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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Critical Older Adult Services Coordinated by Award Recipient
Metropolitan Family Service Builds Capacity to Offer Seniors More Options in Hard Times

Portland, Ore.—January 31, 2003—With the recent budget cuts to social service organizations, more older adults are finding it difficult to access critical services.

Project Linkage, a program of Metropolitan Family Service, is expanding its volunteer and service capacity to better meet the growing needs of older adults and people with disabilities. Recently awarded a Faith in Action grant from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, MFS Project Linkage assists more than 1,000 older adults each year in Inner NE and SE Portland.

MFS Project Linkage helps seniors remain independent in their own homes by providing services that include transportation, shopping, friendly visiting, and telephone reassurance.

Scott Gates, MFS Project Linkage Transportation Coordinator, coordinates volunteers who provide 800 rides to the grocery store or to medical appointments. Recently he received the Ron Yoder Award for Service Excellence, awarded in recognition of his dedication to strengthening families and individuals while enhancing their participation in community life. According to Scott, *"We value our volunteers and look forward to growing, so we can help more seniors stay in their homes."*

Evelyn Pudwill, an MFS volunteer of eight years, spends 30 hours a month helping seniors. Evelyn recognizes the need and says, *"It is the only time during the week many of our clients get out."*

Metropolitan Family Service has provided social services for low-income children, families, older adults, and people with disabilities for 53 years. For additional information contact Jana Richardson at janar@metfamily.org or 503.232.0007, ext. 108 or visit www.metfamily.org.

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