

# CONFERENCE PROGRAM



2025 FLORIDA CONFERENCE ON AGING

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## Going above and beyond.

Here's to those who look at things differently. Those who set the example.  
Those who inspire and serve others.

Duke Energy is proud to support the Florida Council on Aging conference celebrating 70 years of education, advocacy and information-sharing with Florida's Aging Network.

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*BUILDING A SMARTER ENERGY FUTURE®*

**SUNDAY, AUGUST 3, 2025**

- 12:00 PM - 2:00 PM FASP Board Meeting.....Bayhill 21
- 2:30 PM - 4:30 PM FCOA Board Meeting .....Bayhill 21
- 3:00 PM - 6:00 PM Registration Desk Open..... Plaza International Foyer
- 2:00 PM - 5:30 PM Connections Corner..... Plaza International Foyer

**MONDAY, AUGUST 4, 2025**

- 7:30 AM - 5:30 PM Registration Desk Open.....Plaza International Foyer
- 8:30 AM - 10:00 AM Senior Center Intensive.....Discovery 46
- 9:00 AM - 5:30 PM Connections Corner.....Plaza International Foyer
- 10:00 AM - 4:00 PM Vaccination Station.....Plaza International Foyer
- 10:30 AM - 12:30 PM Opening Session & Refreshments.....Plaza International H-K
- 12:00 PM - 4:00 PM Exhibit Hall Setup.....Plaza International D-G
- 12:30 PM - 1:00 PM Anniversary Cake Served.....Plaza International Foyer
- 1:00 PM - 2:00 PM Concurrent Workshops
  - SMARTER Focused Goals in Project Planning.....Blue Spring
  - Understanding Anticipatory Grief.....Winterpark 49
  - Live Longer at Home: The Power of Smart Home Technology.....Winterpark 50
  - Empowering Seniors Through Assistive Technology: A Program for Enhanced Engagement and Independence.....Discovery 43
  - Long Term Care: The Right Services, Right Time.....Discovery 44
  - Empowering Older Adults: Power of Varied Programming in Senior Centers....Discovery 46
  - Shaping Your Future in Aging: Conversations with Leaders.....Columbia 37
- 2:00 PM - 2:30 PM Break On Your Own
- 2:30 PM - 3:30 PM Concurrent Workshops
  - Building Community Partnerships for Aging Advocacy .....Blue Spring
  - Field of Themes: A Four-Hour Respite Program for Older Adults with Dementia.....Winterpark 49
  - An Overview of Trauma-Informed Care When Working with Older Adults.....Winterpark 50
  - Thrive Together: An Integrated Adult Day Program for Growth & Inclusion.....Columbia 36
  - Senior Fraud Prevention.....Columbia 37
  - Bridging the Communication Gap with PERS: Effective Strategies for Senior Outreach.....Discovery 43
  - Ethics in Dementia Care.....Discovery 44
  - Calm Under Pressure: Strategies for Building Resilience and Stress Management for Senior Services Heroes.....Discovery 46
- 3:30 PM - 3:45 PM Break
- 3:45 PM - 4:45 PM Concurrent Workshops
  - The Aging Workforce-Why Does Everyone Question My Ability?.....Blue Spring
  - Filling the GaP: The Grandparents as Parents Program.....Winterpark 50
  - Connect with the Care Team: Many Know OF Parkinson`s Disease but not ABOUT, Let`s Change That!.....Columbia 36
  - What an Accessible Home Looks Like. Nobody Likes to Live in a Hospital.....Discovery 43
  - Educating Caregivers on End-of-Life Options and Hospice.....Discovery 44
  - Increasing our Flock: How the Tallahassee Senior Center Increased Participation in Six Rural Communities.....Discovery 46
- 5:00 PM - 7:00 PM Grand Reception in Exhibit Hall.....Plaza International D-G

**TUESDAY, AUGUST 5, 2025**

- 7:30 AM - 5:30 PM Registration Desk Open..... Plaza International Foyer
- 8:00 AM - 9:00 AM Continental Breakfast in the Exhibit Hall.....Plaza International D-G
- 8:00 AM - 12:00 PM Vaccination Station.....Plaza International Foyer
- 8:00 AM - 5:00 PM Connections Corner.....Plaza International Foyer
- 9:00 AM - 10:30 AM Plenary Session.....Plaza International H-K

**EVENT SCHEDULE**

EVENT SCHEDULE

TUESDAY, AUGUST 5, 2025

10:30 AM - 11:15 AM Refreshment Break in Exhibit Hall..... Plaza International D-G

11:15 AM - 12:15 PM Concurrent Workshops

- The Development of a University-based Program to Communicate Relevant Research on Aging to Older Adults.....Blue Spring
- Bridging Gaps: Social Determinants of Health and Self-Direction.....Winterpark 49
- Guardianship- Our Ethical Dilemmas and Quest for Quality of Life.....Winterpark 50
- Fueling Healthy Aging with Medically Tailored Meals and the Longevity Diet ....Columbia 36
- Ripple Effects: Small Scale Innovations Making Big Waves for Age-Friendly Florida..Columbia 37
- Falls, Funding, and the Future: Enhancing Home Safety and Accessibility in Florida.....Discovery 43
- Harnessing the Power of Technology: Artificial Intelligence.....Discovery 44
- Caring for Caregivers.....Discovery 46

12:15 AM - 2:00 PM Quality Senior Living Awards Luncheon....Plaza International H-K

2:15 PM - 3:15 PM Concurrent Workshops

- Lego Serious Play Workshop.....Blue Spring
- Telling the Story of Care: Leveraging Communication to Build and Enhance Senior and Aging Services.....Columbia 36
- Managing Stress While Aging: Practical Techniques for Well-Being.....Winterpark 50
- Health Buddies.....Columbia 37
- AI for Aging Services: Transforming Senior-Focused Organizations Through AI-Powered Workflow and Innovation.....Discovery 43
- How To Work With Community Partners.....Discovery 44
- Maximizing Retirement Security: Social Security Role in Financial Planning..Discovery 46

