

Delivering information to those at  
the center of quality care

CELEBRATING  
**20** YEARS  
OF IMPACT

PLEASE JOIN US  
as we celebrate 20 Years  
during our annual meeting

MONDAY  
NOVEMBER 5,  
2012

LOCATION:  
**Bistro (Building 7) • DMACC Campus**  
2006 South Ankeny Boulevard  
Ankeny, IA 50023

4:45 P.M. Social time with  
hors d'oeuvres and cash bar

6:00 P.M. Grateful for the Past —  
Focused on the Future

*"From the Heart"* Recognitions  
will be presented during the program

*"Don't Stop Thinking About Tomorrow"*

PLEASE RSVP **by October 31, 2012** to  
Georgeanna at 515.223.2805 or  
Georgeanna.Spagnola@iowacaregivers.org



**DIRECT CARE  
BY DESIGN**  
ICA 2012 CONFERENCE

See Conference highlights  
on pages 4-5

View Conference Photo Gallery  
at: [http://iowacaregivers.org/programs\\_and\\_events/conference.php](http://iowacaregivers.org/programs_and_events/conference.php)

Job Corps Students Attend  
Conference And Are Pumped  
About Entering The Direct  
Care Profession!!  
See page 5

Educational Standards Topic  
Of Ottumwa Forum pg. 10

AARP Iowa Receives  
ICA From The Heart  
Recognition pg. 6

**FROM THE** *Heart*

You Have The Right To  
Remain Silent pg. 11

★ **VOTE** ★



**Special Conference For All Iowa CareGivers Associations'  
Leadership Graduates!! MARK YOUR CALENDARS NOW!!**

**February 28, 2012**

Des Moines Area Community College  
(more details later)

This newsletter is made possible in part by IDPH Contract #s  
5882NW23 & 5882SN02

**INSIDE:**

- From the Executive Director
- Spotlight: Sherry Oswald
- ICA Turns 20
- 2013 Program Schedule
- Conference Highlights
- Award Recipients
- From the Heart Recognitions and more...

**STAY INFORMED!**

If you are interested in receiving information about educational programs, topics in direct care, and other opportunities, register **NOW** with the Iowa CareGivers Association. You can complete the registration form on our website at [www.iowacaregivers.org](http://www.iowacaregivers.org). You can also register by phone or request a form at 515.223.2805 or by email [georgeanna.spagnola@iowacaregivers.org](mailto:georgeanna.spagnola@iowacaregivers.org).

## Grateful for the Past

I recently attended the play, Les Mis, for about the fifth time. It is about a small army of students who started a revolution against the French monarchy. The people of France were poor and hungry while the French royalty enjoyed lavish and gluttonous lifestyles. The students armed themselves and built a meager street barricade from furniture and anything else they could find. While their small army of a few hundred was no match for the French troops numbering 2500 ...they took a strong stand for what they believed in! And while ICA's battles are in no way like those in the streets of France during that horrible time in history... we have and will continue to take a **STRONG STAND** for those who work in direct care and the lowans whom you serve.

We're still standing after 20 years despite predictions by many that we would not! We've learned many lessons, but they have only contributed to the clarity of our purpose, conviction to our values, and commitment to those of you we serve.

The road has been anything but easy and the resistance, like that of the French army, has been overwhelming at times, but to quote my mother, "if the road isn't easy you must be doing something right."



*Di Findley, Executive Director,  
Iowa CareGivers Association*

## Focused on the Future

We are grateful for the past but now focused on the future. We have had a great deal of impact in the first 20 years. Our vision for the next 20 years is to finish the job through **bolder leadership, and even greater impact** on issues that affect the direct care workforce.

### The day will come when:

- every lowan will receive the best care and support possible when and where they need it
- every elected official and every citizen will know the value of those in direct care and will hold them in the highest regard.

### The day will come when all who work in direct care will:

- be recognized by the state and society as a direct care "Professional"
- never be forced to start a job without the proper education and skills to feel confident in what they are doing
- be owners of their education and credentials
- be paid what they are worth
- no longer work sick because they have no health care coverage or money to go to the doctor
- never again file bankruptcy because of medical debt
- be able to afford to retire and enjoy that part of their life

**THIS IS WHAT WE BELIEVE!  
JOIN US IN OUR STAND!**

## THANK YOU!

Thanks to the 20th Anniversary Committee, the entire Board of Directors, and Lin Salasberry for making our 20th year so memorable for us all!

**Di**



## Quilt Captures 20 Years of ICA Memories

A 20th anniversary quilt was designed by Mary Oliver, ICA Board, using the t shirt logos from various ICA events and conferences since 1992.

Lin Salasberry contributed her private collection of shirts for the project. Members of the Anniversary Committee presented the quilt to Di Findley, ICA Founder and Director, during the annual conference.

*Pictured from left to right are: Nancy Anderson, Mary Oliver, Lin Salasberry (hiding behind the quilt), Kim Downs, Di Findley, and Shirley Sorenson.*

## Living My Mantra

As an ICA Leadership Council Member I've been given the tools to live my mantra not only IN my profession, but FOR my profession. My mantra is this: "we as Direct Care Professionals must.... think logically, care compassionately and work competently if we are to be taken seriously. My work on the Iowa Direct Care Advisory Council and my ambassadorship with the Direct Care Workforce Initiative makes this mantra live and breathe. Thank You ICA."

– Anthony C. Wells



Anthony C. Wells

## THE LEADERSHIP LOG

What Have Direct Care Professional Leaders Been Up To?

