

Commonwealth Council on Aging  
Best Practices Awards Committee Meeting  
Virginia Department for Aging and Rehabilitative Services  
1610 Forest Avenue, Suite 100, Henrico, Virginia 23229  
March 24, 2015

Members Present

Richard Lindsay, *Chair (via telephone)*

Beth Barber

Mitchell Davis

David Farnum

Valerie Scott Price

Vernon Wildy

Members Absent

Roberto Quinones

Staff Present

Amy Marschean, Senior Policy Analyst

Matt Morgan, DARS Intern

Meeting Called to Order

Dr. Lindsay called the meeting to order at 1:10 p.m. by thanking everyone and welcoming everyone to the meeting. He noted a special thanks to the Committee's two expert application reviewers, Lynne Seward, formerly of A Grace Place Adult Day Center in Richmond, and Gordon Walker, former Executive Director of the Jefferson Area Board for Aging (JABA) in Charlottesville. They represented the long-term care industry and the university-based gerontology or geriatric program following the Council's Selection Process Guidelines. Dr. Lindsay further thanked DARS staff, Amy Marschean, Tanya Brinkley, Cecily Slasor, Matt Morgan and Deb Loving for getting the voting results tallied and managing the overall process. Most importantly, he thanked the members of the Best Practices Awards Committee for the time they spent in reviewing the applications and scoring the applicants.

2015 Best Practices Award Selection

The nominees were rated based on the following criteria: community need and impact, promotion of aging in the community, innovation, inclusiveness, goals/outcomes/evaluation, cost effectiveness/sustainability, and potential for replication. Mrs. Seward and Mr. Walker employed the same scoring system and criteria followed by the members of the Committee and their scores were provided to the Committee by email on March 19 after all Committee members' scores were received by staff. Both experts agreed to be available by phone to answer any questions that arose during the meeting, but they were not consulted.

The Committee members agreed that the twelve nominated programs were meritorious. One program, however, failed to be operational for a full year prior to March 2, 2015 as required

having begun in fall 2014 according to their application. The Committee determined they were ineligible, but urged staff to encourage them in their notification letter to reapply after the program was operational a full year. After much discussion, Beth Barber moved that the following first, second and third place award winners be recommended to the full Council for selection. The motion was seconded by David Farnum and passed unanimously.

**First Place (\$5000): Faith to Fate Advance Care Planning Initiative of Senior Connections, the Capital Area Agency on Aging**

The Faith to Fate Advance Care Planning Initiative is an ongoing partnership between Senior Connections and five area churches that serve African American congregations and communities within the Greater Richmond and Tri-Cities regions. Ultimately enrolling 12 churches, its purpose is to deploy practical solutions to counter the alarming and widespread dearth of awareness, information, access and assistance with end-of-life medical and property asset legal discussions, planning and free legal documents execution. Consistently, national research has documented that this vital life-planning activity is done the very least among African Americans, as compared with every other ethnic subgroup. Research also shows that this problem is both expanding rapidly and heaping ever more avoidable suffering and wasteful medical costs upon all Americans, as new state laws, technologies, treatment options and procedures have drastically altered the end-of-life medical landscape for everyone. Using the new professional advance care planning (ACP) program – Honoring Choices Virginia – as the best-practice “alternative to guardianship” for family members suddenly facing the incapacity of a family member, this is the first and only effort nationwide to leverage local African American churches as permanent ACP resource centers.

**Second Place (\$3000): Central Senior Center of Fairfax County, Virginia**

For the past 20 years, the Central Senior Center (CSC) has provided a wide array of programs for thousands of frail older Korean Americans to help them stay in the community and enable them to be self-sufficient. It has grown to be the largest senior center with over 450 participants in Fairfax County. Koreans are Fairfax County’s third largest immigrant community. CSC provides four major services: Congregate Meal and Senior Center Day Program, Korean Meals on Wheels, Personal Care Aide Certification program, and Central Senior Center Home Care. CSC provides classes with cultural enrichment opportunities, physical exercise, development of hobbies, spiritual health and health education, as well as furnishes information about social services and naturalization in a culturally appropriate manner. In 1994, CSC started as a “Korean Senior Center,” but non-Koreans began to participate as students and volunteers and the senior center was renamed the “Central Senior Center” in 1998. It is now open to all seniors regardless of religion, race or ethnicity. About 16 other senior programs modeled after the CSC Day Program have been developed by the Korean faith community in Virginia and Maryland.

