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National Guardianship Month

Every day, guardians strive to assist those in need. We at the Statewide Public Guardianship Office recognize their hard work and dedication throughout the year, but were especially proud to take the time to acknowledge and honor their hard work during the recent National Guardianship Month in October.

We encourage all of you who are guardians or work with guardians to take some time to reflect upon the enormity of a guardian's role and appreciate all they do to help our fellow Floridians.



Eight Excited Boys Caught Four Funky Flying Fish!

Huh? Has the Statewide Public Guardianship Office gone crazy? No, but we did need a creative way to make sure staff provides consistent responses to one of our most frequently asked questions: "What do I need in order to register with the Statewide Public Guardianship Office?" The result is our very own mnemonic device: **Eight Excited Boys Caught Four Funky Flying Fish!**

1. Education New professional guardians must take an SPGO-approved training course and submit proof of completion to the Office. Registered professional guardians simply need to complete the continuing education requirement; CE Broker does the rest. Visit www.CEbroker.com or call toll-free 1-877-434-6323.

2. Examination Unless the requirement is waived by the Statewide Public Guardianship Office, every professional guardian must pass the Florida Professional Guardian Competency Examination administered by the Center for Guardianship Certification. This exam consists of two parts, national and Florida-specific sections. You only need to take and pass the exam once.

3. Bond Professional guardians must maintain a \$50,000 bond. Initial registrants must send SPGO a copy of the bond. Registered professional guardians need only to submit proof of bond renewal.

4. Credit A credit history must be done every two years.

5. FBI An FBI criminal history must be done every five years unless completed electronically. If the criminal history is completed electronically, FDLE will automatically advise your local Clerk of Court of any changes and the Clerk will notify SPGO.

6. FDLE An FDLE criminal history must be done every two years unless completed electronically. If it is completed electronically, FDLE will automatically advise your local Clerk of Court of any changes and the Clerk must notify SPGO.

7. Form A Statewide Public Guardianship Office annual registration form.

8. Fee The appropriate registration fee.

Public Guardian **Eloisa Ramos** Director Office of the Public Guardian for Broward County

SPOTLIGHT

FLORIDA'S PUBLIC GUARDIANS

AGING SAFELY, INC.

Manatee and DeSoto counties
M. Ashley Butler, Ph.D.
Phone: 941-779-4682
Fax: 941-351-8073

AGING SOLUTIONS, INC.

Brevard, Hillsborough, Pasco
and Pinellas counties
Tamara Cribben
Brevard: 1-866-92-AGING
Hillsborough: 813-949-1888
Pasco/Pinellas 727-442-1188
Fax: 813-963-7161
tamaracribben@aging-solutions.org

BARRY UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK

Broward County
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erosestramos@mail.barry.edu

CHARLOTTE COUNTY PUBLIC GUARDIAN

Charlotte County
Patrick C. Weber, Esq.
Phone: 239-417-1040
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COLLIER COUNTY PUBLIC GUARDIAN

Collier County
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COUNCIL ON AGING OF VOLUSIA COUNTY

Volusia County
Marylou McKeon
Phone: 386-253-4700
Fax: 386-253-6300
guardianship@coaiaa.org

FIFTH CIRCUIT PUBLIC GUARDIAN CORPORATION

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Each year the Mary Thiel Memorial Award is given to a public-sector employee who has made an outstanding contribution to community services for people with developmental disabilities. This year's recipient is Eloisa Ramos, Director of the Office of Public Guardian in Broward County. She was nominated by the Ann Storck Center.

Eloisa has served for 10 years as director of the Office of the Public Guardian in Broward County, which Barry University operates. Eloisa's tenure as director has been marked by her person-centered approach to those for whom she cares, an approach that can be clearly seen in the very compassionate and caring work of her staff.

The award is named for Mary Thiel, who devoted her life to serving people with developmental disabilities in the state's Sunland Training Centers, including the difficult process of guiding the closing of the Orlando and Tallahassee facilities. Many of today's leaders in developmental disabilities programming acquired their knowledge and honed their skills under Mary's tutelage. She believed in community-based services, and by coordinating the process of closing the first two Sunland Centers, she nurtured much of Florida's community service system. Mary died in 1985, but her legacy lives on.

GUARDIANSHIP CARE GROUP, INC.

Miami-Dade County
Barbara Reiser
Phone: 305-448-6111 ext. 109
Fax: 305-448-5553
breiser@infocentricsolutions.com

GUARDIANSHIP PROGRAM OF DADE COUNTY, INC.

Miami-Dade County
Jerry Santeiro
Phone: 305-592-7642
Fax: 305-592-6737
mail@guardianshipprogram.org
<http://www.guardianshipprogram.org>

LEE COUNTY PUBLIC GUARDIAN

Lee County
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LEGAL AID SOCIETY OF PALM BEACH COUNTY, INC.

Palm Beach County
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MARTIN COUNTY PUBLIC GUARDIAN

Martin County
Linda Hake
Phone: 772-223-5945 ext. 3464
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OFFICE OF THE PUBLIC GUARDIAN, INC.

