

News Release

Lifeline for the Empowerment and Development of Consumers, Inc.

PO Box 496, Painesville, OH 44077

(440) 354-2148 carried@lclifeline.org

**Lifeline, Inc. Honors Lake County Residents, Organizations with 2010 Awards
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PAINESVILLE, Ohio—Lifeline, Inc., Lake County's Community Action Agency, is pleased to announce its 2010 award winners and to recognize agency volunteers and community partners for their commitment to Lake County's low-income citizens. Lifeline also proudly acknowledged outstanding program participants for their successes in achieving self-sufficiency. The awards were presented at Lifeline's Annual Dinner held on July 21 at Chester's Legacy Tavern.

"We gave out four different awards this year, although we had multiple winners for one of them" said Carrie Dotson, Executive Director of Lifeline. "We are so excited to be able to recognize those who support Lifeline and its programs, as well as the participants who excel in those programs."

The 7th Annual Mildred P. Wilson Award was presented to Mark Alderman who has demonstrated outstanding service and dedication to Lifeline. The Mildred P. Wilson Award is named for the late Mildred Wilson, a dedicated Lifeline employee for many years. Mildred's commitment and service to both Lifeline and Lake County's low-income community were remarkable. This award was established in 2004 to honor an individual who goes above and beyond the call of duty in working to benefit Lifeline and the individuals we serve. Previous recipients have included Bill Margalis, Barb Crabtree, Janet Gockel, Rita C. McMahon, Donna Zabarsky and Bob Zaluski.

Mark Alderman served as Lifeline's Field Representative from the Ohio Department of Development's Office of Community Services for many years, until December 2010 when OCS redistributed Field Representative assignments.

During his time as Lifeline's Field Representative, Mark assisted the agency through several very challenging years and has always been supportive of the growth of the agency and the programs they provide to our customers. Mark was integral in helping bring the Home Energy Assistance Program back under Lifeline's administration for Lake County.

"As our former representative from Ohio Department of Development, Mark spent many hours supporting Lifeline's mission and assisted Lifeline with regaining the HEAP program," said Erin Johnson, Lifeline Board Secretary. "Mark's kind and gracious support played a large role in Lifeline's ability to prosper and grow within the community of Lake County."

An Outstanding Community Spirit Award was given to Consolidated Investment Corporation for their commitment to Lifeline, Inc.'s growth and mission, as well as their support of the Lake County non-profit community. The Community Spirit Award is bestowed upon a local business or organization who displays outstanding dedication and service to improving the quality of life for Lake County's low-income families.

Consolidated Investment Corp., owned by Dan Smith, has been Lifeline's landlord since mid-2004 when Lifeline relocated to 8 N. State St. Since 2004, Lifeline has moved to the 54 S. State St. property and recently expanded the space to accommodate the HEAP program. Consolidated has worked with Lifeline three times to build out office spaces that would specifically meet the needs of the growing agency. Dan Smith and Consolidated Investment Corp. have also been very supportive of Lifeline's fundraising efforts, regularly donating to the agency's Annual Campaign and sponsoring fundraising events.

"Usually landlords are receiving letters of complaint, not awards," said Jeremy Iosue, Lifeline Board President. "I think the fact that a charitable organization recognized Dan Smith and Consolidated Investment Corp. speaks volumes about what he means to our community."

Shamorrow Jones was honored for her Outstanding Achievement as a program participant. The Outstanding Achievement Award recognizes a customer of Lifeline who has made significant progress in achieving family self-sufficiency.

Shamorrow enrolled in the Family Development Program in 2007 while attending Lakeland Community College. As a single mother of two school aged children, Shamorrow has juggled school, children and working at a skilled nursing facility as a STNA. While taking nursing classes at Lakeland, Shamorrow enrolled in Auburn Career Center's LPN program; an intense full-time nine month training program.

During her tenure in the Family Development Program, she has demonstrated qualities that have allowed her to be successful in her endeavors. Shamorrow has been determined to fulfill her goal of becoming a health professional and continues to seek a balanced life for herself and her children. In June 2010, Shamorrow graduated from the LPN Program and continues to take classes at Lakeland. Shamorrow's family plans to relocate to Georgia this fall and she plans to pursue a career as an LPN.

"If it wasn't for the Family Development Program, I wouldn't have my LPN certificate; I would probably still be struggling. Now I have a better life and future for me and my children" said Shamorrow.

