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Media Contact:
Nancy Grah, Director of Philanthropy & External Affairs
708-603-2243; ngrah@agingcareconnections.org

**ACCESS TO CARE TO IMPROVE THANKS TO A GRANT FROM THE RIVERSIDE TOWNSHIP
MENTAL HEALTH BOARD**

Aging Care Connections, UCP Seguin and The Way Back Inn collaborate to address community needs

Riverside, IL – Aging Care Connections, in collaboration with UCP Seguin of Greater Chicago and The Way Back Inn, was recently awarded a \$69,224 grant from the Riverside Township Mental Health Board to provide information and referral services to the residents of Riverside Township.

In the fall of 2017, The Mental Health Board conducted a community needs assessment. Over two hundred (200) residents provided their input. The pilot was created when the Riverside Township Mental Health Board saw there was a need to address the lack of services in Riverside Township in three particular areas: people with addiction issues; people with disabilities, and older adults. The Board welcomed an application from three local nonprofit organizations to fill this gap by working together to make professional staff from each nonprofit available at the Riverside Township office. The staff will create a Community Care Coordinator position who will link the Riverside Township community to information and direct services that address the needs of the communities.

“Aging Care Connections is excited to partner with Riverside Township Mental Health Board, UCP Seguin and The Way Back Inn to make information and referral more accessible to the residents of Riverside Township,” said Debra Vershelde, Executive Director, Aging Care Connections. She added, “This pilot is a great resource for the Riverside Township residents and we commend the Riverside Township Mental Health Board on having the foresight to meet this community need.”

“The members of the Mental Health Board are pleased to launch this innovative outreach effort designed to make getting help smoother and easier when someone needs information or assistance for a mental health, disability or aging matter. We fund some great local agencies, including Helping Hand Center, Community Support Services and Pillars Community Health, in addition to the three partners in this new project. We are also fortunate to have many other human services resources in the surrounding area. The information and referral service, based at Township Hall, will connect folks to care even simpler and faster,” noted Timothy Heilenbach of Brookfield, President of the Mental Health Board.

The Community Resource Center is located in Township Hall at 27 Riverside Road in Riverside. A Community Care Coordinator will be available on Monday, Wednesday and Thursday from 9:00 am - 11:00 am and 4:00 pm - 6:00 pm, as well as Saturdays between 9:00 am and 1:00 pm. The telephone number for the Center is 708-853-9578.

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About Aging Care Connections: For nearly 50 years, Aging Care Connections has been a leader in providing comprehensive, client-centered programs that focus on improving the quality of life of older adults. Based in La Grange, IL, Aging Care Connections is a nonprofit organization that serves 38 communities from the Lyons, Proviso, Riverside, Leyden and Norwood Park townships. The mission of Aging Care Connections is to enrich the quality of life in our community by providing older adults and their families with guidance and support that enhances the ability to age well. More info at: www.agingcareconnections.org.

About Riverside Township Mental Health Board: In the early 1970's, the people of Riverside Township were early to recognize that a healthy community is one where people have access to healthcare and human services that focus on the whole person – including their mental health and related needs. In 1972, Township voters approved a referendum that allowed for the creation of the Riverside Township Mental Health Board. Since that time, volunteer board members have worked to identify the mental health, substance abuse and developmental and intellectual disability needs of our community and contract for services to meet those needs.