

2023 engAGED and Commit to Connect Social Engagement Virtual Summit

Speaker Profiles

Alison Barkoff

Acting Administrator and Assistant Secretary for Aging U.S. Administration for Community Living



Alison Barkoff was sworn in as Principal Deputy Administrator on January 20, 2021, and is currently serving as ACL's Acting Administrator and as the Acting Assistant Secretary for Aging. She provides executive leadership and coordination for ACL programs nationwide and advises the HHS Secretary on issues affecting people with disabilities and older adults.

A sibling of an adult brother with developmental disabilities and a civil rights attorney, Alison is a lifelong advocate for community living – both professionally and personally – and has been at the forefront of national efforts to expand the home and community-based services (HCBS) that make community living possible.

As part of countless coalitions of people with disabilities, older adults, and advocates, she has fought to uphold the rights of people with disabilities and older adults and advance policies to ensure their access to health care, housing, employment, education, and all other facets of community life. She has testified before Congress and the US Commission on Civil Rights on disability rights and community living.

She has served in a variety of leadership roles with disability rights organizations, including leading advocacy efforts at the Center for Public Representation and the Bazelon Center for Mental Health Law.

She also is a veteran of the federal government. As Special Counsel for Olmstead Enforcement in the Civil Rights Division of the Department of Justice, she led efforts to enforce the rights of people with disabilities to live, work and fully participate in their communities. She also led interagency initiatives with the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services on Medicaid HCBS and with the Department of Labor on direct care workforce issues.

Alison has brought that same focus on collaboration and coordination to her current role. Under her leadership, ACL is working with partners across HHS and the federal government on initiatives and interagency approaches to issues that affect people with disabilities and older adults, such as expanding access to HCBS and affordable, accessible housing; strengthening the direct care workforce; increasing competitive, integrated employment for people with disabilities; and advancing equity, to name just a few.

John Beilenson

President, SCP



John Beilenson is President of SCP (formerly Strategic Communications & Planning), a certified B Corporation and socially responsible communications and public relations firm, which he founded in 1987.

Mr. Beilenson has delivered more than 150 communications presentations, workshops, and trainings around the country, serves on the ReFraming Aging national advisory committee, and is a certified facilitator in ReFraming Aging from The Frameworks Institute in Washington, DC. He has been an instructor in communications studies at the University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill and recently co-led a semester-long course on “Digital Storytelling” at St. Andrews University.

He has also written 18 books for Peter Pauper Press, including *The Future Me: Authoring the Second Half of Your Life*, an interactive journal for people considering retirement and other transitions in later life. He has contributed to several national magazines and journals, including *Social Policy* and *Sports Illustrated*.

Mr. Beilenson has an AB in history and literature from Harvard University and an MA in communications studies from the University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill. He is currently a member (and former chair) of the board of directors of Surrey Services in Devon, PA, a member of the Board of Trustees of the Foundation for Health Equity and a board advisor to Generations Online, both in Philadelphia.

Fawn Cothran

Hunt Research Director, National Alliance for Caregiving



Dr. Fawn Cothran is the Hunt Research Director at the National Alliance for Caregiving with 15+ years of experience in dementia family caregiving research and related activities. Dr. Cothran is a nurse scientist, and a board-certified gerontological clinical nurse specialist who helps elevate national family caregiving research by designing and managing NAC research initiatives, leading a peer-to-peer network of caregiving experts, and representing NAC in public meetings and professional research forums.

Dr. Cothran earned a Bachelor of Science in Nursing from Howard University in Washington, D.C. She completed a Master of Science in Nursing with an emphasis in Gerontological Nursing and a Doctor of Philosophy, both from the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor. She also completed a Claire M. Fagin Post-Doctoral Fellowship with the National Hartford Centers of Gerontological Nursing Excellence. She is a fellow of the Gerontological Society of America, a lifetime member of the National Black Nurses Association, and a Distinguished Educator in Gerontological Nursing Education.

Jennifer Harbison

Care Giver Support Specialist, AgeWell

Jennifer Harbison joined Age Well, Vermont's largest Area Agency on Aging, as a case manager supporting home- and community-based clients enrolled in Long-Term Care Medicaid, before transitioning to her current role as Caregiver Support Specialist. Jennifer's current focus is on providing information, access assistance, education and respite grants to family and unpaid caregivers caring for individuals at home. Prior to joining Age Well, Jennifer's affinity for older adults led her to volunteer as a "be-friender" visiting socially isolated and homebound older people. In addition, Jennifer worked as a home care provider serving clients with dementia and Parkinson's disease. Jennifer has completed coursework in Leadership and Management in Health and Social Care from the Open University (with Distinction) and is a graduate of the University of Vermont End-Of-Life Doula Professional Certificate program.



Julianne Holt-Lunstad, Ph.D.

