

PRESS RELEASE

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IL Dept on Aging honors advocates who assist older adults

Awards Ceremony officially ends the 2012 Governor's Conference on Aging

CHICAGO – December 14, 2012. The Illinois Department on Aging (IDoA) today wrapped up activities for the *Governor's Conference on Aging*, by honoring individuals and organizations whose contributions in assisting older adults merit recognition. The awards program was the final event of the conference where advocates and experts from across the state gather to focus on issues that affect the aging population. This year was the 31st consecutive *Governor's Conference on Aging*, held December 12, 13 and 14 in Chicago.

“We continue to make great strides in addressing the needs of older adults. But limitations on resources and a growing demand call for us to find ways to make sure we are still providing quality services. This conference, which is the largest statewide meeting of those who work in the aging network, is the perfect place to anticipate the needs of the aging population and to honor those who are dedicated to serving the needs of the aging population,” said IDoA Director John K. Holton, Ph.D.

IDoA Director Holton presented the following awards to:

James Blanton, named *Outstanding Caregiver* of a nursing facility. Mr. Blanton has worked at Amboy Healthcare and Rehabilitation for eight years. Called the “everything man” he does anything to ensure residents’ needs are met. Each morning he gets to work early to greet residents and help start off their day with a smile.

Millie Clements, of Madison County Catholic Charities’ Tri-Cities Faith in Action Program in Granite City, received the *Outstanding Caregiver Award* for Older American Act Services. Ms. Clements has volunteered with the Retired Seniors Volunteer Program for eight years. She is compassionate and takes caregiving duties seriously.

June Dehlin, of Iroquois Memorial Hospice in Watseka, was previously presented the *Direct Care Worker Award*. The award recognizes an outstanding worker over the age of 55 who has provided outstanding direct caregiving to seniors through the home care or hospice industry.

Diane Drew, executive director of Community Home Environmental Learning Project (CHELP) in Decatur and president of the Illinois Association of Community Care Program Homecare Providers, received the *Charles D. Johnson Leader of Excellence Award*. Ms. Drew has more than 25 years working for elder abuse prevention.

Sue Peters, nursing administrative assistant at Pathway Senior Living of Alexian Village in Elk Grove, was named *Outstanding Caregiver* of a senior housing facility. Ms. Peters champions the quality of life and started an intergenerational reading program at an elementary school that features seniors reading to students.

Awards were presented by professional associations to individuals and organizations that provide best services to assist older adults.

Lindsey Colgan, home care assistant for the Henry County Health Department in Kewanee, is the *2012 D. Jeanne Tippettt Scholarship* winner. She is currently enrolled at Black Hawk College where she is pursuing her degree and licensure as a physical therapy assistant.

The Honorable Jacqueline Collins, state senator from Chicago, was named *2012 Legislator of the Year* by AARP. An accomplished advocate of political activism and social justice, fighting to increase staffing levels for Illinois nursing homes, Senator Collins has a long history of leading efforts to protect consumers.

Kathy Etters, of Shawnee Alliance for Seniors in Carterville, was named the *2012 Care Coordinator of the Year* by the Illinois Council of Case Coordination Units. In her 12 years there, she has been a team leader, mentoring new coordinators, and building relationships and networks in the area. She is said to be a calm, strong advocate.

The Honorable State Senator Mattie Hunter and Honorable State Representative Joe Lyons, both of Chicago, received the *Sid Granet Aging Network Achievement Award for Individual Excellence* from the Illinois Association of Area Agencies on Aging for their help to pass Senate Bill 3267. This law requires financial institutions to train employees to prevent financial fraud of older adults.

Helen Nakayama, of the Japanese American Service Committee in Chicago, received the *Pillar of Service Award* from the Coalition of Limited English Speaking Elderly (CLESE). She worked with CLESE on program development for the committee that, in 1997, received its first Community Care Program contract.

Senior Services of Central Illinois (SSCI), in Springfield, was given the *Mind, Body and Spirit Award* by the Association of Illinois Senior Centers. Celebrating 45 years of service, the hardworking staff is recognized for efforts and accomplishments made in the face of economic difficulty. After a \$1 million budget cut, SSCI continued to provide services to some of the frailest in the communities they serve.

Lois Elaine Smith, supervisor with Adult Comprehensive Human Services of West Frankfort, was named the *2012 Supervisor of the Year* by the Illinois Association of Community Care Program Homecare Providers. She has a dedicated staff of home care aides (HCA) who go out of their way to work for and with a participant. Upon incident, she works with HCAs, care coordinator, the participant and family to make sure everything gets resolved.

Linda Toepfer, of the Daily Bread Program for Senior Services of Central Illinois, received the *Joyce Still Memorial Award*. Dedicated to senior nutrition, for the last eight years she has been instrumental in making the program run smoothly. Seen as a driving force, she has personally secured many of the program's donations.

Judith K. Tribble, lead supervisor at InTouch Home Care of Lutheran Social Services of Illinois in Canton, was named *2012 Supervisor of the Year* by the Illinois Association of Community Care Program Homecare Providers. She joined InTouch as a home care assistant that led to supervisor. Committed to excellence, she helps counsel and guides her home care aides in all activities.

C. Kay Waller, licensed practical nurse at McDonough District Hospital Adult Day Care in Macomb, received the *Sunlight Award* from the Illinois Adult Day Service Association. The award is said to reflect the dedication and compassionate spirit she so generously gives at the hospital adult day care.

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