



National Alliance for Caregiving

Contact: Ted Mitchell, MetLife Foundation Kathy Cameron, National Alliance for Caregiving
(401) 827-3236 (703) 585-6607
tjmitchell@metlife.com kathleen56@caregiving.org

The National Alliance for Caregiving and MetLife Foundation Honor Innovators Making a Difference in the Lives of Caregivers

July 21, 2009—Minneapolis, MN—Representatives from leading national aging organizations and agencies convened today in Minneapolis, MN to honor the 2009 winners of the National Family Caregiving Awards, sponsored by the National Alliance for Caregiving and MetLife Foundation. The event recognized community-based programs supporting family caregivers of older adults, rewarding innovation, effectiveness, and responsiveness to caregiver needs.

“We were thrilled to learn about so many diverse and effective programs around the country that support and educate family caregivers in their communities,” said Gail Gibson Hunt, President & CEO, National Alliance for Caregiving. “The support these programs provide to caregivers is so critical especially during these difficult economic times when the time and expense of caregiving are so challenging for so many.”

This year’s award winners are:

- [Services and Advocacy for GLBT Elders \(SAGE\)](#) of New York, NY for the *SAGE Caregiver Program*, the only program in the country specifically designed to meet the complete care and support needs of LGBT caregivers, who are often marginalized from mainstream service and support.
- [The Pro Bono Counseling Project](#) of Baltimore, MD for its *Caring for Caregivers* program, which links low-income, uninsured caregivers with licensed mental health professionals, who donate their time and skills to families of persons with cancer, Alzheimer’s disease, and multiple sclerosis, among others.
- [James Madison University](#) in Harrisonburg, VA for its *Caregivers Community Network*, which recruits and trains community volunteers and students to provide respite and companion care services to families caring for frail or disabled older adults in rural VA.
- [The Copper Ridge Institute](#) in Sykesville, MD for its *Dementia Skills Training for the Home Caregiver*, an innovative educational program available in English or Spanish, designed to be sensitive to the dignity and quality of life necessary for both patient and caregiver. This program was also honored with an Alzheimer’s Recognition Award.
- [DARTS](#) in Minneapolis, MN for its *Workplace Eldercare Seminars*, which support caregivers in the workplace with education and resources bringing confidence to the caregiver, payback to the employer, and a needed spotlight on aging and caregiving.
- [The Community Action Program East Central Oregon](#) in Pendleton, OR for *Native Caring*, a Native American Caregiver training conference that provides workshops and activities integrally tied to spiritual, physical, mental and social—all key elements of the Native American value system of care. This conference was also honored with a Cultural Diversity Recognition Award.
- [Lifespan, Al Sigl Center, and The Arc of Monroe County](#), all based in Rochester, NY, collaborated to create *Future Care Planning Services*, which provides comprehensive life care planning services to assure peace of mind and a legacy of love for caregivers while providing autonomy for people with disabilities. The program also received an Award for Older Caregivers Caring for Adult Children with Disabilities.

Three programs received honorable mention awards:

- [MemoryCare](#) of Asheville, NC for an integrated program that provides caregivers with a fuller understanding and greater capability to manage their loved one's dementia.
- [Alzheimer's Foundation of America](#) (AFA) of New York, NY for *AFA Teens*, an Alzheimer's disease online resource offering direct interaction with teens living in families affected by Alzheimer's disease.
- [The Kennedy Center](#) of Trumbull, CT for *Caring for the Caregiver*, a support program where the "caregiver" identified as the adult child of a family member over the age of 60 with cognitive disabilities.

"Family members provide much of the day-to-day care needed by older adults," said Dennis White, president and CEO of MetLife Foundation. "We hope other non-profits will be inspired by these programs, and incorporate some of these best practices into support and education programs provided to caregivers."

Non-profit organizations from around the country competed for the National Family Caregiving Awards in the categories of caregiver support and education, either as a small or large community. In addition, one award was given to an organization meeting the needs of caregivers caring for adult children with disabilities. Applicants were judged by a panel of caregiving experts and awarded \$25,000 to continue their support for caregivers.

Family caregiving is the underpinning of the country's healthcare system, with a value to society estimated at \$306 billion per year—more than the value of home care and nursing care combined. At least 44.4 million adults provide care, with an estimated 80 percent of all care received by older Americans provided by family members – spouses, children, grandchildren and other relatives. Nearly 60% of caregivers work and nearly 40% of caregivers have children under the age of 18. Managing the competing priorities of work and family, in addition to caregiving, is stressful, costly, and draining, and can exact a heavy toll, resulting in caregiver stress, burnout, and other health problems. Experts anticipate that family caregiving will continue to grow in the decades ahead.

MetLife Foundation was established in 1976 by MetLife to carry on its long-standing tradition of corporate contributions and community involvement. The Foundation has been involved in a variety of aging-related initiatives addressing issues of caregiving, intergenerational activities, mental fitness, health and wellness programs and civic involvement. More information about the Foundation is available at www.metlife.org.

Established in 1996, **The National Alliance for Caregiving** is a non-profit coalition of national organizations focusing on issues of family caregiving. Alliance members include grassroots organizations, professional associations, service organizations, disease-specific organizations, a government agency, and corporations. The Alliance was created to conduct research, do policy analysis, develop national programs and increase public awareness of family caregiving issues. Recognizing that family caregivers provide important societal and financial contributions toward maintaining the well-being of those they care for, the Alliance's mission is to be the objective national resource on family caregiving with the goal of improving the quality of life for families and care recipients. To learn more about the National Alliance for Caregiving, including detailed profiles on the award winners, visit www.caregiving.org.

####