

August 2015



## Spotlight: Meet Merea Bentrott

*Having served as a VOP Volunteer Coordinator for the Office of the State Long-Term Care Ombudsman, Merea has witnessed first-hand the value of volunteerism to Iowa's long-term care residents and their loved ones. > [Learn More](#)*



Continuing Education:

## Welcome Our Newest Volunteer Ombudsmen!

- Jolene Tratchel, Tru Rehab of Grinnell (Grinnell)



## VOP Trivia!

Are you a trivia buff? To make things a little more exciting, our VOP newsletters will now include a trivia question related to aging facts and prizes will be awarded!

Volunteers can submit answers via email to [volunteerVOP@iowa.gov](mailto:volunteerVOP@iowa.gov) or by calling their VOP coordinator (one submission per volunteer, please). Volunteers who submit the correct answer will be entered into a prize drawing, which will take place the second Friday of each month, allowing volunteers a few weeks to submit their answers. The correct answer and name of the winner will be featured in the following month's newsletter.

The prize for this month's trivia winner is either one free hour of continuing education OR a VOP swag bag.

### ***This month's trivia question:***

Congress enacted the Older Americans Act in which year?

- 1980
- 1965
- 1972
- 1959

Submit your answer by Aug. 14 to be eligible for this month's prize drawing!

### ***Last month's trivia question:***

The word "ombudsman" is of what linguistic origin?

- French

## Offerings & Opportunities

### STATEWIDE VOP CONFERENCE CALLS:

Did you miss the Statewide VOP Conference Call on July 22? Not to worry... minutes of the meeting and resources are available on our website's [VOP Communiques](#) page.

The next Statewide VOP Conference Call will take place on Sept. 16 at 2 p.m. More information will be available in the September newsletter.

If you are a volunteer without an email address who would like to join the call, please contact your VOP Coordinator to obtain the contact information.

### LECTURES:

#### **University of Iowa 2015 Geriatric Lecture Series (offered online each month)**

The University of Iowa Geriatric Lecture Series is presented online in a series of monthly lectures. The 2015 series, which is sponsored by the Iowa Geriatric Education Center and the University of Iowa Roy J. and Lucille A. Carver College of Medicine, is free and will focus on dementia. Each lecture can be viewed for one month and is accessible exclusively during the month it is scheduled beginning the first business day of each month.

To register for the series, email the Iowa Geriatric Education Center at [geriatric-education@uiowa.edu](mailto:geriatric-education@uiowa.edu) with your name, discipline (e.g., nursing, medicine, social work), organization or facility name and your contact information, including your email address. Please allow at least one week to receive a response.

Upcoming topics:

- August - "Choosing Wisely and Goals of Care"

> [View the full schedule](#)

### EVENTS & CONFERENCES:

#### **GAIN Annual Conference**

Nov. 6, 2015 (8:45 a.m. - 4 p.m.)  
Iowa State Bar Association Headquarters  
625 E Court Ave.  
Des Moines, IA 50309

The Guardianship Association of Iowa Network (GAIN) is hosting its third annual conference. "Tough Decisions: Mental Health, Aging and Substitute Decision-Making in Iowa" will feature Iowa's leading experts and advocates to help attendees develop a better understanding of mental illness, Alzheimer's disease and the aging

- [Swedish](#)
- Spanish
- Korean

Thanks to those who submitted an answer to last month's trivia question - the correct answer was "Swedish" and 100 percent of the guesses received were correct!

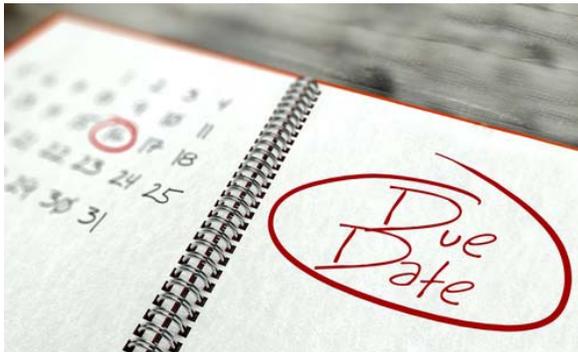
Congratulations to our winner, Thomas Schulte! Thomas serves at Little Flower Haven in Earling, Iowa. He has been with the VOP since April 2015.



