

Check out page 4 for highlights from Cuyahoga County Democratic Party Chair Shontel Brown's visit.

WRAAA SPOTLIGHT

Winter 2019/2020

A publication of the Western Reserve Area Agency on Aging



WE PROVIDE CHOICES FOR
PEOPLE TO LIVE INDEPENDENTLY IN
THE PLACE THEY WANT TO CALL HOME.

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FROM THE DESK OF WRAAA CEO DR. DOUG BEACH



Food as Medicine

The ancient Greek physician Hippocrates had it right when he said, "Let food be thy medicine and medicine be thy food."

When you think of food as medicine, the importance of what you eat, at any stage in your life, takes on much greater significance. While good food cannot replace medication entirely, the medical community agrees a diet made of nutrient-dense foods, vitamins and minerals can:

- Reduce the risk of some diseases, including heart disease, diabetes, stroke, some cancers, and osteoporosis
- Reduce high blood pressure
- Lower high cholesterol
- Improve your well-being
- Increase your ability to fight off illness
- Elevate your ability to recover from illness or injury
- Intensify your energy level.

In other words - you can fight everything from depression to life-threatening cardiovascular disease with your fork - if you fill your plate with plenty of vegetables, fruits, whole grains, fat-free or low-fat dairy products, lean meats, poultry, fish, beans, eggs, and nuts.

At WRAAA we know that getting people to eat correctly, particularly older adults on a limited budget, is a challenge. We understand the vital role good nutrition plays on our clients' ability to live independently. That's why our care managers carefully monitor their clients' diets, encourage them to access home delivery meal services and help stock their cabinets with healthy foods. Good nutrition keeps the body strong, the mind sharp and the energy level up as we age.

To make healthy cooking easier for our clients and community members WRAAA is currently compiling *WRAAA Cooks!*, a cookbook chock-full of easy to prepare, nutritious, user friendly recipes. Also, we are using our Nutrition Kitchen located in the lower level, for healthy cooking demonstrations being broadcast by Cleveland's media outlets. And, we are planting the seeds for a community garden in the spring to help our clients choose foods from plants (the living botanical kind) not plants (the industrial processing kind).

So the next time you go grocery shopping or sit down to a meal remember to eat wisely and well. What you eat – becomes you!

E. Douglas Beach 

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Left to Right: Flossie Brisker, Sam Thomas III, Stacy Turner, Patricia Anderson, Tayloria Anderson, June Taylor, Shontel Brown

YOUR VOTE MATTERS

CUYAHOGA COUNTY DEMOCRATIC PARTY CHAIR SHONTEL BROWN VISITS WRAAA

Shontel Brown, the first black female chairperson of the Cuyahoga County Democratic Party, shared her political journey, her commitment to helping others, and her call for citizens to exercise their right to vote at the WRAAA All Staff Meeting last October.

"Eight years ago I entered Warrensville Heights politics because I knew things could be a lot better for my neighbors, and if I wanted change, I needed a seat at the table," said Ms. Brown, who served on Warrensville Heights City Council for three years, then was elected as District 9's Cuyahoga County Council Representative before being tapped as Democratic Party Chair.

Ms. Brown's goal is to unite Cuyahoga County voters to effect positive change, particularly in caring for the county's growing senior population.

I have never backed down from a challenge and will continue to fight for funding that enables seniors to have the necessary resources to live safely and comfortably in their own homes," she said.

Ms. Brown urged WRAAA staff to use the power of the ballot and cast their votes in every election cycle. "Get to know your local representatives and contact them when you have concerns," she said. "Only by being involved and taking action for causes you believe in can you, like me, be the change you want to be." 🌸

“I urge citizens to use the power of the ballot and cast their votes in every election cycle.”

~ Shontel Brown, Cuyahoga County Democratic Party Chair



David Schafer, Maltz Museum's Managing Dir.

