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National Association of Area Agencies on Aging

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**n4a Honors Innovative Programs that Promote
Successful Aging in America**

2017 Aging Innovations and Achievement Awards Announced

Washington, DC—Today, the National Association of Area Agencies on Aging (n4a) honored 52 programs with an impressive track record of success helping older Americans remain in their homes and communities for as long as possible.

n4a announced the 2017 recipients of the prestigious *Aging Innovations and Achievement Awards* at its 42nd Annual Conference in Savannah, Georgia. The awards program, supported by WellCare, recognizes Area Agencies on Aging (AAAs) and Title VI Native American aging programs that have implemented successful initiatives to support older adults, people with disabilities and family caregivers. Honorees shared best practices with an audience of 1,000 Aging Network leaders who gathered at the four-day conference to engage in a dialogue about challenges facing older adults and solutions being developed by AAAs throughout the nation.

“With the health care landscape continuing to change rapidly, our members are discovering new ways to position themselves in the long-term and health care marketplaces, as well as to strengthen long-standing services, to meet the needs of America’s rapidly growing older adult population,” said n4a’s Chief Executive Officer Sandy Markwood. “Our members work tirelessly, and with little fanfare in their communities, and this program enables us to shine a well-deserved spotlight on their critical work to support older adults’ health, safety, independence and dignity,” Ms. Markwood added.

In presenting the awards, Pamme Taylor, WellCare’s Vice President, Advocacy and Community-Based Programs, said “WellCare is pleased to support n4a’s *Aging Innovations and Achievement Awards* program, which recognizes Area Agencies on Aging work to serve older adults, people with disabilities and caregivers with innovative, successful programs designed to fill gaps in services and meet the critical needs of consumers in communities across the country. We salute this year’s winners for sharing their secrets to success with their

peers, helping grow the AAA network’s capacity and prepare for the incredible demographic changes ahead.”

Thirty-six programs received *Aging Achievement Awards* and 16 initiatives were honored with *Aging Innovations Awards*. Honorees developed programs in a wide variety of areas including care transitions, elder abuse, nutrition, healthy aging, Livable Communities and technology. **Descriptions of 52 award-winning programs can be found in n4a’s [awards book](#).**

In addition, the top four highest-scoring Innovations winners won cash awards. First place honors were accorded to the “Increasing Cancer Health Literacy and Promoting Early Screening in Southwest Virginia” program of Mountain Empire Older Citizens, Inc. (MEOC) in Big Stone Gap, VA. To address the high incidence of cervical cancer in rural Appalachia, MEOC partnered with the University of Virginia School of Nursing and the U.Va. Cancer Center to study the feasibility of using at-home self-collection for HPV testing and to offer “Understanding Cancer” trainings throughout the community.

There was a three-way tie for second place:

- Greater Lynn Senior Services’ “Kiosks for Living Well: Health Centers Without Walls” (Lynn, MA) are accessible one-stop centers located in locations where people naturally gather that assist older adults and adults with disabilities with health monitoring and health management.
- The New York City Department for the Aging’s “Age-tastic: Promoting Health and Emotional Wellness Using Game Play” program is currently being used in close to 200 New York City Department for the Aging–funded senior centers. Age-tastic involves board game play for “dollars,” combined with group discussions and try-it-at-home activities, to reach older adults with important information about preventing falls, staying socially engaged, watching out for financial mistreatment, managing medications and exercising.
- United Way’s Area Agency on Aging of Tarrant County’s (Texas) “Geriatric Practice Leadership Institute” was created to prepare the geriatric workforce for carefully managing the health care needs of a rapidly increasing older adult population. The training curriculum includes three two-day sessions that focus on leadership skill development, the Aging Network, population health and organizational change.

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About n4a

The National Association of Area Agencies on Aging (n4a) is the leading voice on aging issues for the 622 Area Agencies on Aging (AAAs) across the country and a champion in the nation’s capital for the 256 Title VI Native American aging programs. n4a’s primary mission is to build the capacity of our members so they can help older adults and people with disabilities live with dignity and choices in their homes and communities for as long as possible.