



## OAPs provide a vital service to the state by educating their older citizens.

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- The correlation between education and health has been statistically confirmed in epidemiological studies. (Ross & Mirowsky, Demography 1999)
- If one or two out of every twenty sedentary and/or overweight Californians were to become more physically active and reduce their BMI to a leaner category, then California could take in a significant saving of about \$1.3 billion per year, or almost \$6.4 billion in five years. (California Department of Public Health/California Arthritis Partnership Program: *Arthritis and Weight*. [www.dhs.ca.gov/arthritis](http://www.dhs.ca.gov/arthritis).)
- Chronic diseases account for 75% of the money our nation spends on health care, yet only 1% of health dollars are spent on public efforts to improve overall health. By 2011, the cost of chronic disease is estimated to be \$2.8 trillion—an average of \$9,216 per person. (National Governors Association)
- In 2000, the total direct cost of all fall injuries for people aged 65+ exceeded \$19 billion. This financial toll is expected to increase as the population ages and may reach \$54.9 billion by 2020 (adjusted to 2007 dollars). (Healthy Aging Fact Sheet NCOA, National Council on Aging.mht)
- There is an investment in keeping older adults healthier because their use of the medical system is disproportionate to their numbers. Investments in disease prevention could save Medi-Cal over 84 million dollars. (Study by California Endowment, Prevention for a Healthier California)
- Physical activity for older adults is not recreational. Those who participate in regular physical activity have a 30% lower risk of developing moderate to severe functional limitations and spend less health care dollars. (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Physical Activity Guidelines for Americans)
- Community-based physical activity programs benefit sedentary, racially, and ethnically diverse older adults by coupling a behavior-change support group with a fitness class. (Gerontologist, Dec, 2009)
- Physical activity has a positive impact on fall risk. The CDC lists falls as one of the top three health concerns for older adults. In 2000, the cost of fatal falls was \$0.2 billion and \$19 million for non-fatal injuries. (Stevens, et al., 2006)
- Affordable and accessible public education programs in local communities are important social determinants of health in an aging society and a viable long-term social and economic investment. (Intl. J. of Lifelong Learning 2008)
- Participation in lifelong learning has effects upon a range of health outcomes including the onset and the progression of chronic illness and disability. (Hammond, Oxford Review of Education, 2004)
- 80% of older learners reported a positive impact of learning—those with disabilities or health problems reported more positive benefits than those in good health. So, those most likely to incur medical costs, or having to be on state aid are those who are most benefited. (Dench & Regan, Learning in Later Life, Research Report for the Department of Education and Skills, UK, 2000)
- Exercise Best Anti-aging Treatment, Study Suggests “The finding, which could be a turning point in anti-aging medicine, suggests the proverbial fountain of youth won't come from a pill or from an exotic berry from the Amazon, but rather plain old exercise” (By Sharon Kirkey, Postmedia News, February 22, 2011) <http://www.canada.com/health/Exercise+best+anti+aging+treatment+study+suggests/4321105/story.html>

## OAPs provide an important service to the state by keeping older citizens cognitively fit.

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- Social engagement, intellectual stimulation and physical activity play a key role in maintaining cognitive health and preventing cognitive decline. (Butler, [J R Soc Promot Health](#). 2004 May)
  - In a random sample of CA's Medi-Cal population, the state spent \$200 million on Alzheimer's Disease, nearly 10% of state spending on elderly patients. (Desai, et al., 1998)
  - Soon, only those with a good income and health and a better educational background are going to be able to continue learning while those with a limited income and poor health are left behind. (Manheimer, Journal of Transformative Education, 2005)
  - Those who venture into the "learning to learn" experiences often encourages them to engage in community work or re-engage in the workforce. It may also motivate them to embark on a second career that benefits society as a whole. (Framing New Terrain, Older Adults and Higher Education, 2009)
  - Higher Levels of Social Activity Decrease the Risk of Developing Disability in Old Age "Social activity has long been recognized as an essential component of healthy aging, but now we have strong evidence that it is also related to better everyday functioning and less disability in old age" (By Sharon Butler, Rush University Medical Center via EurekAlert!, February 17, 2011)  
[http://www.eurekalert.org/pub\\_releases/2011-02/rumc-hlo021711.php](http://www.eurekalert.org/pub_releases/2011-02/rumc-hlo021711.php)
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### American Association of Community Colleges Plus 50 Initiative

- The Plus 50 Initiative education program at the American Association of Community Colleges (AACC) is spearheading a movement by community colleges to help adults age 50 and over to prepare for new jobs, along with sharpening their marketable skills. The need for this program was founded in the wake of the latest recession when so many older adults found themselves unemployed and financially burdened
- The vision for work after age 50 is changing. Increased life-expectancy, loss of retirement funds and/or one's job and even the baby boomer culture of "making a difference" or "giving back" all play a part in this shift. Today, four out of five people over 50 intend to work in retirement, whether for enrichment or necessity, often in positions for which they must acquire new skills. Consequently, baby boomers are returning to school in record numbers. To meet this need, in 2008 the American Association of Community Colleges launched a three-year "Plus 50 Learner" initiative across the country to benchmark and showcase innovative community college programs that target the 50+ learner.
- Dr. George R. Boggs, AACC's president and CEO said "Reaching out to plus 50 students fulfills the long-standing community college mission to take education into the community, This new brand of student is going to revolutionize and reenergize community college campuses."
- At 78 million strong, the baby boomer generation is bringing a surge of older students to campus. In a national survey by the American Association of Community Colleges (AACC), 93% of the institutions reported demand for plus 50 programs and services
- Community college is particularly appealing to this student population: half of all adults over age 50 who are pursuing higher education are choosing to enroll at community colleges, according to the American Council on Education.