Rabbi Jonathan Cohen, Senior Rabbi at The Temple-Tifereth Israel



Rev. Dr. Otis Moss, Jr. interviewed by Dr. Sharon Milligan, CWRU



Rev. Dr. Otis Moss, Jr. with Local Students



Beachwood Mayor Martin Horwitz, June Talyor, and Ronald C. Todd II, Gov. DeWine's Minority Affairs Liaison



MARTIN LUTHER KING COMMEMORATION DAY

WRAAA was one of the sponsors of a community-wide program honoring the memory and legacy of Rev. Martin Luther King, Jr. The keynote speaker for the January 20th event, held at The Temple Tifereth Israel and the Maltz Museum of Jewish Heritage in Beachwood, was theologian and civic leader Rev. Dr. Otis Moss, Jr, who served as pastor of Olivet Institutional Baptist Church in Cleveland for 33 years.

Rev. Moss delivered a message of hope, perseverance and resilience as he recalled the days of walking alongside Dr. King, peacefully advocating for social justice during the turbulent civil rights era.

"Dr. King's philosophical, theological and moral base was consistent from 1955 when he first stood up to injustice until the evening of April 4, 1968 in Memphis, Tennessee, when at age 39 he gave his last drop of blood in the struggle for human rights," said Rev. Moss.

In response to the current racial tensions facing America, Rev. Moss compared the situation to being on an airplane. "When you fly to England you can catch a tailwind that brings you to your destination ahead of schedule," he said. "But coming home you might catch a headwind, which delays your trip, but eventually you arrive where you want to go. That is where we are now. We may be facing upheavals and delays in our mission to end racism, war, poverty, ethnic and religious hatred, but we are still moving forward toward a necessary goal of building an action plan for social change."

Calling Dr. King an unrivaled leader, Rev. Moss said, "The ultimate measure of men and women is not where they stand in times of comfort and convenience, but where they stand in times of dangers, toils and snares. The courage to lead is the courage to speak truth with love, without fear or bullying. One word spoken at the right time can further the welfare of a nation. We must all make a difference, and we will not grow weary in our fight to do what is right." 🌸

WRAAA TURKEY GIVEAWAY

Spotlight on Nutrition

As Cierra Brown walked out of Dave's Market & eatery at MidTown with a 15-pound turkey and a meat thermometer in her bag, her smiling face reflected immense gratitude. "I give thanks to Western Reserve Area Agency on Aging for arranging this free turkey giveaway today," she said. "I'm going to cook the turkey and share it with my relatives, who will sit at my table and enjoy a real Thanksgiving dinner this year."

Cierra's turkey was part of a 3,500 turkey giveaway, sponsored and coordinated by WRAAA in partnership with MetroHealth Medical System, Dave's Supermarket, the Greater Cleveland Food Bank and St. Luke's Foundation. The turkey giveaway drew media attention and segments appeared on WOIO Channel 19 and Fox 8 News.

Older adults who attend senior centers in WRAAA's five county area, and women who are part of the nutrition education and food access program offered by UH Rainbow Center for Women & Children MidTown, received turkeys at the following locations:

- West Side Community House
- Community Partnership on Aging
- Dave's Market & eatery MidTown
- Geauga County Dept. on Aging
- Lake County Office on Aging
- Lorain County Office on Aging
- Euclid Senior Center
- Medina County Office for Older Adults
- Senior Citizen Resource Inc.

Dietician Lora Silver, MS, RD, LD, University Hospitals Outpatient Nutrition Counselor, was on hand to offer nutritional guidance at Dave's MidTown. "What you eat makes a big difference in how you feel and act during the day," she said. "A healthy diet is a healthier you, and the more meals a family shares the healthier they eat. That's why we are so grateful for our partnership with the WRAAA turkey giveaway program which enables so many people to share a Thanksgiving meal together." 🌿



Turkey Recipient Cierra Brown



Chef Tony shared recipes and healthy cooking tips



UH Dietician Lora Silver



MetroHealth Turkey Giveaway



Volunteer Spotlight

Robert Loud – A beloved volunteer


Teresa Allerton, a co-team leader in WRAAA's Aging and Disability Resource Center, has nothing but praise for the late Robert Loud.

"During the 17 years Robert was a 5-day a week WRAAA volunteer he focused on the job at hand, from filing papers to helping us put out mailings," says Teresa. Robert's presence became an integral part of our department. We adored him."

The close bond Teresa developed with Robert extended beyond WRAAA. When Robert, who was on the autism spectrum, required extra help after his stepfather passed away, Teresa connected him with the appropriate WRAAA services. "I knew what resources were available for Robert, and I made sure he had whatever he needed to live independently as long as he could," said Teresa.

