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San Francisco's Institute on Aging Appoints Longtime Supporter Sandra Simon as Head of Philanthropy Committee and Chair of 2021 Dinner à la Heart Fundraiser

SAN FRANCISCO, Sept. 17, 2020 — [Institute on Aging](https://www.ioaging.org/) (IOA), one of California's largest nonprofits dedicated to health and community programs for older adults and adults living with disabilities, today announced that Sandra Simon is stepping in to lead the organization's critical philanthropic efforts as head of the all-volunteer philanthropy committee. She will also spearhead its annual fundraising dinner, Dinner à la Heart, in 2021. Sandra has been a supporter of Institute on Aging for the past 34 years.



The philanthropy committee is a donor-driven group charged with turning IOA's program needs into funding opportunities and guiding and evaluating the solicitation of patron support. In her new role as committee chair, Sandra will ensure that IOA's fundraising program is aligned with the organization's strategic direction and needs.

“Institute on Aging does important work, including touching many facets of our society that go unnoticed or hidden from view,” said Sandra. “It has brought seniors into the spotlight, and I love being a part of that. It’s such a sense of accomplishment to raise all-important dollars to keep the organization’s programming moving forward.”

Sandra’s mother, May Shane, was part of the group of supporters who first created Dinner à la Heart in 1983, a give-back program that pairs IOA’s supporters with their favorite Bay Area restaurants for an inimitable dining experience. Her mother encouraged Sandra to establish her own East Bay-based friend group to participate in the fundraising event, and after many years of doing so, Sandra decided to carry on her mother’s legacy by joining the auxiliary board that works together to produce the event – a cause she has worked on since 1994. Dinner à la Heart and the yearlong work of the philanthropy committee has become a key part of the success of the non-profit organization by raising significant funds to its support senior services in the Bay Area, such as dementia care, home care, community living services and the Friendship Line.

“Institute on Aging is very lucky to have someone as dynamic as Sandra leading the charge for our philanthropic initiatives from the donor side,” said Jonathan Bernstein, Vice President of Philanthropy for Institute on Aging. “Her longtime association with our non-profit means she brings a wealth of knowledge to those whom she is leading, as well as a deep passion for helping older adults and adults with disabilities who need what IOA offers.”

“Seniors are really cool and have great stories that should be listened to and shared,” added Sandra. “We will all be older one day, and it can get lonely. I remember my grandmother in her late 90s would light up from a simple visit or phone call from a friend or family member, even if that person just asked ‘what did you have for lunch today?’ It made her feel included and special, knowing that someone cared. Institute on Aging does that for all its participants, and it’s so important.”

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