



**WCAAA**

*Western Connecticut  
Area Agency on Aging*

**AN AGING AND DISABILITY RESOURCE CENTER**

# Annual Report 2019

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## 2019 WCAAA Board of Directors

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**Dolores Winans, Secretary**

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## 2019 WCAAA Advisory Council

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Danessa Marshall

Donna-Jean Lavoie

Ellen Durstin

Janet Day

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Joe Pasquarella

Kathy Kinane

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## 2019 Professional Assessment Committee - PAC

Janice Zwicker

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Antoinette Barrett

Deborah Besaw

## FROM OUR PRESIDENT

***“Fairy tales are more than true: not because they tell us that dragons exist, but because they tell us dragons can be beaten.” - Neil Gaiman***

*I'm not sure if there has been another time in recent history where we need a reminder that dragons can be beaten. Certainly, the staff and volunteers at the WCAAAA, as well as its many valued grantees, have helped us remember that this is most definitely possible. Armed not with sword and shield, but with love and compassion, these dedicated individuals have battled relentlessly over the past year to ensure that our aging and disabled neighbors, friends, and family living in our communities are provided with the necessary and essential services to live safely and independently in their homes. From year to year their ability to fight and advocate for our most vulnerable citizens is mostly hampered and constrained by overstressed and underfunded State and Federal budgets. A Sisyphean task even under these “normal” circumstances. However, as well all know, this has not been a normal year. Through professionalism, dedication, and selflessness, the WCAAAA's staff and volunteer's ability to continue their service and devotion to the aged and disabled despite the uncertainties of Covid-19 is nothing short of heroic.*

*As a direct result of these efforts, hundreds of thousands of meals were delivered, while thousands were able to live safely at home with the support of home care and waivers services, received assistance navigating the gauntlet of Medicare Open Enrollment, and received transportation to medical and other essential appointments.*

*On behalf of the Board of Directors and Advisory Counsel, as well as for the members of our community, I would like to thank them for reminding us that even the biggest of dragons can be beaten.*



*Atty. Michael Giardina  
President*

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

On behalf of the Board of Directors and Advisory Council, I, as President of the Agency, would like to take this page to recognize two individuals whose longstanding service and devotion to the Agency have guided and molded it into a beacon for senior citizens, care givers, and individuals with disabilities to turn to for guidance and counseling. Because of them, and the people they have inspired, our Agency has provided so many in our area with comprehensive services and programs which have allowed them to maintain their independence and quality of life. In any other year the Board would have tried our best to recognize each of them more appropriately and completely at our Annual Meeting with the pomp and circumstance that they both so truly deserve. However, having had the privilege of knowing these two women for more than a decade, I am veritably certain that neither of them would have felt comfortable with receiving any accolades regardless of how just it may be. So perhaps it is fitting that they serendipitously chose a year to retire where we were precluded from gathering in large groups. Christina Fishbein and Dolores Winans have jointly and severally been the not only the face, but also the heart and soul, of the Western Connecticut Area Agency on Aging for the past five decades.

**Christina Fishbein** was hired as the Agency's Executive Director in June of 1988 and each and every day thereafter, for the next 31 years, she zealously served in that role with dignity, purpose, and humility. So much so that at some point along the way she transcended simply being the Executive Director to being the icon of the Agency. During her tenure the Agency experienced a transformative growth in the services it provided. Never willing to accept the status quo, Chris worked tirelessly to develop and implement new programs. In 2008, the agency was selected to be one of the first agencies to be recognized as an Aging and Disability Resource Center. Not willing to rest, she was also the catalyst for the Agency being designated as a provider for the Connecticut Home Care Program for Elders in 2013, which now serves not only elders, but also disabled adults in Waterbury. Whether it was Money Follows the Person, Grandparents Raising Grandchildren, National Family Caregiver Support, or the Alzheimer Respite Program, Chris was relentless in pursuing funding for programs to assist those individuals and other charitable organizations providing services to Agency's 41 cities and towns. Like a Sherpa, her intimate knowledge and understanding of the mountain of services, service providers, legislative and community leaders, as well as the subtle and intricate political and social issues effecting each of them, which were simultaneously intimidating and astonishing, guided us and was an invaluable asset for the Agency. Her advocacy and her intensity have been and will be missed by all.