Eventually Robert could no longer live alone and he moved into a group home. The situation was not ideal, so Teresa invited him to live with her and was appointed his legal guardian.

After a bad fall Robert moved to Villa St. Joseph, and Teresa was a regular visitor. "I had become his extended family, and it was my joy to look after him until he passed away," she said.


Today there is a beautiful plaque outside the medical records department honoring Robert and his volunteer service to WRAAA. "Robert may be gone but his memory lives on in our department and in our hearts," says Teresa. "Those who had the pleasure of knowing him will never forget him." 

Volunteer Opportunities

WRAAA's dedicated volunteers play a vital community role. As the agency voice, they serve as ambassadors within its five county area and provide new avenues of service and partnerships that benefit the people they serve.

Volunteer Opportunities:

- **Speakers Bureau**
- **Outreach Events**
- **Advocacy in Motion (AIM)**
- **WRAAA Resource Center**

All volunteers participate in a thorough training and orientation process. For volunteer information contact Director of Community Outreach and Advocacy, Fatima Perkins at 216.539.9209 or fperkins@areaagingsolutions.org 

Legacy of Caring

17th Annual Recognition Event

The energy level was high at WRAAA's 17th Annual Legacy of Caring Recognition Event. Dr. Doug Beach welcomed guests and praised paraprofessionals in attendance and those in the field for their dedication and compassion when caring for WRAAA's 9,000 PASSPORT recipients. WRAAA CFO Christopher Hall and Mardell Nimmer-Huckabee, WRAAA Manager of Provider Operations, also lauded the exemplary work done by service providers.

The morning's keynote speaker was Deborah Adams, who served as WRAAA Director, Community Services and Supports and Provider Operations for 22 years.

"Paraprofessionals are the bedrock of community-based services for the elderly and differently-abled adults," Mrs. Adams said. "By providing help with activities of daily living, transportation, adult day care, emergency response and so many other services, paraprofessionals allow people to live comfortably in their own homes."

The importance of dedicated paraprofessionals is evident in the following statistics cited by Mrs. Adams:

- By 2030 one out of eight people will be over 65
- People 85 and older are the fastest growing segment of the population
- Obesity rates are rapidly increasing among adults ages 60 and older
- A startling 75% of Americans over age 65 live with multiple, chronic health conditions, ranging from diabetes to dementia.

"These statistics indicate the growing number of elderly who will need the essential services provided by paraprofessionals," said Mrs. Adams.

The program included special acknowledgement of lifetime paraprofessional honorees Arlene Johnson and Deneen White-Cox, the Legacy of Caring Scholarship award in honor of Deborah Adams presented to Rita Hargrove, and the Legacy of Caring 2019 award ceremony honoring 21 outstanding paraprofessionals. 🌸



Keynote Speaker Deborah Adams



Mardell Nimmer-Huckabee, Ronald Davis, Chris Hall



Paraprofessional
Vede Gilcrease

Paraprofessional
Rita Hargrove

MEDIA COVERAGE

CHANNEL 5, CHANNEL 8, CHANNEL 19,
THE PLAIN DEALER AND WTAM



Channel 5 Interview with Theresa Foster and Tommy York

WTAM's Bill Wills with Dr. Doug Beach and Theresa Foster



Maria Cribbs with Jen Picciano of Channel 19 Cleveland Cooks
in WRAAA's Nutrition Kitchen

WRAAA Client, Danny Seiger, shares his story

Reaching our Community

President Teddy Roosevelt said, "People don't care how much you know until they know how much you care." That inspiring message was the theme for WRAAA's 2019 media coverage campaign.

2019 Media Highlights:

- We answered the call to help feed the needy for Thanksgiving, which was showcased on WOIO Channel 19 and Fox 8 News
- Plain Dealer reporter Julie Washington quoted WRAAA in a column highlighting ways to make homes safer for seniors
- The WRAAA kitchen partnered with WOIO Channel 19's Jen Picciano to create well balanced meals for seniors
- Score a touchdown for the agency's Nutrition Kitchen! Former Cleveland Brown's wide receiver and return specialist Josh Cribbs and his wife Maria now call WRAAA home for their morning talk show cooking segments on Channel 19
- WEWS Channel 5 called on WRAAA to showcase Danny Seiger, an agency client, who thrives independently at home
- CEO Dr. Doug Beach and Theresa Foster, Director of our Aging and Disability Resource Center, took to the air waves with WTAM's Bill Wills in a podcast discussion on the growing needs of seniors. 🌸



Josh Cribbs and WRAAA Staff

“Good Communication has a profound impact on how people can learn. We want people to know that they are not alone. WRAAA is here to help.”

