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**Independence woman honored with prestigious award for her outstanding commitment to older Iowans, Iowans with disabilities**

**Des Moines, Iowa (Sept. 18, 2015)** – Patty Esch of Independence, Iowa, has been named the winner of the 2015 Betty Grandquist Lifetime Achievement Award by the Iowa Commission on Aging, the governor-appointed policy-making arm of the Iowa Department on Aging. The prestigious award is designed to identify and recognize an Iowan who has dedicated a portion of his or her personal or professional life to achieving excellence in the fields of aging and/or disability or has made significant contributions to promoting independence and enhancing quality of life among older Iowans and Iowans with disabilities.

Over the past 25 years, Patty has served as a mentor, leader and consumer advocate in the areas of aging and disabilities, with major achievements that include creating a case management model for the Iowa Area Agencies on Aging; assisting in the development of standards and protocols for Iowa’s aging and disability resource centers; launching a medication reconciliation plan for older adults; and implementing the Medicaid HCBS Elderly Waiver Program in Black Hawk County, which was the first county in Iowa to provide funding and services to older Iowans. Patty has also served on many boards and committees throughout the state, volunteering her time to promote the independence of older Iowans and Iowans with disabilities.

“Patty is very deserving of this award, as she has dedicated her personal and professional life to helping others,” said nominator Cecelia Johnson, director of LifeLong Links for the Northeast Iowa Area Agency on Aging.

“Her ambitions, knowledge and accomplishments make Patty highly deserving of the honor bestowed by the Betty Grandquist Lifetime Achievement Award,” added nominator Deon Clabby, business development director for NuCara Home Medical. “Most of her life has been dedicated to helping older Iowans and adults with disabilities. I don’t know of anyone more qualified to win this award.”

The Betty Grandquist Lifetime Achievement Award is an annual award named for the former director of the Iowa Department on Aging and current chair of the Iowa Commission on Aging, Betty Grandquist. It has been presented annually since it was established in 2009, with past winners including Bob Welsh (2009); Kitty Buckwalter (2010); Russ Proffitt (2011); Bob Brown (2012); and Julie McMahon (2013). The call for nominations for the 2016 award is expected to be announced next January.

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*The Iowa Department on Aging (IDA) is an executive branch agency dedicated to making Iowa the premier state in which to live and retire. To meet that goal, the IDA works closely with the Iowa Commission on Aging and Iowa’s six Agencies on Aging to develop a comprehensive, coordinated and cost-effective system of long-term living and community support services that helps individuals maintain health and independence in their homes and communities. More information is available at [www.iowaaging.gov](http://www.iowaaging.gov).*