3:15 PM - 4:15 PM Closing Reception in the Exhibit Hall.....Plaza International D-G

4:15 PM - 5:15 PM Concurrent Workshops

- Beyond the Capitol: The 2025 Legislative Scoop!.....Blue Spring
- Is Your Ankle Bone Connected to Your Head Bone?.....Winterpark 49
- Navigating the Complexities of Aging: Strategies for Cognitive Well-Being....Winterpark 50
- Empowering Older Adults Through AI-Driven Digital Literacy: A Partnership Between SoFIA and Apo AI.....Columbia 37
- Opening the Door to Advance Care Planning and Dignity.....Discovery 43
- Thriving or Just Surviving? Building the Senior Center of the Future with Smart Leadership & Data-Driven Strategy.....Discovery 46

WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 6, 2025

7:30 AM - 11:00 AM Registration Desk Open..... Plaza International Foyer

8:00 AM - 8:30 AM Refreshment Break.....Plaza International Foyer

8:00 AM - 11:00 AM Connections Corner.....Plaza International Foyer

8:30 AM - 9:45 AM Seniors, Volunteerism and the Meaning of Life....Plaza International H

9:45 AM - 10:00 AM Break

10:00 AM - 11:00 AM Breakout Sessions

- The Power of Giving Service: Volunteers as Leaders of Change.....Plaza D
- Beyond the Whistle: Turning Passion into Partnership – Leading Volunteers Who Serve by Choice.....Plaza E
- Retention Begins at Recruitment.....Plaza F

11:00 AM - 12:30 PM Closing Brunch & Plenary Session.....Plaza International H

Thank you for attending the 2025 Florida Conference on Aging.

We look forward to seeing you again August 3-5, 2026!

## Additional Scheduling Information

### Connections Corner Plaza International Foyer

WellCare and Sunshine Health invite attendees to take a break and get to know your fellow conference-goers!

**Hours:**

Monday, August 4th 9:00 AM - 5:30 PM  
 Tuesday, August 5th 8:00 AM - 5:00 PM  
 Wednesday, August 6th 8:00 AM - 11:00 AM

Co-Sponsored by:  **sunshine health** 

### Exhibit Hall Schedule

Located in Plaza D-G

List of exhibitors and map on page 34

**Monday, August 4th**

12:00 PM - 4:00 PM Booth Set-Up  
 5:00 PM - 7:00 PM Expo Hall Grand Reception

**Tuesday, August 5th**

8:00 AM - 9:00 AM Continental Breakfast  
 10:30 AM - 11:15 AM Refreshment Break in Hall  
 3:15 PM - 4:15 PM Closing Reception  
 4:15 PM Tear Down

### Conference Phone App



Get alerts, meet fellow conference attendees and follow all the action using the Whova App!

Here are the steps:

1. Download the app.
2. Create account using your registration email
3. Set a password.
4. You should be automatically connected to the conference. If not, search for Florida Conference on Aging.

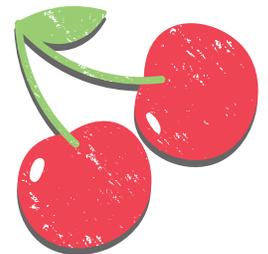
<https://whova.com/pages/whova-app-user-guide/>



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**SORRY!**



### Continuing Education

*Due to lack of registrations, we will not provide CE in 2025.*

*We apologize for the inconvenience.*



### Vaccination Station Plaza International Foyer

Walgreens pharmacists will be administering adult vaccinations. Please bring your insurance card. If a co-pay is required, Walgreens can accept a check or credit card as payment.

**HOURS:**

Monday, August 4th - 10:00 AM - 4:00 PM  
 Tuesday, August 5th - 8:00 AM - 12:00 PM



## Track Information

### AARP Florida Track



- Shaping Your Future in Aging: Conversations with Leaders (p. 11)
- Maximizing Retirement Security: Social Security's Role in Financial Planning (p. 24)
- Ripple Effects: Small-Scale Innovations Making Big Waves for Age-Friendly Florida (p. 20)
- The Power of Giving Service: Volunteers as Leaders of Change (p. 30)
- Beyond the Capitol: The 2025 Legislative Scoop! (p. 27)

### Senior Center Track



- Caring for Caregivers (p. 20)
- Calm Under Pressure: Strategies for Building Resilience and Stress Management (p. 11)
- Thriving or Just Surviving? Building the Senior Center of the Future with Smart Leadership & Data-Driven Strategy (p. 27)
- Lego Serious Play (p. 23)
- Increasing our Flock: How the Tallahassee Senior Center Increased Rural Participation (p. 14)
- Empowering Older Adults: The Power of Varied Programming in Senior Centers (p. 10)

### Technology Track



- Empowering Older Adults Through AI-Driven Digital Literacy: A Partnership Between SoFIA and Apo AI (p. 28)
- Live Longer at Home: The Power of Smart Home Technology (p. 9)
- Empowering Seniors Through Assistive Technology: A Program for Enhanced Engagement and Independence (p. 10)
- AI for Aging Services: Transforming Senior-Focused Organizations Through AI-Powered Workflow & Innovation (p. 26)
- Harnessing the Power of Technology: Artificial Intelligence (p. 19)

### Volunteerism Track - Wednesday



Both General Sessions on Wednesday will provide attendees with thoughtful ideas and strategies to empower staff and volunteers. (p. 29-32)

- The Power of Giving Service: Volunteers as Leaders of Change
- Beyond the Whistle: Turning Passion into Partnership – Leading Volunteers Who Serve by Choice.
- Retention Begins at Recruitment

