



News Release

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COMMONWEALTH COUNCIL ON AGING HONORS SENIOR CONNECTIONS' 'FAITH TO FATE' INITIATIVE

(RICHMOND, Va.) — Senior Connections, The Capital Area Agency on Aging, won the top 2015 “Best Practices” award from the Commonwealth Council on Aging for its advance care planning initiative in the Richmond region.

The council, which advises the Governor on issues affecting the 1.5 million Virginians age 60 and older, acknowledges organizations whose innovative programs can be replicated across the Commonwealth. The awards are announced each year in May, proclaimed by Gov. Terry McAuliffe as [Older Virginians Month](#).

This year’s first place award of \$5,000 honors [Senior Connection](#)’s Faith to Fate Advance Care Planning Initiative. This program works with area African-American congregations to encourage awareness about the need for advance care planning and offers information for individuals to make end-of-life decisions and legal documents to help relatives and others know what type of medical care is wanted.

“All of us know that making plans provides peace of mind, but few of us actually do it,” said Beth Barber, chair of the Commonwealth Council on Aging. “I know families in the Richmond area are appreciative for the opportunity to have access to the information and assistance in completing the process. The partnership of community and Area Agency on Aging is a model that is effective and replicable.”

This is the 10th year for the Commonwealth Council on Aging’s Best Practices Award Program. Nominees for the awards were judged on their innovation, ability to promote aging and how it impacts the community, among other standards.

“Through the ‘Best Practices’ program, the Commonwealth Council on Aging has honored new, exciting and innovative ways that organizations across the Commonwealth are providing programs and services for older Virginians that previously did not exist,” said Dr. Richard Lindsay, chair of the council’s Best Practices Awards Committee. On May 19, Dr. Lindsay will present the award to Senior Connections, which will hold an [open house event](#) from 2:30-4:30 p.m.

The second place award of \$3,000 recognizes the Central Senior Center for its meal and home care programs that help thousands of older residents of Fairfax County. The center, located in Centreville, opened in 1994 to serve Koreans, Fairfax County’s third largest immigrant community, and its programs help older Korean-Americans age in place and maintain their independence. The award will be presented June 2.

“As the number of aging Virginians grows, it’s important to have innovative programs that keep them, their family members and caregivers informed about choices that allow them to remain in their communities as they age and to make knowledgeable end-of-life decisions,” said Commissioner Jim Rothrock of the Virginia Department for Aging and Rehabilitative Services. “These programs make that possible.”

A \$2,000 third place award was given this year to the [Volunteer Solutions program of the Fairfax Area Agency on Aging](#). The program, which has expanded to other organizations, connects volunteers to older adults and adults with disabilities in the community, and recruits volunteers for senior centers in Fairfax County. The award will be presented June 17 at the Fairfax Commission on Aging meeting at the George Mason Library in Annandale.

Dominion Resources continues to support the Commonwealth Council on Aging’s Best Practices Awards, which serve to encourage organizations across the Commonwealth to develop and support programs and services that assist older adults to age in their community.

The council gave honorable mentions to the following organizations:

- The Hopewell Respite Care Group
- The New Freedom Mobility Management Programs, serving 12 counties in Northern Neck and Middle Peninsula, in addition to New Kent and Charles City counties
- Successfully Aging at Home in the New River Valley

For more information about the Commonwealth Council on Aging and the Best Practices awards, visit www.vda.virginia.gov/council.asp.

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The Virginia Department for Aging and Rehabilitative Services, in collaboration with community partners, provides and advocates for resources and services to improve the employment, quality of life, security, and independence of older Virginians, Virginians with disabilities, and their families. For more information, visit www.vadars.org or follow DARS on Facebook at www.facebook.com/vadars or Twitter at @vadars.