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**Rappahannock Rapidan Community Services Board and Area Agency on Aging  
Receives Grant to Improve Local Services for Older Adults**

*Aging Together partnership will improve long term care and supportive services*

**Culpeper, VA, May 15, 2006** – Rappahannock Rapidan Community Services Board and Area Agency on Aging, on behalf of the Aging Together Partnership, was awarded a \$750,000 grant from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation (RWJF) to improve long term care and supportive services for at risk older adults in the counties of Culpeper, Fauquier, Madison, Orange and Rappahannock. The four-year grant was awarded through the Foundation's *Community Partnerships for Older Adults* program, a national initiative created to foster community partnerships that will improve long term care and supportive services systems to meet the current and future needs of older adults.

Aging Together was one of eight projects across the country awarded funding. Its partnership is made up of over 100 organizations and individuals in the five-county area of Planning District Nine. The Core Leadership of the partnership includes key leaders from the Rappahannock Rapidan Community Services Board/Area Agency on Aging; Departments of Social Services in Culpeper, Fauquier, Madison, Orange and Rappahannock; Piedmont United Way; the Rappahannock Rapidan Regional Commission, Culpeper Regional Hospital and Fauquier Hospital. Other partners include senior citizens, churches, AARP, TRIAD, businesses, hospice organizations, county elder coalitions, long-term care service providers, Alzheimer's Association, Virginia Cooperative Extension, community colleges, high schools, and many other organizations and individuals. All of these partners have actively participated in a strategic planning process, which began in 2004 and culminated with the award of the grant from RWJF.

"We've had overwhelming support from older individuals, caregivers, service organizations and local governments in identifying ways we can help make our five counties great places to grow older. We look forward to working together to put our plans into action over the next four years, thanks to financial support from RWJF," said Sallie Morgan, Chair of Aging Together and Senior Manager with Rappahannock Rapidan Community Services Board and Area Agency on Aging.

This initiative is consistent with the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation's longstanding commitment to support communities in which older adults can remain in their homes and neighborhoods and continue to live full, independent lives. The project will work to:

- Facilitate expansion of long-term care and supportive services in the region
- Increase capacity of local paid and informal caregivers
- Establish an effective and sustainable volunteer network to support aging objectives
- Increase knowledge among older adults and caregivers about long-term care options
- Increase awareness of the importance of healthy lifestyles among seniors

“There is no one-size-fits-all program that can adequately meet the diverse needs of older adults. Each of the partnerships selected understands that, and they are generating new approaches that address the unique long term care needs of older adults in their communities,” said Jane Isaacs Lowe, Ph.D., RWJF senior program officer.

The CPFOA projects focus on two groups of older Americans: those 60 years of age or older who are at increased risk of disability because of poverty, race or ethnicity, chronic illness, or advanced age; and older adults with physical or cognitive impairments who require long term care and supportive services.

“Aging Together has realized that it takes more than a single agency or organization working alone to improve the long term care and supportive services system. Aging Together is ‘pushing the envelope’ to develop solutions that fit their unique circumstances and priorities,” said Elise J. Bolda, Ph.D., CPFOA national program director.

The Community Partnerships for Older Adults program is based at the University of Southern Maine's Muskie School of Public Service. The Duke University Long Term Care Resources Program provides technical assistance for the program, under the direction of Beverly S. Patnaik. More information about the Community Partnerships for Older Adults program is available on the program's Web site at: [www.cpfoa.org](http://www.cpfoa.org).

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