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December 07, 2021

Dear Norman Heyano,

We are delighted to inform you that you have been chosen to receive the 2021 AARP Alaska Andrus Award for Community Service. This is AARP's most prestigious volunteer award to recognize individuals, over age 50, who share their experience, talent, and skills to make a difference in the lives of those who live in their community. You were nominated by Alice Ruby, who shared the following information:

Being the Volunteer Fire Chief in Dillingham, Alaska, Norman "Koolie" Heyano shows us that people over 50 can still have a significant impact on the community around them. Although Norman is in his seventies and retired, he gladly volunteers as the only ambulance driver and first responder servicer in Dillingham.

The COVID pandemic drew a lot of attention to first responders and medical providers. They are all courageous and inspiring. During the past year, Norman was one of only a hand full of volunteer individuals (sometimes only 3 people) that continued to respond with the ambulance group in our community. His dedication and commitment are beyond compare. Norman dedicates his time, his health and his life to the service of others.

During the height of the pandemic, Norman's positive attitude helped keep the other volunteers inspired. Without him, I believe that they would have lost their enthusiasm and commitment. Norman's selfless volunteering has led him to provide life-saving care and transportation to those in need.

Due to the continuation of the pandemic, we will not be able to present this award in person. We are hosting a virtual concert with Libby Roderick on December 16 at 7 p.m. on Facebook and would like to announce that you have won this award during the concert. Katie Severin, our communications director will connect with you to talk about options for the award presentation.

Please accept our warmest congratulations and our thanks on behalf of AARP Alaska.

Sincerely,

Madeline Holdorf
State President

Teresa Holt
State Director