"I wrote a poem for the ICA Hub."  
– Renee Bernier

"I hosted a public forum in Ottumwa on educational standards."  
– Jeff Weinstock

"I attended a meeting in Wash., DC. with representatives of the Dept. of Human Services Health Resources & Service Administration to share information about Iowa's efforts to establish educational standards."  
– Becky Johnson

"I took part in a round table with Senator Tom Harkin on retirement benefits."  
– Tracy Hoveland

"We assisted with Iowa CareGivers conference."  
– Leslie Ann Hayenga Adams, Michael Owens, Laura Stein, Kathy Leibold

"I participated in presenting an ICA From the Heart recognition to Upper Midwest Public Health Training Center."  
– Val Oxenford

"I participated in a direct care public forum in Council Bluff on educational standards."  
– Vicky Garske



## Spotlight: Sherry Oswald

Member of the ICA Direct Care Professional Leadership Council and Recent Leadership Award Recipient

**Title:** CNA, Behavioral Health Technician

**Where I work:** Mercy Medical Center

**Recent accomplishments:** I was on a panel for the Direct Care Workforce Initiative.

**My favorite part of caregiving:** The smiles and thanks from our clients.

**Something I'd like to change about the caregiving profession:** More appreciation from administrators, nurses, doctors, etc. for our profession.

**How will caregiving change in the next ten years?** I'm afraid that without proper training, direct care workers will be difficult to find and keep.

**My advice to employers about what they need to do to recruit and retain direct care workers:** Listen to your direct care staff, we are telling you what we need and remember that everyone in direct care is a teachable person.

**Something I'd like to accomplish:** Encouraging empathy/compassion in new employees in direct care.

**Someone I admire:** Kathy Liebold, a fellow direct care professional, is a wonderful woman who will take you under her wing and encourage you in direct care work.

**Outside interests:** Church, Boy Scouts of America, Camping, Reading

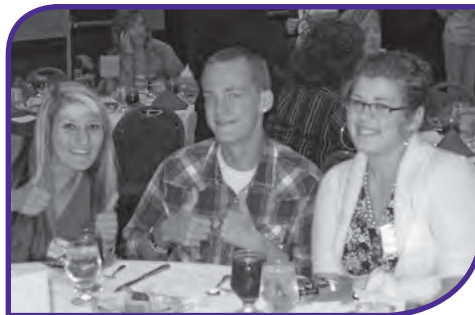
**About my family:** I have been married 22 years to my husband, Lonnie. We have 3 teenage sons.

**My favorite vacation spot:** Devil's Lake, Wisconsin

A TOTAL OF 340 attended the “Direct Care by Design” Conference on September 10 and 11, 2012



**82% said** the conference contributed to the likelihood that they would continue to work in the field of direct care.



**97%** of the conference attendees said they could use the information they learned.



**95%** of the conference attendees rated the conference as excellent or very good.



Did you know that approximately **42%** of the conference attendees were attending for the first time?





## Resources/Partner Programs

### Help Us Celebrate National Family Caregiver Month!

*by Kay Vanags, Family Caregiver Specialist,  
Aging Resources of Central Iowa*



November is the month when we traditionally give thanks for all of our blessings. Since 1997, the National Family Caregiver Support Program has recognized November as the month to celebrate the contributions that families make in caring for the elderly and disabled in our country. Despite the huge role family caregivers play in the care of their loved ones, family caregivers often think they are not doing enough or not doing everything "right". In addition, these caregivers often are not recognized and supported by others in the healthcare system.

As direct care workers, you assist many family caregivers in providing needed services to their aging parents, ill spouses, or disabled family members. Without your assistance, many of your clients would not be able to remain as independent as they are. The aid you provide allows the family caregivers to manage their caregiving role and to receive much needed respite. For some caregivers, you might be the only person that they see on a regular basis. Your knowledge and support are invaluable.

Please take a moment in November to express your "thanks" for all that these families do. As their partner in providing care, your words of support will mean a tremendous amount.

## Direct Care Professionals are Honored at the Iowa CareGivers Association's "Direct Care by Design" Conference



*Lisa Davis (center) received the "Margaret Swanson Legacy in Giving Award" for her 39 years of service in direct care, all with the same organization, Trinity Center at Luther Park. This award honors former board member and supporter, Margaret Swanson. The award was presented this year by Margaret's daughters, Jeannie Swanson-Dungy (left) and Martha Swanson (right).*



*Kathy Leibold, CNA ; Jeff Weinstock, CNA; and Sherry Oswald, CNA and Behavioral Health Technician were the recipients of the Iowa CareGivers Leadership Award. This award pays tribute to the leadership role taken on by a direct care professional for the benefit of their profession and quality care. We honored 3 direct care professionals this year because... we wanted to highlight how people lead in different ways. Some are more out front and others work just as effectively behind the scenes. They are ALL important! These three demonstrate different styles of leadership, but are all effective leaders in their own right!*

## From The Heart Recognitions

### AARP Iowa

AARP Iowa received Iowa CareGivers Association's From the Heart recognition on October 10, 2012 during AARP's Volunteer Recognition Luncheon held at Prairie Meadows. Receiving on behalf of the AARP Iowa were Kent Sovern, AARP State Director, Tony Vola, AARP Volunteer State President, and Anthony Carroll, Associate State Director of Advocacy.

Lin Salasberry, a Direct Care Worker from Des Moines said at the presentation that "AARP's work with the Iowa CareGivers Association has made my voice stronger. As a result of your interest and your efforts, more people are aware of direct care workers and the work we do. More people are talking about the importance of workers like me, and the training we have and the respect we deserve."

Mary Ann Young, a Member of the ICA Board of Directors, said that "Direct care workers are the unsung heroes of the health and long term care system, and they SO DESERVE the support that AARP staff, AARP volunteers, and the Iowa CareGivers provides to them."

