

SilverSource, Inc.
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Making Our Communities Age-Friendly: SilverSource Offers Practical Strategies to Support An Aging Population.

STAMFORD, CT (October 31, 2016) “90% of people surveyed expect to age in their homes and communities,” said Julia Evans Starr in front of a crowd of 200 business and community leaders, legislators and agency executives at the SilverSource Autumn Breakfast yesterday morning in Stamford.

“With the nation aging, there’s a need to make older folks feel comfortable, safe and part of the community,” Starr continued, “and Baby Boomers will prompt this change.” Starr, the former Executive Director of Connecticut’s Legislative Commission on Aging, and Lindsay Goldman, Deputy Director of Healthy Aging, New York Academy of Medicine and Project Director, Age-Friendly NYC, spoke to the packed house, raising awareness and offering practical advice on how to make communities more age-friendly.

“Age-friendly NYC works to adapt structures, services and systems within each area that makes up an age-friendly city,” said Goldman, who explained that departments across NYC were challenged to find ways to improve their services for seniors. The result: 59 initiatives were born; she outlined the details of a few of the most successful.

“Safe Streets For Seniors” installed countdown clocks at intersections and repainted crosswalk lines—“these changes reduced pedestrian fatalities in some areas by 90%,” said Goldman. The “Market Ride” program made use of school buses to take seniors to markets once children were already at school, and the “SU-CASA” program put artists in residence at senior centers in exchange for studio space. Other improvements included making bus shelters transparent to increase the sense of safety, putting in city benches along blocks to provide an opportunity to stop and rest and “Senior Splash”—senior only swim hours offered at public pools.

“In Connecticut,” explained Starr, “the system is changing.” She pointed to the Federal initiative, “Money Follows The Person,” which seeks to help rebalance the long-term care system so that people have freedom of choice over where they live and receive care and services.

Starr described the Connecticut for Livable Communities initiative, which creates places that promote independence and provide supports for residents, and highlighted Rocky Corner, the first cohousing community in Connecticut. She explained that age-friendly programs and strategies are in place throughout the state, citing Masonicare in Wallingford where Quinnipiac students are in residence, Danbury’s Aging In Place Council, New Canaan’s *iSTEP* program and Stamford’s Street Smart initiative.

Stamford Mayor David Martin spoke, sharing his own experience with his Dad, who was living alone in Kansas City and frightened to move into a senior residence community. “When it came time that he

could no longer live alone, he went. He met people, made friends and now has a new lease on life,” he said. “This is the future we’re moving toward, not one of fear, but opportunity. Thank you SilverSource, you’re helping so many other Moms and Dads, I’m deeply appreciative of what you’re doing.”

SilverSource Executive Director Kathleen Bordelon presented highlights from their “Voice of the Community Survey,” a two part study comprised of canvassing Stamford Neighborhood Associations and an online county-wide poll. Having enough money to make ends meet was a common concern among neighborhood associations, as was access, including access to grocery stores, information about activities and transportation. Concerns about financial security and delayed retirement topped the list from the online poll, with 57% expecting to retire beyond age 65, and 43% of those currently working expecting to move out of Fairfield County in retirement.

The final portion of the morning was a celebration: the presentation of the first annual SilverSource Awards, recognizing the extraordinary efforts being made to improve the lives of Fairfield County’s older adults. The winners included: Dorothy Canzano and Daniel S. Katz for the SilverSource Community Service Volunteer Award, Maureen Matthews and Attorney Jean Mills Aranha for the SilverSource Community Service Volunteer Award and Community Health Center (CHC) for the SilverSource Contribution to Community Award by an Outstanding Organization.

“I was very happy to learn that I was nominated by a client. We work so hard to serve them and it’s gratifying to know they’re so pleased with our service,” said Jean Aranha of Connecticut Legal Services, Inc. “I always had this hope that I could make a contribution to the field of Alzheimer’s and dementia, so to get this award, it’s encouraging,” said Maureen Matthews, founder of *To Whom I May Concern*.

Perhaps the morning was best summed up by SilverSource Board Vice-Chair Tracey Alston. “Today was about awareness and changing mindsets. Old isn’t bad, it’s just a new phase. It’s about putting the structure and support in place to help people grow older where they live.”

SilverSource would like to thank Stamford Plus for their media sponsorship of the event.

About SilverSource, Inc.

SilverSource was founded in 1908. It is an independent, 501(c) 3 nonprofit organization that provides information, financial support, and specialized services that positively improve the quality of life for people over age 60 while serving as a resource center and referral source for older adults and their families. SilverSource, Inc., is located at 2009 Summer Street in Stamford, CT 06905. For more information visit www.silversource.org or call [203.324.6584](tel:203.324.6584).

Images to accompany this release: (photo credit Studiosmith)

Starr_Bordelon_Goldman.jpg

Caption: (left to right) Julia Evans Starr, former Executive Director of Connecticut’s Legislative Commission on Aging; Kathleen Bordelon SilverSource Executive Director; and Lindsay Goldman, Deputy Director of Healthy Aging, New York Academy of Medicine and Project Director, Age-Friendly NYC. Starr and Goldman spoke to a packed house at the 2nd Annual SilverSource Autumn Breakfast, raising awareness and offering practical advice on how to make communities more age-friendly.

Bordelon_Berkman_Masselli.jpg

Caption: Mark Masselli accepts the SilverSource Contribution to Community Award by an Outstanding Organization on behalf of Community Health Center (CHC). (left to right: Kathleen Bordelon, SilverSource Executive Director; Jerome Berkman, Esq., SilverSource Board Member and Mark Masselli, Founder of CHC.)

Breakfast_Crowd1.jpg

Caption: Speaker Julia Evans Starr shared anticipated demographic shifts in CT with a packed house at the 2nd Annual SilverSource Autumn Breakfast.

Breakfast_Martin.jpg

Caption: Stamford Mayor David Martin spoke at the 2nd Annual SilverSource Autumn Breakfast, sharing his own experience with his Dad as he transitioned into a senior residence community.

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