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11/8/21

TWO COMMUNITY VOLUNTEERS IN HERKIMER AND ONEIDA 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 90 honorees statewide for their service

Two exceptional community volunteers from Herkimer and Oneida 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.

Doug Capraro of West Winfield and **Anna Swalgin** of Sherrill 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.

- Capraro has been a volunteer with the Retired and Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP) since December 2012. He is a dedicated driver for the Retired Individuals Driving Elderly (RIDE) program at Catholic Charities of Herkimer County, assisting hundreds of older adults to their medical appointments, donating 4,356 hours and driving over 135,000 miles over the past eight years.
- For the last five years, Swalgin has created ornaments and sent cards to over 200 residents of the local extended care facility. She has assembled tote bags for cancer treatment patients and, every holiday, sends cards to current and past parishioners of her church through its Card Ministry. She has also taught vacation Bible school for six years and serves food at her church's Wacky Wednesday event, which offers a free weekly meal to families.

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>.

Kathy Fox, Director of the Herkimer County Office for the Aging, said: "Herkimer County is fortunate to have individuals like Doug Capraro offering their time to help older adults stay as healthy as possible by getting them to medical appointments, such as

screenings, preventive care or therapeutic treatments. Doug not only provides vital transportation help, but he is also an incredibly kind person who is always finding ways to give back to the residents in Herkimer County. I am proud to join the New York State Office for the Aging in recognizing his noble work."

June Hanrahan, Director of the Oneida County Office for the Aging/Continuing Care, said: "Few individuals match the depth of giving or community spirit that Anna Swalgin extends to her neighbors throughout Oneida County. Hundreds of people are touched by her many acts of kindness and cheer that have a profound impact on emotional well-being. Through her church, Anna has also served countless meals for people of all ages, supporting our efforts to provide nutrition for those who may otherwise go without. We are incredibly grateful for all that she does to help the community, and we are proud to join the New York State Office for Aging in celebrating her volunteerism."

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.

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