

Governor's Conference on Aging & Disability

Awards Luncheon

Friday, December 13, 2013
Illinois Department on Aging

Sponsored by:



**BlueCross
BlueShield**

Charles D. Johnson
Leader of Excellence Award

*Presented by: John Holton, Ph.D., Director,
Illinois Department on Aging*



**Jean Blaser, Ph.D., Leader for Community
Care Program in Illinois**

Dr. Jean Blaser served the state of Illinois from 1981-2001. She served as both the Manager of the Long Term Care Division of the Illinois Department on Aging as well as the Special Assistant to the Director. She was the primary architect for the design and implementation of the statewide Community Care Program, commonly known as CCP. While Dr. Blaser was at the helm, CCP served 39,000 seniors. Today, the program serves over 90,000 and has a billion-dollar budget. Dr. Blaser also developed a statewide contracted case management system; constructed the assessment tool used for long term care services; developed the universal nursing home pre-admission screening; implemented deinstitutionalization to transition older adults from nursing home to community-based services, and received national prominence for the Illinois Community Care Program as exemplary among state programs. Dr. Blaser is also a well-known and accomplished author.

Leader of Excellence

Outstanding Caregiver Award Nursing Facility

*Presented by: John Holton, Ph.D., Director,
Illinois Department on Aging*



**Maxine Cunningham, Central Nursing and
Rehabilitation Center, Chicago**

Maxine Cunningham has been a CNA at Central Nursing and Rehabilitation Center, a skilled nursing facility in Chicago for close to 20 years. She has shown dedication and devotion to her hundreds of residents, whose lives she has touched. Maxine has a warm smile which shines in the face of each of the residents. She is pleasant to residents' family members and to her co-workers as well. She is seldom absent and when Maxine comes in to work in the morning, her first concern is how the residents are faring. She is always willing to lend a hand or provide advice. She is usually assigned to work with residents who need the most assistance bathing, dressing, grooming and eating. Not only does she never complain, she considers it an honor to care for individuals who are unable to care for themselves.

Outstanding Caregiver Award Housing Facility

*Presented by: John Holton, Ph.D., Director,
Illinois Department on Aging*



J. Kay Landers, Glenhaven Gardens of Alton

Each morning, Kay Landers cheerfully enters Glenhaven Gardens, and the whole atmosphere changes. Joy begins to spread among residents and staff. No matter what is on her to-do list for the day, Kay always takes the time to listen to each resident and puts their needs first. Many times she will work late into the evening or come in on her days off to drive residents to a special event. During the holiday season, Kay and her husband will come in just to have lunch with residents who are missing family. Three days a week you can hear Kay visiting with a group in the Eagle View Room and having a great time exercising. According to Community Relations Coordinator Laura Robinson, "One day I walked in to see what all the laughter and the cheers were about and I found Kay and about 15 ladies acting like Rockettes." Whether it is a smile to uplift your day or a shoulder to lean on when times are sad, Kay is always there. She is the first one to volunteer to help organize events. Even though she has her own family, Kay cares just as much about her Glenhaven family. The activity program received a perfect 100% score due to Kay's involvement.

Outstanding Caregiver Award Older Americans Act Services

*Presented by: John Holton, Ph.D., Director,
Illinois Department on Aging*



Linda Cousin-Stearman, European Service at Home, Inc.

Linda Cousin-Stearman is known for her exceptional ability to be a 'natural' caregiver. She loves people and never tires of helping others. "I am a 'yes' person and would never argue. I do not want to say 'no,' or hurt people's feelings," says Linda. If anyone has a need, Linda does not consider any time limits; she puts the needs of others above hers. Her supervisors say that they can send her to anybody who requires experience and knowledge and who demands an excess of attention and patience. She is at ease with Alzheimer's patients and has a gift of making them relax. Many people call European Service at Home to tell them that they have a wonderful caregiver in Linda. Linda's nominator, Aneta Kastriekiene said that everyone who experiences Linda as a substitute worker wants to keep her. She is described an "earthly guardian angel."