**Dolores Winans** first became associated with the Agency back in 1996 when she became a member of the Agency's Advisory Council. It didn't take long for the Board to notice her talents as only one year later she was invited to become a member of the Board of Directors. A role she held for the next 23 years, retiring in March of this year. Not content with being simply serving the Agency as a Board member, in 2000 she began working in the office as a volunteer where she had the unique opportunity to see how the Board's decisions and policies were being applied and how those decisions impacted the community. Through her volunteering she became immersed in the CHOICES program where she became an invaluable member of the team. For the next 13 years she volunteered at least 2 days a week providing valuable insight and guidance to seniors. Remarkably in 2017, at the spry age of 82, she won an award for the most hours volunteered!! Professionally, we on the Board have missed her profound knowledge, insight, and sage advice. Personally, I think I can speak for all of us when I say that we have also missed her genuine warmth and regard for us and all those that we serve.

## OUR PROGRAMS

### Alzheimer Respite Care Program

Respite Care is a short term option designed to provide a break from the physical and emotional stress from caregiving. Services may include: adult day care, home health aide, homemaker, companion, skilled nursing, or short term assisted living or nursing home care. Funds may be used for day or night respite. Current eligibility requirements include: person must have Alzheimer's or irreversible dementia, income cannot exceed \$46,897 a year or have liquid assets of more than \$124,679. The program has a 20% co-payment toward the cost of services unless waived. In 2018, the WCAAA's Alzheimer Respite Care Program provided 46,798 units of respite care services, utilizing funds from the state, client co-pays & federal funds for 346 persons.

### CHOICES, Medicare Counseling

The CHOICES Program (**C**onnecticut's programs for **H**ealth insurance, **O**utreach, **I**nformation and **E**ligibility **S**creening) is designated as the official State Health Insurance Program (SHIP) for Connecticut. The WCAAA serves as one-stop, no wrong door resource center for free, confidential, unbiased information on programs and services for seniors, caregivers and individuals 18+ with disabilities. Our staff links people to the appropriate community resources, and also provides advocacy and assistance for those who have no one to help. We assist with information related to Medicare, Medicaid, Medigap insurance, long term support options, public senior housing, transportation services, health services, support groups, volunteering opportunities and much more. In 2019, WCAAA staff and volunteers assisted 4,871 clients of which, 2,177 clients were outreached through activities such as presentations, senior health fairs, and other outreach efforts.

### Congregate Housing Services Program

The Congregate Housing Program serves the following housing sites: Grace Meadows in Southbury, Greenwoods Garden and Chestnut Grove in Winsted, Nunnawauk Meadows in Newtown, George B.

Lewis I & II in Naugatuck and Torrington West in Torrington. This program contracts for and finances direct supportive services for eligible residents and persons with disabilities. Participants are involved in making choices about their services. After a home assessment, services provided may be a personal response system, chore, homemaker, foot care, adult day care, meals, home health aide, medication monitoring or transportation. In 2019, the WCAAA arranged for and financed 9,338 units of chore, foot care, homemaker, home health aide, companion and nursing visits and 13,164 congregate meals with HUD, State and client contributions.

## **CT Home Care Program - Waterbury**

The Connecticut Home Program is designed to help elderly persons and younger persons with disabilities to remain safely in their homes with the proper supports and services in place rather than being institutionalized. Persons needing services must be age 65 years+, unless disabled, and require assistance in at least two areas of their daily functioning and meet the program's financial eligibility requirements. Referrals are accepted by telephone by calling the State of CT, Alternate Care Unit, at 1-800-445-5394, OR by completing the online application. Information is available through the WCAAA Home Care Program at 203-465-1000. The WCAAA'S Care Management unit provided assessments and other care planning functions to achieve community living independence for 1,641 Waterbury residents through CHCP, 78 for PCA waiver and 51 Acquired Brain Injury Program participants in 2019.

## **Elderly Nutrition**

### **Home Delivered Meals**

Programs prepare and deliver hot and cold meals to elderly individuals who are unable to shop for and/or prepare their own meals or travel to a site where a meal is being served. Donations are suggested. "Scripts" are required from health care professionals indicating the type of special meals needed such as ground, diabetic, etc. A Registered Dietician visits each participant to determine the need for specialized health education or counseling at home.

