



2009 CARA Accomplishments

CARA has become the leading, grassroots, progressive movement for seniors in California, representing over 850,000 seniors through our 160+ affiliated organizations.

Some highlights for 2009:

Organizing on CARA Priority Issues

- ❑ Held 3 Rallies around the State to celebrate Medicare's 44th birthday and the need to expand Medicare to everyone (as part of the national health care debate). Received national media attention when 8 CARA members "sat-in" at Senator Feinstein's L.A. office demanding to speak to her about health care reform.
- ❑ Made over 50 presentations regarding the State Budget Crisis and the May 19th Special election. Distributed over 100,000 NO on Prop 1A cards to seniors around the state, participated in dozens of press events, hearings and rallies, got several letters to the editor published.
- ❑ Participated in more than two dozen press conferences and hearings on key issues around the state including the State Budget, Single Payer Health Care and other health care reform proposals, Renters Rights, transportation and disabled access issues, long term care and discharge planning issues, pension protection, protection from financial and elder abuse, and more.
- ❑ Organized Single Payer health care events around the state, with over 1000 participating at rallies and demonstrations in San Francisco, Sacramento, Stockton, L.A, San Diego, Fresno, and other locations.
- ❑ Turned out over 200 seniors to Congressional Town Hall meetings around the state on Health Care Reform during the August recess.
- ❑ Continued to develop our Discharge Planning Coalition, and presented our "Road Show" to explain the rights patients have to a safe discharge to over 200 seniors around the State.
- ❑ Translated our "Know Your Rights to a Safe Discharge" brochure in Spanish, Chinese and Russian, and have distributed over 10,000 brochures this year.

Legislative Advocacy

- ❑ Expanded CARA's Legislative Committee to over 30 members (which meets monthly) to discuss CARA's position on issues and develop our legislative, education and organizing strategies.
- ❑ Sponsored legislation to develop a state website to compare the effectiveness of prescription drugs and create a pilot academic detailing program (SB 341) and presented this issue to labor and community groups to gain their support.
- ❑ The CARA Legislative Committee wrote letters on more than 100 bills and sent these to all legislators on the key committees and to the full legislature before floor votes.
- ❑ Continued to develop the CARA "toolkit" on our priority bills, with fact sheets, sample letters, etc. that are used by all CARA CATs and others to advocate on behalf of seniors.
- ❑ CARA Legislative Committee members attended hundreds of hearings on our priority bills, presenting CARA's positions, explaining the impact the legislation would have on seniors.
- ❑ CARA CATs and members met with members of the California Congressional delegation and the CA Legislature in their district offices and in Sacramento on key CARA issues, such as health care reform, the State budget, housing, long term care, and other key senior issues.
- ❑ Continue to participate with the CA Board of Pharmacy to create a standardized Rx label that is more consumer friendly and culturally appropriate.

Membership Development

- ❑ Recruited 18 additional affiliated organizations this year, mostly from community based senior organizations, so that CARA now represents well over 800,000 seniors and their families.
- ❑ Increased participation in the 12 CARA Action Teams (CATs) throughout California and organized two new CATs – one in the High Desert and one in Southern L.A. County.
- ❑ Attended over 50 meetings of affiliate organizations to present CARA's work, our position on issues, and support the efforts of our member organizations.

Leadership Development

- ❑ Sponsored 2 CARA Leadership Academy sessions in 2009 with over 40 students participating.
- ❑ Edited the training materials used by the CARA Leadership Academy and put them on the CARA website so that the public can now access the training information
- ❑ Translated the CARA Leadership Academy materials into Spanish and will be putting these on our website by the end of the year.
- ❑ Developed a plan to offer Spanish translation at our next Leadership Academy session, planned for early 2010.
- ❑ Held a 2-day leadership retreat for the CARA Board members and CAT Conveners to plan our work for 2009.
- ❑ Sponsored two all day trainings for CARA leaders in Northern and Southern CA, with over 200 people participating.

Organizational Development

- ❑ Raised almost \$400,000 for the 2009 fiscal year to date (CARA & CARA Ed Fund combined).
- ❑ Held the second Annual Wrinkle Run in Sacramento and Orange, which raised over \$17,000 with over 75 CARA members participating.
- ❑ Created an Individual Donor program for CARA to encourage board members and other CARA supporters to make an annual pledge to CARA – and have raised almost \$10,000 to date.
- ❑ Continued to support the development of our sister organization, the CARA Education Fund, which is CARA's 501(C) 3 education, training and policy organization.
- ❑ Produced the CARA Alert monthly newsletter, which is e-mailed and faxed to CARA affiliates and activists every month. A printed CARA Alert is produced quarterly and mailed to our entire mailing list and distributed to senior centers and other senior organizations. The CARA Alert is also posted on our website.
- ❑ Re-designed and enhanced the CARA website (www.californiaalliance.org) to give seniors and other advocates a place to learn about the work of CARA and get involved.