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Ten SMP Volunteers Honored During National Health Care Fraud Conference

WASHINGTON, D.C.—On Wednesday, August 10, 2011, the U.S. Administration on Aging (AoA), an agency of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, honored the contributions of 10 senior volunteers who serve as community educators and resources in the Administration’s effort to detect, prevent and report fraud and abuse in the Medicare and Medicaid programs.

“I’d like to congratulate and thank the volunteers who are being recognized this year – and all of our SMP volunteers,” said Kathy Greenlee, Assistant Secretary for the U.S. Department of Aging. “The Senior Medicare Patrol program is a success because of their time, energy and unwavering commitment in the fight against health care fraud.”

Cindy Padilla, Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary for Aging, presented the awards during a recognition luncheon at the tenth Senior Medicare Patrol (SMP) National Health Care Fraud Control Conference August 9-11 in Washington, D.C. The theme of the conference was “Leading the Grassroots Fight Against Fraud.”

The SMP program was established in 1997 under the Older Americans Act through language in the Omnibus Consolidated Appropriations Act. Administered by the AoA, the 54 statewide SMP projects recruit and train retired professionals to inform older Americans, their family members and caregivers on how to prevent, detect and report health care fraud, error and abuse.

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The Center for Service & Information for SMP Projects

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AoA's volunteers work in their local communities and senior centers, educating Medicare and Medicaid beneficiaries on how to recognize and report suspected cases of deceptive health care practices, such as overbilling, overcharging or providing unnecessary or inappropriate services. This training also empowers beneficiaries to be better health care consumers. More than 4 million beneficiaries have been educated directly by SMP volunteers or staff since the program's inception, while more than 25.3 million people have been reached during community education events.

The volunteers recognized were:

- Larry Bauer, Illinois
- Linda Burney, Michigan
- Venancia R. Colet, Guam
- Doug Cooper, Maine
- Tom Gaumer, Ohio
- Winnie Greenshields, Montana
- Felice Hannah, New York
- Richard Hotinski, Texas
- Harold Ishler, Louisiana
- Ray Jones, California

Additional information about the Administration on Aging's SMP projects is available by contacting Doris Summey at 202-357-3533 or by accessing AoA's website at www.aoa.gov or The National Consumer Protection Technical Resource Center at www.smpresource.org.

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