

At 80 years old, Robert Synder is a passionate champion for seniors and senior issues. Mr. Synder retired eight years ago and has been actively involved in numerous social work networking groups since, ensuring seniors are provided information on Medicare, healthcare and other services to meet their needs.

Mr. Synder is entering his sixth year as a member of the Board for Aging Ahead (formerly Mid-East Area Agency on Aging), holding a position on the Executive Committee. He also sits on the Aging Ahead Foundation Board of Directors and is an active participant in the Aging Ahead Silver Haired Legislature. For the past eight years, Mr. Synder has volunteered with VOYCE as an Ombudsman to ensure individuals in nursing facilities and their family members have a voice regarding quality of life in long-term care services. Mr. Synder is also a member of his church's business committee.

When asked what Engaging at Every Age meant to Mr. Synder, he said, "Individuals need to remain active--exercise and participate in various activities." Mr. Synder certainly walks the walk when it comes to remaining active. He recently completed training in the *Matter of Balance*, a program designed to reduce the fear of falling and improve activity levels among community-dwelling older adults, and has signed up to facilitating upcoming classes. Mr. Synder states isolation is the biggest problem among the senior population; that's why he feels it is important to get out and be as active as you can. Mr. Synder enjoys talking to people and being an advocate, but feels it is important to focus on one individual at a time, making sure their needs are met. "I just want to do what I can for people."

To honor his volunteer efforts, VOYCE nominated Mr. Synder for the *St. Andrew's Charitable Foundation 2017 Ageless Remarkable St. Louisans*. Awards are presented annually to individuals 75 years or older who are actively contributing and making an impact in the St. Louis area. Mr. Synder stated he was honored to be nominated alongside other influential individuals.