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2009 Aging Awards announced

RALEIGH—The North Carolina Division of Aging and Adult Services (DAAS) has announced the recipients of the 2009 Awards in Aging. These awards recognize individuals, organizations and programs that exhibit outstanding work with North Carolina's aging population, with issues related to aging and with the aging community around the state.

"We have an outstanding group of award winners this year," said Dennis Streets, DAAS Director. "Collectively these groups touch the lives of many older adults and their families in the state. Their common emphasis on healthy aging and volunteerism is especially significant for today's seniors and in helping North Carolina prepare for the aging of our large baby boomer population."

The awards are as follows:

Messer Award: The Messer Award recognizes a community that has excelled in addressing the needs of its older citizens. There are two recipient organizations for the 2009 Messer Award—The Shepherd's Center of Greater Winston-Salem and the Orange County Department on Aging.

"In this award category we have two winners, both equally deserving," said Streets. "These agencies have a tremendous positive effect on their communities."

The Shepherd's Center of Greater Winston-Salem is a tremendous example of a vast community of volunteers dedicated to serving older persons. In 2008, over 475 volunteers provided more than 25,000 hours of support to over 2,500 older adults.

In 1980, Orange County established the first local public department on aging in North Carolina. Since that time, the Orange County Department on Aging has focused on meeting the needs of older adults through the use of creative programming, a team of inter-disciplinary professionals and a director and staff who have championed a person-centered, holistic approach to care.

This award is named for Ernest B. Messer, who was a champion for aging in the General Assembly and former assistant secretary for aging for the NC Department of Health and Human Services between 1981 and 1985.

Maddox Award: The Maddox Award recognizes an individual or organization that has excelled in creative programming for older adults. The 2009 Maddox Award winner is AARP North Carolina.

“AARP exemplifies an organization that has excelled in developing and implementing creative programs for older adults since its opening as an AARP State Office in 1995,” said Streets. “As the face of the older adult continues to change, AARP has adapted and grown along with those changes to continue addressing the needs and interests of our aging population.”

The award is named for Dr. George L. Maddox, a noted gerontologist and director of Duke University's Long Term Care Resource Program.

Busse Award: The Busse Award recognizes an individual or organization that has had a significant impact on enhancing the health status of older North Carolinians through efforts to direct health-related policies and provide leadership in developing innovative solutions to health care problems. The 2009 Busse Award recipient is Wake Resources for Seniors.

“Resources for Seniors is receiving this award for its focus on innovative, creative and effective physical activity programming for older adults in Wake County,” said Streets. “The work they do brings long-lasting benefits for our seniors.”

The award is named for Dr. Ewald W. Busse, who was president emeritus of the NC Institute of Medicine and a founding director of the Duke University Center for the Study of Aging and Human Development.

For more information about the DAAS or issues related to aging in North Carolina, please go to www.ncdhhs.gov/aging/index.htm.