



## **News for Immediate Release**

**Nov. 18, 2014**

### **YWCA of Greater Harrisburg Selected for State's Supportive Housing Award**

**Harrisburg** – The YWCA of Greater Harrisburg today was awarded the state's annual Supportive Housing Award for its program that provides Pennsylvania veterans with safe, quality rental housing and other services to help them live productive, independent lives.

Sponsored by the Department of Aging, Department of Public Welfare and the Pennsylvania Housing Finance Agency, the award was presented during the 2014 Pennsylvania Veterans Forum held at the Holiday Inn in Grantville.

"Pennsylvania's veterans have given so much. They deserve help with housing and social services that can help them lead fulfilling civilian lives and be self-sufficient," Secretary of Public Welfare Beverly Mackereth said.

"The YWCA of Greater Harrisburg honors the service of these veterans by providing them with secure housing and supportive services," Mackereth said. "Housing really is the key to help these servicemen and women stay healthy and maintain their independence and their dignity. National statistics show that one-in-four homeless people is a veteran."

The YWCA's supportive housing program predominantly helps veterans between the ages of 50 and 65. To address the needs of this population, the Y takes a "housing-first" approach by offering one-bedroom apartments to participants who are chronically homeless with a verified disability and veteran status.

The approach used by Harrisburg's YWCA addresses the immediate need of getting veterans off the streets and into a safe environment. Once that is done, they are able to engage with the veteran to address other needs and provide them with veteran's benefits. This includes providing life skills, mental health counseling, drug and alcohol cessation, education and employment.

The Y's six-year-old program has proven success – with 80 percent of the participants remaining in their permanent housing.

The state's annual Supportive Housing Award recognizes individuals and organizations that have taken a lead role in creating quality housing opportunities in Pennsylvania. Nominees must demonstrate the ability to improve people's quality of life, support community integration, create a sustainable model of affordability and provide barrier-free living.

For more information about the Supportive Housing Award, please visit:  
[www.aging.state.pa.us](http://www.aging.state.pa.us)

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