### Care Management



- An Overview of Trauma-Informed Care When Working with Older Adults (p. 12)
- Guardianship - Our Ethical Dilemmas and Quest for Quality of Life (p. 19)
- Navigating the Complexities of Aging: Strategies for Cognitive Well-Being (p. 27)
- Bridging the Gaps: Social Determinants of Health and self-Direction (p. 17)
- Managing Stress While Aging: Practical Techniques for Well-Being (p. 24)
- Field of Themes: A Four Hour Respite Program for Older Adults with Dementia (p. 13)

### End of Life Track



- Understanding Anticipatory Grief (p. 10)
- Ethics in Dementia Care (p. 11)
- Opening the Door to Advance Care Planning and Dignity (p. 28)
- Educating Caregivers on End-of-Life Options and Hospice (p. 14)



### Grab a Snack Sack!

No need to miss a session to grab a snack! Guidewell Source is sponsoring a 'snack sack' for attendees to stay on the go and keep that hunger at bay.

Pick up your Snack Sack when you pick up your name badge at Registration. Each sack includes hand wipes, trail mix, nuts, hard candy, granola bars, and chips or crackers. Swap basket and GF/V option available.

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**Monday, August 4, 2025**

**8:30 AM - 10:00 AM**

**Discovery 46**

**Empowering Senior Centers: From Program Impact to Strategic Partnerships**

Pre-Conference Intensive - Separate Registration Fee Applies



This interactive panel will conduct dive deep into how senior centers can leverage program data, build strong volunteer programs, and foster partnerships with local governments to create sustainable and impactful programs. Each panelist will share their expertise on a specific topic and how these elements can be integrated for maximum success.

**Segment 1:** Volunteer Engagement as a Key to Success - Building and maintaining an effective volunteer program to drive success and community involvement.

**Segment 2:** Strengthening Local Government Partnerships - Techniques for engaging with local government to secure support, resources, and advocacy for senior center programs.

**Segment 3:** Leveraging Program Data for Economic and Social Impact - Using data to showcase the effectiveness and value of senior center programs, highlighting both social and economic benefits.

**Segment 4:** Leading with Results 1<sup>st</sup> to Maximize Your Impact - Implementing a results-based framework to strategically plan, measure, and communicate the impact of your senior center's programs.

**PRESENTERS:** Robyn Faucy, CEO/Owner, Results 1st, Bradenton, FL; Darwin Tepe, Data Strategy and Economics Analyst, Senior Friendship Centers, Sarasota, FL; Susan Berger, Aging Systems Coordinator, Sarasota County Health and Human Services, Sarasota, FL; and Stephanie Sielaty, Volunteer Sarasota Program Coordinator & DOVIA Chapter Leader (for Sarasota, Manatee, Pinellas County), Sarasota County Government Human Resources, Sarasota, FL

**FACILITATOR:** Jenny Macias, Director of Program Initiatives, Senior Friendship Centers, President, Florida Association of Senior Centers, Sarasota, FL

10:00 AM - 10:30 AM

Plaza International H-K

Welcome Refreshment Break

SPONSORED BY:



10:30 AM - 12:30 PM

Plaza International H-K

Conference Opening Plenary Session

**The Connection Cure.** Social prescribing is a way for doctors and other health workers to connect patients with medicine that addresses their social determinants of health. It turns out up to 80% of our health is determined by social factors – tangible things like access to healthy food, a safe home, stable finances, and also intangible things, like a community we can belong to and friends we can depend on. The doctor who came up with social prescribing has a great tagline: instead of asking “what’s the matter with you?” they ask patients “what matters to you?” Visit the Conference Registration Desk to purchase your copy of *The Connection Cure*.

**Presiding:** Jeff Johnson, State Director, AARP Florida, FCOA President

**A Special Message of Celebration:** Alex Modric, CEO, Phoenix Pro

**Introduction of Speaker:** Nicole Weaver, Sr. Director of Medicare Growth Enablement, Florida Blue Medicare

**Keynote Address:** Julia Hotz, PhD, Author

**Closing Remarks:** Jeff Johnson

CO-SPONSORED BY:



Julia Hotz, PhD

12:30 AM - 1:00 PM

Plaza International Foyer

Cake & Networking!

Celebrate FCOA, OAA, Social Security & Medicare/Medicaid. Join us in the foyer for CAKE! Thank you FASP for recognizing these important anniversaries!

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MONDAY

## 1:00 PM - 2:00 PM Concurrent Workshops

### SMARTER Focused Goals in Project Planning *Blue Spring*

A focus on using the SMARTER project management tool to help make planning easier and more efficient for long and short term plans in the aging network. The tool helps users identify specific information about a goal for projects to provide information on how to track and report progress. In the presentation, an AAA will showcase how using the SMARTER goal method in Area Planning projects have provided a guideline for the agency to actively work on set goals throughout the year rather than just another document sitting on an agency bookcase.

**PRESENTERS:** Heather Kirwan, MSW, Director of Planning and Programs, Advantage Aging Solutions, Tallahassee, FL and Kira Houge, Bureau Chief of Community and Support Services, Florida Department of Elder Affairs, Tallahassee, FL

### Live Longer at Home: The Power of Smart Home Technology *Winterpark 50*



Assistive Technology (AT) and smart home innovations are transforming the way people age in place by enhancing safety, convenience, and independence. Features like remote supports, alerting and notifying systems, and smart scheduling/reminding tools help older adults manage daily tasks and stay connected. These technologies improve accessibility, security, and overall quality of life. By integrating these technologies, aging adults can remain in their homes longer, maintaining their quality of life while reducing reliance on outside assistance.

