

## **For Immediate Release**

### **Massachusetts Elder Organization Honored**

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### ***NISC State Association Award presented to MCOA at the National Conference on Aging***

**WASHINGTON, D.C., March 28, 2008—The National Institute on Senior Centers (NISC), an interest group of the National Council on Aging (NCOA), presented its 2008 State Association Award to the Massachusetts Association of Councils on Aging and Senior Center Directors (MCOA).**

MCOA was established in 1979, to improve quality of services provided to senior citizens of the Commonwealth and to encourage and promote development of municipal senior centers and their staffs. Last year the Association was successful in working to help overturn state budget cuts in aging programs, and even accomplished a modest increase in funding for municipal COA services. Over the last two years, working in coalition with other elder advocates, the Association achieved several legislative successes including a change to the Commonwealth's Prescription Advantage Program to allow for year-round open enrollment, new legislation that provided property tax relief for seniors, an increase in the Personal Needs Allowance for nursing home residents and they helped revise the Commonwealth's Protective Services Act to make COA staff 'mandated reporters.'

The Association in conjunction with the Massachusetts Executive Office of Elder Affairs produces a successful three-day fall conference with over 450 paid registrants, 80+ workshops and over 70 vendors. In addition the association conducted twenty eight other training events throughout the year geared for all levels of staff including management, resource diversification, marketing, program development, outreach, volunteer management, supportive day and meeting the needs of small and rural COAs. Topics addressed cutting-edge issues facing senior centers and other aging service programs. The Massachusetts Association has a staff certification program for Directors and Program Managers, 59 individuals have completed certification to date. In addition, MCOA facilitates municipalities in applying for NISC Senior Center Accreditation Program.

NISC is a dynamic network of professionals that represents the senior center field from all across the United States. These professionals and their centers serve as effective agents for the provision of services and opportunities to older people. NISC's State Association Award recognizes outstanding and innovative achievement in the senior center field and was presented at NISC Reception with over 400 senior center professionals and other elder care advocates in attendance; including Massachusetts' Elder Affairs Secretary Mike Festa, Undersecretary Sandy Albright, Assistant Secretary Ruth Palumbo and former Secretaries Paul Lanzikos and Jim Callahan. This reception was part of the joint national conference of NCOA and the American Society on Aging (ASA) that drew 4000 participants, and was held the last week of March in Washington, D.C.

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MCOA Executive Director Executive Director, David P. Stevens, accepted the award on his organization's behalf. "This is truly a team award representing the concerted efforts of over 70 individuals who volunteer in leadership positions for our association, by serving on our Board, Advisory Council, and as chairs for our standing committees, working groups, and task forces. We are also blessed by a handful of dedicated part time staff members, bipartisan support from a proactive legislature, and a close working relationship with our Commonwealth's Executive Office of Elder Affairs. Currently our focus is to transform our network of 349 senior centers into wellness centers, and to ensure our centers are "Welcoming Places for All". In addition we are working in coalition with other elder advocates to provide adequate mental health services for our Commonwealth's older residents. Thanks to NCOA and NISC for this truly remarkable honor and to all our members and fellow advocates-this honor is for all of us in the Commonwealth who provide program and services to Massachusetts' older adults."

**A plaque was issued along with a \$1000 stipend. The Plaque read:**

**NISC**  
**NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF SENIOR CENTERS**  
*An interest group of National Council on Aging*

**STATE ASSOCIATION AWARD  
PRESENTED TO**

**MASSACHUSETTS ASSOCIATION OF COUNCILS ON AGING  
& SENIOR CENTER DIRECTORS**

*For Outstanding Creative Technical Assistance In Promoting The Growth,  
Development And Expansion Of State Associations of Senior Center Organizations.*

**March 28, 2008**

**Submitting MCOA for this award:**

**Jayne Colino, Massachusetts State NISC Delegate  
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