

**San Francisco Seniors Encouraged to Enjoy a Nutritious Lunch  
at On Lok's 30<sup>th</sup> Street Senior Center Meals Program**

***Great Food and Good Company on the Menu, Says Center Director***

**San Francisco, CA, October 14, 2011** – For Valorie Villela, recently honored at On Lok's 30<sup>th</sup> Street Senior Center's "Autumn Magic" gala celebration for her 30 years of service, the real reward comes not from personal recognition but from ensuring that the needs of the community's older population are well met. That's why Villela, director of the center, is encouraging residents 60 years old and over to take advantage of the Congregate Meals Program, where seniors can enjoy a nutritious lunch served daily in a welcoming social setting.

"Good nutrition is one of the factors that helps older adults remain healthy and independent in their communities," says Villela, who notes that 30<sup>th</sup> Street meals are planned to provide one third of the recommended daily dietary needs of seniors. "Forty percent of seniors in San Francisco live alone. People don't eat as well when they are cooking for one nor do they get the variety they need. Our lunch program provides a solid base that they can supplement with breakfast and dinner."

The 30<sup>th</sup> Street dining room offers seniors a nutritious, low-fat, three-course lunch planned by the center's registered dietician and prepared from scratch. The meals are well-balanced to include appropriate proteins, grains, and fruits and vegetables. Menus feature a variety of foods, such as Latino, Asian and traditional American fare along with vegetarian offerings. Seniors can attend one of two seatings at noon and at 1 p.m. Monday through Saturday and all holidays. Anyone 60 years of age and older is eligible to enjoy lunch at the center regardless of income level. Although a \$2 donation is encouraged, no seniors are turned away because of their inability to pay.

In addition to promoting good health and providing nutritious meals, the 30<sup>th</sup> Street Senior Center Congregate Meals Program is designed to prevent social isolation, one of the largest contributors to diminished health among seniors according to Villela and one of the major reasons why the program is so important.

"These are not just meals; they are meals in a social setting," says Villela. "We all need stimulation; isolation leads to illness and disease. We want to get people connected to other people and engage the body, mind and spirit so that they live longer, more satisfying lives."

30<sup>th</sup> Street Meals Program  
Page 2

She continues, “While the seniors are here, our hope is that they will learn about the other activities and services we offer and perhaps make use of them later. It is such an inspiration to me to see how these programs help older adults really flourish.”

The On Lok 30<sup>th</sup> Street Senior Center is located at 225 30<sup>th</sup> Street. For more information about the Congregate Meals Program, call 415-550-2210 or visit the website at [www.30thstreetseniorcenter.org](http://www.30thstreetseniorcenter.org).

The 30<sup>th</sup> Street Senior Center serves 5,000 ethnically diverse seniors with enriching activities and essential services that help them remain active, healthy, and involved in their communities for as long as possible. In addition to congregate meals, 30<sup>th</sup> Street also provides home delivered meals, case management services, the Always Active health promotion program, and a wide range of activities for active seniors. The 30<sup>th</sup> Street Senior Center is a member of the On Lok, Inc. family of senior services, which also operates On Lok Lifeways, a health plan that provides care and support so that frail seniors can age in place and enjoy the comforts of home while receiving comprehensive health care in nine centers throughout the Bay Area.

###