In 2019, WCAAA's Registered Dietitians provided 436 units of nutrition assessment, education and counseling for home delivered meal participants. With federal, state, client & locally raised funds, the WCAAA's Elderly Nutrition Programs served 273,364 meals to home bound seniors. The WCAAA "meals" program can be reached at 203-757-5449 or 1-800-994-9422.

### **Central Naugatuck Elderly Nutrition**

New Opportunities, Inc. (Phone: 203-757-7738)

### **Housatonic Valley Elderly Nutrition**

CW Resources (Phone: 203-628-7540)

### **Litchfield Hills/Northwest Elderly Nutrition Project**

City of Torrington Sullivan Senior Center (Phone: 860-489-4151)

## **Congregate Meals**

Congregate hot meals are served in group settings for seniors who may otherwise not eat properly and who can profit from an opportunity to socialize with others.

Congregate meals are often combined with recreation, education and social activities. The WCAAA's Elderly Nutrition Providers served 84,747 meals in 2019 at 44 congregate meal sites including our restaurant providers.

## **Live Well, Self-Management Program**

Attend a free Live Well Chronic Disease Self Management workshop and learn skills to understand and take control of your long term health condition. Learn about tools to deal with pain, fatigue, difficult emotions, anxiety, stress, easy exercises to help improve or maintain strength and energy, and ways to improve your nutrition, and appropriate use of medications and more. There is also a Live Well With Diabetes program and a Live Well with Chronic Pain Program. In 2019, 289 participants received wellness and prevention programs through our 27 free, six-week, evidence-based Live Well workshops for diabetes, chronic conditions and chronic pain management. The completion rate for the

program was 76% compared to the national average of 72%.

Funding for DSMP is through CT DPH and funding for CDSMP and Chronic Pain (CPSMP) are through the State Unit on Aging. We also had generous support from the Connecticut Community Foundation, the American Savings Foundation and the Tufts Health Plan Foundation. .

## **Money Follows the Person Program**

The goal of Money Follows the Person is to enable Medicaid clients, living in long term care facilities such as nursing homes to move back to the community. Transition Coordinators provide one-on-one help to connect clients, depending on their needs, to services including: community support programs and resources, housing or other living arrangements, rental assistance, accessibility modifications, assistive technology, personal care, money management and emergency backup to help clients be as independent as possible in the community.

In 2019, WCAAA was awarded the Specialized Care Manager position (SCM) in expansion of our CHCP contract to assess residents in Waterbury Nursing Homes to transfer to the community. The MFP team at WCAAA is comprised of (2) Transition Coordinators and (1) Housing Coordinator to assist the person back to community living with housing and supportive services. Specialized Care Manager hired in May 2019.

## **National Family Caregiver Support Program**

The National Family Caregiver Program provides information, assistance, individual counseling, caregiver training, respite care and supplemental services such as home health aide, homemaker, companion, adult day care, minor home repair or medically necessary items not paid for by other sources. Services are aimed at keeping seniors in their homes Although there are no income or asset limits, new persons and those whose incomes are below poverty level are given high priority status. With federal funds, client donations and service monies from a private foundation, the WCAAA arranged and financed 3,763 units of respite care type assistance. Our supplemental services program provided an additional 2,093 units of items. In addition, a local private foundation, “Buck Foundation,” provided funding for services aimed at maintaining Danbury seniors in their homes. This



project provided 4,018 units of homecare services for 79 Danbury seniors in 2019; and 215 seniors benefited from the Emergency Response System (PERS) with 2,091 units of service.

## **Resident Service Coordinator Program**

The WCAAA has prized our Resident Service Coordinators who have been part of our direct service family for approximately fifteen years through a variety of state, federal and private contracts. Under the CHSP program RSCs' assist clients in remaining in their homes with a variety of services such as case management, meals house-keeping aid, personal assistance, footcare, companions and other services. 191 Seniors and younger persons with disabilities availed themselves of this service in 2019. Four other coordinators work in private and State housing developments and provide residents with case management, assist with linking residents with community resources, and work as liaison between the resident and various providers in the community. It is estimated that residents total about 900 and all have access to these resident Service Coordinators.