Iosue says that Shamorrow Jones epitomizes how successful a consumer can be when they work towards their potential.

"Shamorrow has turned her life around by properly utilizing our services and she clearly exemplifies the goals of our organization," said Iosue.

The Outstanding Community Partnership Award was presented to several organizations this year. One was given to NEIGHBORING and another was given jointly to the Cleveland Foundation and the Family Planning Association of Northeast Ohio. The Outstanding Community Partnership Award recognizes a program or collaboration that shows both innovation and results in helping low-income families achieve self-sufficiency.

"Lifeline, Inc. recognizes that our mission in the community would be impossible to achieve without the help and cooperation of other non-profit organizations in Lake County," said Mark Pohovey, Lifeline Board Treasurer. "It is important that we recognize, in a public way, the valuable partnerships we've developed with NEIGHBORING and The Cleveland Foundation/Family Planning. Lifeline, Inc. is

grateful to these organizations for their innovative approach in helping low-income families in Lake County achieve self-sufficiency.”

NEIGHBORING exists to empower adults with mental illness and substance use disorders to live, learn, work and participate fully in family and community. The Employment Services division at NEIGHBORING has whole-heartedly embraced Lifeline’s Employment & Training Program, sending the majority of the program’s referrals since September 2009 when the program was launched. NEIGHBORING case workers have coordinated with Lifeline’s staff to help guide customers through the process of being assessed, selecting and registering for classes and supporting them while they attend school. NEIGHBORING has helped make the Employment & Training Program very successful.

“NEIGHBORING ‘s Evidenced Based Supported Employment Program, under the supervision of Ginger Yanchar, has provided a wealth of support to Lifeline’s new Employment and Training Program,” said Johnson. “NEIGHBORING’s staff have proved to be enthusiastic and very helpful in providing Lifeline with referrals and support so that many consumers can move toward long-term career training and employment. We thank NEIGHBORING for offering such a strong partnership.”

“NEIGHBORING and Lifeline, Inc. have partnered over the last year to develop, in a very short time, an effective Employment and Training Program that is helping low-income families in Lake County achieve self-sufficiency,” added Pohovey. “The services provided by the organizations are complimentary and it is a testament to the two staffs that they are working together to leverage their resources and achieve more than either could alone.”

Through a grant from the Cleveland Foundation, Lifeline and the Family Planning Association have worked closely over the last four years to build a fundraising collaboration that would increase efficiency and profit for both organizations—a collaboration that would be unique, yet replicable by other agencies. Over the course of the grant cycle, several productive joint Board trainings provided both agencies with a basis for beginning a fundraising plan. In the end, the Dancing Under the Stars event was born, raising nearly \$15,000 in its first year to be shared between both agencies. The 2nd Annual Dancing Under the Stars is scheduled for August 7 with a new crop of celebrity dancers.

“An element of Lifeline, Inc’s. strategic plan was to partner with local non-profits to pool limited resources and develop joint fund-raising activities,” said Pohovey. “The Cleveland Foundation and Family Planning has embraced this approach with Lifeline and the two organizations have created a fun and entertaining event with Dancing Under the Stars. Lifeline wishes to publically recognize The Cleveland Foundation and Family Planning for their cooperation and partnership in helping to make this such a success.”

Dotson says that because Lifeline, Inc. is such a locally-based organization, they work to recognize those who have made an impact locally with these awards.

“As a Community Action Agency, we are obviously a community-based organization. Last year we served over 3,000 households from nearly every community in Lake County,” said Dotson. “We’ve strived to continue that effort by recognizing local individuals, entities and program participants who have been successful in the past year.”

Lifeline for the Empowerment and Development of Consumers was founded in 1973 with the mission of helping Lake County residents by providing them assistance and life skills programming that is designed to increase self-sufficiency. In 1980 Lifeline became a participating agency of the United Way of Lake County, UWLC, and in 1987 was designated a Community Action Agency by the Ohio Department of Development, ODOD.

Today Lifeline continues with the same mission of helping Lake County’s low-income residents break the cycle of poverty and make the transition from agency-dependency to self-sufficiency. Lifeline’s current programming includes services in the health, housing, energy and consumer education areas. Our motto is ‘first to help, then to teach.’ Lifeline is currently funded by the UWLC and by grants through the ODOD, the Lake County Board of Commissioners, the Western Reserve Junior Service League, the CVS Foundation, Bikers Aiding Local Diabetics and through private donors.