The From the Heart recognition was presented to AARP Iowa because of their long term interest in and commitment to the direct care workforce and the Iowans they serve.

### Des Moines University Physician Assistant Program

Des Moines University Physician Assistant Program received one of the 2012 "From the Heart" recognitions for their continued contribution of time, expertise, and supplies to provide the free health screenings during our annual conference for the last several years. Thanks to Jo Kelly, Director of the Physician Assistant Program, her staff, and students.



**FROM THE** *Heart*



*L to R: Anthony Carroll, AARP; Mary Ann Young, ICA; Tony Vola, AARP; Lin Salasberry, ICA; John Hale, ICA; Kent Sovern, AARP*



*Jo Kelly, DMU pictured with Pam Biklen, ICA.*

## How The Affordable Care Act May Benefit You Or Those You Serve

Susan Voss, Iowa Insurance Commissioner and Angie Doyle Scar, Iowa Department of Public Health presented information about the Affordable Care Act (ACA) during ICA's statewide conference.

The ACA is a new federal law intended to make it easier for you to get health care coverage that you can afford. The state is now working on setting up what is called a "Health Benefits Exchange" which will be a "one-stop shop" where you can go to find out what you are eligible for.

The law has changed the eligibility requirements for Medicaid. A family of four up to 400% of the federal poverty level or \$80,000 will qualify for Medicaid or a tax subsidy to buy a private plan through the Exchange.

The new law will go into effect in 2014 and you can start enrolling in October 2013.

You owe it to yourself to learn as much as you can about this new law. It could benefit you in many ways. You can also share the information with those you serve who may benefit from more affordable health care coverage.



*Susan Voss, Iowa Insurance Commissioner*



*Angie Doyle Scar, Iowa Department of Public Health*

**"If you don't have coverage this is an opportunity to get coverage and if you qualify for a tax subsidy you can get that through the new Iowa Health Benefits Exchange."**

**– Susan Voss, Iowa Insurance Commissioner**

## What Direct Care Workers Want to See in the New Health Benefits Exchange

Angie Doyle Scar, Iowa Department of Public Health shared information about a small group discussion she held with direct care workers. She asked them what they thought the new Health Benefits Exchange should be like. Here were some of their comments:

- **I want someone to hold my hand to help me through the whole process.**
- **I want to be able to enroll in the new coverage online.**
- **I want to know that I can trust the new system.**
- **I want a seal of approval on the coverage and the people helping me.**

Angie said, "I have to be honest...it is complicated...but it shouldn't be complicated for you and our goal is to make it simple for you."

### What Would You Call The "One Stop Shop"?

Angie said the name "Health Benefits Exchange" is a little threatening and sounds sort of like "stock exchange". She asked for participants to share ideas for a better word for the new "one stop shop". If you have an idea for a better name than "exchange" please let Angie know: [Angela.DoyleScar@idph.iowa.gov](mailto:Angela.DoyleScar@idph.iowa.gov)

For more information call Susan Voss, Iowa Insurance Commissioner at 515 281 5907 or email Angie Doyle Scar at [Angela.DoyleScar@idph.iowa.gov](mailto:Angela.DoyleScar@idph.iowa.gov)

### Learn More By Watching The Video Of The Conference Session!

[http://www.iowacaregivers.org/videos/icg\\_reform\\_law.php](http://www.iowacaregivers.org/videos/icg_reform_law.php)

## White House Briefing on Affordable Care Act (ACA) by Di Findley



**It's not an easy topic but it is an important one.** It's mind boggling to wade through the wonkish language and the political ads that contain sound bytes about what is good or not good about what some refer to as Obama Care. But the fact is, the law to reform our health care system passed Congress and the Supreme Court upheld a decision that the law is constitutional.

The purpose of the reform is to help make sure that all Americans have access to affordable health care. We are obviously very interested in this issue because so many who work in direct care are uninsured or have policies that cover too little and cost too much. Health care coverage is often

just unaffordable. We know that many in direct care work sick and go without the treatments they need, and some have filed bankruptcy because of medical debt.

ICA's role is to provide you with information you need to better understand the changes and to be able to easily access the health care coverage through the new Health Benefits Exchange when it is established. One of the biggest concerns is whether the mandated insurance will meet the needs you have for medical care AND be something you can afford. We will continue to push for a system that serves the people it is intended to serve...those who are at greatest risk.

What I learned at a recent White House Briefing is that IF implemented well...direct care workers who are uninsured or underinsured stand to benefit in a number of ways. The things to remember at this point are:

### The new benefits will go into effect in 2014 for 30 million uninsured Americans

#### Some benefits have already gone into effect:

- Insurance companies will no longer be able to refuse to cover expense for children with existing medical conditions.
- 105 million Americans no longer have limits placed on the total amount of expenses their policy will pay for.
- 3 million young adults who were uninsured now have coverage on their parents' plans.
- 82,000 who were uninsured due to an insurance company refusing to cover expenses for a past or current medical condition, can now get coverage.

Secretary, Kathleen Sebelius, US Department of Health and Human Services, said, "the new system doesn't work if people don't know about it." That's why ICA will be working with elected officials, the Iowa Insurance Commissioner's Office, and others to equip you with information about the changes that will be coming so you can make the decisions you need to make, and take the actions you need to take to get the best health care coverage possible.

For more information on the health care reform law, please go to [www.healthcare.gov](http://www.healthcare.gov).

*If you have benefitted from the new health care law, please share your story with us at **information@iowacaregivers.org** or call **515-223-2805**.*



## JOIN OUR "Direct Care Rapid Response Team"

From time to time, ICA has the need to make very quick contact with direct care workers and their supporters around Iowa to either get information or to request action. Examples: we need to see if you could attend a meeting in your part of the state or at the State Capitol, share information or your story with your elected representatives, or write a short letter to your local paper, etc.