Outstanding Caregiver Award Home Care and Hospice



Marta Licht, Henry County Home Health Department

Marta Licht has been a valued employee of the Henry County Home Health Department for nearly 30 years. Administrators and staff say her commitment, care, compassion and devotion to her patients is unsurpassed. In the summer, Marta often works in 90-degree homes. In contrast, during winter months, Marta plows through snow drifts to read patients for their day. One winter day she was assisted by the County Sheriff's Department via a deputy on a four-wheeler who rescued her after her car got stuck after leaving a homebound patient. She often works holidays to ensure her patients are bathed and ready for *their* company. Marta is the master at the power of persuasion, often making progress with the most challenging patients. One challenging patient asked if she could come more often. She has been known to carry garbage out to prevent patients from falling. She is an expert at shaving her male patients and rivals local hair dressers when styling the female patients. Not long ago, Marta set a retirement dates but when the date grew near she rescinded her request. She said she didn't want to give up a job she loves.

Everything Under the Sun Award

*Presenter: Kathy Wyatt, Leader of Day Health Services,
McDonough District Hospital, Macomb, and President,
Illinois Adult Day Services Association*



IPMR Senior World Men's Group, Peoria - Phyllis Coffman, Activity Coordinator

IPMR Senior World has provided adult day services in central Illinois for 32 years. In 2008, 32 percent of its participants were men, and by this year, that percentage will be 50 percent. Over three years ago a new program was introduced called "The Men's Group." Male participants wanted an area where they could do "guy things" like play pool, perform woodworking and drink coffee. Senior World got assistance from the Certified Occupational Therapy Program at Illinois Central College with implementing this change. The men have formed strong bonds, especially among the military men. They have a Wall of Peace with their names, branch and years of service. The area is usually full of talking, laughing, and physical activities such as pool, frisbee and Wii sports. Besides increasing Senior World's men census, daily attendance has increased nearly 20 percent since 2008.

Lifetime Achievement



**Jane Stansell, Director, Alzheimer's Family Care Center,
Chicago**

Jane Stansell was the Director of the Alzheimer's Family Care Center in Chicago and remains a leader in the state. She has provided recommendations for rule, policy and procedural changes for the aging generation. She has served on Community Care Programs' Policy Advisory Committee, served two consecutive terms as president of the Illinois Adult Day Services Association, as well as leading statewide training initiatives with the Illinois Department on Aging. Her effective advocacy has resulted in legislative changes regarding rate and rule changes, program enhancement and education of caregivers about programs and services throughout Illinois. Not only does Jane work tirelessly for improvements, but when directing her center she provided stellar care to participants. Strong leadership with compassion and integrity has been her benchmark in serving the aging population for over 25 years. The Illinois Adult Day Services Association, which Jane so admirably, proudly bestows her with its Award for Lifetime Achievement.

Sid Granet Aging Network Achievement Award

*Presenter: Jonathan Lavin, President and CEO, Age Options,
Oak Park*



Walter S. Meyers, Northeastern Illinois Area Agency on Aging

Walter Meyers began his career in aging in 1974 as a Program Director for the Washtenaw County Council on Aging in Ann Arbor, Michigan. He then moved on to the Community and Economic Development Association of Cook County, Illinois, as the Older Americans Act Program Coordinator. In 1982, he joined the staff of the Northeastern Illinois Area Agency on Aging where he has spent the balance of his career in a variety of community planning positions. Currently, he is Director of Research, Development and Network Integration. After nearly 40 years of service to older persons in Michigan and Illinois, Walt has decided to retire. During his career, he has been responsible for a number of major initiatives. He has helped to develop the statewide Care Coordination Unit System, Illinois Elder Abuse and Neglect Program, and the Information and Assistance Electronic Data Base, better known as ESP. The Illinois Association of Area Agencies is pleased to recognize Walter for his professional contributions to the development and success of the network of services funded under the Older Americans Act. Few can claim to have spent a 40-year-career with such insight, action and commitment.

