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## **State Recognizes Advocates for Their Outstanding Service to Older Adults**

### ***Awards Ceremony held during the 2009 Governor's Conference on Aging***

CHICAGO – The Illinois Department on Aging (IDoA) today hosted an awards ceremony to celebrate the efforts of individuals and organizations providing the best services to assist older adults. The special awards ceremony is held each year during the Governor's Conference on Aging where advocates and experts from across the state gather to focus on issues that affect the aging population. This year's conference was December 9 - 11 at the Chicago Marriott Downtown.

"This annual conference provides a wonderful opportunity to remind ourselves that by working together we can improve the quality of life for the older adults we serve," said IDoA Director Charles D. Johnson. "I'm pleased to honor these individuals and organizations that go that extra mile to address the needs of seniors."

During the special awards luncheon, several awards were presented by professional associations to individuals and organizations in the Aging Network whose contributions and accomplishments merit recognition.

A list of the 2009 presenters and awardees follows:

**Jane Angelis, Ph.D.**, Director, Intergenerational Initiative, Southern Illinois University at Carbondale is the winner of this year's *Governor's Award for Excellence*. Dr. Angelis works diligently tap the skills of older adults and retirees for interesting and creative projects, including working with the Illinois Policy Academy on the Civic Engagement of Older Adults. Her work promotes the mindset that we are best when older and younger generations address problems together.

IDoA Director Charles D. Johnson presented the *Senior Hall of Fame Award* to **Jo Ann Dinello**, of Darien, as the winner in the Community Service Category. She set up the *Medical Lending Closet*, at the Darien Police Station, for people to get free donated medical equipment. She also founded the *We Care Program*, in 2003; to date more than 1,000 packages have been sent to soldiers serving in the Middle East.

The Coalition of Limited English Speaking Elderly (CLESE) presented the *Pillar of Service Award* to **Santosh Kumar**, Founder and Executive Director of Metropolitan Asian Family Services, a non-profit agency working for the well-being of the Indian community, in Chicago. Kumar is recognized for versatility and efforts to wipe out social injustice. She defines her dedication to services to the elderly as her passion, not just a profession.

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The Illinois Association of Area Agencies on Aging presented the *Sid Granet Aging Network Achievement Award for Individual Excellence* to **Janet B. Ellis**, Retired Executive Director, of Northwestern Illinois Area Agency on Aging, in Rockford. Ellis began her tenure at the Agency in 1972, and has been a persistent and effective advocate for older adults and family caregivers. She was awarded for her lifetime achievement.

The Illinois Adult Day Service Association presented the following awards:

- *The Everything Under the Sun Award* to **Family Alliance, Inc., in Woodstock**. Family Alliance has served as the only adult day health and recovery service in McHenry County for the last 27 years. Programs include door-to-door transportation, recovery services, in-house counseling, caregiver support groups, case management and community education.
- *The Sunlight Award* to **Cathy Davit**, Executive Director, ESSE Adult Day Centers, in Wheaton. Davit has been Executive Director of the three ESSE adult day centers for the last 14 years. She provides trainings for her staff and fosters interaction with caseworkers and other referral sources by inviting them to promote optimal services. Davit also works as a nurse in an assisted living facility.

The Association of Illinois Senior Centers presented the following awards to:

- *The Director of the Year* to **Paula Eaton**. Eaton has been Director of the Wayne Township Senior Center, in West Chicago, for eight years. Eaton tailors a quality program with a staff of only two people. Her nominator describes her as a “tireless force.”
- *Award for Brochures* to **Hanover Township**.
- *Award for Marketing and Website Design* to **Wayne Township Senior Center**.
- *Award for Newsletter* to Palatine Township Senior Citizens Council for “**The Happenings.**”
- *Award for Program of the Year* to the **Glenview Senior Center**, in Northfield.

Illinois Association of Nutrition Providers presented the *Joyce Still Memorial Award* to **Bob Smith**, of the Illinois Valley Economic Development Corporation. Smith began working at the Corporation in 1976 and later became project director of its nutrition and transportation program. He was very active with House Bill 527, which addresses rural home delivered meals. Smith is very dedicated to the older adults he serves.

AARP presented the following awards to:

- *The AARP Andrus Award* to **J Fazel** for working to provide sustenance and support to the homeless, seniors and the unemployed in and around Elgin. On average, he logs over 1,000 miles a month picking up food from local businesses each week and distributing it to churches and local agencies that provide hot meals for populations in need. Fazel also works at Public Action to Deliver Shelter running a kitchen to serve the needy.
- *The AARP Inspire Award* to **Aida L. Maisonet Giachello**, Ph.D, for her expertise, research and success in reducing health disparities. Giachello is an Associate Professor and Director of the UIC Midwest Latino Health Research, Training and Policy Center, where she has been conducts research on health disparities, trains new Latino/minority investigators and engages in policy work emerging from research findings.
- *The AARP Legislator of the Year Award* to the Honorable **Greg Harris**, State Representative of the 13<sup>th</sup> Illinois Legislative District. Since his election to the General Assembly in 2006, Representative Harris has been a tireless advocate for programs that serve seniors. He has taken on fights that many legislators are hesitant to stand up against, including oversight of nursing homes and sponsoring House Bill 3923, which makes the insurance industry more accessible and apparent to the public.

The Illinois Council of Case Coordination Units presented the *Case Manager of the Year* to **Amanda Groaning**, of Shawnee Alliance for Seniors. She was chosen to be a team leader for CCC Quality Improvement and Best Practice skills has embraced the concepts of comprehensive care coordination for clients. Groaning is compassionate and patient, and utilizes all programs and resources to meet the needs of her clients.

The Illinois Association of Community Care Program Homecare Providers presented the *Supervisor of the Year* to both **Alice Stenander** and **Conni L. Williams**.

- **Alice Stenander**, of Western Illinois Managed Home Services in Monmouth, has been responsible for the daily oversight of staff for 15 years. She does this with concern and compassion for staff and the clients they serve. Currently she's responsible for 285 clients and 71 employees working in various programs.
- **Conni L. Williams** is a good leader for her home care aides. She is approachable and does not ask staff to do anything she would not do herself. She works with staff to resolve difficult situations with their clients.

She supervises 45 home care aids with 135 clients and has been a supervisor for three years.

The winner of the *D. Jeanne Tippett Scholarship* is **Jessica M. Petty**, of the Henry County Health Department, in Kewanee. A home care aide for two years, Petty is pursuing a degree in nursing from Black Hawk College East in Kewanee. She plans to work in a hospital, upon graduating.