## **Senior Medicare Patrol (SMP)**

WCAAA's Senior Medicare Patrol (SMP) program provides enhanced education on the issues of fraud and abuse for our network of volunteer and staff counselors. Trained SMP counselors educate volunteers and professionals in the community to ensure that seniors are empowered to address issues of health care fraud, errors, abuse and other related health care scams such as identity theft and internet scams. In the July 1, 2018 to June 30, 2019 fiscal year, the SMP unit provided 30 presentations in our region with 796 Group Outreach and 788 Media Outreach and Education participants (totaling 1,584.) In addition 1,200 joint SMP and CHOICES program materials (large placemats) were given out to congregate meal nutrition providers in Torrington, Danbury and Waterbury. Monthly SMP participation on WATR radio (listening coverage estimated at 30,000) and SMP articles in WCAAA's bimonthly newsletter (circulation 2000-2500) significantly increased community education and outreach .

## **WCAAA's Grantees and Contractors**

Annually, the WCAAA Board of Directors awards state and federal funds through a Request for Proposal process to organizations

servicing western area seniors for services such as chore, transportation, adult day care days, legal services, assistance for veterans or other special population groups and senior center activities. Federal and state funds have matching requirements which are used to supplement base rates or provide additional services for seniors, age 60+. Some services are available for below age 60 populations without charge but monetary donations are accepted. The data below entered into the State’s Management Information System and supported by client characteristics, demonstrates the high productivity of these dedicated organizations in 2019. All contractors and grantees through these federal and state funds provided a total of 452,607 units of service for 6,718 western area seniors age 60+, some of which are highlighted below.

## Independence Northwest (IN)

IN is an independent living resource for people with disabilities living in Northwest Connecticut. IN works with people with all types of disabilities and all age groups. Empowerment is a key objective of the organization. Four core services are advocacy, peer counseling, independent living skills and information and referral. As a partner of WCAAA, Independence Northwest is an initial point of entry for those persons with disabilities, seeking information, guidance or services.

<b>Transportation:</b>	30,679 one way trips	<b>Legal Services:</b>	1,236 hrs.
<b>Sr. Exercise:</b>	6,044 hrs.	<b>Alternative Housing:</b>	200 days
<b>Money Management (volunteer based):</b>	494 hrs.	<b>Adult Day Care:</b>	2,544 staff hrs. & 318 ADC days
<b>Chores:</b>	13,524 hours	<b>Sr. Ctr. Activities:</b>	10,315 hrs.
<b>Veterans Outreach:</b>	234 contacts for assessment	<b>GRG</b>	2,448 hrs. of respite
<b>Emergency Fuel (one x benefit):</b>	64 deliveries		

Through WCAAA grant funds, IN provided 234 contacts for 21 western area veterans to assist with benefits and allows them to choose their care providers. Veterans served have the opportunity to self-direct their own care and receive services in their home from the caregiver of their choice.

## **Veteran Directed Home and Community-Based Services (VDHCBS)**

This VA program is a consumer directed home and community-based services program designed to keep Veterans at home. Veterans who are at risk of nursing home placement receive community-based home care alternatives allow them to choose their care providers. In some cases, a family member of the veteran can be paid for the care they provide. An assessment will be completed to determine eligibility and level of need and to review the program plus assist with care plan development. Services may include: assistance with personal care, household tasks, minor home repairs, skilled nursing, accompaniment to medical appointments. Referrals to the WCAAA must come from the VA. For more information on these benefits or to check your eligibility, call the VA directly at 203-932-5711. From October 1, 2018 to September 30, 2019 the VDHCBS program reported a total of 8 active veteran receiving services.

### **SPECIAL OUTREACH ACTIVITIES**

Local foundations partnered with the WCAAA for special outreach and, in Danbury, financing of direct services. We are grateful to the CT Community Foundation for financing our outreach efforts in Waterbury and greater Central Naugatuck Valley region utilizing staff and volunteers. The Waterbury effort is part of the new BRASS initiative that includes the new Waterbury Senior Center, CT Community Foundation, City of Waterbury, New Opportunities, Inc. and the WCAAA.

Information on Waterbury activities and changes in benefits as well as eligibility requirements can be accessed by contacting New Opportunities, the Waterbury Senior Center or the WCAAA. In 2019, the WCAAA's BRASS outreach effort reached 1,387 seniors to help with benefits in services.

