



**For Immediate Release**

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## Ypsilanti Meals on Wheels Named Finalist for Vital Seniors Prize

Countywide initiative backs long-term solutions to senior care

**June 20, 2018** - Ypsilanti Meals on Wheels, in partnership with Habitat for Humanity of Huron Valley, has been named a finalist in the Ann Arbor Area Community Foundation's Vital Seniors competition.

Sponsored by the Glacier Hills Legacy Fund at the Ann Arbor Area Community Foundation, this \$2.5 million initiative seeks innovative means to lasting, positive outcomes for seniors and their caregivers in Washtenaw County.

YMOW's proposed Vital Seniors project uses the principles of CAPABLE (Community Aging in Place, Advancing Better Living for elders), a model by Johns Hopkins University, to help local seniors age safely in their homes.

Each senior in the CAPABLE program is supported by a team consisting of a social worker, handyman, nurse and occupational therapist, all of whom work with the senior to make tangible improvements in wellness, activities of daily living, home safety and more.

Each five-month intervention is expected to cost \$3,900 – a mere fraction of the cost of assisted living care.

“Our program will provide support for seniors to age longer and more safely at home,” said Alison Foreman, YMOW executive director. “This comprehensive approach will help people make lasting changes to their homes, their lives and the lives of their caregivers.”

As a finalist, Ypsilanti Meals on Wheels receives a \$20,000 grant and remains eligible for larger prizes, including the Vital Seniors Grand Prize of \$500,000 and the Ralph C. Wilson, Jr., Foundation Caregiver Prize of \$250,000. A \$100,000 prize and the People's Choice Award of \$50,000 also will be awarded. Winners will be announced in Fall 2018.

Throughout the summer, finalist teams will participate in trainings, receive coaching and mentor support, and technical assistance as they continue to develop their proposals for change.

Neel Hajra, AAACF CEO, said the time is right to find actionable solutions to the problems faced by seniors and their families in Washtenaw County.

“Between 2010 and 2040, the number of adults age 60+ in Washtenaw County will more than double, as will the number of seniors in poverty. Life for everyone in 2040 will be shaped by how we respond now to the needs of the aging,” Hajra said.

More information, including a synopsis of GHLF, can be found at [www.vitalseniorscomp.com](http://www.vitalseniorscomp.com).