

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**Contact:** Dawn Moeglin  
Director of Community Engagement  
330-253-4597 Voice  
330-996-7685 Fax  
[dmoeglin@matureservices.org](mailto:dmoeglin@matureservices.org)

## **MATURE SERVICES NOW ACCEPTING NOMINATIONS FOR THE INAUGURAL 2017 SOAR AWARDS**

### **Summit Oscars for Aging Resources Awards Dinner to be Held on May 23, 2017**

February 23, 2017, Akron, OH.—Mature Services is currently accepting nominations for the Inaugural SOAR Awards to recognize businesses, individuals and communities that support successful aging in Summit County.

According to Karen Hrdlicka, CEO and President of Mature Services, “Summit County has been making great strides in recognizing the growing population of adults 50 and over in the region and identifying their specific needs. Mayor Horrigan’s reinstatement of the Senior Citizens Commission to help make Akron a better place to live, along with Summit County Executive Ilene Shapiro’s continued efforts to support aging issues, demonstrates how important it is to recognize our leaders and to build visibility for senior causes in Summit County. Our agency has been at the forefront of programming designed to address the needs of adults as they age for over 40 years and we are excited to involve the community in recognizing the great work being done locally,” said Hrdlicka.

There are nine awards that will be presented at the SOAR Awards on May 23, 2017 at the Tangier in Akron. The awards are being designed by a local artist through a partnership with local artist and owner of Hazel Tree Interiors, Karen Starr. Each year the awards will be customized and unique to that year’s winners.

Nominations are being accepted online at [www.matureservices.org](http://www.matureservices.org) or forms may be completed and returned to the Mature Services headquarters. Deadline for award nominations is **March 24, 2017**.

**Mature Services 2017 SOAR Judged Awards**-Four awards to be reviewed by an esteemed panel of judges with the winner being announced the evening of the awards.

**THE JOE RUBY COLLABORATION IN AGING SERVICES AWARD:** Joe Ruby served as the President and CEO of Direction Home Akron-Canton Area Agency on Aging from 1981-2016. During his tenure, Joe did so much to encourage collaboration in an effort to produce better outcomes for older adults, including Community Based Care Transitions Program, Community Care Coordination, and provider alignment in a variety of service area. This award will go to a group of people or an organization who improved services to older adults through a collaborative effort in Summit County.

**AGE FRIENDLY CITY AWARD:** The World Health Organization (WHO) Global Age-Friendly Cities project has developed a checklist as a tool for assessing and making our cities age-friendly. This award will go to a city in Summit County who is making efforts in making their city more age-friendly.

**INNOVATIONS IN AGING AWARD:** This award is presented to a person or organization who has done something innovative in the last year in Summit County to serve older adults. The innovation can be in any category as long as the outcome improved the lives of older adults.

**ED KAUFMAN LEADERSHIP IN AGING AWARD:** In 1977, Ed Kaufman became the leader of Mature Services and took a struggling, start-up nonprofit to a multi-service organization that empowers seniors to thrive in our community. He led the organization until his death in 2011. His legend lives on today in the mission of Mature Services. This award will be presented to a leader in Summit County who strives to improve the lives of older adults.

**Mature Services Awards-**Two awards to be determined by the leadership team and board of directors of Mature Services.

**COMMUNITY PARTNER OF THE YEAR AWARD:** A person or agency that assisted Mature Services in serving older adults through collaborative efforts.

**DONOR OF THE YEAR AWARD:** A person or company that furthered the mission of Mature Services through an in-kind or financial donation or through the gift of time.

**Online Voting Community Awards-**Nominations for this award are being accepted online ONLY through May 19, 2017 at [www.matureservices.org](http://www.matureservices.org). Organizations are encouraged to share information with their supporters who can nominate their business online for their contributions to support successful aging.

**AGING IN PLACE AWARD:** A service provider in Summit county who has helped older adults stay in their homes.

**AGING ENVIRONMENT EXCELLENCE AWARD:** A housing service in Summit County who provides excellence in their living environments to older adults.

**AGE FRIENDLY BUSINESS AWARD:** A business in Summit County who strives to be friendly to older adults in the way they conduct business.

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### **About the SOAR Awards:**

The SOAR Awards is a series of awards that acknowledges the good work being done in Summit County to support older adults' ability to age successfully. The awards were created in response to the local, state, and national need to recognize the increasing number of adults ages 50 and older that require specific programs in order to remain independent and active in our communities. The awards' aim is raise the profile of aging issues in Summit County while encouraging collaboration between people, businesses, government and nonprofit service providers.

**About Mature Services, Inc.**

Mature Services provides high-quality programs to empower the economic, social, physical, and mental well-being of adults as they age. Founded in 1975 as a senior program, our agency has become an independent, nationally respected organization with offices throughout the state. Programs include homecare, alcohol and substance use treatment and prevention, mental health counseling, job training, home-delivered and congregate meals, emergency food pantry, and volunteer opportunities.

For additional information about Mature Services, visit our website at [www.matureservices.org](http://www.matureservices.org).