## One-Year Anniversaries

The following volunteers are celebrating their one-year anniversary in August:

- Helen Bombei-Dobbins
- Suzanne Menke



## Monthly Reports Due July 31

A friendly reminder that monthly reports are due on the last day of each month. If you have not already done so, please submit July's report as soon as possible. Online reports must be completed by Aug. 5.

Please contact your Volunteer Coordinator for any assistance.

process; challenges related to serving this population; and additional impacts these diagnoses have on the substitute decision-making process.

Space is limited; Volunteer Ombudsmen are encouraged to attend and can register at the discounted rate of \$25. If you are interested in applying for reimbursement to attend this event, please contact your VOP Coordinator.

> [Register](#)

### 2015 Iowa CareGivers Conference: Passport to Direct Care

Aug. 24-25  
The Meadows Events & Conference Center  
1 Prairie Meadows Drive  
Altoona, IA 50009

The annual Iowa CareGivers Conference is scheduled for August and last year we were able to send two volunteers on scholarship. This year's lineup of workshops will cover topics such as dementia, challenging behaviors, sexuality in long-term care, oral health and hygiene, grief, falls prevention, advocacy and more.

If you are interested in applying for a scholarship to the conference, please contact your VOP Coordinator.

> [Register](#)

### TRAINING REFRESHER:

It has come to our attention that some Volunteer Ombudsmen feel they would benefit from a training refresher on the fundamentals of the VOP.

If you think you could benefit from attending new Volunteer Ombudsman training, you are welcome to attend in whole or in part! An upcoming training for new volunteers is scheduled to take place in Cedar Rapids on Aug. 18 from 10 a.m. - 4 p.m.

If you would like to attend, contact your VOP Coordinator for more details. If you can't make a training refresher, but feel like one-on-one assistance would be helpful, please contact your VOP Coordinator at any time.

### ADDITIONAL RESOURCES:

#### Office of the State Long-Term Care Ombudsman Resource Library

Check out the new Resource Library on the Office of the State Long-Term Care Ombudsman's website for important information relating to advocacy and residents' rights. Anything and everything found here - from brochures and fact sheets to handbooks and presentations - can be counted toward your VOP continuing education requirement. Report time spent reviewing these

## Ombudsman Tidbit

I'm so appreciative of the many wonderful volunteers serving in our VOP program! I often rely on a volunteer to do an initial investigation, or to follow up with residents after my investigation.



Just last month, I received a referral from a hospice nurse who was working with a resident in a nursing facility. She reported the resident had some concerns about the facility and said the resident had given permission for an ombudsman to contact her.

Since the information was vague - and I knew I couldn't get to the facility until the following week - I asked the volunteer ombudsman if she could check in with the resident. The volunteer did so, and was able to identify the resident's concerns about call lights and medication.

With the resident's permission, the volunteer spoke to the administrator/POC about the issues - right around the time when DIA (Department of Inspections and Appeals) stopped in for the facility's annual inspection. I spoke with the surveyors and was able to relay the call light concerns as noted in the volunteer's report.

As you can see, the volunteer was essential in helping to identify and resolve concerns for the residents. In this situation, the volunteer had noted call light concerns on previous monthly reports. She documented when she visited with her POC about this, included a copy of their action plan and continued to monitor the situation - information that is very helpful to include on monthly reports.

Many thanks to all of you for helping to facilitate changes that enhance the quality of care and quality of life for the amazing folks living in long-term care! You make such a tremendous difference and your efforts are recognized and appreciated.

Pam Railsback  
Local Long-Term Care Ombudsman  
East-Central Iowa

materials to your VOP Coordinator.

> [View the Resource Library](#)

### Residents' Voice Challenge

In anticipation of Residents' Rights Month in October, the Consumer Voice encouraged long-term care residents across the country to participate in the Residents' Voice Challenge by submitting essays, poems, art or videos related to this year's theme, "Care Matters."

Additionally, residents were asked to submit 40 words of wisdom to coincide with the 40th anniversary of Consumer Voice.

> [View the entries](#)



510 E 12th Street, Ste. 2 | Des Moines, IA 50319 | (866) 236-1430 | [www.iowaaging.gov/VOP](http://www.iowaaging.gov/VOP)

This message was sent to [Katie.mulford@iowa.gov](mailto:Katie.mulford@iowa.gov) from:

Sarah Hinzman | [Sarah.Hinzman2@iowa.gov](mailto:Sarah.Hinzman2@iowa.gov) | Iowa Department on Aging | Iowa Department on Aging 510 E 12th St., Ste. 2 | Des Moines, IA 50319

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