**PRESENTERS:** Kailey Medlock, Training & Community Development Director, Florida Alliance for Assistive Services & Technology, Tallahassee, FL and Carolyn Buchanan, University of Central Florida, Orlando, FL

**Empowering Seniors Through Assistive Technology: A Program for Enhanced Engagement and Independence**   
*Discovery 43*

This workshop will explore how assistive technology can empower older adults by providing easy access to social connections, healthcare resources, and cognitive activities. Attendees will learn best practices for setting up and maintaining a senior-friendly tablet program and hear success stories from our program.

**PRESENTERS:** Karla Radka, President and Chief Executive Officer, Senior Resource Alliance, Orlando, FL and Marin Godsey, Sales Director, Claris Healthcare, Fort Mitchell, KY

**Long Term Care: The Right Services, Right Time**  
*Discovery 44*

Join us for an informative workshop on ensuring long-term care members receive the right services at the right time to support aging in place and maintain independence. We'll explore how managed care organizations assess and coordinate care, the role of caregivers in the process, and strategies to enhance support for both members and their caregivers. Learn how to navigate the system effectively and ensure the best care outcomes for those who need it most.

**PRESENTERS:** Ada Gutierrez, Regional Vice President- Long Term Care, Humana Healthy Horizons in Florida, Tampa, FL; Miriam Walters, Director of Health Services, Humana Healthy Horizons in Florida, Tampa, FL; April Evans, Director of Case Management, Humana Healthy Horizons in Florida, Tampa, FL and Natalia Aresu, Plan President, Humana Healthy Horizons in Florida, Tampa, FL

**Empowering Older Adults: The Power of Varied Programming in Senior Centers**

*Discovery 46*

Explore the role that varied programming plays in empowering older adults within senior centers. As the aging population becomes more active and diverse, senior centers will be tasked to evolve to meet a wide range of physical, emotional, social, and cognitive needs. Through inclusive, engaging, and personalized activities, from fitness classes and tech workshops to cultural celebrations and support groups, older adults can thrive in community settings. The presentation highlights key benefits, real-life examples, best practices, and strategies for measuring impact. Let's meet the call to action to reimagine senior centers as vibrant, inclusive hubs of lifelong learning and connection.

**PRESENTER:** Jenny Macias, Director of Program Initiatives, Senior Friendship Centers, Sarasota, FL

**ROOM AMBASSADOR:**



**Understanding Anticipatory Grief**   
*Winterpark 49*

Understanding anticipatory grief helps individuals recognize that mourning can begin before a loss occurs. By validating these emotions and providing appropriate support, individuals can navigate this period with greater resilience and emotional preparedness and avoid the pitfalls of not recognizing and addressing grief. This session will review what anticipatory grief is and review exercises to address the grief.

**PRESENTER:** Jeff Steele, Bereavement Manager, VITAS Healthcare, Daytona Beach, FL

**ROOM AMBASSADOR:** Patty Husted, EVP of Patient and Family Supportive Services, VITAS Healthcare, Port Saint Lucie, FL



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- Bedbug Fumigation
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**Shaping Your Future in Aging: Conversations with Leaders**  
**Columbia 37**



The field of aging is evolving, offering new opportunities for growth and impact. This interactive session brings together industry leaders for candid conversations about career paths, emerging trends, and strategies for professional advancement. Whether you're starting out or looking to take the next step, you'll gain valuable insights, practical advice, and networking opportunities to help shape your future in aging.

**PRESENTERS:** Jennifer Martinez, Executive Director, Marion Senior Services, Ocala, FL; Jeff Johnson, State Director, AARP Florida, St. Petersburg, FL; Erin McLeod, President & CEO, Senior Friendship Centers, Inc., Sarasota, FL and Lindsay Peterson, PhD, Research Assistant Professor, School of Aging Studies, University of South Florida, Tampa, FL

**MODERATOR:** Hope Mimbs, Doctoral Candidate in Sociology, Florida State University, Tallahassee, FL



2:00 PM – 2:30 PM

*Break on Your Own*

2:30 PM – 3:30 PM

*Concurrent Workshops*

**Calm Under Pressure: Strategies for Building Resilience and Stress Management for Senior Services Heroes**  
**Discovery 46**



Designed to empower professionals working in senior services and senior centers, participants will explore the unique stressors they face in their roles and learn both short-term and long-term techniques to manage stress. The session will also guide attendees in developing a personalized self-care plan and recognizing key components of a workplace culture that supports well-being.

**PRESENTERS:** Carole Ware, Recreation Supervisor, Office on Aging, City of St. Petersburg, FL and LaToya Fryson, Director of Elderly Affairs, Gadsden County Board of County Commissioners, Quincy, FL

**Ethics in Dementia Care**  
**Discovery 44**



As dementia progresses, cognitive impairments can affect a person's memory, judgment, and ability to make decisions. This creates unique ethical challenges for caregivers, healthcare providers, and family members. Ethics in dementia care requires balancing respect for the individual's dignity with the realities of cognitive decline. Proactive work to encourage conversations about care and treatment preferences can help ensure that compassionate, informed, and ethically grounded practices support patients and families living with dementia as they make care choices that align with their loved one's wishes and preferences to receive respectful, fair, and high-quality care throughout their journey.

**PRESENTERS:** Susan Ponder-Stansel, MSW, CEO, Alivia Care, Inc. and Paul Malley, President, Five Wishes, Tallahassee, FL



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*Thank you for serving Florida's Aging Community.*

**Building Community Partnerships for Aging Advocacy**

**Blue Spring**

Building Community Partnerships for Aging Advocacy is a program designed to strengthen collaboration between senior service organizations, healthcare providers, policymakers, and community groups to enhance support for aging populations. The session will explore strategic public relations approaches to building relationships with stakeholders, fostering cross-sector partnerships, and leveraging media to amplify advocacy efforts. Participants will learn how to craft compelling messages, engage local businesses and civic organizations, and drive public awareness campaigns for aging-related issues.