In order for us to be effective, we need your contact information and we need to know if you have the time and the interest to play a role in our efforts to advocate for those who work in direct care and the people you serve.

To address that, we are using this message as a way to create a "**Direct Care Rapid Response Team.**" This team will include those WHO WANT TO BE CONTACTED TO HELP OUT. The Team will include others in direct care, employers, family caregivers, and the people you serve.

**IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO BE ON THIS TEAM**, please complete the information below and return it to ICA  
**By providing this information, you ARE saying that you:**

- ✓ Care about the issues important to direct care
- ✓ Want to be contacted to help out
- ✓ Check e-mail and phone messages on a regular basis, and
- ✓ Will try to help out when and where you can.

You **ARE NOT** saying that you will always be available or can always do what is being asked. Thanks for your consideration of this request. We need to build a strong team of supporters around the state who are willing to help out when asked – we hope you'll sign up!

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### Direct Care Rapid Response Form

*(Please complete and mail to Iowa CareGivers Association)*

\_\_\_\_\_ **YES, ADD ME TO THE DIRECT CARE RAPID RESPONSE TEAM!** Here is my contact information:

Name \_\_\_\_\_ County I Live in \_\_\_\_\_

Complete Home Mailing Address \_\_\_\_\_  
City State Zip

Best E-Mail Address to Reach Me At \_\_\_\_\_

Best Phone Number to Reach Me At *(indicate if it's a cell phone)* \_\_\_\_\_

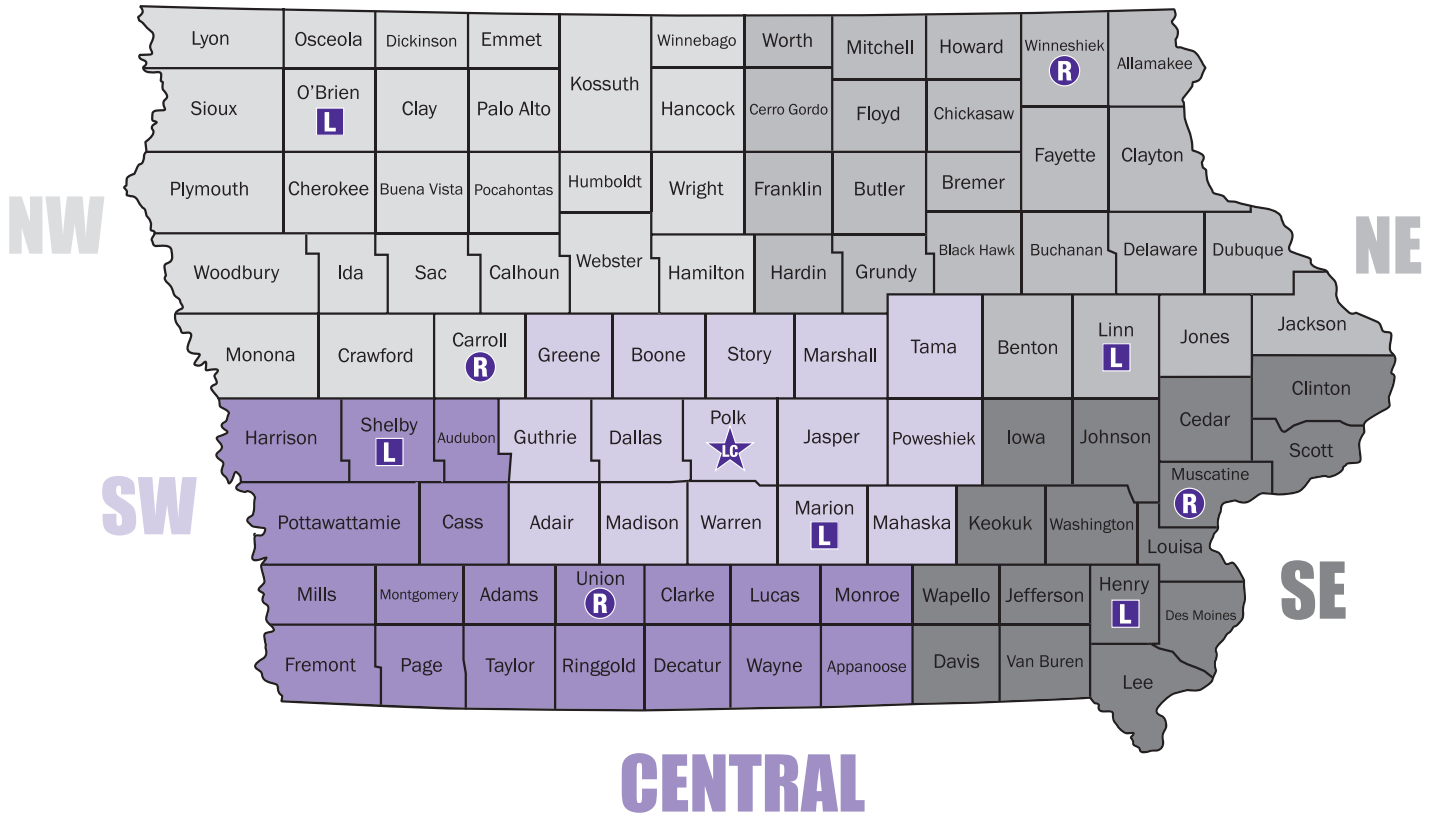
- \_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_ No I have contacted my elected officials before.  
\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_ No I plan to vote in the November 2012 election.  
\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_ No I support consistent educational standards for my profession.  
\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_ No I support access to affordable healthcare for those who work in direct care.



