

News Release

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

ASHEVILLE--Robert M. (Bob) Tomasulo of Weaverville has been named Volunteer of the Year by the Land-of-Sky Regional Council for his extensive volunteer work with aging agencies in Buncombe County. Presenting the award at a regional council meeting on Wednesday, April 24, were Wendy Marsh, executive director of the Council on Aging of Buncombe County (COABC), and Linda Kendall-Fields, who chairs the Buncombe County Aging Coordinating Consortium (ACC).

The LOSRC Kathleen Cole Volunteer of the Year Award is presented each spring to a volunteer, age 55 or better, who resides and performs volunteer service in Buncombe, Henderson, Madison or Transylvania County and has made major contributions and/or impacts to Western North Carolina.

Tomasulo has guided the board of the COABC through implementation of specific strategic goals created in 2010, when he became its president and chair. Since 2012, he also has chaired the ACC Planning Committee, which is responsible for overseeing and prioritizing goals of the Buncombe County Aging Plan, which was recently updated for 2013-2017.

As vice-chair of the Buncombe County Adult Care Home Community Advisory Committee since 2009, he visits all of the county's 87 adult care homes

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at least once a year. The committee meets monthly to discuss these visits as well as issues concerning the adult care homes. Tomasula served on the Statewide Task Force on the Co-Location of Different Populations in Adult Care Homes in 2010, which met monthly at the Institute of Medicine at Research Triangle Park in Durham to develop a list of Short- and Long-Term Solutions for Co-Location in Adult and Family Care Homes.

His other major volunteer contributions over the past five years include serving on the Buncombe County ACC Community Awareness and Advocacy Committee, the “Boomers and Beyond” Conference at the University of North Carolina-Asheville Reuter Center in 2009, the Land-of-Sky Community Resources Connections (CRC) Leadership Team and the Land-of-Sky Lesbian/Gay/Bisexual/Transgendered Elder Advocacy Group.

The knowledge he gained through a 33-year career with the U.S. Social Security Administration in New York and Florida has helped Tomasulo to become “quietly effective in researching topics and bringing a group’s attention to the central aspects of a discussion,” Kendall-Fields said. His approach has benefited everyone on his work teams as they become better informed, more focused and able to move initiatives forward more easily, she added.

“Bob was instrumental in helping the leadership team coalesce around the development and implementation of the CRC by contributing to the process

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expertise and insights gained through a similar effort he was involved in in Florida,” Marsh said.

Also nominated for the award and given certificates of appreciation at the LOSRC meeting were Octavia Boone and Willie Mae Wadkins of Asheville and James Spicer of Mills River. Fellow nominees Betty Lou Howard of Candler and Nancy Porter of Marshall were unable to attend the presentation.

The Kathleen Godwin Cole Award was established in 1990 in memory and honor of its namesake, who served for several years on the LOSRC Advisory Council on Aging and chaired its Contractor Relations Committee. She also chaired the Buncombe County Domiciliary Home Community Advisory Committee for several years.

The LOSRC is a multi-county, local government planning and development organization located in Asheville. It is one of 17 such organizations throughout North Carolina.

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