

Older Vermonters Act Working Group

Act 172 charges the DAIL Advisory Board with appointing several members to the Older Vermonters Working Group:

1. Two older Vermonters from different regions of the state; and
2. Two family caregivers of older Vermonters, one of whom is a family member of an older Vermonters and one of whom is an informal provider of in-home and community care.

Applications Submitted for Consideration

Name	Older Vermonter	Family Caregiver	Informal Provider
Marie Zura		X	
James Dean	X - Chittenden		
Virginia Milkey	X - Washington		
Doris Tillotson	X - Unknown		
Roni Lesage	X - Chittenden		
Hope Lindsay	X - Chittenden		

Older Vermonters Act Working Group Candidate Form

Please submit the following information for each candidate. Candidates can submit the information on their own or you can send it in for them, but if you send it in for them, *please make sure that you have spoken to the candidate, described the charge of the group and the anticipated meeting schedule and have confirmation from the candidate that they are interested and willing to serve on the working group:*



1. Candidate's full name: Marie Zura _____
2. Candidate's e-mail: _____
3. Candidate's phone number: _____
4. Please check the category that the person fits. If the person fits more than one category you can indicate all categories that fit:
 - Older Vermonter (age 60+). Please indicate county of residence: _____
 - Family caregiver: family member of an older Vermonter
 - Family caregiver: informal provider of in-home and community care
5. Provide a brief explanation of why you (the candidate) are interested in serving on the Older Vermonters Act Working Group:

I am very invested in promoting the health and well-being of all Vermonters, especially those in our communities who are most vulnerable. Currently I support a family member who is dealing with Parkinson's disease. This experience along with being a professional in the field gives me a unique perspective that I hope will be helpful.

Submission Instructions:

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1. Candidate's full name: **James M Dean**
2. Candidate's e-mail: 
3. Candidate's phone number: 
4. Please check the category that the person fits. If the person fits more than one category you can indicate all categories that fit:
 - Older Vermonter (age 60+). X Please indicate county of residence: Currently **Chittenden , formerly Windsor and Rutland counties**
 - Family caregiver: family member of an older Vermonter
 - Family caregiver: informal provider of in-home and community care
5. Provide a brief explanation of why you (the candidate) are interested in serving on the Older Vermonters Act Working Group:

In 1997 I was hired as a Public Guardian by DAD (predecessor to DAIL), one of 4 Public Guardians for the elderly (later the public guardians for the elderly and those for the developmentally disabled were combined into one agency, but that was after I had left the position). I was assigned to cover Bennington, Rutland and Addison counties, as well as elsewhere as needed. This was my first exposure to elderly services, though my mother had been receiving care for several years for dementia. I had retired from a career in the federal probation system, and recognized that the skill set I had developed there (advocacy for the disenfranchised; interaction with the social services systems; operating within the court system; etc.) was completely transferable to working with this new population. Fortunately for me, the folks who oversaw the Public Guardians recognized that as well.

In 1999, my then 83-year old friend and neighbor in Proctor asked for my help. She owned her home, but had insufficient income to meet her needs, and was fearful that she would be forced to leave her home of 40+ years, and the town in which she had lived her entire life. I agreed to see what I might be able to find to help her, and discovered the federal government's reverse mortgage programs. At the time, no one in the state of Vermont was offering this product, but it seemed to meet my friend's needs perfectly. I talked my way into a job as a reverse mortgage originator, covering the whole state of Vermont (the sole person in that position for the first 4

years), a job I held until 2016. In that capacity, I met hundreds of older Vermont homeowners and families and learned a great deal about their experiences of aging in Vermont.

After leaving the Public Guardian position, I also provided equivalent services for several people over the years, as Power of Attorney.

In addition, I served on the COVE Board for several years in the mid-2000s, and as the Windsor town representative on Senior Solutions' advisory group from 2016 to 2018. In that capacity I was also appointed to the DAIL Advisory Board in 2016, as the representative for southeastern Vermont, resigning those positions in April 2018 because I had moved back to Burlington after selling my house in Windsor.

While in Windsor, I also was a volunteer driver for Volunteers in Action, primarily providing transportation as needed for local area medical appointments, as well as volunteering with Senior Solutions' SHIP coordinator to offer Introduction to Medicare classes and assistance.

Recently, I have also been an AARP FraudWatch volunteer, with a program with significant emphasis on elder fraud.

Although I have lived in Chittenden County for about half of my tenure in Vermont, my work has always taken me throughout the state, and exposed me to situations from Canaan to Guilford, and Highgate to Pownal.

Submission Instructions:

Thank you for your help! Please e-mail candidate information via e-mail **by June 28** to Liz Perreault (liz.perreault@vermont.gov) and Camille George (camille.george@vermont.gov).