Sunlight Award

*Presenter: Kathy Wyatt, Leader of Day Health Services,
McDonough District Hospital, Macomb, and President,
Illinois Adult Day Services Association*



Betty Erickson, Adult Day Service Director, Fox Valley Older Adult Services, Sandwich

Betty Erickson joined the Fox Valley Older Adult Services Board of Directors in 1994. She was a talented board member who always shared her knowledge and talent. She assisted with the development of the Adult Day Service Program in Sandwich in 1993. By 1999, she was such a strong presence at the day service program she became the volunteer Nurse Manager. She assisted with the acquisition of two other Fox Valley Old Adult Services ADS sites – Rachel’s Place in Aurora and the DeKalb Adult Day Care in DeKalb. By 2004, she became an employee of Fox Valley Older Adult Services, managing the Sandwich site. In 2012, Betty was promoted to the new position of Adult Day Service Director for all three sites. She is also an Alzheimer’s Association certified support group facilitator. Each day, Betty leads staff to make a positive difference in the lives of participants. She supports and encourages them and her staff by exhibiting the value of loyalty and work. She is creative, cooperative and dependable. All who know her say, “Thank you, Betty. We couldn’t have done it without you.”

Mind, Body, Spirit Awards

Presenter: John Becker, President, Association of Illinois Senior Centers



Millstadt Senior Center – Patty Evansco, Executive Director

Over 20,000 meals were served or delivered to seniors in Millstadt Township last year. The meals helped to meet the physical nutritional needs of seniors. However, food for the mind and spirit involved community involvement, staff commitment and volunteers donating countless hours of time. The Millstadt Senior Center helps to maintain the health and quality of life for the growing senior community in Millstadt Township by providing activities to stimulate the mind and keep the body active as well. Programs offered include rock painting, baby picture contests, Bible study, book club, and quilting. The AARP Driving Program and the Senior Police Program are offered as well. Community involvement included the completion of a walking trail with senior designed stretching and exercise stations.

Mind, Body, Spirit Awards

Presenter: John Becker, President, Association of Illinois Senior Centers



Mascoutah Senior Services Program - Sandra Hakanson, Executive Director

The Mascoutah Senior Services Program strives to help seniors maintain their mind, body and spirit connections through special education programs, exercise classes, and a positive atmosphere. The program hosted "Maintaining a Healthy Brain" with Washington University Medical School. Zumba, yoga and Tai Chi are offered regularly. According to staff, "We are a happy and fun place where seniors can have a delicious lunch, meet and enjoy their friends and learn how to stay safe and healthy. Life Stories are recorded and provided to our seniors and are proven to lift their spirits." They also produced a 2013 Calendar titled "Aging with Attitude" and sold them for a fundraiser. The program succeeds in a smaller way than many centers yet is still effective in keeping seniors living independently in their own homes. Director Sandra Hakanson's philosophy is, "Senior citizens are a precious gift and should be treasured for the knowledge and love they bring to the table of life."

Care Coordinator of the Year

Presenter: Kathy Weiman, CEO, Alternatives for Older Adults, Moline



Kristen Lair, Alternatives for the Older Adult

For the past 15 years, Kristen Lair has willingly helped out in other counties numerous times for care coordination. Since she is APS certified, she carried a caseload for three months while the agency was hiring and training. Kristen maintains an excellent working relationship with her co-workers. She keeps them laughing with her great sense of humor. As one worker said, "She makes you laugh when you really need to laugh." She has excellent rapport with providers, participants, hospitals, nursing facilities, supportive living, and families in her area. Customer satisfaction surveys reveal Kristen's popularity. One commented that Kristen is "a blessing from God." She is the "go-to" person in Mercer County. Kristen's humor is infectious, and staff appreciates it and enjoys it. As one stated, "Even with all the frustrations that come with serving as a care coordinator in a rural area, combined with timelines, compliance reviews and productivity expectations, Kristen manages to keep the punch lines coming."

