

# Inaugural SHIP Award: Exemplary Volunteer

## Ginny Paulson

SHIP TA Center Director

At the July 2023 SMP/SHIP/MIPPA conference, Larry Spivack, Arizona SHIP volunteer, was given one of two inaugural Mike Klug awards for his exemplary volunteerism. Larry also has a long history of working with Mike Klug on complex SHIP cases.

Larry is a retired attorney and has been a volunteer SHIP counselor for the Arizona SHIP in their Region One Area Agency on Aging for thirteen years. Marco Mendoza, Larry's supervisor at the Arizona Region One SHIP, has this to say about Larry: "Larry is a people person. He makes new friends wherever he goes. SHIP staff, volunteers, and clients all enjoy spending time with Larry. He is a bright shining star, and we are lucky to have him as part of our program." Clearly, Larry is more than a Medicare expert to the people he works with. One of my favorite quotes from Larry about his volunteer work is, "I get paid in God Bless You." As Marco so aptly told me, "Larry exemplifies the best of what Area Agencies on Aging and volunteer SHIP counselors do!"

Marco also described Larry as knowledgeable, tenacious, empathetic, understanding, able to explain Medicare in plain language, and as someone who goes above and beyond the call. That's just like Mike. Clearly, Larry is deserving of one of our Mike Klug awards. SHIP volunteers like Larry win the trust and the hearts of the Medicare beneficiaries in their community.

Larry and Mike Klug met at one of the first joint SMP/SHIP conferences. Here are some highlights of the local, state, and national impact of Larry and Mike's work:

- Their most recent success story was the [Mast case](#), featured in our *Medicare Messenger* newsletter over the past year. Together, they worked to restore coverage for lifesaving care for Arizona beneficiary Ms. Mast, by winning an appeal. Prior to winning the appeal, she was becoming entrapped in her own body due to a lack of essential but expensive infusion treatments.
- In 2019, Larry and others at the Arizona SHIP identified and resolved a problem that otherwise would have left 13,000 state retirees without notice of their right to purchase Medicare Supplement (Medigap) insurance when their existing coverage ended. Mike Klug wrote about it in the [January 2020 SHIP newsletter](#).
- In 2016 and 2017, Mike and Larry worked together on a complicated appeal colorectal cancer screening procedure called CT Colonography (CTC) test that eventually led to testimony before Congress. The issue they identified and outlined was included in the Administration for Community Living (ACL) [2017 SHIP Report to Congress](#). Larry and Mike presented this case, along with tips for SHIPs, at the 2019 national SMP/SHIP conference. ([Click here](#) to view their presentation.)

Stay tuned for more details about the Mike Klug awards in the September *Medicare Messenger* newsletter. Larry can be reached at [larryspivack@gmail.com](mailto:larryspivack@gmail.com). 