### **SPECIAL PUBLICATIONS**

WCAAA staff and volunteers produce brochures, booklets & newsletters during a year for consumer and provider audiences. See our website ([wcaaa.org](http://wcaaa.org)) for documents that can be printed from that source or call the WCAAA office at 203-757-5449 for a few copies. "Medicare & You" is also available through us. WCAAA also publishes a newsletter called *WCAAA Insider* for distribution.

# WESTERN AREA CONGREGATE MEAL SITES

(Meals served in 2019)

Amalfi's Restaurant	Middlebury Senior Center
American Pie Restaurant	Monteiro Restaurant
Annoula's Restaurant	Morris Senior Center
Brookfield Senior Center	Naugatuck Senior Center
Cheshire Senior Center	New Fairfield Senior Center
Claire Hall Green Manor	New Milford Senior Center
Danbury Senior Center	Newtown Senior Center
East Gate Apts. Food Truck	Nick's Country Kitchen
Falls Avenue Senior Center	Nunnawauk Meadows Housing
Falls Village Senior Center	Prospect Towers Food Truck
George B Lewis I	Rietdyke Senior Center
George B. Lewis II	Sherman Senior Center
Grace Meadows	Southbury Senior Center
Harwinton Senior Center	Sullivan Senior enter
Heritage Senior Center	Templeton Farms Rec. Building
Hispanic Coalition	Torrington West Housing
John Bale Bookstore	Waterbury Senior Center
Lakeville Town Grove Building	Woodbury Senior Center
Litchfield Community Center	
McCarthy Senior Center	

## FOCAL POINTS: 2018 –2020

According to the federal Older Americans Act (OAA), the term focal point means a facility established to encourage the maximum co-location and coordination of services for older adults (OAA, Section 102 Definitions). The following facilities were approved by the WCAAA Board of Directors as western area Focal Points for the period noted above.

**BROOKFIELD SENIOR CENTER \* DANBURY SENIOR CENTER \* FALLS AVENUE SENIOR CENTER \* MIDDLEBURY SENIOR CENTER \* NAUGATUCK SENIOR CENTER \* NEW FAIRFIELD SENIOR CENTER \* NEW MILFORD SENIOR CENTER \* NEWTOWN SENIOR CENTER \* SOUTHBURY SENIOR CENTER \* SULLIVAN SENIOR CENTER \* WINSTED SENIOR CENTER \* WOLCOTT SENIOR CENTER**

### WCAAA - Statement of Activities For the years ended September 30, 2019 & 2018

	<u>2019</u>	<u>2018</u>
Net assets without donor restrictions:		
Revenue, gains and other support:		
Grants and contracts:		
Federal	\$ 4,197,056	\$ 4,154,808
State	2,707,303	2,753,676
Other	148,723	126,540
Program and other revenue	384,653	377,009
Investment (loss) income, net	(7,148)	70,703
In-kind	<u>36,002</u>	<u>40,416</u>
Total revenue, gains and other support	<u>7,466,589</u>	<u>7,523,152</u>
Expenses:		
Program Services:		
Nutrition programs	2,183,686	2,383,866
Social service programs	1,736,134	1,651,178
Home care services for the elderly	2,406,620	2,317,082
Housing service programs	683,943	665,421
CHOICES for seniors	236,732	233,780
Health promotion programs	52,813	43,194
Alzheimer's programs	<u>32,654</u>	<u>36,654</u>
Total program expenses	<u>7,332,582</u>	<u>7,327,175</u>
Supporting services:		
Management and general	<u>295,861</u>	<u>277,995</u>
Total expenses	<u>7,628,443</u>	<u>7,605,170</u>
Change in net assets without donor restrictions	<u>(161,854)</u>	<u>(82,018)</u>

