



News Release

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THREE VIRGINIA AREA AGENCIES ON AGING RECOGNIZED NATIONALLY

(RICHMOND, Va.) — Three of Virginia’s aging programs won honors from the National Association of Area Agencies on Aging for developing initiatives to help older Americans remain independent in their homes and communities.

The awards were announced during the association’s annual conference held last month in San Diego. Each year, the association recognizes the best programs and practices of its members, giving Aging Innovations Awards to honor the most creative programs and Aging Achievement Awards to recognize programs that are contemporary, effective and replicable.

The Commonwealth’s 25 Area Agencies on Aging contract with the Department for Aging and Rehabilitative Services to provide services for older Virginians and their families in communities throughout Virginia.

“Our Commonwealth is very fortunate to have our aging network centered on our Area Agencies on Aging. Virginia’s programs are truly an innovative and effective public-private partnership that works for us all,” said DARS Commissioner Jim Rothrock.

“We are very proud of our sister agencies for their hard work in serving their communities and offer our congratulations on these well-deserved awards,” said Leigh Wade, president of the Virginia Association of Area Agencies on Aging.

Loudoun County Area Agency on Aging won an Aging Achievement Award for civic engagement. Its Community Ambassador Program trains volunteers to increase awareness about local services available for older adults. Ambassadors also act as “confidants” to community members, who may be more likely to tell a peer about abuse, neglect or financial exploitation. The program has reached an additional 1,800 older adults and increased the agency’s volunteer base.

The Aging Innovation Awards honorees included:

- Senior Connections, The Capital Area Agency on Aging serving the metro Richmond area, won in the healthy aging category for its “You Can! Live Well, Virginia!” Adapted Chronic Disease Self-Management for Elder Prisoners. The association noted the agency’s status as the first to use the Stanford University’s renowned chronic disease self-management program inside a state correctional center, offering the opportunity for Virginia offenders to pursue a healthier lifestyle, even while incarcerated.
- Mountain Empire Older Citizens, Inc., in Big Stone Gap, won in the transportation and mobility category for its Falls Prevention in Transportation. The program was cited for its success in educating transport drivers and personal care aides on falls prevention and its impact on service and liability. After implementing the program, falls in MEOC facilities and on buses dropped 24 percent for the third quarter of 2015 and 40 percent for the fourth quarter.

The National Association of Area Agencies on Aging supports the national network of AAAs whose services make it possible for older individuals to remain in their homes, preserving their independence and dignity. These agencies coordinate and support a wide range of home and community-based services, including information and referral, transportation, senior centers, adult day care and long-term care ombudsman programs.

For a listing of Virginia’s AAAs or to contact an Area Agency on Aging near you, visit www.vda.virginia.gov/aaalist.asp or call 800-552-3402.

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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.