**PRESENTERS:** Jacob Winge, Public Affairs Specialist, TLC Marketing and Creative Services, FL

**An Overview of Trauma-Informed Care When Working with Older Adults**



**Winterpark 50**

The purpose of this presentation is to provide a brief overview of trauma and its impact among the older adult population. This presentation will increase the awareness and understanding among long-term care providers, caregivers, and various aging professionals of the impact of trauma among older adults. Attendees will gain a better understanding of trauma, the effects of trauma among older adults, and the importance of using a trauma-informed, person-centered approach in treatment and care planning. Those who work with older adults will learn how to recognize and effectively respond to the individual with a trauma history. Lastly, strategies for a more trauma-informed approach to care will also be reviewed in the presentation.

**PRESENTER:** Sharon Sykes, LCSW, Senior Clinical Provider Trainer, Sunshine Health, Tallahassee, FL

### **Thrive Together: An Integrated Adult Day Program for Growth & Inclusion** **Columbia 36**

The Arc's Specialized Aging Support program is an integrated adult day program designed to empower adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD) through structured, meaningful engagement. It supports individuals at high risk for dementia and those experiencing cognitive decline, focusing on cognitive stimulation, social connection, health and wellness, and creative expression. This session will highlight the development of a full-year curriculum designed to maintain skills and enhance quality of life through hands-on, structured activities. Participants engage in real-world experiences through community partnerships, fostering inclusion and self-confidence. Learn how to implement this model in your own programs to create an inclusive, enriching space for adults with IDD.

**PRESENTERS:** Abigale Such, Director of Adult Day Programs, The Arc Jacksonville, Jacksonville, FL and Dakota LaPorte, Aging Services Manager, The Arc Jacksonville, Jacksonville, FL

### **Field of Themes: A Four-Hour Respite Program for Older Adults with Dementia**



#### **Winterpark 49**

The development and structure of "Field of Themes" will be presented. Field of Themes is a four-hour evidence-based program for engaging older adults with a medical diagnosis of mid to moderate dementia, who are living at home with family caregivers. Each group is facilitated by a credentialed social worker and/or credentialed music therapist. The program focuses on language skills, decreasing agitation, socialization, reminiscence, self-esteem and overall cognitive support. One theme is utilized throughout each of the 4-hour sessions to continually reinforce engagement of the clients. Theme based activities include reminiscence, light physical activity and art projects. At the end of each group a credentialed music therapist works with the group with theme related music. The groups not only engage the clients with dementia, but give their caregivers four hours of respite. Currently Baker Senior Center Naples offers 9 respite groups.

**PRESENTERS:** Jaclynn Faffer, DSW, President/CEO, Baker Senior Center Naples, Naples, FL and Marisa Luizzi, Chief Cognitive Officer, Baker Senior Center Naples, Naples, FL

### **Bridging the Communication Gap with PERS: Effective Strategies for Senior Outreach** **Discovery 43**

This session will explore the essential role of Personal Emergency Response Systems (PERS) in community aging program strategies to support and reach their aging clients. As community aging programs face increasing challenges in communicating effectively with hard-to-reach clients, PERS offers a critical solution to help bridge this gap. The session will examine recent industry statistics around senior engagement with technology, highlighting how outreach to this population remains difficult but crucial. Our expert panel will feature leadership from local Florida Area Agency on Aging and/or PACE offices, who will share insights on how they leverage PERS in their programs and what effective, real-world utilization of this technology looks like. Additionally, we will explore a compelling case study on LifeStation's work with CareAssist Connect, our outreach solution designed to reach members through outbound messaging, emails, SMS, and more.

**PRESENTERS:** Lyndsie Roddenberry, Executive Director, Citrus County Supports Services, Lecanto, FL; Melanie Harrison, Senior Services Director, You Thrive Florida, Leesburg, FL and Charlotte Mather-Taylor, CEO, Area Agency on Aging of Broward, Sunrise, FL

**MODERATOR:** Randy Marowitz, Regional Director, Government Programs, LifeStation, Union, NJ

### **Senior Fraud Prevention**

#### **Columbia 37**

To educate those within the senior service industry about the current scams victimizing their clients.

**PRESENTER:** Jeffery Merry, Master Deputy Sheriff, Hillsborough County Sheriff's Office, Sun City Center, FL

3:45 PM - 4:45 PM

Concurrent Workshops

**Connect with the Care Team: Many Know OF Parkinson`s Disease but not ABOUT, Let`s Change That!**

**Columbia 36**

The session will begin with a short 5 minute presentation from each panel member (20 mins) about the role they play on the Parkinson`s Disease Care Team. We will then open the panel discussion questions with the commonly misguided information about Parkinson`s Disease per expert and then open the panel discussion to questions from the audience. The APDA Florida Chapter staff- Desirae Mearns will be both on the panel for questioning and moderating the team of experts.

**PRESENTER:** Desirae Mearns, MBA, Florida Chapter Program Director, American Parkinson Disease Association, Port St. Lucie, FL

**ROOM AMBASSADOR:** Vanessa Vicente, National Manager Programs and Community Engagement Bi-Lingual, Miami, FL

**What an Accessible Home Looks Like. Nobody likes to live in a Hospital**

**Discovery 43**

I have been very fortunate to speak at multiple events to help educate the public on the options available when modifying a home for someone with a disability or a senior.

**PRESENTER:** Pat Acquisto, President/Accessibility Construction Expert (ACE), PRO Accessibility, Concord, ON, Canada

**Educating Caregivers on End-of-Life Options and Hospice**

**Discovery 44**



This session is designed to empower caregivers with knowledge, skills, and emotional readiness to provide compassionate, respectful, appropriate and dignified care to individuals nearing the end of life. Attendees will learn about Hospice and Palliative Care including defining these services and the differences in care they bring. An overview of the hospice basics, the when, where, why and how will be provided while learning the importance of entering hospice at the right time with a patient/family-centered Plan of Care.

