

MaCCRA Vantage House Chapter

Activities Report – 2016

Your MaCCRA Chapter Board has prepared a brief summary of each of our 2016 activities for the membership.

We realize that the repositioning/renovating construction currently underway at Vantage House may cause us to limit the number of MaCCRA in-house activities during 2017. However, our Chapter will continue to be involved in all off-campus State activities and our Membership Committee will be providing building tours during the construction.

February 24, 2016 – “MaCCRA Day in Annapolis” and House Bill 588

Along with 90 members from MaCCRA State chapters, eight members from Vantage House participated in “MaCCRA Day in Annapolis.” At the rally legislators from the General Assembly spoke to the group in support of HB 588 mandating actuarial studies for all of Maryland’s CCRCs. Additionally, our members held private meetings with each of our Howard County Delegates: Eric Ebersole, Dr. Terri Hill, and Dr. Clarence Lam to discuss the importance of HB 588 to all CCRC residents.

April 13, 2016 - Delegate Eric Ebersole spoke at Vantage House

For Delegate Ebersole’s first meeting with our Chapter he presented a wrap-up of the 2016 Session of the Maryland Legislature. Issues discussed included the environment, education and the budget. He talked about “Noah’s Law” which strengthened Maryland’s drunk-driving laws; also “Equal Pay for Equal Work” which requires that employers not discriminate based on gender or gender identity in paying their employees. He concluded by answering questions which had been forwarded to him by our Chapter’s Legislative Advisory Committee (LAC).

Delegate Ebersole surprised all when he ended the meeting accompanying himself on the guitar and singing his own composition, “The Lawmakers Lament (There Oughta Be a Law)”

“Our purpose is serious but we have merry moments.”

May 7, 2016 – Vantage House MaCCRA Chapter Annual Meeting and Speaker

MaCCRA Sate Council President, William Ratcliff, presented an update on State activities, and then spoke about NaCCRA – the National Continuing Care Residents Association. Our Chapter

President and Treasurer presented annual reports. They were followed by representatives from the Membership and Legislative Advisory Committee (LAC) who updated recent Committee activities. Member Joel Broida reported on a local issue of importance to many of our members – “Affordable Housing in Downtown Columbia.”

A by-law revision which changed the governance structure of our Chapter was passed unanimously

May 21, 2016 - MaCCRA State Council Annual Meeting, held at Carroll Lutheran Village, Westminster, MD

Six Vantage House Chapter members attended. Gerri Gray, MaCCRA State Legislative Chair, reported on the unsuccessful attempt to pass legislation requiring actuarial studies for Type C CCRCs. An effort to reach out to two organizations which represent Maryland’s CCRC providers – Maryland Leading/Age and LifeSpan - has been positive. Ms. Marty Roach, Chief, Division of Continuing Care, gave a status report on Maryland’s CCRCs. Ms. Barbara Brocato, MaCCRA’s Legislative Advisor, spoke about Gov. Hogan’s efforts to streamline state government and presented a list of potential issues that MaCCRA leadership is monitoring.

In addition, MaCCRA member Jim Fennessey reported on the present status of a new MaCCRA website, soon to go into a testing phase. The website will feature State’s advocacy efforts and individual chapters will be able to advertise their events, speakers and advocacy work.

**June 13, 2016 - Speakers: Ms. Rosales, Director VH Department of Social Services
Ms. Albert, Coordinator of the State Health Insurance
Assistance Program (SHIP)**

Ms. Rosales described the resources available to Vantage House residents through her office which include: counseling, referrals, sources for relationship & mental health topics, support groups (grief counseling, low vision, low hearing) and assistance with transitioning to & from different levels of care available at Vantage House.

Ms. Albert, SHIP Coordinator, outlined the many services SHIP offers. All are free, unbiased, confidential and available to Medicare beneficiaries, their families, and/or caregivers. Services include assistance in filling out medical forms, understanding medical bills, completing medical directives, and helping seniors review and decide on a drug prescription plan. At the conclusion of the meeting a laminating station was available for three medical cards, your Medicare and two others, compliments of SHIP.

September 19, 2016 – Ms. Marty Roach, Chief Division of Continuing Care, Maryland Department of Aging, spoke at Vantage House

Ms. Roach responded to a number of questions that had been submitted to her by MaCCRA members earlier in the month. She spent time delineating the responsibilities of her Division, outlining differences between the information provided by end-of-the-year financial reports and actuarial studies, and she provided a comprehensive overview of the current status of Maryland's CCRCs.

This was Ms. Roach's final visit to any CCRC in Maryland; since she will be retiring as of November 1st. Members of the audience welcomed this opportunity to personally thank her for her contributions to the CCRC industry, and for her never-faltering work in support of protections for CCRC residents throughout Maryland.

October 26, 2016 – Vantage House MaCCRA Chapter Mid-Year Business Meeting

Chapter officers and committee chairpersons reported on the growth of the Chapter, mentioning increased membership, continuation of tours for new and established residents, increased financial stability, and efforts to collaborate with other resident groups. MaCCRA jointly sponsored a meeting for the community with News and Views and has worked with the Residents Association and Social Services and Marketing.

The evening's program was a presentation entitled "Why You Need MaCCRA!" It included a short dialogue between two residents: one who asked questions about MaCCRA and one who answered them. Following an impromptu comedic presentation of the script, causing lots of laughter from the audience, attendees broke into groups and facilitators guided a discussion about all things MaCCRA. A one page informative handout was the evening's take home prize. A potluck dessert with coffee and cold drinks was available throughout the meeting.

November 17, 2016 - Delegate Terri Hill spoke at Vantage House

Delegate Hill spoke to us about her service on the House Health and Government Operations Committee which considers such issues as 1) end of life decisions, 2) the problem of a need for vans to accommodate the ambulatory disabled, 3) behavioral health issues (psychiatric & addictive) and the training of police and others who encounter citizens with these problems, and 4) issues relating to CCRCs, including actuarial studies for Type C CCRCs. A Q&A concluded the meeting. Noise pollution at Merriweather Post Pavilion was discussed at length. This was the first MaCCRA event co-sponsored with News and Views.

More details and photos are available about our Chapter's 2016 Events in the MaCCRA Notebook located in the Vantage House Library