



June 24, 2014- VVCC Receives STAR Transportation Award

By Katie Layne

Verde Valley Caregivers Coalition received a STAR Merit Award from the National Volunteer Transportation Center, a program of the Community Transportation Association of America, for its volunteer transportation services.

VVCC Executive Director Kent Ellsworth said the award places VVCC in the top 10 in the country for its volunteer transportation model.

"This recognition is the result of our method of operation and service delivery. We utilize a One-Call Center to match approximately 200 volunteer drivers to service requests, enabling our older adult clients to get to important medical and other appointments."

The CTAAA received applications from 190 volunteer transportation programs from 30 states. The award winners were selected by a committee of nationally recognized experts in transportation, aging, and volunteerism were announced at the CTAA Community Transportation EXPO in St. Paul, Minn. The awards recognized outstanding volunteer transportation programs and will enable winners to continue to engage volunteer drivers to promote transportation services. VVCC's award also includes a \$2,500 cash prize.

VVCC, in its 22nd year of operation, has nearly 2,000 older adults throughout the Verde Valley enrolled to receive services. About 300 volunteers provide transportation to medical, physical therapy, grocery shopping, and other appointments, as well as home visits, handy person help, and business assistance. These assistive services improve the quality of life for older adults who wish to live in their homes for as long as possible. VVCC also engages transportation providers to help older adults who have specialized needs such as wheel chair and motorized carts.

VVCC also partners with Verde Valley Medical Center. Among its many services, VVCC's 30-day Transitional Care Program ensures older adults who are discharged from the hospital are provided the support they need to go back to their homes and get to vital medical appointments.

Funding for VVCC's programs and services comes from individual donors, clients, local foundations, ADOT, NACOG and VVMC. VVCC is challenged to increase its funding to meet the needs of our growing older adult population, which Ellsworth says is growing 30% annually.

The growth in services also requires the need for more volunteers. If you would like to make a difference in the life of an older adult, please contact Kim Meller at kimmeller@vvcaregivers.org.