**PRESENTERS:** Autumn Belahmer, Social Worker, VITAS Healthcare, Maitland, FL  
**ROOM AMBASSADOR:** Patty Husted, EVP of Patient and Family Supportive Services, VITAS Healthcare, Port Saint Lucie, FL

**Increasing Our Flock: How the Tallahassee Senior Center increased Participation in Six Rural Communities**

**Discovery 46**  
 This presentation will provide an overview of the Leon County Senior Outreach (LCSO) program as part of the Tallahassee Senior Center. LCSO provides social support, community connections, fitness classes and monthly lunch and learns.  
**PRESENTER:** Lisa Baggett, Leon County Senior Outreach Coordinator, Tallahassee Senior Center Foundation,



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**Filling the GaP: The Grandparents as Parents Program  
Winterpark 50**



This presentation will provide an overview of the Grandparents as Parents (GaP) program at the Tallahassee Senior Center. GaP provides social support, education, and resource referral to seniors unexpectedly thrust into the parenting role again. The audience will learn how to address the needs of this unique population.

**PRESENTER:** Sarah Vernon, MSW, Assistant Director, Tallahassee Senior Center Foundation, Tallahassee, FL

**The Aging Workforce-Why Does Everyone Question My Ability?  
Blue Spring**



This presentation will discuss the various issues that arise from the aging work population. Many people assume that older people are not relevant or don't have the appropriate computer and IT skills to perform adequately in the workplace. This presentation also discusses ways to overcome bias for the older adult, especially when birth rates are decreasing, and people are becoming less likely to do certain jobs.

**PRESENTER:** Mari Adams, MSN-Ed, BSN, RN, CHPN, Clinical Nurse Educator, Chapters Health System-Cornerstone Hospice, Orlando, FL

MONDAY



5:00 PM - 7:00 PM

Plaza International D-G

Grand Opening Reception in the Exhibit Hall

Over 60 exhibitors are waiting to speak with you about their companies and services! This is a great opportunity to network while enjoying great refreshments courtesy of our co-sponsors.

CO-SPONSORED BY:



Tuesday, August 5, 2025

8:00 AM - 9:00 AM Plaza International D-G

Continental Breakfast in the Exhibit Hall

SPONSORED BY:



9:00 AM - 10:30 AM Plaza International H-K

Plenary Session

The Florida Council on Aging welcomes Robert Blancato to move BEYOND a 10 top issues in 10 minutes presentation! Policy issues and politics are moving fast and the aging network needs to stay informed to plan for the future. Funding streams are changing, but so are the ways we communicate, advocate and support aging with dignity and respect in our communities. Learn about hot topics and trends that might be seen after Congress returns in September.

**Presiding:** Darrell Drummond, CEO, Council on Aging of St. Lucie, FASP President  
**Presentation of the Humana Best Direct Service Employee & Humana Senior Volunteer of the Year Awards:** Natalia Aresu, Medicaid Regional President, Humana Healthy Horizons in Florida, Tampa, FL

**Introduction:** Darrell Drummond  
**Introduction of Speaker:** Natalia Aresu

**Plenary Speaker:** Robert Blancato, Matz, Blancato & Associates  
**Closing Remarks:** Darrell Drummond

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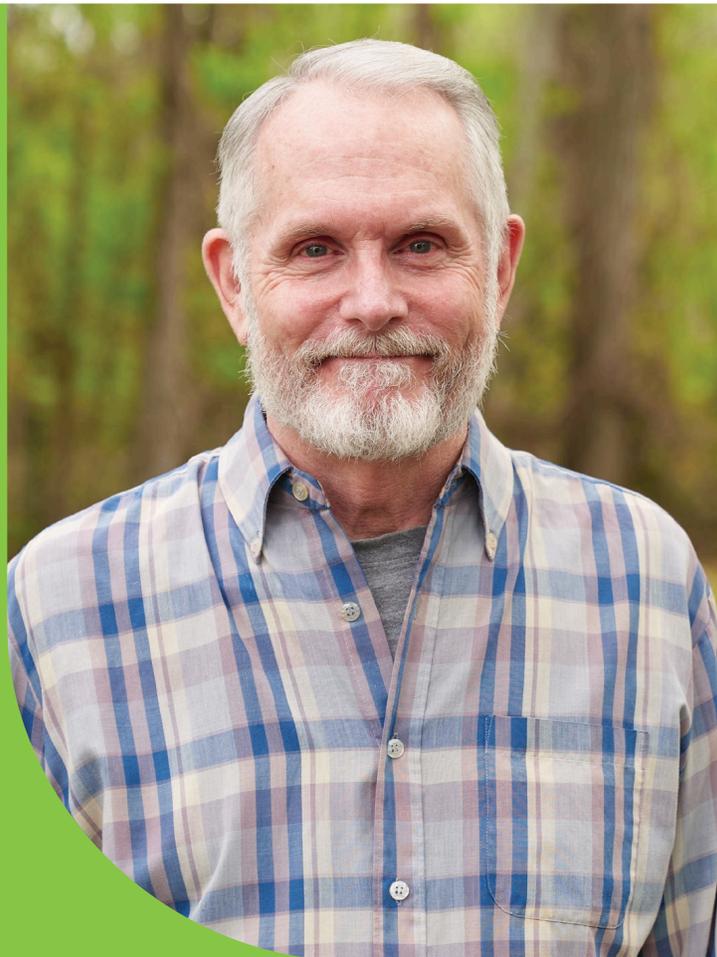
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10:30 PM - 11:15 AM

Plaza International D-G

Refreshment Break in the Exhibit Hall

CO-SPONSORED BY:



11: 15 AM - 12:15 PM

Concurrent Workshops

### Bridging Gaps: Social Determinants of Health and Self-Direction

#### Winterpark 49

Bridging Gaps: Social Determinants of Health and Self-Direction aims to explore the intersection between social determinants of health (SDOH) and self-determination as a pathway to improving health outcomes. Traditional methods to address SDOH often use top-down interventions, which can unintentionally create dependency and disempower individuals. This workshop aims to shift the focus by exploring how integrating self-determination and self-direction into SDOH initiatives can lead to individuals taking greater control of their health outcomes.