Leon, Madison and Bay counties
Karen Campbell, Esq.
Phone: 850-487-4609 ext.103
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OSCEOLA COUNTY COUNCIL ON AGING

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Phone: 321-689-0404
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SENIORS FIRST, INC.

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TALLAHASSEE – A new study shows that Florida’s public guardian programs saved the State of Florida almost \$1.9 million last year, mostly by helping incapacitated persons move from costly hospitals to more affordable living options, such as assisted living facilities. Public guardians serve as legal representatives for indigent elders and others who cannot make their own decisions and have no one else to assist them.

The cost-savings determination is part of a University of Kentucky study conducted at the request of Florida’s Statewide Public Guardianship Office, which is a unit of the Department of Elder Affairs.

The research team examined the 15 public guardianship programs that serve 20 Florida counties, reviewing the period from June to December 2008 and then calculating full-year savings. The researchers found that the program served 1,916 incapacitated persons at a savings of \$3,940,456. Once the statewide program’s operating expenses were subtracted, the annual savings was \$1,883,043, according to the independent researchers.

The researchers also concluded that Florida’s public guardian programs produce “significant quality of life savings” for incapacitated persons, ranging from emotional support and improved socialization to reconnecting with family, friends and religious institutions.

“It’s gratifying to know that independent experts recognize the value public guardianship provides, both financially and socially,” said Michelle Hollister, executive director of the Statewide Public Guardianship Office. “We are proud of the way public guardians help those who have nowhere else to turn.”

The Statewide Public Guardianship Office appoints local public guardian offices. These offices provide guardianship

Study:

Public Guardianship Programs Save Florida Taxpayers \$1.9 Million



services to persons who do not have adequate income or assets to afford a private guardian and who have no willing family or friend to serve in that role.

“This report clearly shows that our state’s public guardianship programs provide a tremendous value to the people of Florida,” said Elder Affairs Secretary E. Douglas Beach. “Especially in these difficult economic times, it’s good to know that elders in need can be helped in a way that actually saves taxpayers’ money.”

According to the University of Kentucky study, the most significant impacts of the public guardianship programs were for discharging incapacitated persons from medical hospitals to assisted living facilities (481 individuals in a year, at a savings of \$2.5 million); securing community-based services to prevent moving incapacitated persons to more restrictive settings (814 individuals, saving \$814,000); and discharging incapacitated persons from state hospitals to nursing homes (522 individuals, saving \$329,000).

The researchers also issued a series of recommendations, including that the program be expanded to cover all 67 Florida counties and state financial support be expanded to produce even greater statewide savings.

A copy of the University of Kentucky study is available at http://elderaffairs.state.fl.us/english/pubguard/SPGO_Evaluation_09.pdf.

Foundation For Indigent Guardianship, Inc.

If you are looking for a pooled special needs trust, you may want to consider the Florida Public Guardianship Pooled Special Needs Trust (FIG Trust). This is the only trust that guarantees retained funds will go back to the beneficiary’s community to fund public guardianship. It is also the only trust of its kind with a trust protector, Berkshire Trust Advisory. For additional information on the FIG trust, contact FIG toll-free at 1-888-310-3726.

Is it Time for You to Be Fingerprinted?



If so, you may want to try electronic fingerprinting. All 67 counties now accept electronic fingerprints. FDLE criminal history is required every two years unless completed electronically from an SPGO provider. If the fingerprinting is completed electronically, FDLE will automatically advise your Clerk of Court of any changes, and the clerk must then notify SPGO.

Electronic fingerprinting saves time and money. Check the SPGO website for a list of providers who can take care of your electronic fingerprinting needs.



Information & Referral
1-800-96-ELDER
(1-800-963-5337)

Access to information regarding elder services and activities is available through the Elder Helpline Information and Referral service within each Florida county. For the hearing or speech impaired, all Elder Helplines can be accessed through the Florida Relay by simply dialing 711 from anywhere in the state.

Elder Helpline can also assist non-English speakers. Telephone interpreters provide live, on-the-line assistance by translating from English into as many as 148 different languages.

FLORIDA ELDER HELPLINE DIRECTORY

Please call the telephone number below in your area for information and referrals.

Alachua.....	800-262-2243
Baker.....	888-242-4464
Bay.....	866-467-4624
Bradford.....	800-262-2243
Brevard.....	321-504-2038
Broward.....	954-745-9779
Calhoun.....	866-467-4624
Charlotte.....	866-413-5337
Citrus.....	800-262-2243
Clay.....	888-242-4464
Collier.....	866-413-5337
Columbia.....	800-262-2243
DeSoto.....	866-413-5337
Dixie.....	800-262-2243
Duval.....	888-242-4464
Escambia.....	866-531-8011
Flagler.....	888-242-4464
Franklin.....	866-467-4624
Gadsden.....	866-467-4624
Gilchrist.....	800-262-2243
Glades.....	866-413-5337
Gulf.....	866-467-4624
Hamilton.....	800-262-2243
Hardee.....	800-336-2226
Hendry.....	866-413-5337
Hernando.....	800-262-2243
Highlands.....	800-336-2226
Hillsborough.....	800-336-2226
Holmes.....	866-467-4624
Indian River.....	772-453-2151
Jackson.....	866-467-4624
Jefferson.....	866-467-4624
Lafayette.....	800-262-2243
Lake.....	800-262-2243
Lee.....	866-413-5337
Leon.....	866-467-4624
Levy.....	800-262-2243
Liberty.....	866-467-4624
Madison.....	866-467-4624
Manatee.....	800-336-2226
Marion.....	800-262-2243