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1. Candidate's full name: Virginia A. Milkey
2. Candidate's e-mail: [REDACTED]
3. Candidate's phone number: [REDACTED]
4. Please check the category that the person fits. If the person fits more than one category you can indicate all categories that fit:

xOlder Vermonter (age 60+). Please indicate county of residence: Washington
 Family caregiver: family member of an older Vermonter
 Family caregiver: informal provider of in-home and community care
5. Provide a brief explanation of why you (the candidate) are interested in serving on the Older Vermonters Act Working Group:

Most of my professional life has involved working with older adults. As the Volunteer Coordinator (1978-1981) and then Director of RSVP of Windham County (1981-2005), my work involved both interaction with older volunteers and with the service agencies at which they assisted.

Interested in issues and politics since my late teens, I served for twenty years as a State Rep from Brattleboro (1991-2010). Merging that experience and my years at RSVP, my seven years (2011-2018) as Executive Director of COVE (Community of Vermont Elders) allowed me to focus the advocacy skills gained as a Legislator on issues impacting older Vermonters.

My interest in older adult issues was enhanced by my involvement for several years with my mother's care, in partnership with my sisters and her live-in caregiver, until she passed away last September at the age of 99. That included an episode of abuse at a local nursing home, which culminated in the employee being put onto the registry.

While my residence is now in Washington County, my ties to Windham County run deep, and my interest in issues that affect older persons is even stronger now that I am in my late 60s. Serving on the Older Vermonters Act Working Group would enable me to continue work that has become a passion for me and to apply 45 years of experience to an exciting new project.

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1. Candidate's full name: DORIS TILLOTSON
2. Candidate's e-mail: ~~XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX~~
3. Candidate's phone number: ~~XXXXXXXXXXXX~~
4. Please check the category that the person fits. If the person fits more than one category you can indicate all categories that fit:
 - Older Vermonter (age 60+). Please indicate county of residence: _____
 - Family caregiver: family member of an older Vermonter
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5. Provide a brief explanation of why you (the candidate) are interested in serving on the Older Vermonters Act Working Group:

I am convinced that personal stories and testimony are important ways to access our legislature. I want to participate.

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1. Candidate's full name: Roni Lesage
2. Candidate's e-mail: [REDACTED]
3. Candidate's phone number: [REDACTED]
4. Please check the category that the person fits. If the person fits more than one category you can indicate all categories that fit:
 - Older Vermonter (age 60+). Please indicate county of residence: Chittenden
 - Family caregiver: family member of an older Vermonter
 - Family caregiver: informal provider of in-home and community care
5. Provide a brief explanation of why you (the candidate) are interested in serving on the Older Vermonters Act Working Group:

I will be 75 in January and moved back to Vermont in 1990 with my native Vermonter husband. I became a widow 10 years ago and started a support group at my church for older people to deal with grief and loss. That group has evolved into a support group where we get together regularly to talk about our needs and challenges as we grow older. I am well aware of those challenges not only because of this group, but because I am living them firsthand! I also am a SASH volunteer so I work with people my age and older who have a variety of backgrounds, incomes and education levels as well as a variety of health conditions, from very healthy to not so much so. I love living in Vermont and would love to make a contribution to the state that has given me so much. Living at Thayer House (a Cathedral Square property in Burlington), I can appreciate all the opportunities here and how much others could benefit from what we have here. I would be grateful for the opportunity to serve. Thank you, Roni Lesage

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1. Candidate's full name: Hope Lindsay
2. Candidate's e-mail: [REDACTED]
3. Candidate's phone number: [REDACTED]
4. Please check the category that the person fits. If the person fits more than one category you can indicate all categories that fit:
 - Older Vermonter (age 60+). Please indicate county of residence: Chittenden County
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5. Provide a brief explanation of why you (the candidate) are interested in serving on the Older Vermonters Act Working Group:

I am a former medical/hospice social worker, and until recently, I volunteered for five years at the VNA Respite House in Williston and Colchester. (I had to stop because I use a wheelchair now and could not find regular transportation.) Some years ago, I volunteered for early AIDS education programs and served in LGBTQ outreach. I once lived in Central America, and through a church-related group I volunteered for Witness for Peace as an observer during the political struggles there. I would bring to the Working Group the perspective of mobility-impaired and LGBTQ older Vermonters who want to remain active, engaged and involved to get the most out of life in their older years.

I am fortunate to be a resident of Cathedral Square Affordable Housing and a SASH participant, and volunteering is the least I can do to express my gratitude for all that has been given to me here at Grand Way Commons. I have volunteered in many ways, and I truly believe that giving my resources, time, and energy makes me a better person. Thanks to my secure, friendly, helpful living environment, I am able to optimize my limited mobility and "pay forward" my good fortune. While some forms of volunteering are no longer a possibility for me, participating in the Older Vermonters Act Working Group offers a way I might be of help. I am very interested in being involved and making a contribution to what will become the Older Vermonters Act. (Note: I have arranged for transportation to and from the meetings should I be selected.)

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