~Joe Benny,
Director of
Communications

o4a 30th Annual Conference

The 30th Annual Conference for the Aging and Disability Networks, hosted by The Ohio Association of Area Agencies on Aging (o4a) in Columbus, helped participants identify the latest Medicare changes, addressed the value of spirituality for seniors and disabled adults, and explored health problems related to homelessness. Along with educational seminars, attendees shared innovative ideas to help care for those in need.

The keynote speakers and presenters included Governor Mike DeWine, Ursel McElroy, Director of The Ohio Department of Aging, William Armbruster, Senior Advisor for AARP Livable Communities, Dr. Margot Kushel, Professor of Medicine of the University of California San Francisco, and Fatima Perkins, WRAAA Community Outreach and Advocacy Director.

WRAAA CEO Dr. Doug Beach and Duana Patton, o4a President, presented Senator Matt Dolan (Ohio Senate District 24) with the Advocacy Award. "The Advocacy Award should be shared by everyone here," Senator Dolan emphasized. 🌸

From the West Wing to WRAAA

Ja'ron Smith, Deputy Assistant to the President, made an early morning stop at WRAAA headquarters in December to share his thoughts and enthusiasm on his White House role.

Mr. Smith, 37, is the highest-ranking African-American staffer in the White House. In that capacity, he plays a pivotal role in developing and implementing the President's policies designed to improve the lives of urban African-Americans. Mr. Smith's focus includes writing legislation to promote opportunity zones, reforming the criminal justice system, and providing aid to the nation's historically black colleges and universities.

"Growing up in the Buckeye-Kinsman area, I understand the communities I am working so hard to rebuild and the need to lift people up," said Mr. Smith, a graduate of Howard University in Washington, D.C. "I urge everyone I meet to get the word out about the programs being offered by the Administration to help urban African-Americans in our communities. These programs can only be successful if state governments, as well as citizens, are willing to collaborate and do their best to make them succeed. There are so many people who have potential, we have to do all we can not to waste our valuable human capital." 🌸



Sen. Matt Dolan, Duana Patton, and Dr. Doug Beach



Ja'ron Smith, Deputy Assistant to the President, with WRAAA Board of Trustees Member Andrew Jackson



Shalira Taylor with WRAAA Staff Member Diana Davis

About WRAAA

The Western Reserve Area Agency on Aging (WRAAA) is a private nonprofit corporation organized and designated by the State of Ohio to be the planning, coordinating and administrative agency for federal and state aging programs in Cuyahoga, Geauga, Lake, Lorain and Medina counties. Building upon four decades of experience in providing services and support to elderly and disabled individuals in need, WRAAA continues to expand its service portfolio in the long-term and healthcare delivery systems.

Our Mission

We provide choices for people to live independently in the place they want to call home.

Our Vision

We aim to create a community that provides aging individuals and people with disabilities the opportunity to have their needs met with optimum choice, dignity and maximum independence. 🌸

WRAAA has full service meeting rooms with up-to-date technology and can accommodate 6 to 200 people. Numerous amenities available. Interested?
Contact: ldavidson@areaagingsolutions.org



Western Reserve
Area Agency on Aging

WRAAA COOKS!

WRAAA will soon present *WRAAA Cooks!*, a cookbook chock full of easy-to-follow, nutritious, downhome recipes designed to open the door to good health and nutritious eating.

Try Garlic Edamame from *WRAAA Cooks!*

- 1 bag frozen edamame
- 3 cloves garlic
- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- coarse sea salt
- low sodium soy sauce



- 1 Boil the edamame as directed on the package. Drain and set aside.
- 2 In a large skillet, heat 2 tablespoons olive oil, add three cloves of crushed garlic. Add the edamame and saute them until the outsides begin to brown.
- 3 Pour the edamame into a bowl. Serve with a side dipping sauce of low sodium soy sauce. 🌸



ISSUE 33 HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

On March 17th Cuyahoga County voters will be asked to vote on Issue 33. This Cuyahoga County Health and Human Services levy provides funding for critical health and human services programs that support seniors, individuals with mental illness and addiction, public safety, and children across the county. Every year 400,000 people from more than 200,000 families use these services. Passing Issue 33 will ensure that those in Cuyahoga county will have the community-based services they need and will help connect seniors with caregivers and strengthen their independence.

