



2012 Volunteers Matter: Excellence in Volunteer Services Awards

In 2012 NASUAD honored three programs as recipients of the *Volunteers Matter: Excellence in Volunteer Services Awards*. These three programs presented unique solutions on how to recruit and retain volunteers in their respective states.

The Volunteers Matter Award was started as a result of NASUAD's work with the Aging Network's Volunteer Collaborative. With funding from the Administration on Aging, the Volunteer Collaborative was started in 2010 for the purpose of enhancing the engagement of volunteers in the aging network with a particular emphasis on increasing volunteer participation of the baby boom generation. In spring 2011, the Volunteer Collaborative was launched as an on-line resource to assist the Aging Network in engaging and empowering older adults and maximizing their leadership skills and experiences. The website can be found at www.agingnetworkvolunteercollaborative.org. Without the work of the Collaborative, these awards would not have been possible.

Awards were presented at the 2012 Home and Community Based Services Conference on September 12, 2012 at the Hyatt Regency Crystal City in Alexandria, Virginia. Each program received a check for \$1000 to be used to strengthen their program, one all-expense paid trip to the conference, and participated in a workshop at the conference to highlight their program.

Awards were presented to the following programs:

Time Banking in New Mexico

The **Concilio Campesino del Sudoeste Inc. (Condilio CDS, Inc.)** from New Mexico is a private community-based not-for-profit organization that has served the state of New Mexico with a special emphasis on areas that are federally designated as medically underserved areas. They address needs for older adults in the areas of health issues, social justice and social services. The program for which Concilio CDS, Inc. was recognized is their civic engagement program in time banking. Time banking is used with a wide population group and focuses on reciprocity and meeting basic needs in the community. The concept of time banking is simple: individuals in the program earn time by helping others and then they can spend that credited time to obtain assistance when they need help. This concept is supported by the principle that Concilio CDS has adopted which says that everyone has something to give and what we receive builds our capacity so that we can give to others to build their capacity. This philosophy has allowed them to reach a large population to address health disparities, economic crisis, poverty, education, hunger and other areas through their active volunteer corps of over 2500.

Josefina Mata, Executive Director, accepted the award on behalf of the Concilio CDS Inc.

Aging Advocacy Leadership Academy in Oklahoma

The Oklahoma Department of Human Services, Aging Services Division sponsors the **Oklahoma Aging Advocacy Leadership Academy**. The Academy was started in 1997 and is designed to identify, train and develop volunteer leaders and advocates in issues related to aging and disability. The academy is structured to provide training over 10 weekends during a one-year period. Over the course of the training, participants select an issue of personal interest on which they build an advocacy platform.

Past participant issues have included utilizing church congregations to serve older members, grandparents raising grandchildren, court-appointed advocates for vulnerable adults and establishing a health clinic. Not only does the Academy assist participants in learning how to effectively develop a strategic plan to advocate on their issue, but it also provides lasting relationships with other members of the Academy. In selecting candidates for the Academy, the Aging Services Division seeks to build diversity into each class in order to help participants develop a wider perspective and to sharpen their learning experience. So far over 300 individuals have completed the Academy, including NASUAD's Board President Lance Robertson who was a member of the first class in 1997-98.

Judith Mowery accepted the award on behalf of the Oklahoma Department of Human Services, Aging Services Division.

Senior Journal in Rhode Island

The Rhode Island Department of Human Services, Division of Elderly Affairs provides a program called the **Rhode Island Senior Journal**. The Senior Journal is a public access cable television program formatted as a 30 minute talk show. The Senior Journal was first broadcast in November 1988 and over 600 Senior Journal programs have aired since. Over 50 volunteers have served as a member of the crew and the average volunteer serves for 8 to 10 years. The goal of the Senior Journal is to explore issues affecting the aging population and those living with disabilities and is done through the perspective of senior volunteers and people with disabilities. In fact, the volunteer crew for the Senior Journal includes several seniors and one adult who is a wheelchair user. The topics addressed by the Senior Journal include medical care insurance, housing, legal issues, long-term care, community-based support systems and financial issues. Not only does the program address issues that are of concern to older adults and people with disabilities, but it also highlights volunteer opportunities available to older adults.

Lawrence Grimaldi accepted the award on behalf of the Rhode Island Department of Human Services, Division of Elderly Affairs.