



## PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Wednesday, December 2, 2015

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### Department on Aging Announces the 2015 *Senior Hall of Fame* Inductees *Awards Highlight Service to the Community*

**SPRINGFIELD – December 2.** The Illinois Department on Aging (IDoA) has announced this year's *Senior Illinois Hall of Fame* Inductees. The department recognizes the special contributions made by older adults in the categories of community service, education, and the labor force, in regard to their employment.

"We are pleased to acknowledge the contributions these individuals have made," said IDoA Division Manager of Community Relations and Outreach Elizabeth Delheimer. "Their accomplishments have helped make Illinois communities a better place to live and we thank them for their dedication."

The *Senior Illinois Hall of Fame* was created by the Legislature in 1994 to honor Illinois residents age 65 and older for their personal achievement. Since then, 98 people have inducted into the Hall of Fame including the 2015 inductees. Each inductee is chosen through a statewide nomination and selection process. IDoA compiles a list of nominees then consults with the members of the Illinois Council on Aging to determine the winner of each category.

Nomination forms for the 2016 *Senior Illinois Hall of Fame* are now available on the IDoA website at <https://www.illinois.gov/aging/HallofFame/Pages/default.aspx>, or by calling the Department's Senior HelpLine at 800-252-8966.

The 2015 *Senior Illinois Hall of Fame* inductees are:

**Robert A. Saddler, M.Ed, Ed.D., 81, of Chicago, is the 2015 inductee of the Education category.** For nearly 60 years, Dr. Saddler has gone above and beyond to build a foundation of educational success for Chicago youth. Dr. Saddler holds a doctorate in Education Leadership and supports several educational programs aimed at improving the lives of students and preparing them for college. He recently began a mentoring program for young men in 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade to provide moral support and academic guidance. Through various volunteer initiatives, Dr. Saddler continues to instill his passion for education and commitment to helping students achieve success.

**James Thomas Pioth, 68, of Oak Forest, is the 2015 inductee of the Labor Force category.** Pioth has worked close to 50 years for the Oak Forest Fire Department. He started out as a junior firefighter and soon became a full-time firefighter. Early in his career he found a strong interest in the fire investigation unit, was a founding member of the fire investigation team, and was instrumental in establishing a yearly investigative training program. Pioth is a decorated firefighter who continues to contribute to the Oak Forest Fire Department and serve the residents of Oak Forest.

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**Martin G. Vilimek, 69, of Bridgeview, is the 2015 inductee of the Community Service category.** Vilimek has dedicated most of his life to volunteering. He is a retired firefighter who was instrumental in making Bridgeview the third community in Illinois to receive certification from the National Weather Service as a storm ready community. In addition, Vilimek has been a volunteer with the Masons and Shriners for more than 20 years, having won the Meritorious Service Award and volunteering at the Shriners Children's Hospital. His other recognitions include the Community Leader Award for community involvement and civic duty and serving in various leadership roles.

**About the Illinois Department on Aging**

The Department's mission is to serve and advocate for older Illinoisans and their caregivers by administering quality and culturally appropriate programs that promote partnerships and encourage independence, dignity and quality of life. For more information, call the Senior HelpLine at 1-800-252-8966 (or TTY for the hearing impaired at 1-888-206-1327), or log on to the website at [www.illinois.gov/aging](http://www.illinois.gov/aging)

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