



**Office for
the Aging**

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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THREE COMMUNITY VOLUNTEERS IN ALLEGANY AND CATTARAUGUS COUNTIES HONORED FOR THEIR EXCEPTIONAL SERVICE ON OLDER NEW YORKERS' DAY

New York State Office for the Aging celebrates Older New Yorkers' Day with video presentation recognizing approximately 90 honorees for their service

Three exceptional community volunteers from Allegany and Cattaraugus Counties were recently honored by the New York State Office for the Aging (NYSOFA) for their exceptional service to older adults and others in the community.

Merrill and Muriel Frable of Olean and **Kevin Harris** of Wellsville were nominated by their county Area Offices on Aging for recognition at NYSOFA's annual Older New Yorkers' Day celebration.

The virtual celebration premiered November 5 on social media, with a video presentation featuring approximately 90 honorees from around the state, along with remarks from state officials.

- Muriel and Merrill Frable have provided home-delivered meals in their Olean community for 26 years, sharing a deep personal connection to the people they help.
- Harris provides minor home repairs to seniors through the handyman volunteer program at the Allegany County Office for the Aging, performing a variety of jobs with varying difficulties for the past four years. He has also served as a Meals on Wheels substitute for the last nine years.

For a more detailed profile of each exceptional honoree, please see the award program book and get a link to NYSOFA's video presentation [on our Older New Yorkers' Day landing page](https://aging.ny.gov/older-new-yorkers-day-2021-epk) at <https://aging.ny.gov/older-new-yorkers-day-2021-epk>.

Anita Mattison, Director of the Allegany County Office for the Aging, said: "As the Director of the Allegany County Office for the Aging, I am honored to recognize Kevin Harris for his extraordinary service to his fellow man. Kevin has volunteered at our office for the last nine years in addition to serving his community through other volunteer opportunities. His dedication and expertise have provided additional safety for many of his fellow older adults, allowing them the freedom to remain in their homes and in their

community. Kevin is truly an asset to the Allegany County Office for the Aging. We could not accomplish the amazing work we do without volunteers like him who exhibit unprecedented compassion and dedication on a daily basis. I want to thank all of our volunteers for giving back to their community and for helping to make Allegany County such a great place to live through all stages of life.”

Cathy Mackay, Director of the Cattaraugus County Department of Aging/NY

Connects, said: “Every Tuesday, Muriel and Merrill Frable deliver meals to homebound seniors in Olean. They are affectionately known by the Olean Senior Wellness and Nutrition Site manager as ‘M&M.’ Merrill drives and Muriel delivers the meal to the door. Muriel sends personal birthday cards to each and every recipient on their birthdays. Meal recipients also receive greeting cards from Muriel on every holiday, including Halloween. The Frables look forward to making someone’s day, and everyone says how much they look forward to seeing them. M&M are truly making a difference in their community. They serve with compassionate, kind, and loving hearts and have done so for decades. Thank you, Merrill and Muriel, for your dedication to the seniors in your community.”

New York State Office for the Aging Director Greg Olsen said: “Older adults contribute mightily to their communities. These individuals are a great reason why New York lives up to its designation as an age-friendly state – the first in the nation to receive this distinction. Older New Yorkers not only help their peers in the same age group, but also families and youths as well, with a level of voluntary contribution that is unmatched by any other demographic group. We are so proud to celebrate their incredible contributions. We thank them for their wisdom, their talents, their mentorship, and their service.”

Throughout New York State, over 935,000 individuals age 55 or older contribute approximately 495 million hours of service to their communities annually. This translates into an annual economic output of \$13.8 billion.

People over the age of 50 also account for the majority of volunteering, philanthropy, and donation activities in the U.S. Older New Yorkers and Baby Boomers make up 63 percent – \$379 billion – of all the household income generated in New York State, supporting local businesses and schools while contributing significantly to the local and state economy.

About the New York State Office for the Aging and Health Across All Policies/Age-Friendly New York

The New York State Office for the Aging (NYSOFA) continuously works to help the state’s 4.3 million older adults be as independent as possible for as long as possible through advocacy, development and delivery of person-centered, consumer-oriented, and cost-effective policies, programs, and services that support and empower older adults and their families, in partnership with the network of public and private organizations that serve them.

New York is nationally recognized for being the first age-friendly state in the nation. Using the state's Prevention Agenda as the overarching framework, in 2017, New York launched a Health Across All Policies approach, where public and private partners work together to positively impact population health by marrying health care, preventive health, and community design, in concert with addressing social determinants of health, to improve the lives of all New Yorkers, young and old.

Stay connected—visit the NYSOFA Facebook page; follow @NYSAGING on Twitter and NYSAGING on Instagram; or visit aging.ny.gov.

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