# IOWA *CareGivers*

A S S O C I A T I O N

# Iowa CareGivers Association's 2013 Regional Programs



Regional Conference  
 Leadership Program  
 Leadership Conference

## Tentative 2013 Program Schedule

- **December 4, 2012:** ICA Leadership Program (Pella)
- **February 28, 2013:** Conference for Leadership Graduates (Ankeny)
- **April 9, 2013:** ICA Leadership Program (Sheldon)
- **April 16, 2013:** Regional Conference (Peosta/Calmar)
- **April 23, 2013:** Regional Conference (Muscatine)
- **April 30, 2013:** Regional Conference (Creston)
- **June 4, 2013:** Regional Conference (Carroll)
- **June 11, 2013:** ICA Leadership Program (Cedar Rapids)
- **June 18, 2013:** ICA Leadership Program (Mt Pleasant)
- **June 25, 2013:** ICA Leadership Program (Harlan)
- **September 9 & 10, 2013:** ICA Annual Conference (West Des Moines)



**IOWA** *CareGivers*

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A S S O C I A T I O N

## Unemployed and Unemployable – Enough is Enough!

I have worked in the healthcare field as a Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA) my whole life, but as of last week I became unemployed which was bad enough as I liked my job. Now I have found that soon I will also be unemployable in a field I love and have worked in my entire life. That...because of a federal law that requires CNAs to work 8 hours in certain work settings in order to keep an active and “employable” status in the state. It doesn’t seem right!

**My Education:** At the age of seventeen I completed the 120 hour CNA class offered at a local hospital. At that time students paid for their own training.

**My Work History:** Except for a couple years that I worked in a nursing facility, I have spent my entire career working in a hospital setting. I have worked on most every unit at some point. A couple years ago I switched over to home care and being the only staff on duty overnight in an assisted living facility.

**My Current Situation:** My employer required that I be active on the Iowa Direct Care Worker Registry in order to be eligible for employment by their agency. In order for me to remain active on the Registry, an employer must report my work history. But not every employer is required to do that. The agency where I worked was not required to report my employment and as a result had no reporting system in place that would “keep” me in an “active status” on the Registry. I was told by the Department of Inspections and Appeals (DIA) that the last reporting was done when I left the hospital setting in April 2009 and that unless I go back into a Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) approved employment setting --like a nursing home-- I will become “inactive” on the registry in April 2013 and unemployable in some work settings. To add insult to injury, I learned that going back to the hospital would not be an option because the organization now requires all CNAs to have the 150 hour training and I only had the 120 hour class.



*Lin Salasberry, Certified  
Nursing Assistant*

*Basically because I have not worked eight consecutive hours in the settings approved by the federal government, the education, skills, and experience I have gained over all these years simply mean nothing! If I had ownership of my own credentials and a continuing education standard like other professions... this would never happen!” That is why I support the state establishing a Board of Direct Care Professionals and ask for a major change in the federal regulations that are out of date and add no value to the quality of care.*

The thing that frustrates me the most is that I feel the system is failing me. I received the best of training, have consistently worked as a CNA my whole life, but the rules made in an office in Washington D.C. years ago make no sense today...yet they are the rules and decisions that, in many respects will end the career I’ve loved. At a time when our state needs 15,000 new direct care workers while keeping the over 70,000 now in the field...it is time that the state and CMS stop closing doors for DCWs and find solutions to challenges such as those I am encountering!

The only way this kind of confusion, inconsistency, and injustice will ever end is if we, as a profession, stand up and say enough is enough! The new educational standards that have been recommended by the state Direct Care Worker Advisory Council, that I serve on, offers solutions to this and many other issues we face.

## Educational Standards Topic of Ottumwa Forum

A public forum on September 27 drew a number of candidates seeking elected office, direct care professionals, employers, and members of the public. The Direct Care Workforce Initiative, AARP Iowa, and Iowa CareGivers Association co-hosted the event as a way to increase awareness about the need for more standardized education for those who work in direct care. Participants discussed efforts underway to establish a Board of Direct Care Professionals which is a recommendation of the state's Direct Care Worker Advisory Council. The Board will ensure more consistent and portable educational standards for direct care workers across all care and support settings, as well as elevate the professional status of the workforce. Representative Mary Gaskill, a panelist, spoke about the issues from personal experience saying "I have been personally involved with Alzheimer's and dementia issues. When my husband started having those problems, we had an in-home worker that came in and supported us. If we can ensure that those workers are well-trained, we're going to help a lot of people in this state. The person that came into our home taught me a lot; you just can't learn enough fast enough, and you really need that support from a professional."

Iowa Senate candidate, Ken Rozenboom, said, "Because of my experience as a long time member of the Christian Opportunity Board of Directors and my fondness of people who do the work of direct care professionals, your efforts won't be lost on me. I applaud you for trying to raise the standards."

For more information about the Direct Care Workforce Initiative please contact:

**Erin Drinnin**, Project Manager, Direct Care Workforce Initiative  
Iowa Department of Public Health - Lucas State Office Building  
321 East 12th Street, Des Moines, IA 50319  
P: 515.281.3166 / F: 515.242.6384 / erin.drinnin@idph.iowa.gov

Visit <http://www.idph.state.ia.us/directcare/> for more information and to sign up for E-Updates.