Care Coordinator of the Year

Presenter: Kathy Weiman, CEO, Alternatives for Older Adults, Moline



Kristen Ritchie, DuPage County Community Services

Kristen Ritchie has always offered to take on additional responsibilities, no matter what her current workload. If one of her co-workers is falling behind, she will help them. She is a sounding board when others have questions or need clarification. Kristen works well with providers and other agencies to resolve issues. She is well respected by her peers, participants and other professionals. She uses diplomacy and tact when dealing with difficult situations. Even when others might not be treating her in a professional manner, she keeps her calm. Kristen puts participants' needs first and works hard to assist them with all types of issues. She works to find resources to address homelessness, lack of food or medication. She assisted one participant to relocate after a bug infestation. Kristen obtained new furniture and coordinated the move. She is extremely trustworthy and follows through regardless of the situation. She works hard to meet all the rigorous demands of her position, balancing participant needs with time demands. She worked well with one participant with delusions and helped get her hospitalized and stabilized. According to her nomination, Kristen is "extremely patient and caring and has a positive energy that is catching."

Pillar of Service Award

Presenter: Marta Pereyra, Executive Director, CLESE (Coalition of Limited English Speaking Elderly)



Martha Litas, Founder, Starlight Adult Day Care Services/Forever Young, Lincolnwood and Wheeling

Martha Litas immigrated from the former Soviet Union in 1975, fleeing the communist regime. She wanted to create a better life for her family. She holds a master's degree in education and when she arrived in Chicago she started a Russian radio station, creating a popular radio show called "New Life." This popular show aired everyday for over 20 years and discussed issues within the Russian community. Martha always had a heart and ear for older adults and organized trips to Springfield and Washington, D.C., advocating on their behalf. Martha and her late friend, Olga Pilnikov, opened their first adult day service in 2005 and it grew into the largest ADS program in the state with an average daily attendance of 250 seniors and a total number of clients of 900. The service is located in Lincolnwood and Wheeling and serves Russian, Ukrainian, Belarusians, Armenians, Georgians, Bulgarians, Czech and Polish older adults. Martha's loving and warm personality gives hope to many and promotes friendship and well-being of ethnic elders.

Supervisors of the Year

Presenters: Robert Thieman, Jr., CAE, Executive Director, Illinois Association of Community Care Program Homecare Providers, Springfield



Aurelia Salazar, Addus HealthCare, Inc., Hillside

Aurelia Salazar has been an exemplary supervisor with Addus since 2008. She has demonstrated the essential competencies to be successful in all aspects of her job responsibilities. Upon the arrival of a new participant, Aurelia is responsible for the intake process, employee recruitment and training, scheduling, welcome visits, ongoing coaching and supervision of the home care workers, payroll, quality assurance visits and monitoring of any change in the participant's physical, emotional and environmental conditions. Currently, Aurelia has a caseload of 250 participants and 167 in home care workers. However, she has temporarily managed a caseload of up to 435 participants and 310 workers without compromising the delivery of high quality care standards and participant satisfaction. Aurelia is fluent in English and Spanish. Her cultural and bi-lingual competency has allowed her to build strong relationships with participants, fostering empathy, understanding, and positive wellness. Moreover, Aurelia possesses the experience and leadership to influence employees to not only comply with the authorized plan of care, but to identify and report any exacerbation of the participant via the recently implemented Electronic Visit Verification system. Her rapport with them was fundamental in the training and implementation but helpful when troubleshooting. She is the go to person when it comes to any needs. She is a true champion of older adults and respected by her colleagues.