Voting is how you communicate to your local government your choices. Support seniors with a YES vote on March 17th. Every vote counts. 🌸

Western Reserve Area Agency on Aging Programs and Services

Aging and Disability Resource Center

ADRC experts provide information, assistance, and referrals to help connect individuals to long-term services and support.

Assisted Living

Designed to help individuals who may need a range of assistance but desire to maintain a level of independent living in a setting that feels like home.

Family Caregiver Support

Designed to help identify individuals' needs as a caregiver and connect them to supportive resources.

Farmers Markets

Coupon eligibility to purchase fresh locally grown fruits, vegetables, herbs, and honey from participating farmers.

Home Choice

Helping eligible Ohioans transition from institutional settings to either home or community-based environments.

MyCare Ohio

A managed care program designed for Ohioans who receive BOTH Medicaid and Medicare benefits.

Nutrition Program Services

Nutrition programs including home-delivered meals, congregate meals, as well as nutrition education and risk screening.

Ohio Benefits Long-Term Care

Improved access to community-based, long-term services, and supports.

Ohio Home Care

A waiver program serving individuals on Medicaid with long-term care needs who may need to depend on a hospital or nursing facility.

Older Americans Act Services

Title III of the Older Americans Act provides funding for supportive services, nutrition services, and family caregiver support.

Ombudsman

An advocate for individuals receiving care in nursing homes, assisted living, adult care homes and more.

PASSPORT

Various support services for eligible older individuals who wish to remain in their own homes.

Preadmission and Level of Care Screenings

Preadmission review process for individuals seeking access to Medicaid-funded, long-term care.

Specialized Medicaid Recovery Services

A program available through Medicaid for individuals diagnosed with severe and persistent mental illness.

To learn more about WRAAA coordinated services please call our Resource Center at 800.626.7277.





ADVOCACY

Operating under the legislative authority of the federal Older Americans Act (OAA), WRAAA is responsible for a wide range of activities in support of older adults and those with various abilities. Its major responsibilities are to:

- Serve as an effective, visible advocate and focal point for the approximately 440,000 older adults, aged 60+ within its five county planning and service area;
- Identify the needs and concerns of older adults and individuals with various abilities by creating plans for collaboratively addressing needs through systems of home and community-based services (HCBS) and other interventions which enable older adults to maintain their independence and dignity;
- Administer a wide variety of federal, state, local and private funds used to provide HCBS, care management, and other support and opportunities for older adults and those who are disabled.

Western Reserve Area Agency on Aging provides Advocacy, Assistance, and Answers for those who are aging and individuals with various abilities.

WRAAA FOUNDATION

SUPPORTS AND PROMOTES THE MISSION OF THE WESTERN RESERVE AREA AGENCY ON AGING

The Western Reserve Area Agency on Aging (WRAAA) Foundation was established in 2017, and has the benefit of drawing on the recognized experience of WRAAA, at the center of the human services field for almost 50 years. The WRAAA Foundation will continue to enhance and promote the agency's mission by providing additional "Resources for Life" to seniors and individuals with disabilities.

Please support the WRAAA Foundation's three target areas:

- **Independent Living Fund** – Meets the basic emergency needs of WRAAA's clients who have nowhere else to turn in times of crisis
- **Food Insecurity** – Ensure older adults receive adequate nutrition and resources to remain healthy and independent in their own homes
- **Senior Support** – Find solutions to help seniors avoid telephone scams, fraud and opioid addiction.

In 2019 the WRAAA Foundation enabled 49 individuals to live independently in their homes through the Independent Living Fund. This Fund, a flagship of the Foundation, is designated for WRAAA consumers who have exhausted all other resources but need an emergency lifeline *to live in the place they want to call home*.

The Independent Living Fund has assisted with necessities like utility payments, and the purchase of mattresses, major appliances, etc. For example, Gloria became wheelchair bound and her independence was threatened. She was simply unable to stand to wash her dishes and keep a clean kitchen. Though she received weekly help around the house, the Independent Living Fund provided Gloria with a dishwasher that ensured she could continue to live independently.