Professor of Psychology and Neuroscience, Brigham Young University
Chair, Foundation for Social Connection Scientific Advisory Council



Julianne Holt-Lunstad is a professor of psychology and neuroscience at Brigham Young University, the director of the Social Neuroscience Lab, and the chair of the Scientific Advisory Council for the Coalition to End Social Isolation and Loneliness. Dr. Holt-Lunstad's research is focused on understanding the long-term health effects, biological mechanisms, and effective strategies to mitigate risk and promote protection associated with social connection. Her work has been seminal in the recognition of social isolation and loneliness as risk factors for early mortality. She serves as a scientific advisor and consults regularly for organizations across sectors aimed at addressing this issue. She has provided expert testimony in a US Congressional Hearing, expert recommendations for the US Surgeon General Emotional Well-Being in America Initiative, served as a member of the UK Cross Departmental Loneliness Team, and a member of a National Academy of Sciences consensus committee.

Catherine Ipsen, Ph.D.

RTC:Rural Director and Rural Institute for Inclusive Communities Associative Director, University of Montana Rural Institute



Dr. Ipsen conducts research focused on the intersection of rural and disability. Her research interests aim to improve health, independent living, and employment outcomes of rural people with disabilities. As part of this work, she has explored social isolation and loneliness experiences of people with disabilities, developed health promotion and self-employment interventions using participatory curriculum development strategies, and studied effective rural service delivery strategies within the Vocational Rehabilitation system.

Lesley Katz

Caregiver Services & Health Promotion Coordinator, Loudoun County Area Agency on Aging



Lesley Katz is a social worker and community educator with the Loudoun County Department of Parks, Recreation and Community Services and Loudoun County Area Agency on Aging where she manages caregiver support services and health promotion programs, outreach efforts, and elder abuse prevention activities. She has a Master's of Social Work from George Mason University. Lesley is passionate about improving the quality of life of older adults and caregivers by creating environments of dignity, respect, and empowerment.

Lenard Kaye, Ph.D.

Director, University of Maine Center on Aging



Dr. Lenard W. Kaye is Professor of Social Work at the University of Maine School of Social Work and Director of the University of Maine Center on Aging.

A prolific writer in the field of health care and aging, he has published approximately 200 journal articles and book chapters and 17 books on specialized topics in aging including social isolation, home health care, productive aging, rural practice, family caregiving, controversial issues in aging, support groups for older women, and congregate housing. His pioneering research and writing on older men's caregiving experiences and help-seeking behaviors, is widely recognized and frequently cited. His recent books include *Social Isolation of Older Adults: Strategies to Bolster Health and Well-Being*, Springer Publishing Company (2019) and the *Handbook of Rural Aging*, Routledge, Taylor & Francis Group (2021).

He is a current Co-Principal Investigator of The Mayer-Rothschild Foundation Designation of Excellence in Person-Centered Long-Term Care and the Lead Evaluator of AgingME, Maine's Geriatrics Workforce Development Project. He has managed a series of John Hartford Foundation-funded gerontological social work education programs at the University of Maine. Dr. Kaye has served on the National Advisory Committee for Rural Health and Human Services of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Service, as well as the advisory boards of a wide range of national and local health and human service programs serving older adults. He is a Past President of both the Maine and New York State Gerontological Societies. He is the Past Chair of the National Association of Social Worker's Section on Aging, sits on the editorial boards of the Journal of Gerontological Social Work and Journal of Aging Life Care, and is a Fellow of the Gerontological Society of America.

Jeannie Krull

Assistant Executive Director, North Dakota Assistive



Jeannie Krull, MS/CCC-SLP, ATP, CAPS is an ASHA certified Speech/Language Pathologist, a RESNA certified Assistive Technology Professional (ATP), and a Certified Aging in Place Specialist (CAPS) who has worked with people all ages and disabilities since 1991. Ms. Krull spent the first part of her career working for a private practice as a speech pathologist, specializing in many areas, in multiple settings to include clinics, schools, hospitals, and nursing homes.

Currently Ms. Krull is Assistant Executive Director for North Dakota Assistive (formerly IPAT), the state's assistive technology program. Her work with ND Assistive, since 2000, has focused on changing systems and policies, educating, collaborating, advocating, and helping people with disabilities find life-changing assistive technology solutions to help them live, learn, work and play.

Her most recent work consists of helping to establish the CAPABLE program in North Dakota, a Johns Hopkins, evidenced based program to help people age in place. She is also currently working to help build Assistive Technology Services by changing policies and procedures regarding assistive technology within the ND HCBS Medicaid Waivers and Money Follows the Person programs to help people live and thrive where they choose.

In addition, she is a 2019 Bush Foundation Fellow and currently serves as the Chair of the National Association of Assistive Technology Act Programs.