**Third Place (\$2000): Volunteer Solutions, Fairfax Area Agency on Aging**

Volunteer Solutions (VS) is a program that has expanded way beyond the Fairfax Area Agency on Aging (AAA) in which it is housed. The mission is to mobilize & connect volunteers with

meaningful opportunities to improve the lives of older adults & adults with disabilities in the community. The program has nine staff that manage nearly 4,000 volunteers throughout Fairfax County and the cities of Falls Church and Fairfax. The volunteers serve AAA, Adult Services and Adult Protective Services clients within Fairfax County's Adult & Aging Services. VS also recruits, trains and manages volunteers for Fairfax County's adult day care centers and senior centers. Their Recruiters and Partnership Developer are constantly creating new partnerships to provide volunteers for services that will help residents maintain or enhance their quality of life and level of independence. Many volunteers provide services such as transportation and household tasks. VS also oversees nearly 1200 volunteers who deliver meals to over 600 homebound residents. VS helps the community grow even better as it grows older.

On a motion by Mitch Davis, with a second by Valerie Price, the Committee unanimously recommended to the full Council a slate of three honorable mentions:

#### **Honorable Mention:**

- The **Hopewell Respite Care Group** is a community service for residents of Hopewell and surrounding areas for ages 35 and above and seniors 60 and older. The program is designed for individuals with a mental, physical, or cognitive disability and/or requiring constant assistance from a caregiver. The program allows participants to engage in meaningful recreational, educational, community, and social activities in a safe environment, among peers. It also creates a break for caregivers to recreate, socialize, or tend to their own personal needs. Families appreciate these services which alleviates the pressure to care for an elderly or disabled adult. Without this program, many individuals are placed in nursing homes, group homes, or mental institutions which can be detrimental to their physical and mental health. There is a sense of empowerment for individuals that remain independent as long as possible.
- The **New Freedom Mobility Management Program** is a transportation service designed to improve transit opportunities for people with disabilities and those over 60 years of age. The project currently serves twelve counties throughout the Northern Neck and Middle Peninsula in addition to New Kent and Charles City Counties. It allows people to become more actively engaged in social and recreational events, retail shopping, access to jobs, vocational training programs in addition to non-emergency medical appointments. New Freedom also offers expanded transit services outside of the public transportation service area and hours. Bay Transit, a division of Bay Aging, is the only public transportation provider to the ten counties of the Northern Neck and Middle Peninsula and the counties of New Kent and Charles City. Data from the 2014 Bay Transit Survey showed that public transportation continues to be a critical need in this largely rural region. Bay Transit also provides a travel training service for Seniors called "Seniors on the Go." The program is designed to educate seniors about transportation services, and alleviate any fears they may have with hands-on experience to learn how public transportation works.
- **Successfully Aging at Home in the New River Valley - a Grassroots, Community-Based Initiative**, was established to meet an unmet and growing need: the ability of residents to age in their homes and communities. The initiative is guided by the New

River Valley (NRV) Aging in Place Leadership Team (Team) made up of eight community organizations. Initiative activities utilize the strengths of team members to bring together a wide range of sectors of the community to develop viable options to address two co-occurring needs that challenge older adults to remain in their homes and communities: home accessibility and supportive services. Also, the program develops new intentional housing options for the regions' rural and town areas that meet the needs and preferences of the aging population. The Team has sponsored innovative community projects and programs promoting aging in place including a Home Modifications Program partnership with Habitat for Humanity, development of a Time Bank program, and establishing a regional Aging-in-Place Action Plan.

#### Schedule Tentative Dates for May Award Ceremonies

It is hoped the awards will be presented to the winners in a formal presentation in their communities in May in conjunction with Older Virginians Month, yet staff noted that organizing the ceremony in the locality often bleeds into June. All committee members are urged to participate in the local ceremonies and Council members will be urged to attend, as well.

#### 2015 Process Improvement Discussion

The Committee members discussed the 2015 procedures for nomination and selection and improvements for the 2016 application and instructions. The members generally felt the paperless process worked. The application's questions regarding inclusiveness and program budget were reviewed, but no changes were deemed to be necessary.

The meeting adjourned at 3:00 p.m.