**PRESENTER:** Cecile Comrie, Account Manager, Public Partnerships LLC, Orlando



TUESDAY

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## The Development of a University-based Program to Communicate Relevant Research on Aging to Older Adults

### *Blue Spring*

This session describes the development of a novel Age-Friendly research dissemination project by the University of South Florida (USF). As part of becoming an Age-Friendly University, USF has developed a reader-friendly product to enable older adults to learn about the research conducted at USF, with a focus on presenting only research that is relevant to their lives. It is titled, "News You Can Use to Age Well". This interactive session reviews the Age Friendly University initiative and efforts to disseminate university research from the perspective of two students and the professor coordinating the process. It also seeks feedback from the audience on how best to communicate research on aging to older adults, as well as how to help universities become more age-friendly.

**PRESENTERS:** Lindsay Peterson, PhD, Research Assistant Professor, University of South Florida, Tampa, FL and Jessica Vanderwerf, University of South Florida, Tampa, FL

## Guardianship- Our Ethical Dilemmas and Quest for Quality of Life



### *Winterpark 50*

How does guardianship work and how do professional guardians substitute the judgement of incapacitated adults for their own? We will look at some of the ethical issues that arise in guardianship case studies and work on solutions together!

**PRESENTER:** Pam Wiener, PhD, Director, Guardianship and Care Management, Alpert Jewish Family Service, West Palm Beach, FL

## Harnessing the Power of Technology: Artificial Intelligence



### *Discovery 44*

We already know that innovations in AI can significantly enhance wellbeing for seniors if applied correctly. While there are barriers to adoption and risks, the transformative potential of AI cannot be overstated. This session offers a comprehensive view of how technology can be harnessed responsibly to improve the lives of older adults. Darryl Greer will provide valuable insights into the current state of Age Tech and offer actionable strategies for technology giants to overcome barriers and ensure that technological advancements genuinely serve the needs of our aging society.

**PRESENTER:** Darryl Greer, Regional Program Manager, OATS/ Senior Planet from AARP, New York, NY

## Fueling Healthy Aging with Medically Tailored Meals and the Longevity Diet

### *Columbia 36*

As the U.S. population ages, the demand for personalized nutrition solutions is rising. This session explores how Medically Tailored Meals (MTMs), guided by the science within the Longevity Diet, can improve clinical outcomes and quality of life for older adults. Grounded in decades of research, the Longevity Diet emphasizes nutrient-dense meals that reduce inflammation and support metabolic and cognitive health. When delivered as MTMs, these meals provide scalable, high-impact solutions for individuals managing chronic conditions like diabetes and heart disease. Attendees will learn how food-as-medicine strategies like MTMs are being used to reduce hospitalizations, enhance healthspan, and lower healthcare costs across Medicaid and Medicare Advantage populations.

**PRESENTER:** Holly Spinks, COO, Nutrition for Longevity, Randolph, NJ

## Falls, Funding, and the Future: Enhancing Home Safety and Accessibility in Florida

### *Discovery 43*

Falls are the leading cause of injury among older adults, yet many of these incidents are preventable with proper home modifications and safety interventions. This session will explore the growing importance of fall prevention and the funding available through Florida's state government programs, agencies, and insurance providers. Experts from a long-term care plan, a fall prevention company, and the Florida PACE Providers Association will share insights on available resources, best practices, and policy advancements. Attendees will learn how to navigate funding opportunities, advocate for home safety improvements, and implement strategies that support aging in place. This session is essential for professionals working with older adults, caregivers, and policymakers aiming to reduce fall risks and healthcare costs.

**PRESENTERS:** Alex Modric, Owner, Phoenix Pro Management, Inc, West Palm Beach FL; Grace Sub Laban, Independent Living Systems, Miami, FL; Matt Hudson, Executive Director, Florida PACE Provider Association, Tallahassee, FL; Charlotte Mather-Taylor, CEO, Area Agency on Aging of Broward, Sunrise, FL; Tim Conroy, VP Advocacy and Growth, Jukebox Health, Roswell, GA and Randy Marowitz, Regional Director, LifeStation, Union NJ

**Caring for Caregivers  
Discovery 46**

First, we will quickly review caregiver burnout to establish the need for caregiver services. Next, we will review our new program that will offer service navigation and counseling services to caregivers; we will also discuss other services available (like support groups) and why those services are needed. Lastly, we will discuss our own caregiver support groups and the outcomes we have tracked.

**PRESENTERS:** Evan Farrar, Caregiver Resource Manager, Senior Friendship Centers, Sarasota, FL; Joni Ricker, Director of Adult Day Services, Senior Friendship Centers, Sarasota, FL and Michael Cochrane, Support Group Facilitator, Senior Friendship Centers, Sarasota, FL

**ROOM AMBASSADOR:** Amanda Hinz, VP of Contracted Programs, Senior Friendship Centers, Sarasota, FL



**Ripple Effects: Small-Scale  
Innovations Making Big Waves for  
Age-Friendly Florida  
Columbia 37**



Join us for a deep dive into how quick, low-cost initiatives like AARP's Community Challenge Grants are enhancing Florida's Communities to be even better places for all ages. This session spotlights the AARP Community Challenge Grants and other local models that may be small in scope—but punch far above their weight in impact. From sidewalk improvements that improve safety and accessibility to pop-up placemaking that fosters intergenerational connection, we'll explore how these quick-action initiatives ignite lasting change. Whether you're a policymaker, advocate, or curious resident, this conversation will energize your thinking on how grassroots efforts can ripple outward to shape the future of age-friendly living.

