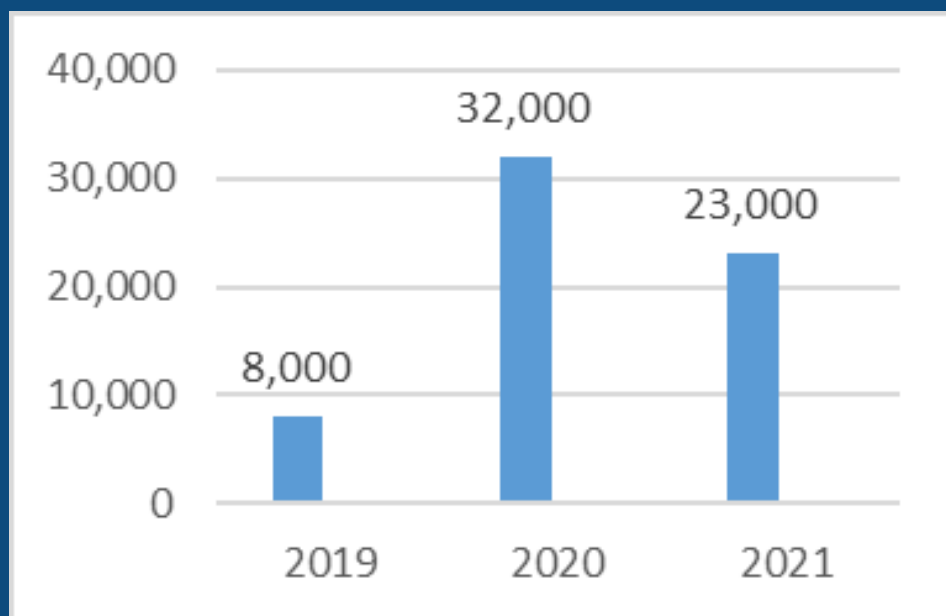
## Adult Day Health Program “Without” Walls!

The Adult Day Health Program “Without” Walls! Virtual Program originated in May 2020 as a result of program closure due to Covid-19. This program is a much needed and welcome addition to the Adult Day Health Program. Virtual programming includes Zoom classes and activities, home delivered meals and in-home respite care. Participants that attend the virtual program receive the following benefits: minimized isolation, cognitive stimulation, balanced nutrition, interaction with peers and continuation of the daily activities and programs.



## STARline (Information and Assistance)

The STARline (Soaring Through Aging Resources) has provided support through the Covid-19 Pandemic to all of our seniors. The team has continued to provide customer service and quality care. Since the pandemic calls have increased by 300%.



**“It has been difficult adjusting to life without the Center but I look forward to the daily Wellness calls.”**

*-DSS Senior Multipurpose Facility Participant*

# Supportive Services

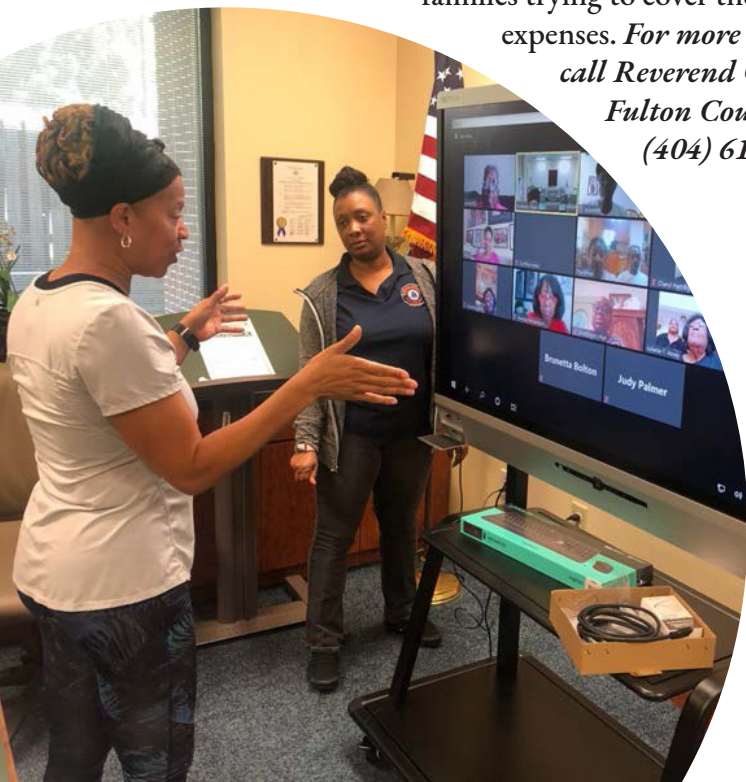
## Georgia Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP)

DSS collaborated with the Fulton Atlanta Community Action Authority and launched the Georgia Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) virtually in 2020 and again November 2021. This program helps low income senior households with their home energy bills. Eligible Fulton County residents applied for financial assistance, energy crisis assistance incurred as a result of heating or cooling emergencies, and long-term, low-cost residential weatherization assistance. In 2021, DSS launched the LIHEAP program at its Senior Multipurpose Facilities and processed 676 applications in 8 days.