Want more information on the Independent Living Fund? Check out WRAAA Foundation: www.areaagingsolutions.org/wraaafoundation

AmazonSmile

Good news! WRAAA Foundation is now a recognized charity on AmazonSmile. To find us go to smile.amazon.com and search: wraaafoundation



WRAAA Staff and Dr. Doug Beach with Foundation President David Schell



WRAAA Foundation Celebration



Gloria, Independent Living Fund Recipient



WRAAA
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Giving Matters - 3 Easy Ways to Donate

- Mail your donation to:
Western Reserve Area Agency on Aging
Attn: WRAAA Foundation
1700 E. 13th Street, Suite 114, Cleveland OH, 44114
- Go to www.areaagingsolutions.org/wraaafoundation
- AmazonSmile at smile.amazon.com and search wraaafoundation



WRAAA
FOUNDATION

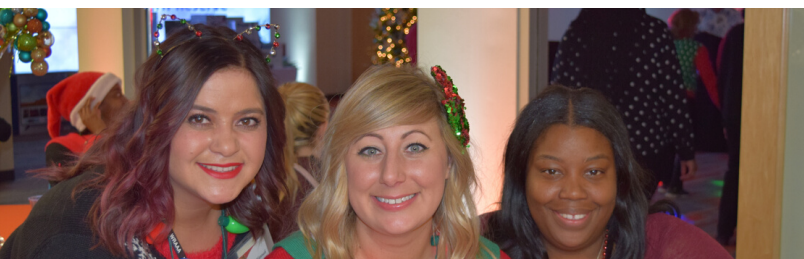
For more information regarding the WRAAA Foundation
call Mary Lipovan, Director of Development,
at 216.586.5355



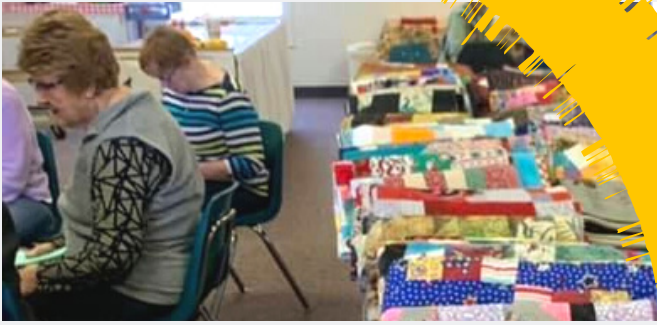
WRAAA Foundation raffle winner Emily Feuchter and co-worker Kristin Scharte look forward to vacationing in Florida!

Good thing Emily Feuchter, WRAAA Interim Care Manager Supervisor, decided to buy two Foundation raffle tickets. With doubled chances, Emily won an all-expense paid vacation for two to an east coast location of her choice. An investment well made at WRAAA's December staff holiday party. 🦋

WRAAA HOLIDAY PARTY



SCRAPPY QUILTERS SHARE GIFTS




A table filled with quilts made by Firehouse Quilters Guild of Medina that were donated to WRAAA clients.



There were no strings attached when members of the Firehouse Quilters Guild of Medina donated 56 quilts to WRAAA clients this winter. The quilted gifts, which ranged from lap quilts to bedspread size quilts, were lovingly handcrafted to keep WRAAA clients warm and cozy in the winter season.

"Making quilts is a labor of love for members of the Firehouse Quilters Guild," said longtime member Jan McMillin. "We happily devote our quilting time to helping others in the community. We know senior citizens appreciate the time and care that goes into each piece."

Fatima Perkins, WRAAA Director of Community Outreach and Advocacy, is grateful for the donation of the quilts and for the members of the Firehouse Quilters Guild. She mentioned, "These quilts not only provide warmth and comfort, the gift of the quilts also warms our clients' souls. Every stitch that holds the fabric together was done with such kindness." 

*“These beautiful quilts
blanket our clients with love.”*

~Fatima Perkins, Director of Community
Outreach and Advocacy



Western Reserve

Area Agency on Aging

CONTACT US

**For more information regarding this newsletter please contact the
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pmqi@areaagingsolutions.org**

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