



## PRESS RELEASE

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CONTACT:

Kimberly Parker 312/814.1577

### IL Dept on Aging Hosts Governor's Conference on Aging

#### *Annual conference brings together professionals who serve older adults*

**CHICAGO** - December 8, 2010. The Illinois Department on Aging (IDoA) kicked off the first day of the *Governor's Conference on Aging*. The three day conference runs December 8, 9 and 10, at the Marriott Chicago Downtown. Each year, IDoA hosts the conference as a comprehensive training event that offers intensive workshops to promote the latest research, trends and developments in supportive technology, and is the largest statewide meeting of those who work in the aging network.

During last year's conference, Governor Pat Quinn made the call to action to get older adults and their families engaged in efforts to benefit communities and the state. IDoA Director Charles D. Johnson, who leads the initiative, said with the number of potential older volunteers on the rise, there has never been a better time to leverage the power of older adults to meet social needs in our communities.

"Today, more than 70 million baby boomers are facing retirement. With longer life spans and higher quality health care, there will be more and more active older adults seeking opportunities to make meaningful contributions," said Director Johnson. "As society, we need to recognize the potential of a large pool of untapped older adults that have the wisdom and experience to make a positive difference."

Director Johnson and the core team working on this project will meet during the conference to wrap up the year-long campaign. Detailed information will be included in a report to the Governor and General Assembly.

According to the Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity, in the year 2000 older Illinoisans represented 15.8 percent of the population. That number is expected to grow to 24.3 percent by 2030. To address the growing number of older adults facing retirement, the Illinois Department of Insurance, co-sponsor of the conference, held a workshop earlier today about Medicare Part D enrollment and benefits coordination with the state's prescription assistance program Illinois Cares Rx.

Aging and disability specialists, advocates, nursing home residents and their families are encouraged to attend a public forum today at 1:00 p.m., on the *Transformation and Continuum of Long Term Care in Illinois*. Representatives of the Illinois Long Term Care Council and the Illinois Coalition on Mental Health & Aging are leading the forum.

On Friday, IDoA will host an awards program to honor individuals from around the state, who have shown outstanding dedication and compassion about aging issues.

For a complete agenda of the conference, log on to [www.state.il.us/aging/2calendar/gov-conf.htm](http://www.state.il.us/aging/2calendar/gov-conf.htm).

**Respect for yesterday. Support for today. Hope for tomorrow.**