

# Aging Network Volunteer Spotlight

## Highly Skilled Volunteer Helps Save Millions in Fraud

**W**ith Medicare fraud and abuse costing the U.S. an estimated \$60-\$90 million annually, fighting fraud behind the scenes is a job that Senior Medicare Patrol (SMP) volunteer Gary Molina takes very seriously.



SMP empowers Medicare beneficiaries, their family and caregivers to protect, detect and report Medicare fraud through outreach and education. While most SMP volunteers work in the community to raise awareness about Medicare fraud prevention, CHA has a “behind the scenes” highly skilled team, which Gary is part of, working on its SMP Information Reporting System (SIRS). Gary’s exceptional analytical and software skills make data searching and analysis easy and convenient for the SMP staff and volunteers.

What may appear as a rather daunting volunteer role for many, Gary is able to do with great ease, according to the host agency of the SMP, California Health Advocates (CHA). “The field that I volunteer in is something that I really enjoy doing, so it doesn’t feel like work,” said Gary.

Gary has a background in auditing and a great knowledge of Microsoft programs, both skill sets critical to the “grunt work” of identifying potential fraud and abuse. “Gary easily pulls reports from the SIRS allowing staff to check out performance measures and identify fraud trends,” said Sandy Morales, SMP Outreach and Volunteer Coordinator at CHA. “This process is crucial because it guides SMP staff to spot Medicare trends and issue SMP Medicare fraud alerts to our network, which includes community groups, law enforcement and the Office of Inspector General.”

Gary has always had the desire to volunteer and attributes that in part to his parents. He recalled his mother who volunteered as a “candy striper” in a local hospital for many years, which this memory instilled in him the idea that volunteering was good to do and could fulfill

his desire to give back to his community. “I feel that my contribution is very simple, and volunteering alone is a significant part of the reward,” he said.