

# T H E • P R O • B O N O COUNSELING PROJECT

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## The Pro Bono Counseling Project Receives One of Only Three MetLife Foundation National Awards for its Caring for Caregivers Program

July 21, 2009—Minneapolis, MN—At the 34<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference of the National Association of Area Agencies on Aging, the Pro Bono Counseling Project, based in Baltimore, Maryland was honored by the MetLife Foundation and the National Alliance for Caregiving for its Caring for Caregivers Program. This \$25,000 award is one of only three Caregiver Support Awards given annually by the Foundation and the National Alliance for Caregiving. Other recipients were SAGE, an urban program in New York City and the Caregivers Community Network in rural Virginia. The awards recognize “community-based programs supporting family caregivers of older adults, rewarding innovation, effectiveness, and responsiveness to caregiver needs”.

“We were thrilled to learn about 182 diverse and effective programs around the country that support and educate family caregivers in their communities,” said Gail Gibson Hunt, President & CEO, National Alliance for Caregiving. “The support these programs provide to caregivers is so critical especially during these difficult economic times when the time and expense of caregiving are so challenging for so many.”

“This is a wonderful honor for the Pro Bono Counseling Project to be recognized as part of a team bringing together mental health professionals throughout Maryland who are volunteering their time and skills to support the essential, and for the most part, unrecognized work of caregivers”, Barbara Anderson, Executive Director of the Pro Bono Counseling Project said in her acceptance presentation.

Family caregiving is the underpinning of the country’s healthcare system, with a value to society estimated at \$306 billion per year—more than the value of home care and nursing care combined. At least 44.4 million adults provide care, with an estimated 80 percent of all care received by older Americans provided by family members—spouses, children, grandchildren and other relatives. Nearly 60% of caregivers work and nearly 40% of caregivers have children under the age of 18. Managing the competing priorities of work and family in addition to caregiving is stressful, costly and draining, and can exact a heavy toll, resulting in caregiver stress, burnout, and other health problems. Experts anticipate that family caregiving will continue to grow in the decades ahead.

**MetLife Foundation** was established in 1976 by MetLife to carry on its long-standing tradition of corporate contributions and community involvement. The Foundation has been involved in a variety of aging-related initiatives addressing issues of caregiving, intergenerational activities, mental fitness, health and wellness programs and civic involvement. More information about the foundation is available at [www.metlife.org](http://www.metlife.org)

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