

Commonwealth Council on Aging 2011 Best Practices Award Winners

\$5,000 Award Winner

Partnership between Arlington Aging and Disability Services Division [ADSD] and Culpepper Garden [CG] Retirement Housing

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Arlington County maintains a vital partnership with Culpepper Garden I and II, a 35-year old HUD financed retirement housing apartment that has 273 efficiency, 1-bedroom and 2-bedroom apartments for very low income elders. Most residents have multiple service needs; however the housing facility is not in a position to provide any services in addition to meals and a HUD financed service coordinator. Through close cooperation with Arlington County staff, residents utilize a broad array of services, with services tailored to each resident's needs. Service utilization is so strong that the residents' profiles mirror that found in assisted living residences. Examples of services that are available to older residents generally, but can be delivered in a cost-effective manner are: (a) bi-weekly transportation service to grocery stores and pharmacies; (b) personal care/homemaker service available 7 days per week; each resident receives only the number of hours needed. A single aide can get several people dressed in the morning and then move on to take care of others. During snow times, the aides have stayed at the building and not gone home. (c) Nurses set up medications and coordinate with the individual's physicians. Residents and staff at Culpepper Garden communicate with us regularly and serve as a bellwether for emerging issues and changing needs. This has been Arlington's way of responding to the lack of assisted living for low-income elders, or what we call that oxymoron – affordable assisted living.

\$1,750 Award Winners

Elderspirit Community

Richard Brumleve, President.

Elderspirit Development Corporation Board of Directors

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Elderspirit Community in Abingdon Virginia is about aging. It is also about living and housing and eventually about dying. It is about all of these things – not as an ending or as a failing – but as an opportunity, a possibility. The mixed-income cohousing, community consists of 29 homes (16 low-income rentals; 13 market-rate homes), a central Common House and a small Spirit Center. The community consists of 45 members. Eleven members live off site because there was no vacancy when they wanted to come. All members participate in the life of the community. Elderspirit is a community of mutual support and late –life spirituality. Mutual support is defined as neighborly care. Late-Life spirituality is not religion, but the search for a meaningful life. Resident Management is one of the principles of cohousing. The residents determine how they will live with one another, maintain the lawns and buildings, cook their common meals and live by the stated values. Committees report at the monthly meetings of the whole.

Volunteer Money Management Program

Thelma Bland Watson, Ph.D., Executive Director

Senior Connections, The Capital Area Agency on Aging

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The Capital Area Agency on Aging, in partnership with AARP, assists seniors age 60 and over who need help with their monthly bill-paying responsibilities. Trained volunteers provide individualized bill-paying assistance including check writing along with services such as preparing a monthly budget, sorting mail, reviewing bills, creating a household filing system, balancing a checkbook, and reviewing bank statements. Money Management enables older adults to live independently and with the peace of mind that their bills are paid in a timely fashion and no late fees or penalties are being assessed. The program also provides ongoing oversight to protect against financial exploitation by monitoring expenditures. All services are customized to the individual's needs and requirements. Volunteers typically work in the client's own home at least once per month. All volunteers must pass criminal background checks and training prior to assignment. There is no charge for Money Management services but donations are encouraged. For further information, please contact Senior Connections, CAAA at (804) 343-3000.

\$500 Award Winners (Honorable Mention)

Caregiver Training Series

Chris Miller, Project Manager
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Aging Together was founded on the premise that collaboration is the key to successfully addressing the needs of the growing senior population. Within the framework of aging services, caregivers are a critical factor in successfully assisting their family members to age in the community. Aging Together's *Caregiver Training Series* supports family caregivers by providing them affordable and accessible hands-on training in their home communities. Facilitated by the local county teams of Aging Together, training is developed to address the needs and interests of caregivers in each community. This training is provided by local experts that can provide specific answers to group and individual questions. Implemented in 2007 this training has so far reached over 250 caregivers in the five counties of the Rappahannock Rapidan region teaching skills including assistance with personal care, legal issues of caregiving, preparing for end of life, Alzheimer's Disease, dementia, medical issues of older adults, caring for the caregiver, financial planning and much more. Using the collaborative relationships of Aging Together, this training is provided entirely through donations and volunteers who assure a quality learning experience for family caregivers and acknowledge the stresses inherent in being a caregiver. The result is more skilled and confident family and friends who are better prepared to support their elder family members and who are better connected to a system of supports.

RSVP & Care-A-Van Driving Programs

Brian Duncan, Executive Director
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Increases in the elder population in Planning District 9 (PD9) prompted local volunteer transportation programs to be coordinated under the umbrella of the RRCSB/AAA's RSVP Volunteer Program. The five major "RSVP Driving Stations" are the VOLTRAN Program, St. Steven's "Road to Recovery," "RAPPMEDRIDES," as well as the RSVP Driving & Care-A-Van Programs. In 2010, the combined efforts of the volunteer transportation programs in PD9 resulted in 874 trips by 67 RSVP volunteers. These volunteers provided 43,077 miles of transport and spent 3,191 hours of service helping individuals with vital transportation services.

The Virginia Heart and Vascular Institute Heart Failure Clinic

Jennifer Reynolds, Manager

Mary Washington Healthcare

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The clinic provides patients with high-quality, ongoing care that significantly reduces the rate of hospital readmissions, enables patients to self-manage their condition, and enhances their quality of life by allowing resumption of most daily activities. Our active patient census is around 200 with an average age of 69. Patients are seen three to five days after hospital discharge, regardless of ability to pay. Rigorous efforts are in place to help uninsured or underinsured patients gain access to transportation, primary care, and medications.