Supervisors of the Year

Diane Drew, Executive Director, Community Home Environmental Learning Project (CHELP), Decatur, and President, Illinois Association of Community Care Program Homecare Providers



Debra Smith, ASI Services, Chicago

Debra Smith is a critical part of ASI. She has been with ASI for 22 years and in the home care industry for 28 years. She is a team player with a soft demeanor and excellent organizational skills. She inspires confidence among the 45-50 homecare aides she oversees. Her strong work ethic and family values are evident in her treatment of her staff and those around her. Debra encourages communication and dialogue that has proved to serve as a conduit for educating, coaching and training others. She brings a wealth of knowledge and experience to her position that has made a significant contribution to ASI's new-hire training curriculum. Debra insists that working is living out her passion to help others. This was a discovery she made right after high school when she took care of family members who were ill. It was then she discovered her calling. Home care workers respect and admire Debra as their leader. They are aware she not only cares for the work they do but for themselves as individuals. She recognizes their challenges as well as their achievements and strengths. Debra is a highly valued employee who has increased efficiency and morale.

D. Jeanne Tippett Scholarship

Presenters: Robert Thieman, CAE, President, Illinois Association of Community Care Program Homecare Providers, and Mary Hemp, Community Care Systems, Springfield



Darlene Clutter, Addus Healthcare Inc., Springfield

Darlene Clutter's incredible adaptability with unforeseen issues has let her excel to genuine assurance. Her uncanny ability to know what a participant needs before they do, makes their families feel extra comfortable with her. Darlene's flexibility also allows her to quickly switch tactics if changes take place at the last minute. Her relentless perseverance always makes a happy ending. Darlene has promoted great relations in dire situations to render a positive impact. After taking the initiative as a private duty assessor, her leadership, learning, and interpersonal skills improved participant outcomes as she has provided peace of mind to many. Not only is she an asset to the Addus team, she is a single mother of four. She is a wonderful role model and is also enrolled at Lincoln Land Community College. With her abilities, adaptabilities, dedication and positive demeanor, Darlene makes the perfect recipient of the D. Jeanne Tippett Scholarship.

2013 Legislator of the Year

Presenter: Dave Vinkler, AARP Associate State Director



The Honorable State Representative Sara Feigenholtz, Chicago

State Representative Sara Feigenholtz has long been a champion for Senior Services and a driving force behind rebalancing Illinois' long term care system to provide services where people want them. For several years, she has led Illinois' House Human Services Appropriation Committee, navigating the network of human services through some of the hardest fiscal times in Illinois history. In spite of the challenges, the state's commitment to home and community-based alternatives to institutions has grown extensively as a reflection of her commitment. This year has been no exception to her history and a watershed year for her. After her appointment to Assistant Majority Leader, Representative Feigenholtz continued her work on the Community Care Program by leading efforts to clear up over \$300 million in liability and finally balancing the program budget. Representative Feigenholtz also worked throughout the Spring legislative session to pass the Medicaid Expansion that will provide healthcare to an estimated 342,000 uninsured adults in the state. AARP commends Representative Feigenholtz for her steadfast commitment to helping Illinois' seniors have the services they need to live independently.

Ombudsman of the Year

Presenters: Jamie M. Freschi, Regional Ombudsman, ICARE Long Term Care Ombudsman Program, Springfield and Vice President, Illinois Association of Long Term Care Ombudsmen



Tami Wacker, Regional Ombudsman, ECIAAA Long Term Care Ombudsman Program, Bloomington, and President, Illinois Association of Long Term Care Ombudsmen

As President of the Illinois Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program (ILTCOP), Tami Wacker has shown leadership, dedication and determination. Tami exceeds the expectations of a Regional Ombudsman and often volunteers to take on tasks no one else wants to do. She developed an internship program with students from Illinois State University to do legislative work that set the foundation for IALTCO to be able to move forward in its advocacy. Tami works diligently on legislative concerns that may impact residents of long term care facilities. Her enthusiasm for the work she does is contagious. I CARE Regional Ombudsman Jamie Freschi says, "The work that Tami has done on behalf of IALTCO has opened the doors for the Ombudsman Program in many realms and our voice is heard now, more than ever. Tami is also Co-Chair of the Long Term Care Council. Her work with the Council brings to life the reality of long term care through the eyes of residents. Through her diligence, Tami has made the Ombudsman Program relevant, which in turn, makes the residents' voices relevant."