*Jeff Weinstock, CNA, and local host; State Representative Mary Gaskill, Ann Aulwes, Iowa Direct Care Worker Advisory Council; Lori Reeves, Indian Hills Community College; Jo Heidt, Certified Nursing Assistant.*



*James F. Johnson, Candidate for House Seat District 82; Ken Rozenboom, running for the Senate in District 40, and Dien Judge, present on behalf of Congressman Dave Loebsack who is seeking re-election.*

## Too Many People Struggling

I worked for 30 years in public health. It has forever changed me. I have seen too many people without health insurance, too many people struggling to get assistance, too many people with disabilities who cannot fill out required forms and too many people who work full time and still did not have health insurance.

My love for the Home Care Aides, Nursing Assistant and family caregivers has helped me to understand the working poor. When I worked at a nursing home, no employee had health insurance. It took until the late 90's for the nursing assistants who worked there to even be offered health insurance and today many still find the premium too high. Home care was even worse. The state of Iowa dropped employing home care aides and contracted with non-profit agencies to deliver service in 1983. The home care aides received no health insurance, no sick leave, no retirement plan and some vacation depending on hours worked. The agencies were encouraged to keep costs low and they did it on the back of the women they employed. I am proud to say my county did not follow the state. We offered the same benefits as any county employee. I am proud to say the agency has not hired in 14 years because of the values we fought for. When the Home Care Aides of my county retire, they will have a pension.

"I worked with many non-profit agencies and can name you a Home Care Aide who worked 30 plus years starting at 50 cents an hour and ended up at minimum wage. She was on Medicaid the rest of her life." – **Anonymous**

## You Have The Right to Remain Silent

No, you are not under arrest. It's just my way of saying this: If you care about the work you do and the people you serve, then let your voice be heard – by **VOTING** in the November 6th election.

You **DO** have the right to remain silent. You are not required to vote. No one is going to come haul you out of your home, force you into a car, take you to the polling place and escort you in. This is something you get to choose to do ....or choose not to do.

But consider this: Every election is important. This one is particularly so.

The people that get elected at the federal and state level -- the President, Members of Congress in Washington D. C. and members of the Iowa Legislature in Des Moines -- will determine whether the issues important to direct care workers get addressed.

What are those issues? They are the issues of your education, your pay and benefits, your career opportunities, your ability to make a good living in a direct care career, and your ability to provide a high level of care and services to those you assist. If you vote, you can make a difference. If you don't vote, you won't.



### If You Are Not Registered to Vote

Get registered! You can do that now, and you can even do that on Election Day!

### Vote Anytime – On Election Day – November 6th or Before!

Early voting has become very popular. You don't have to wait to vote on the "official" Election Day – and this year that day is Tuesday November 6. You can vote anytime between now and then. That way you get it done. You don't have to worry about the weather or your schedule on November 6.

### To Find Out More Information About Registering or Voting

Contact your County Auditor's Office. They can assist you with registering, finding your voting location, and helping you to vote early. Or, you can visit the Iowa Secretary of State's website at [www.sos.iowa.gov](http://www.sos.iowa.gov)

## Senator Harkin Hears About Need For Retirement Benefits

*"I am a Certified Nursing Assistant...I'm the main bread-winner for my family after my husband was laid off...I don't have health insurance and... I have no retirement benefits other than social security." –Tracy Hoveland, CNA*

Tracy Hoveland, a Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA) in Mason City was part of a recent "roundtable discussion" with US Senator Tom Harkin of Iowa. The meeting was held in Mason City to discuss Senator Harkin's concerns about those in direct care who do not have access to any retirement or pension benefit other than Social Security. Senator Harkin is proposing to create new retirement options called "USA Accounts" that would help those who currently do not have a private pension offered through their employer or any kind of a 401k plan.



Panelists joining Tracy included a small business owner, a retired worker, and a representative of AARP Iowa. Tracy spoke on behalf of thousands of others who work in direct care and have nothing other than Social Security to rely on in their retirement years.

Tracy told Senator Harkin that she appreciated his concerns about the retirement benefits of workers like her, and said that his proposals were a good starting point to deal with the issues. The Senator spoke with her afterwards in more detail about those who work in direct care, their pay and benefits.

## Why we should value direct care

by Charlotte Nelson *Courtesy of Des Moines Register*

More than 90 percent of the direct care work force is female. The men who are in these jobs are equally capable and committed, but there are few of them. So, addressing the needs of the direct-care work force is in reality a women's issue — which is, of course, a human issue.

Those in direct care make up Iowa's largest work force. They constitute one of Iowa's fastest-growing employment opportunities. And direct care work is one of the most difficult occupations for attracting and retaining employees.

They are the home health aides, nurse aides, hospice aides and direct support professionals who serve people with disabilities and older Iowans in many different settings.

Direct care is one of the lowest-paying occupations in Iowa. Approximately 25 percent of these workers have no health insurance. They have few continuing education and training opportunities. Less than half have access to sick leave. Most don't have a retirement plan other than Social Security. Many are eligible for food stamps and other needs-based benefits. Their work is physically and emotionally demanding.

They are grossly undervalued. Commonly they are seen as entry-level workers, as unskilled, as in a job that "anyone could do," and as readily replaceable. Too many direct-care workers feel like second-class citizens, or, as one worker recently said, "We are viewed as a dime a dozen."

Because the work force is predominantly female, the job often gets labeled as "women's work." The label implies that the work is not "real" work, or is not work of consequence. That it is not a career that can or should provide a decent living.

If this were predominantly a man's occupation, it would undoubtedly be better paid and have better benefits. It would provide more and better training. It would be seen as important work that would be valued and respected as a worthy profession.

I am a woman, but I am not a member of the direct-care work force. I have recently, however, been the grateful recipient of direct care. And I know this: Changing the way we think about and treat the direct-care work force is not just the right thing to do, it is the critically necessary thing to do.