Martin.....	772-233-4028
Miami-Dade.....	305-670-4357
Monroe.....	305-670-4357
Nassau.....	888-242-4464
Okaloosa.....	866-531-8011
Okeechobee.....	866-377-8796
Orange: <i>in-county</i>	211
<i>out-of-county</i>	407-839-4357
Osceola: <i>in-county</i>	211
<i>out-of-county</i>	407-839-4357
Palm Beach.....	561-214-8600
Pasco.....	800-963-5337
Pinellas.....	800-963-5337
Polk.....	800-336-2226
Putnam.....	800-262-2243
Santa Rosa.....	866-531-8011
Sarasota.....	866-413-5337
Seminole: <i>in-county</i>	211
<i>out-of-county</i>	407-839-4357
St. Johns.....	888-242-4464
St. Lucie.....	772-409-1041
Sumter.....	800-262-2243
Suwannee.....	800-262-2243
Taylor.....	866-467-4624
Union.....	800-262-2243
Volusia.....	888-242-4464
Wakulla.....	866-467-4624
Walton.....	866-531-8011
Washington.....	866-467-4624

If you need information about, or referral to, a service provider outside Florida, call the national Eldercare Locator Service at 1-800-677-1116. An information specialist will assist you Monday through Friday from 9 a.m. – 11p.m. Eastern time. For people with Telecommunication Devices for the Deaf (TDDs), all Elder Helplines, as well as the Eldercare Locator Service, can be accessed through Florida Relay Service at 1-800-955-8771.

Are you worried that an elder relative or friend may be the victim of abuse? You can report known or suspected cases of abuse by calling Florida's Abuse Hotline at **1-800-96-ABUSE (1-800-962-2873)**.

Florida Area Agencies on Aging (Counties Served)

Northwest Florida Area Agency on Aging, Inc.
 5090 Commerce Park Cir. • Pensacola, FL 32505
 850-494-7101 • 1-866-531-8011
(Escambia, Okaloosa, Santa Rosa & Walton Counties)

Area Agency on Aging for North Florida, Inc.
 2414 Mahan Dr. • Tallahassee, FL 32304
 850-488-0055 • 1-866-467-4624
(Bay, Calhoun, Franklin, Gadsden, Gulf, Holmes, Jackson, Jefferson, Leon, Liberty, Madison, Taylor, Wakulla & Washington Counties)

Mid-Florida Area Agency on Aging, Inc., dba Elder Options
 5700 S.W. 34th St., Suite 222 • Gainesville, FL 32608
 352-378-6649 • 1-800-262-2243
(Alachua, Bradford, Citrus, Columbia, Dixie, Gilchrist, Hamilton, Hernando, Lafayette, Lake, Levy, Marion, Putnam, Sumter, Suwannee & Union Counties)

Northeast Florida Area Agency on Aging, dba ElderSource
 4160 Woodcock Dr., 2nd Floor
 Jacksonville, FL 32207
 904-391-6600 • 1-888-242-4464
(Baker, Clay, Duval, Flagler, Nassau, St. Johns & Volusia Counties)

Area Agency on Aging of Pasco-Pinellas, Inc.
 9887 Fourth St. North, Suite 100
 St. Petersburg, FL 33702
 727-570-9696
(Pasco & Pinellas Counties)

West Central Florida Area Agency on Aging, Inc.
 5905 Breckenridge Pkwy., Suite F
 Tampa, FL 33610
 813-740-3888 • 1-800-336-2226
(Hardee, Highlands, Hillsborough, Manatee & Polk Counties)

Area Agency on Aging of Central Florida, Inc., dba Senior Resource Alliance
 988 Woodcock Rd., Suite 200 • Orlando, FL 32803
 407-514-1800
(Brevard, Orange, Osceola & Seminole Counties)

Area Agency on Aging for Southwest Florida
 2285 First St. • Fort Myers, FL 33901
 239-332-4233
(Charlotte, Collier, DeSoto, Glades, Hendry, Lee & Sarasota Counties)

Area Agency on Aging of Palm Beach/Treasure Coast, Inc.
 4400 North Congress Ave.
 West Palm Beach, FL 33407
 561-684-5885 • 1-866-684-5885
(Indian River, Martin, Okeechobee, Palm Beach & St. Lucie Counties)

Areawide Council on Aging of Broward Co., Inc., Aging & Disability Resource Center of Broward Co.
 5300 Hiatus Rd. • Sunrise, FL 33351
 954-745-9567
(Broward County)

Alliance for Aging, Inc.
 9500 S. Dadeland Blvd., Suite 400 • Miami, FL 33156
 305-670-6500
(Miami-Dade & Monroe Counties)