## 2019 GRANTEES/CONTRACTORS THROUGH WCAA AWARDS OF FEDERAL AND/OR STATE FUNDS

- ◆ New Opportunities: Senior Aide Transp., Chore, Senior Meals, Money Management & Emergency Fuel.
- ◆ CT Legal Services: Senior Legal Issues and Grandparents Raising Grandchildren Legal Education.
- ◆ Northwest CT Rural Transit and Geer: Senior Transportation.
- ◆ Wheels of Greater New Milford: Senior Transportation.
- ◆ Town of Beacon Falls: Senior Transportation.
- ◆ Town of Naugatuck: Senior Transportation.
- ◆ Sullivan Senior Center: Senior Meals, Chore, Senior Transportation
- ◆ Hispanic Coalition: Senior Activities & Transportation.
- ◆ Town of Harwinton: Senior Activities
- ◆ CACD: Emergency Fuel.
- ◆ Sharon Chore Service: Chore.
- ◆ Litchfield Hills Chore: Chore.
- ◆ Helping Hands Chore: Chore.
- ◆ Independence Northwest: Veteran Outreach
- ◆ Town of New Milford: Chore
- ◆ Renewal House: Alternative Housing
- ◆ Family Intervention Center: Mental Health Counseling
- ◆ Almost Home Adult Day Care: Day Care Days
- ◆ Naugatuck YMCA: Senior Exercise, Respite Activities for Grandparents Raising Grandchildren
- ◆ Geer Adult Day Care: Adult Day Care Days of Service

## 2020 HIGHLIGHTS

### **CARES Act Title IIIB Funding – WCAA “Bags of Hope” Grocery Bag Project - Addressing COVID-19 Food Insecurity**

WCAA received CARES Act funding relief in May 2020 and allocated approximately **\$148,825** in CARES Act Title IIIB funding establishing a “Bags of Hope” Grocery Bag distribution program effective May 18, 2020 – July 31, 2020 to address food insecurity in our region. During COVID-19 pandemic, many of our seniors were unable to get out to grocery shop due to social distancing restrictions, limited transportation resources and inability of caregivers to shop for their elders. To mitigate this situation, WCAA was able to serve approximately **1,000** seniors in senior housing complexes and senior centers in Waterbury, Naugatuck, Watertown, Torrington and Winsted. This project provided \$25 grocery bags to each senior from Cherry Valley Market in Waterbury, ShopRite of Waterbury and Bristol and Big Y of Torrington grocers. Approximately **5,953** grocery bags were distributed on a weekly basis through the support of senior housing RSCs, property management staff, WCAA staff, community volunteers and senior center staff.

Moreover, thousands of PPE masks and gloves were distributed to staff and seniors at these senior housing sites and senior centers to prevent the spread of the COVID-19 virus during this project funded by area foundation support secured by WCAA.

**WCAA thanks the following community partners for making this Grocery Bag Project a reality**

- ◆ **ShopRite of Waterbury & Bristol**
- ◆ **Cherry Valley Market—Waterbury**
- ◆ **Big Y of Torrington**
- ◆ **EdAdvance, Torrington**
- ◆ **Sullivan Senior Center, Torrington**
- ◆ **Winsted Senior Center, Winsted**
- ◆ **CERT Volunteer of Naugatuck**
- ◆ **ION Bank Volunteers**
- ◆ **United Way of Naugatuck & Beacon Falls**
- ◆ **Center Subaru of Torrington**
- ◆ **CT Community Foundation**
- ◆ **Tuft’s Health Plan Foundation**

**THANK YOU**

## Our Covered Towns



The WCAAA serves the following 41 towns in Western CT:

Barkhamsted, Beacon Falls, Bethel, Bethlehem, Bridgewater, Brookfield, Canaan, Cheshire, Colebrook, Cornwall, Danbury, Goshen, Harwinton, Kent, Litchfield, Middlebury, Morris, Naugatuck, New Fairfield, New Hartford, New Milford, Newtown, Norfolk, North Canaan, Prospect, Redding, Ridgefield, Roxbury, Salisbury, Sharon, Sherman, Southbury, Thomaston, Torrington, Warren, Washington, Waterbury, Watertown, Winchester, Wolcott, and Woodbury.

## OUR MISSION

The mission of the Western Connecticut Area Agency on Aging, Inc., (WCAAA) is to develop, manage and provide comprehensive services for seniors, caregivers and individuals with disabilities through person centered planning in order to maintain their independence and quality of life.

## CONTACT INFORMATION



**Mailing Address: 84 Progress Lane, Waterbury, CT 06705**



**Phone Number: 203-757-5449 or 1-800-994-9422**



**Visit our website at: [www.wcaaa.org](http://www.wcaaa.org)**



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