Why? Because we have a growing direct-care work force crisis to address. The demand for these workers is outpacing the supply. And how will we entice people to enter and stay in this profession if we don't begin to think about its importance and to treat it with the respect it deserves?

That means better training, wages and benefits and more respect and recognition.

Why should you care about this? Because it is personal! At some point, in some way, you will find yourself depending on a member of the direct-care work force and the services these workers provide — for a parent, spouse, child, sibling, friend ... or even yourself!

When that happens, you are going to want skilled and dependable workers who provide the very best care and support. You'll want workers that you trust, who will treat you or a loved one with dignity and respect.

Want to help ensure that you and your loved ones will get the care and support that you want and need? One important action would be to engage candidates seeking state or federal elective office this fall, asking them if they care about direct-care issues and what they will do to address them. Contact current elected officials with the same questions.

Look for those who will become champions of the direct care work force. And when you find them, support them!

*Charlotte Nelson of Des Moines is former director of the Iowa Commission on the Status of Women and was inducted into the Iowa Women's Hall of Fame in 2011. Comments: ncharlotte96@gmail.com*

*The following letters to the editor were published recently in the Des Moines Register and a number of other Iowa newspapers.*

### Letter to the editor: Iowa needs statewide standards on direct care issues

I want to thank Charlotte Nelson for her essay on the need to better train and recognize direct care professionals on whom many Iowans rely to support their independence, daily living or health ("Direct Care Workers Need Our Support," Aug. 23). I have been a direct care professional for more than 20 years, and I serve on the Direct Care Worker Advisory Council.

Nelson urged readers to ask legislators and candidates where they stand on direct care issues. More specifically, I urge readers to ask their legislators and candidates to support the Board of Direct Care Professionals. Better preparing and recognizing direct care professionals, to ensure quality care for vulnerable Iowans, is the right thing to do. Creating the board is key to doing it.

— Matt Clevenger,  
Direct Care Professional,  
Des Moines





**John Hale**, Public Policy and Development Consultant

## Iowa CareGivers Hits 20! Let's Give It a Gift!

This year, the Iowa CareGivers Association turned 20 years old! 20 years. Amazing.

The Iowa CareGivers Association is an amazing success story. An amazing against-all-the-odds story.

It was the first of its kind. It was founded to bring attention to and to support a workforce that no one knew much about and few really cared about. Di Findley knew what few knew or were willing to

admit – that direct care workers were the invisible people that made a huge difference in the quality of services provided by the health and long term care system.

Today, the Iowa CareGivers Association is a model that other states look to for a way to build and sustain its direct care workforce. It's the model for how to get things done and how to have real impact on the direct care workforce and the people of all ages that are assisted and served.

It is known in the Halls of Congress and in the Iowa General Assembly. It is sought out by the media for information and comment. It works with all kinds of service providers, community colleges and state universities, federal and state government agencies, organizations focused on aging and people with disabilities issues, consumers and their families and others ALL FOR ONE REASON – to improve the lives and jobs of direct care workers and to improve the quality of care and services they provide.

It is unique. Other organizations have sprung up attempting to serve and support certain categories of direct care workers in Iowa. The reality is that try as they might, they can never be what ICA is.

### Here's why:

**ICA is independent.** It's not owned or controlled by anyone.

**ICA is passionate** about what it does. Its interest in direct care workers is genuine. Workers and consumers-- and elected officials -- can see it and feel that in what ICA says and does.

**ICA is persistent.** ICA simply does not give up or go away.

**ICA is local.** It is "run" by local people who know Iowa and Iowans. Iowa is ICA's home.

**ICA is economical if not downright cheap.** It doesn't have fancy space in fancy buildings. It doesn't have high priced Executives, numerous attorneys and an army of high priced lobbyists and accountants.

**ICA asks the right questions.** While others ask how much will I/we benefit from this, ICA is always asking this: How will this benefit the work done by direct care workers and the Iowans they serve?

**ICA is not afraid to be bold.** ICA is willing to tackle the tough issues and to fight the tough battles. And to say what needs to be said even when it's not popular or politically correct.

**In short, ICA is one of a kind.**

**SO....Let's celebrate and support ICA.** It can't keep being a force for good unless people continue to help it financially. If there was ever a time and a reason to support ICA, the 20th anniversary is it.

### ICA touches lives. Those lives now need to touch ICA.

If you are a worker, a consumer or family member, an organization, a business, someone who simply knows or has heard about ICA and supports what it does, and wants to see the next 20 be even better than the first, then dig into your pockets. Give what you can. And feel good that you are doing something special for a very special organization!

### Please Give A Gift to Honor 20 Years of Impact

Show your support for the work we do on behalf of aging Iowans, Iowans with disabilities, their families, and the paid direct caregivers that support them. Your contribution will support 1) high quality educational programs that increase the knowledge and skills of paid direct caregivers; and 2) advocacy that impacts policies that a) ensure the safety and well-being of you and your loved ones and b) encourage Iowans to become paid direct caregivers and make it a career.

#### Here's how you can help:

##### Make a financial contribution.

YES I WILL. Make checks payable to Iowa CareGivers Association or contribute online at [www.iowacaregivers.org](http://www.iowacaregivers.org)

Amount of Contribution \$ \_\_\_\_\_

YES I WILL. Please contact me about considering a larger gift in my will or estate plan.

My contribution is:  In Honor of  In Memory of  
Full name of Honoree or Memorial:

\_\_\_\_\_

Mailing Address of Honoree or Family of Memorial:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Complete Home Mailing Address

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Phone (home) \_\_\_\_\_ Phone (work) \_\_\_\_\_

Phone (cell) \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address \_\_\_\_\_

(Emails are not shared with others.)

Please keep my contribution anonymous.

