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DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES

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- *Interview with Governor Tim Kaine, who comments on the importance of caregivers*

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Farmville woman receives Governor's Caregiver Recognition Award *Dedication to loved ones keeps her going*

Richmond, Va. — A Farmville woman has received the Governor's Caregiver Recognition for her deep commitment to voluntarily providing care for a loved one.

Beverly Dunnivant is among nine outstanding caregivers from throughout the Commonwealth to receive the Governor's Caregiver Recognition Award in a special ceremony on April 23 in Virginia Beach. The annual awards program, in its third year, is sponsored by the Virginia Council on the Status of Women and is designed to honor the more than one million unpaid caregivers within Virginia.

"The Caregiver Award symbolically thanks all of the caregivers in the Commonwealth who lovingly take care of family and friends day after day. Although the award is only given to a few caregivers, it serves as a reminder of the tremendous contributions all caregivers within Virginia make," said Governor Timothy Kaine.

Dunnivant has cared for her 30-year-old son since a swimming accident as a teenager left his paralyzed. A typical day for Dunnivant begins at 3 a.m., when she starts delivery newspapers along her route. She then comes home, cares for her son, and prepares for her full-time job. With the exception of companion assistance while she works, she is her son's sole caretaker and takes on that role without complaint.

Dunnivant is part of a growing trend across the country and the Commonwealth. Last year, Virginia ranked 12th in the nation in the number of family caregivers, with a total of nearly 700,000 people caring for relatives.

It is estimated that there are more than 44 million volunteer caregivers nationwide. The need for such individuals is expected to increase throughout the next 25 years as the population grows and ages.

For more information, visit:

<http://www.dss.virginia.gov>

http://www.dss.virginia.gov/community/council_women/caregiver.html

<http://www.dss.virginia.gov/family/as/caregiver.html>

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Editor's note: Interviews and photos available upon request.