



**Western Reserve**

Area Agency on Aging

## PRESS RELEASE

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The Western Reserve Area Agency on Aging (WRAAA) is pleased to announce free training for First Responders in handling calls regarding allegations of adult abuse, neglect, self-neglect, and exploitation. First Responders who work in Cuyahoga, Geauga, Lake, Lorain, and Medina counties are all eligible.

WRAAA and the Ohio Coalition of Adult Protective Services (OCAPS) have developed a Scholarship Fund to pay registration fees for First Responders in the WRAAA five-county service area. This scholarship will be used to attend the OCAPS' conference "Successfully Leveling Up" in Columbus, Ohio on April 19<sup>th</sup>.

First Responders are mandated to report suspected instances of maltreatment to Adult Protective Services (APS). As such, the partnership between these various agencies is vital for successful investigations of adult abuse.

The conference will include workshops on how First Responders can better collaborate with APS to help individuals who come to the attention of several systems. Iris Freeman, the keynote, will speak on bridging service gaps and Agency partnering. There will also be workshops on mental health "first aid" and training on dementia and other diagnoses seen in older adults.

WRAAA is pleased to support this scholarship and training initiative and believes that collaboration between APS and First Responders is critical to increasing the timeliness of referrals to APS and the ongoing joint work to relieve suffering and stop harm to victims.

How to apply: First Responders can go to the OCAPS website: <https://www.ocapsohio.org/> and complete the registration form indicating payment from the First Responder Scholarship Fund. The Fund will cover the cost of registration.

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