Your contribution may be tax deductible as prescribed by law. Donors will be listed in the Iowa CareGivers Annual Report unless otherwise instructed.

**Thank you to all of the following for your generous support.**

**In Memory**

**Margaret Mancl**

*Fran Mancl*

**Dorla Sansom**

*Betty Grandquist*

**Jimmy T. Stevens**

*Connie Stevens*

**Partners & Donors Contributing \$5,000 and Above**

Anonymous

**Partners & Donors Contributing \$1,000-\$4,999**

Des Moines Area Community College

**Partners & Donors Contributing Up to \$999**

Anonymous

Valerie Stickel-Diehl

Betty Grandquist

Shirley Renfro

Deanna Lehl

Paul and Jen Storbeck

**Inkind Contributions**

Aging Resources of Central Iowa

*\*Listed are contributions from the period 6/27/12 to 9/2012*

**A Tribute to My Mother**

***“She was the one who taught me the real heart of compassionate caregiving.” – Fran Mancl***

**Dear Di,**

Enclosed is a check to help fund programs and services that help Direct Care Professionals provide the best support to people in Iowa. I am giving this donation in memory of my mother, Margaret.

At this time it is important for me to thank the person whom I believe was one of the greatest caregivers in the world. That person was my mother. I have six brothers and six sisters who have always been supportive of my work in the field of health care. My mother was a marvelous caregiver to all of us and she taught us how to take care of one another. She was the one who taught me the real heart of compassionate “Care-giving”.

In October of 2011 my life, as I had known it, profoundly changed. I wanted to be a caregiver for my own mother but I couldn't. My mother learned, at age 83, that she had liver cancer. She was facing the end time of her life.

My life changed because over the course of the past 10 months, I was introduced to a very warm, supportive, loving group of compassionate caregivers that took care of my mom in assisted living. Even though my profession was in direct care, it was so uplifting to embrace the warmth and comfort of direct caregivers who were professional. They created a safe, intimate, comfortable, and compassionate environment for my mother during her last months on earth.

My mother passed away on August 20th with dignity, reverence, and respect because of caregivers who were educated, knowledgeable and skilled Direct Care Professionals. I remain forever grateful for the direct care my mom received at their hands and hearts. I believe their heartfelt passion and dedication in direct care made a positive difference in my mom's life and in my own life.

If we do our work in direct care merely to earn a paycheck or satisfy a supervisor, we will fall short of the highest motivation – doing our best as evidence of our personal passion for direct care. No matter who signed the paychecks for those Direct Care Professionals that took care of my mom, they were really working for my mother; providing compassionate loving care.

I wish it was more sizeable, but with this small donation in memory of my mother, it is my hope that other Direct Care Professionals will continue to make a profound difference in the lives of those they serve and their loved ones.

**Respectfully, Fran Mancl, Certified Nursing Assistant**



*Photo: L to R: Fran Mancl with his mother Margaret.*



L to R: Shirley Sorenson, Kim Downs, Mary Oliver, and Nancy Anderson



### Chefs Du Jour

#### Board Hosts ICA 20th Anniversary Dinner

The ICA volunteer board hosted a 20th anniversary dinner for board members, staff, and consultants at the home of Mary and Arvid Oliver in Ankeny. A social time and dinner were followed by a high stakes ICA Jeopardy game led by Alex Trebek (aka Kim Downs, Board member).

**Thanks to ICA's amazing board of directors for making our 20 Year Anniversary so memorable and FUN!**

### Resources/Partner Programs

**SAVE THE DATE:**  
**November 13th, 2012**  
**Speakers: Celina Peerman, Kris Hansen, & Erin Drinnin, Iowa Department of Public Health**  
**Topics will include:**  
**Motivation, Direct Care Workforce Initiative, "Customer Service," and Innovations in the Health Field**

**Time: 8A-4P**  
**Where: Hawkeye Community College Main Campus – Tama Hall, Waterloo, IA**

**\*\* There will be vendors and door prizes too!**  
**\*\*\* More information will be mailed out as the date approaches.**

2012 Annual Meeting of the Iowa CareGivers Association Board of Directors will be held on November 5, 2012

**Recruitment Brochure: "The Toughest Job You'll Ever Love" is now available. The video and entire recruitment toolkit will be available soon.**



**Make sure to visit us on the web at: [www.iowacaregivers.org](http://www.iowacaregivers.org) and you can follow us on Facebook and Twitter**

### ICA Board of Directors 2012

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Website: [www.iowacaregivers.org](http://www.iowacaregivers.org)

## From Our Readers

*I just wanted to tell you that I attended the two day conference in Des Moines and I really enjoyed it! I loved both speakers who talked about laughter. I also really appreciated Todd Ingram. I actually enjoyed it all... thank you.*

– Jaleyn Dobbs

*"I spent an hour on the Iowa CareGivers Association website yesterday catching up on the latest. Always inspired." – Fran Mancl*

### Keep

*Keep your ears open to hear the stories*

*Keep your eyes open to see their pain*

*Keep your arms open for hugs*

*Keep yourself healthy, so you can help others*

*Keep alert about the issues that could affect your job*

*Keep your mind open to new ideas*

*Keep your hands open, so you can hold another*

*Keep your humor alive*

*Keep your heart open because you care.*

*Written by Renee Bernier,  
CNA, Hartley, IA*



**Please remember** to update us if you have any name or contact information changes, so that you can continue to receive the ICA HUB and other program announcements. Thank you.

*Iowa CareGivers Association does not discriminate in its educational programs and activities on the basis of race, creed, national origin, ancestry, color, religion, sex, age, disability, veteran status, sexual orientation or any other protected class under relevant state and federal laws.*

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