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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Iowa CareGivers' Di Findley honored with prestigious award as a longtime champion of direct care workers in Iowa

Des Moines, Iowa (February 27, 2017)—Di Findley, executive director of Iowa CareGivers, Des Moines, is the recipient of the Iowa Department on Aging's Betty Grandquist Lifetime Achievement Award for 2016. The prestigious award recognizes an Iowan who has dedicated a portion of his or her personal or professional life to achieving excellence in the fields of aging and/or disability, or has made significant contributions to promoting independence and enhancing quality of life among older Iowans and Iowans with disabilities.

The 2016 Betty Grandquist Lifetime Achievement Award will be presented to Findley and Maggie Tinsman, a former state senator from Davenport, during lunch at the Iowa Department on Aging's first session in its 2017 Dialogue on Aging Series on Friday, March 3, at Hilton Garden Inn, Johnston.

Di Findley has championed the needs of direct care workers since 1992, when she founded the Iowa CareGivers from her basement with little more than a garage-sale princess telephone, a Macintosh computer with a 12-inch screen, and a desire to bring a voice and face to those who work in the field of direct care. Having worked 13 years as a nurse aide, Findley recognized a growing crisis in Iowa in the shortage and high turnover rates of those who work in direct care such as Certified Nurse Aides (CNAs) and Home Care Aides (HCAs), and wanted to help these individuals provide better care to patients and residents by offering them education, support, advocacy and recognition. As Findley's nomination for the award reads, "A true believer in systemic health care reform, Di understands that addressing and promoting the needs of caregivers can make a significant impact when it comes to improving the quality of life and care of the people they serve."

Under Findley's leadership, Iowa CareGivers has earned national attention for a variety of projects that focus on recruiting and retaining direct care workers, and that empower them to serve on professional boards and committees. In addition to earning the 2016 Betty Grandquist Lifetime Achievement Award, Findley has been recognized with the Governor's Partners in Aging Award (1995) and the Metro Women's Network's Woman of the Year Award (2001), and was inducted into the Iowa Women's Hall of Fame in 2003 for her work as an advocate for direct care workers.

The Betty Grandquist Lifetime Achievement Award was established by the Iowa Commission on Aging in

2009 and named for former Iowa Department on Aging Director and current Iowa Commission on Aging Chair Betty Grandquist. Past recipients include Patty Esch (2015), Julie McMahon (2013), Bob Brown (2012), Russ Proffitt (2011), Kitty Buckwalter (2010) and Bob Welsh (2009).

The Iowa CareGivers (www.iowacaregivers.org) is an independent, nonprofit and nonpartisan statewide organization. It exists to ensure Iowans receive quality care and support when and where they need it through focusing on providing education, recognition, advocacy and research in support of direct care workers. As Iowa's population of elders and people with disabilities increases, the traditional source of new direct care workers—women aged 25-44—is projected to shrink, leaving Iowa with a critical shortage of workers. It is anticipated that Iowa will need 20,000 additional direct care workers by 2020 to meet the growing demand.

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The Iowa Department on Aging (IDA) is an executive branch agency dedicated to making Iowa the premier state in which to live and retire. To meet that goal, the IDA works closely with the Iowa Commission on Aging and Iowa's six Agencies on Aging to develop a comprehensive, coordinated and cost-effective system of long-term living and community support services that helps individuals maintain health and independence in their homes and communities. More information is available at www.iowaaging.gov.