

Elderly Services Group Recognized for Reaching Out

By Jessica Kastner Plaskett, southington.patch.com

The folks at Central Connecticut Senior Health Services see no point in staying their offices.

If they're going to reach the elderly population, they have to go find them, said Senior Health Services Executive Vice President Patricia Walden.

"We feel very strongly that we have to be reaching out, not just sitting in our offices expecting them to come to us for help," Walden said. "When they form relationships with us, that's when a level of trust builds and when there's a need they'll come to us."

It's that attitude that won Walden, Sharon Robinson and Erika Copes this year's Southington Community YMCA Reaching Out Award, given to an organization who proactively seeks to serve community members.



"At a time when so many people are aging they're meeting a real need in the community," Southington YMCA Executive Director John Myers said. "They have that great personal touch and they really take the initiative to reach out, which is what this award is all about."

The agency provides services and continuum of care in order to enhance seniors' quality of life. Walden said most seniors are not aware of the programs and services available to them, such as a program allowing seniors to visit one of the participating adult daycare facilities to receive a hot meal, socialization or a shower. Transportation is also provided.

"For that daughter who works during the day and cares for her elderly father, it might be a great help if he can get picked up a couple times a week and receive a service like that," Walden said. "It can just give that caretaker a break, which is really needed sometimes."

Copes, Director of Marketing and Business Development for the health services division, emphasized that prevention is one of the main themes preached by the agency in order to prevent accidents, catch health problems before they escalate, and provide a level of care that might allow seniors to live longer independently.

"I think the biggest thing we can provide is information to get people on the right track," Copes said. "To see them thrive and keep their independence, by things we offer like assistance with shopping for groceries. We're just going to continue getting the word out."

The trio will receive their awards along with six other recipients of various honors during the YMCA's annual dinner held Friday night at the Aqua Turf.