## Indigent Burial Program

DSS fulfills a critical end-of-life need for Fulton County residents by providing dignified burial services to those who do not have insurance. This service has increased since the pandemic. Chaplains bury an average of 300 individuals each year. Many of these individuals were employed and about 10% were babies. Burials and funeral proceedings are delivered according to the person's faith with the accompanying spiritual leader presiding over the final rites. This long standing service has existed in the County for over 20 years and offers some financial relief for

families trying to cover their loved ones' burial expenses. *For more information, please call Reverend Clifton Dawkins, Fulton County Chaplain at (404) 612-4365.*



## Program Innovation

- Senior Services entered into an agreement with the Atlanta Housing Authority to provide supportive services to seniors living in Atlanta Housing locations.
- Neighborhood Senior Centers provided congregate meals to seniors at their homes as they participate in virtual and daily telephonic programming to prevent rapid cognitive decline. This allowed seniors to stay connected to the Senior Centers and receive a nutritious meal.
- Senior Services added two new providers to its In-Home Services program, which provides personal care, respite and homemaker services: **Trusted Hands** and **At Home Atlanta**. There are now four providers working on behalf of DSS to provide services in the homes of seniors throughout Fulton County. The remaining two are **All Ways Caring** and **Help at Home**.



# Program Success

## Transportation

DSS manages non-emergency medical transportation through its MOST model (Mobility Options for Senior Transport). The Alternative Senior Transportation program is designed for seniors aged 60 and above who are more ambulatory and do not require assistance beyond the use of a cane to walk. This service began as a pilot in November 2017 providing 412 trips for 25 riders.

Year over year analysis from 2020 to 2021 indicates increased ridership by 52%. The participation level in December 2021 was 1,359 riders and 10,985 trips were provided. The Alternative Senior Transportation program has enabled senior residents to remain engaged in their communities and access trips to pharmacies, doctor appointments and other activities that support daily living. This service has become a lifeline for seniors to connect to their community and prevent senior isolation. In four years, the Uber/Lyft program has exploded demonstrating seniors' need for flexible transportation options.

## Re-Opening Facilities

In July 2021, Neighborhood Senior Centers and Senior Multipurpose Facilities reopened their doors and resumed in-person programming. Operating under strict social distancing, cleaning, and environmental protocols, DSS offered 'Grab and Go' lunches, gym and pool reservations. Congregate Meals were provided to seniors who do not feel comfortable returning to facilities. Since reopening, approximately 200 seniors visit our facilities each day.



**116,598**  
alternative trips

**40,000**  
virtual class participants

**93%**  
customers satisfied with DSS

**99%**  
seniors satisfied with home repairs

**116%**  
increase in DSS YouTube visits

# Thank you Partners

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We would like to extend a special thanks to all of the partners and contributors who have helped to make a difference in the lives of our seniors.

- AmeriCorps
- Atlanta Housing Authority
- Atlanta Regional Commission
- Fulton County Department of Behavioral Health

## Commission on Elder Affairs

The mission of the Commission on Elder Affairs is to serve the elder population of Fulton County through a commitment to identify the social, economic, and health challenges/concerns affecting seniors; communicate with relevant community stakeholders; advocate for needed change; and secure solutions, resources and/or systems which enhance the quality of life for seniors. Commission members are appointed by the Fulton County Board of Commissioners and Councils on Aging. *Meetings are held the 2nd Friday of each month. All seniors are invited to participate. To learn more, visit: [www.fultoncountyga.gov/commissiononelderaffairs](http://www.fultoncountyga.gov/commissiononelderaffairs)*

## Join Us: Become an AmeriCorps Volunteer

AmeriCorps volunteers provide supportive, individualized services for Fulton County senior residents who live independently and may have difficulty completing daily living tasks. Volunteers must meet age and income eligibility requirements and they will receive a stipend for their services.

*Anyone interested in applying to become a trained AmeriCorps Volunteer should contact the Fulton County Senior Services STARline at 404-613-6000.*

**\$22M**  
annual budget

**14%**  
external grant  
funding

**86%**  
Fulton County  
General Fund





**FULTON  
COUNTY**

**404-613-6000 (STARline)**

**[www.fultoncountyga.gov/seniorservices](http://www.fultoncountyga.gov/seniorservices)**

*Connect with Fulton County*

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**Visit us online to register for upcoming virtual classes:**

**[www.fultoncountyga.gov/seniorvirtualclasses](http://www.fultoncountyga.gov/seniorvirtualclasses)**