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CICOA Announces 2023 Annual Award Winners

INDIANAPOLIS, IN — CICOA Aging & In-Home Solutions presented six awards during its annual meeting on June 27 to honor the contributions of volunteers and partner organizations over the past year.

“With heartfelt gratitude, we thank each of these individuals and organizations for their creativity, innovation and advocacy in serving vulnerable older adults, people with disabilities and caregivers,” said CICOA President and CEO Tauhric Brown. “We are proud to recognize these outstanding awardees and know that we are better for their partnership.”

- **Exceptional Service Award:** Low-income seniors in Indiana aren’t getting enough to eat, and many don’t have access to fresh produce, which causes increased risk of chronic diseases and reduced quality of life. To address this and contributing social factors that prevent seniors from living a healthy life, Anthem Blue Cross and Blue Shield Foundation awarded a \$4.4 million Connecting Older Hoosiers with Healthful Foods grant to the I4A Education Institute. This benefits Indiana’s 15 area agencies on aging, of which CICOA is the largest.
- **Collaboration Award:** Dr. Robert Russell of Communicare Health Services is the current chair of CICOA’s Medical Advisory Council and a founding member since 2017, offering guidance and best practices to help CICOA better engage and partner with the clinical community. Dr. Russell also serves as the medical director for CICOA’s Medical Nutrition Therapy program, which is a therapeutic nutrition-based treatment and counseling service provided by a registered dietitian that includes lifestyle assessment, nutrition diagnosis, interventions, goal monitoring and evaluation to help manage chronic conditions with individualized nutrition care.
- **Dementia Friends Indiana Advocate Award:** Representative Greg Porter of Indianapolis was the primary author of 2023 Indiana General Assembly House Bill 1422, which was signed into law by Governor Eric Holcomb on May 1, 2023. HB 1422 establishes a



Dementia Care Specialist program in the state and provides up to \$1.5 million in annual funding for at least two years to bring more dementia expertise to local communities. As the number of Hoosiers experiencing dementia continues to grow, the Dementia Care Specialist program can help individuals stay in their homes and remain active in their communities longer. This represents a critical investment in the state's public health to address the impact of the diseases associated with dementia.

- **Impact Award:** At the beginning of CICOA's 2023 fiscal year, CICOA received a \$5 million sustainability grant from Lilly Endowment Inc. The grant was one of eight grants totaling \$34 million that Lilly Endowment gave to help human service organizations in central Indiana enhance their long-term impact by building stronger financial futures. As CICOA has grown in service reach, offering and scale, the need for better data integration has become more critical. This endowment will provide a sustainable source of income for future technology needs in support of CICOA's mission.
- **Spirit Award:** American Senior Communities is honored for their continued support, dedication to providing team members to serve as volunteers, and living out their commitments with enthusiasm, dedication, and contagious positive energy. The organization not only has supported CICOA through corporate sponsorships, but often has provided teams of enthusiastic volunteers to serve the beloved seniors of our community.
- **Innovation Award:** United Healthcare (UHC) is recognized for providing members in their care with amazing experiences through innovative programming and service offerings. UHC partnered with Postbook, an intergenerational postcard exchange that fosters warm, personal connections across multiple generations. Postbook is one of CICOA's innovation portfolio companies. UHC also has utilized animal robots to combat social isolation and loneliness among older adults and offered peer-to-peer caregiver supports through a mobile application that connects former and current caregivers to reduce caregiver burnout through shared experiences.

About CICOA

CICOA Aging & In-Home Solutions is the premier source of information and access to resources for older adults, people of any age with a disability and family caregivers living in Central Indiana. Through a network of agencies, service groups and volunteers, CICOA provides home healthcare, home-delivered and neighborhood meals, transportation services, home modifications, respite care and caregiver assistance. CICOA is Indiana's largest Area Agency on Aging and serves Boone, Hamilton, Hancock, Hendricks, Johnson, Marion, Morgan, and Shelby Counties. To learn more, visit cicoa.org.

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