Joyce Still Memorial Award
Illinois Association of Nutrition

Presenter: Debbie Weber, Project Director, CEFS, Effingham



Barbra Wylie, Director, Peace Meal Senior Nutrition Program, Mattoon

Barbra Wylie, Past President of the Illinois Association of Nutrition Programs, first discovered her interest in working as an advocate for older adults when she was in high school. Both her education and extracurricular activities focused on older adults. She is a graduate from Eastern Illinois University with a Master of Arts in Gerontology. She then coordinated home-delivered meals for five counties. Later, she became Assistant Director at Peace Meal, focusing her time evenly on assessment, grants and administrative tasks. After a six-year absence from Peace Meal while working for the Social Security Administration, Barbra was invited to serve as Director of Peace Meal. She recently worked with both Eastern Illinois University and Sarah Bush Lincoln Health Center to transfer sponsorship of the 40 year old program without interruption of nutrition services to seniors. She strives to protect seniors in 14 counties served by Peace Meal and also through involvement with the Illinois Department on Aging's Nutrition Advisory Council and the Illinois Association of Nutrition Programs.

Save the Date

Please update your calendar with our 2014 conferences:

April 22- 23, 2014

CCP Supervisors Conference,
Crowne Plaza, Springfield

August 20 - August 22, 2014

Adult Protection and Advocacy Conference,
Oak Brook Hills

August 7 – 17, 2014

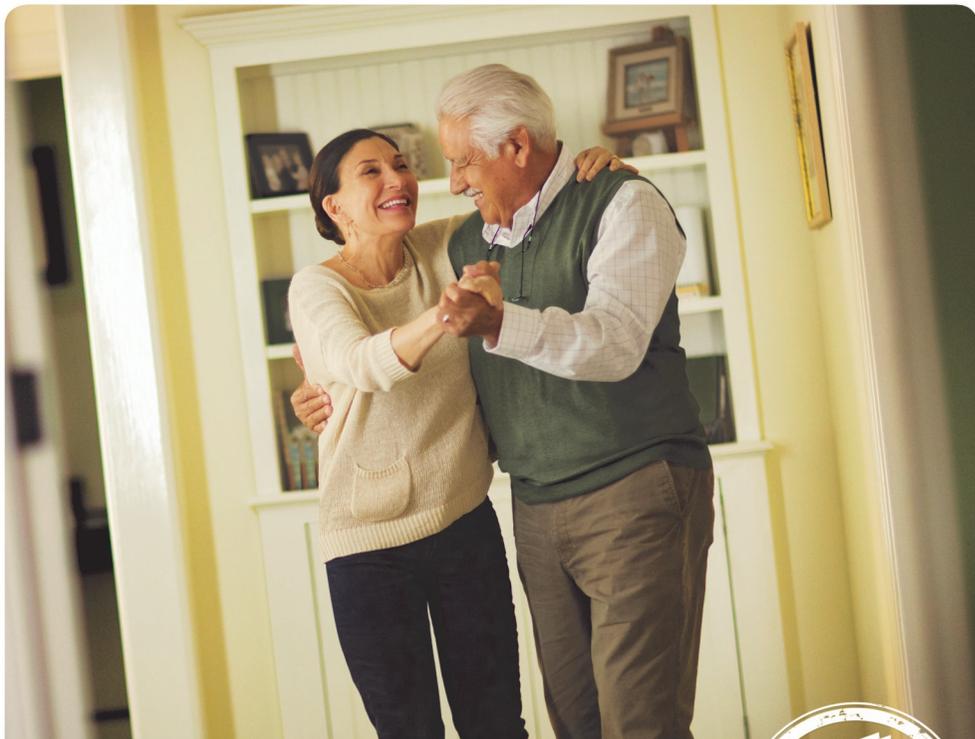
Illinois State Fair,
Springfield

October 16 - 17, 2014

Care Coordinators' Conference,
Crowne Plaza, Springfield

December 10 - 12, 2014

Governor's Conf. on Aging and Disabilities,
Marriott Downtown, Chicago



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