Dr. Vivek Murthy

Surgeon General of the United States



Dr. Vivek H. Murthy was confirmed by the U.S. Senate in March 2021 to serve as the 21st Surgeon General of the United States. He previously served as the 19th Surgeon General under President Obama. As the Nation's Doctor, the Surgeon General's mission is to help lay the foundation for a healthier country, relying on the best scientific information available to provide clear, consistent, and equitable guidance and resources for the public. As the Vice Admiral of the U.S. Public Health Service Commissioned Corps, Dr. Murthy commands a uniformed service of over 6,000 dedicated public health officers, serving the most underserved and vulnerable populations. He is also the host of [House Calls with Dr. Vivek Murthy](#), a podcast highlighting the healing power of conversations. The first Surgeon General of Indian descent, Dr. Murthy was raised in Miami and is a graduate of Harvard, the Yale School of Medicine, and the Yale School of Management. A renowned physician, research scientist, entrepreneur, and author, he lives in Washington, DC with his wife, Dr. Alice Chen, and their two children.

Sara Paige

Community Care Corps Project Manager, The Oasis Institute



Sara Paige is the Project Manager for Community Care Corps, a cooperative agreement with ACL, Oasis, USAging, Caregiver Action Network and Altarum to foster the development of innovative local models which provide nonmedical volunteer assistance to family caregivers, older adults, and adults with disabilities to help maintain their independence in the community.

Sara has been with the Oasis Institute for 7 years. Prior to this role, Sara was a Project Coordinator focusing on falls prevention programs in the St. Louis metro area and across the state of Missouri helping older adults decrease fall risk and increase confidence and mobility.

Sara has 30+ years of experience as an Occupational Therapist in numerous areas of care including home health, long term care, inpatient and outpatient rehabilitation.

Beth Soltzberg

Director of the Alzheimer's/Related Dementias Family Support Program, Jewish Family & Children's Service



Beth Soltzberg, LICSW, MBA, directs the Alzheimer's/Related Dementias Family Support Program at Jewish Family & Children's Service in Waltham, Massachusetts. Beth facilitates the JF&CS Memory Café and a support group for adults whose parent lives with dementia. She founded and coordinates the JF&CS Memory Café Percolator, an international resource for those starting and sustaining memory cafés. Beth leads the Dementia Friends public awareness program for Massachusetts, and is part of the statewide leadership team promoting dementia friendly community initiatives. Beth earned her MSW and MBA from the University of Chicago and a certificate in end-of-life care from the Smith College School of Social Work. She holds an advanced credential in hospice and palliative care social work (AHPC-SW).

Jill Stedem

Administrative Director, OATS Transit



Jill Stedem is the Administrative Director for OATS Transit headquartered in Columbia, MO. OATS Transit is a \$30 million corporation providing transportation to residents in 87 Missouri counties. The company has 600 employees and a fleet of over 700 vehicles throughout the state. Jill has direct responsibility for administration of home office, company policies and procedures, development, grant writing, compliance, marketing, and serves as vice-secretary on the State Board of Directors. She has made presentations to several state and national groups on transportation. Jill is a Certified Community Transit Manager (CCTM), which is a national certification program for transit professionals. Jill serves as a Review Board member for the National Rural Transportation Assistance Program (2021-2023), a member of the Missouri Transportation Taskforce and the Missouri Access & Functional Needs Committee. Prior to joining OATS Transit, Jill worked for the City of Columbia as a Public Information Officer, primarily for the Columbia Regional Airport and Columbia Transit and other public works divisions. Jill graduated from Columbia College in 1996 with a Bachelor of Science in Business Administration, and minor in marketing and management. Over the years, she has been involved in several charitable events in the community, including the Chamber of Commerce, Special Olympics and events that support individuals with developmental disabilities.

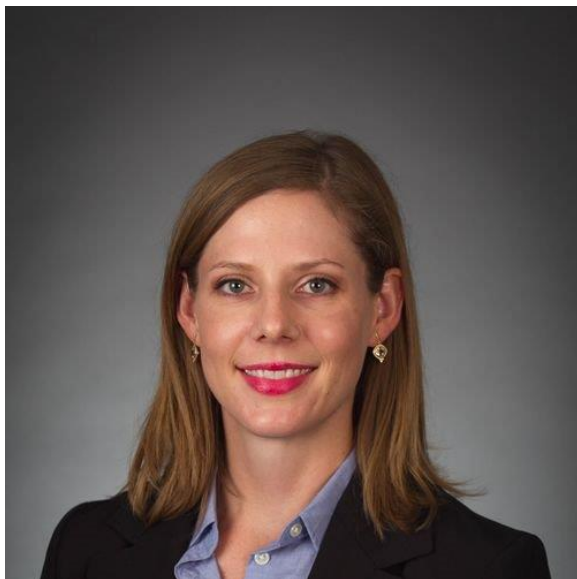
Beth Wiggins

Director of Caregiving and Aging Services, FamilyMeans



Beth Wiggins has more than 30 years of experience in developing and administering community-based supportive services for older adults and their families. With a broad understanding of gerontology, family caregiving, community involvement issues and nonprofit management, she has provided leadership in a number of collaborative entities and multi-sector partnerships to champion aging as a positive and integral part of family and community life. Beth currently oversees a multi-faceted respite project supported by Community Care Corps, housed within a wide-ranging caregiver support program. She holds a BA in Psychology from Carleton College, a master's degree in Social Work from the University of Minnesota and was a Minnesota Area Geriatric Education Center Fellow.

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