



May is National Older Americans Month. Onondaga County Office for Aging would like to recognize our **2020 Older American Month's Honorees**. This year's theme is Make Your Mark. The following honorees have certainly done that and more.

## Three Senior Citizens of the Year

### Joseph Godley



Joe is a Vietnam Army and Reserves Veteran. He has spent decades giving back to the community where he worked and raised a family. For 25 years he helped run the Donnie Fielder Basketball Tournament for inner-city youth. Currently he volunteers at the Dunbar Association where he drives other seniors to the Center, to their medical appointments and to events. His personality lights up a room and once you meet Joe you will never forget him.

### Marvin Shandler



Marvin was the caregiver to his cousin, father and wife before they passed. For five years he has been a Hospice CNY Volunteer driving patients to appointments. He steps in to give their families a break whenever he can. He also volunteers for the American Red Cross, delivering blood and traveling with their Emergency Disaster Team. At the same time he manages to volunteer at the Temple Concord Food Pantry. Marvin is only happy when he is helping others.

### Richard "Dick" Blansett



Dick clearly demonstrates the power of making a difference for the CNY community through his virtually fulltime volunteer engagement with Honor Flight Syracuse (HFS). Dick joined HFS in 2012 and serves as Treasurer and member of the Nominations & Governance/Development committee. He planned, organized and executed key Mission Departure and Welcome Home tasks involving hundreds of volunteers. His superb performance helped HFS provide program benefit opportunities for many aging military veterans.



## **Serving Seniors Honoree of the Year**

**Ruby Gilbert**



For five years Ruby has volunteered at a local Assisted Living Facility as a Senior Companion through Interfaith Works. She volunteers 35 hours a week there as a friendly visitor. She talks with the residents, plays games and often is the only visitor many of these seniors have. Ruby brings joy and happiness to all she comes in contact with on a daily basis. She also volunteers at her church; helping others and serving the community.

## **Flanders Memorial Caregiver of the Year**

**Amanda Tarolli**



When Amanda's 61 year old mother was told she had end-stage lung cancer, Amanda immediately said, "You are moving in with me!" As a single parent with three children under 10, Amanda devoted herself to caring for her mother and even sold equipment from her beautician business to take her mother and children for a memorable trip to Florida. The Hospice nurses who came to the home said, they were so touched by the love Amanda showed as a caregiver. Her mother has passed and Amanda is now looking into a nursing career. She wants to continue to care for others.