

Commonwealth Council on Aging Best Practices Committee Meeting  
Virginia Department for Aging and Rehabilitative Services  
8004 Franklin Farms Dr., West Conference Room  
Henrico, Virginia 23229  
March 24, 2014

Members Present

Richard Lindsay, *Chair*

Mitchell Davis

David Farnum

Valerie Scott Price

Roberto Quinones

Vernon Wildy

Members Absent

None

Staff Present

Amy Marschean, Senior Policy Analyst

Meeting Called to Order

Dr. Lindsay called the meeting to order at 10:10 a.m. by thanking everyone and welcoming everyone to the meeting. He noted a special thanks to the Committee's two expert reviewers, Paul Kupstas, Virginia Center on Aging, Virginia Commonwealth University, and Elizabeth Swider, President, **Care is There** Geriatric Care Management. He further thanked DARS staff, Amy Marschean, Tanya Brinkley, Cecily Slasor and Deb Loving for getting the voting results tallied and managing the overall process.

2014 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. Dr. Lindsay provided a brief background of the two experts, Ms. Kupstas and Ms. Swider whose participation followed the Council's 2014 Selection Process guidelines. They represented the university-based gerontology or geriatric program and the long-term care industry respectively. They employed the same scoring system and criteria followed by the members of the Committee and their scores were provided to the Committee on March 21 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 sixteen nominated programs were meritorious. After much discussion, Mitchell Davis moved that the following first, second and third place award

winner be recommended to the full Council for selection. The motion was seconded by Valerie Price and passed unanimously.

**First Place (\$5000): F.R.E.E. Foundation Equipment Reuse/Recycling and Gifting Program (Roanoke)**

**F.R.E.E.** helps Virginians achieve independence through mobility when they have no other way to attain their independence. Every day, adults across Virginia lose their mobility to injury or illness. Many are uninsured and cannot obtain the equipment they need. In Virginia, the number of uninsured adults remains very high, driven by unemployment and reductions in employer-provided healthcare. **F.R.E.E.** helps these Virginians in need regain their mobility and with it their independence by giving them needed rehabilitation mobility equipment. The majority of those served by **F.R.E.E.** are older Virginians.

**Second Place (\$3000): Retired and Senior Volunteer Programs (RSVP) of Montgomery and Pulaski Counties and City of Radford's Supplies for Seniors**

The goal for **Supplies For Seniors** is to enhance the quality of life by providing basic necessities to homebound seniors during winter months. Homebound seniors are seniors who can't leave their home or rely on others to take them to do errands or bring meals, groceries and medication. During the past six autumns, the **RSVP of Montgomery and Pulaski Counties and City of Radford** have held a "Supplies for Seniors" drive to collect basic household and personal care items for seniors who receive home delivered meals through the New River Valley Agency on Aging) and Radford/Fairlawn Daily Bread. Each January, RSVP volunteers sort and bag the donated supplies, then deliver them to an average of 250 homebound seniors residing in the five localities of the New River Valley.

**Third Place (\$2000): Alzheimer's Association Central and Western Virginia (CWVA) Chapter's Arts Fusion**

**Arts Fusion** offers creative and cultural opportunities for those affected by memory loss in the **Alzheimer's Association CWVA Chapter** area. Arts Fusion's mission is to employ the arts as a vehicle for promoting creative expression and quality of life experiences for persons with dementia and their caregivers. For those diagnosed with younger onset and early stage dementia, who are living at home with a family caregiver, Arts Fusion offers art museum and gallery visits, nature walks, and opportunities to attend symphony and dramatic arts rehearsals.

After further discussion, the Committee decided it could not agree on only three honorable mentions. On a motion by David Farnum, with a second by Roberto Quinones, the Committee unanimously recommended to the full Council a slate of four honorable mentions and agreed that only the first three listed below would be the fallback position if the full committee did not approve a fourth honorable mention. However, the group felt strongly that the four programs were worthy of honorable mention.

## Honorable Mention:

- **Wills for Seniors** is an emotionally moving, empowering event providing seniors with a will, a power of attorney, and an advance medical directive. Four legal teams, consisting of lawyers, law students, and notary publics meet privately with each senior to prepare legal documents. The **Jefferson Area Board for Aging (JABA)** coordinates the event through promotions, completing applications, determining eligibility, scheduling appointments, and guiding participants in preparing an advance questionnaire packet. The packet is reviewed and finalized on the Wills for Senior Day as each senior meets confidentially with their assigned legal team.
- Rural Madison County located in north central Virginia along the foothills of the Blue Ridge Mountains, is home to an innovative program to benefit seniors age sixty or better named **The Nest Egg Thrift Store**. A national catalog company warehoused in Madison has generously donated returned items to the Madison Senior Center for repair and sale at the Nest Egg Thrift Store. Through coordination of 28 local volunteers and limited staff of the senior center, this program has provided substantial amounts of money (\$76,130 in 2013) to expand the existing senior center site through construction of a 600 square foot addition. The program coordinated by **Rappahanock Rapidan Community Services**.
- A collaborative effort formed in 2010, the **Greater Augusta Coalition Against Adult Abuse (GACAAA)** is an all-volunteer organization working to raise awareness of adult abuse in the community and improve reporting procedures and criminal prosecution of adult abuse crimes. GACAAA members include representatives from senior centers, assisted living facilities, healthcare, social service organizations, first responders, law enforcement, local financial institutions, Legal Aid, Commonwealth attorneys, and APS representatives working in Augusta County, Staunton, Waynesboro, and surrounding areas. GACAAA partners with state and local service providers to improve public understanding of adult abuse with the goal of increased reporting, treatment, and prosecution of adult abuse.
- The **Northern Virginia Aging Network (NVAN)** is a collaboration of organizations and individuals that advocate for and serve older residents of the five Northern Virginia Area Agency on Aging (AAA) catchment areas: Alexandria, Arlington, Fairfax, including Fairfax City and Falls Church, Loudoun and Prince William, including Manassas and Manassas Park. Representatives of the AAAs, commissions on aging and non-profit organizations (those providing services to older adults) from these areas meet every other month, to exchange information, share knowledge and stay current with the needs of their constituents and the possibilities for legislative solutions. In October, NVAN presents its platform to the Northern Virginia legislative delegation at its annual legislative breakfast, which attracted over 200 attendees in 2013. NVAN's rigorous analysis of issues and understanding of the legislative process invariably attracts sponsors from the Northern Virginia delegation for its proposals.

### Schedule Tentative Dates for May Award Ceremonies

The awards will be presented to the winners in a formal presentation in their communities, local schedules permitting, during the weeks of May 5 and 12 in conjunction with Older Virginians Month.

### 2015 Process Improvement Discussion

The Committee members discussed the 2014 procedures for nomination and selection and improvements for the 2015 application and instructions. Mr. Quinones requested amendment to the Inclusiveness category to make certain applicants were very specific about the program audience and describe their proactive outreach to communities. Also, many applications seemed to cite to national studies for results and he was more interested in local results achieved with greater focus on local impact. Finally, all members continue to want greater budget information on programs. The question seemed specific enough, but some applicants were not as forthcoming about budgetary information.

The meeting adjourned at 1:10 p.m.