**PRESENTER:** Laura Streed, Director of Outreach and Engagement, AARP Florida, St. Petersburg, FL



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12:15 PM - 2:00 PM

Plaza International H-K

FPL/FCOA Quality Senior Living Awards & Luncheon

Loretta Woodward Veney is a certified LEGO Serious Play facilitator and author of *Being My Mom's Mom*, *Refreshment for the Caregiver's Spirit*, and *Colors Flowing from My Mind*. In 2023, Loretta received a Maude Award. This award is given to individuals using innovative methods for engaging with those with dementia. Loretta was a fierce advocate for her mother who was diagnosed with dementia and passed away in 2022. Loretta continues their legacy of joy and hope in spite of dementia.

**Presiding:** Erin McLeod, CEO, Senior Friendship Centers, FCOA President-Elect

**Presentation of the 2025 Quality Senior Living Awards:**

Francine Freitas, Senior Communications Strategist for Customer Service Communications, Florida Power & Light

**Introduction of Speaker:** Josefina Carbonell, Chief Advocacy Officer, Independent Living Systems

**Luncheon Speaker:** Loretta Veney, LEGO Brick Memories

**Closing Remarks:** Erin McLeod



Loretta Veney

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**Senior Vision Media Award**

Council on Aging of West Florida and Appleyard Duncan McCall, Pensacola, FL  
Nominated by: Emily Echevarria, Council on Aging of West Florida



Alesia Macklin

Council on Aging of West Florida (COAWF) worked with Appleyard Duncan McCall to create a deeply impactful video highlighting two AmeriCorps Seniors volunteer programs. These volunteer programs engage active adults aged 55 and over who want to share their time, passion and talents serving vulnerable communities in one of two programs: Senior Companions or Foster Grandparents. Senior Companions assist older adults in activities that help them continue to live independently and offer respite to their caregivers. Foster Grandparent volunteers serve in schools and child development centers mentoring at-risk youth, giving children extra one-on-one attention and bolstering teachers' efforts. The purpose of the film project was to illustrate the impact of these programs through storytelling, following a volunteer from each of the two programs in their service role and sharing in their own words the benefits of service not only to those they serve but for the volunteers themselves.



Emily Echevarria

**Public Service Award**

Bianca Maria Ceballos, Miami, FL  
Nominated by: Christine DiDia, Miami, FL



Bianca Maria Ceballos

Bianca Maria Ceballos is the Founder and Film Producer of South Florida Golden Lights, a film project that aims to share the wisdom of older adults with younger generations. The mission of South Florida Golden Lights is to foster intergenerational communication and inspire youth to learn from older adults who have greatly contributed to society. The project features interviews of prominent and ordinary individuals, covering their life stories, professional accomplishments, and their encouragement to younger generations through words of wisdom. Bianca M. Ceballos is a Junior (Class of 2026) at American Heritage High School in Broward County, Florida. South Florida Golden Lights is her passion, and she is committed to growing the project into a lasting repository of inspiring interviews for all Floridians to enjoy.

**Service to Seniors by an Organization Award**

Nature Coast Community Band, Lecanto, FL  
Nominated by: Kristine Kopperud, Lecanto, FL



Kathy Thompson

Nature Coast Community Band was founded in 2009 and is located on Florida’s West Coast, drawing more than 80 high-caliber, volunteer musicians from six counties. NCCB’s musicians—and its volunteer board—range in age from 14-94, with more than three-quarters being 55 and older. More than 1,800 audience patrons, largely seniors, attend NCCB’s performances each concert weekend (two concerts, in two different locations). Performance venues are carefully selected for their accessibility to attendees with handicaps and ability to make accommodations for patrons with disabilities. NCCB also coordinates with area assisted living, senior centers, and public transportation to ensure driving-limited patrons can ride shuttles to and from performances. NCCB has no paid staff and relies entirely on donations by sustaining “Friends” of the organization and by concert attendees.

**Public Service Award**

Francina White, Miami, FL  
Nominated by: Elsy Gonzalez, MS, Independent Living Systems, Miami, FL



Francina White

Francina White has been an extraordinary volunteer at Ward Tower Senior Center for an impressive 17 years. As a resident of the Ward Tower buildings herself, Francina’s journey with the center began when she expressed a desire to give back to the community she calls home. Francina plays a critical role in the daily operations of the congregate meal program, which serves as both a nutritional lifeline and a community gathering space for older adults. Francina White is more than a volunteer—she is the heartbeat of the Ward Tower Senior Center. Her 17 years of dedicated service represent a legacy of love, compassion, and community-building that has changed countless lives.

### Public Service Award

Ava Weissman, Plantation, FL

Nominated by: Blanca Ceballos, United Homecare, Miami, FL



Ava Weissman is a rising senior at American Heritage Schools in Plantation, Florida. A passionate leader in business, public service, and global affairs. As Founder and President of Pickleball 4 A Purpose, she has raised over \$30,000 for various senior and youth organizations, launched 14 chapters across 9 states, and mobilized over 200 teen volunteers to foster intergenerational connection. For this work, she received the 2025 Presidential Volunteer Service Gold Medal. She is a top-ranked DECA competitor, placing 4th internationally in 2025 and earning multiple state awards. Her advocacy work includes serving as Youth Director of Fundraising for March For Our Lives Parkland, raising \$20,000 and gaining national media attention. Ava is committed to creating sustainable impact through business, civic leadership, and community engagement.

TUESDAY

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## 2:15 PM - 3:15 PM Concurrent Workshops



### LEGO Brick Memories - LEGO Serious Play *Blue Spring*

This session will discuss using LEGO bricks to build new strategies for delivering the best possible caregiver experiences for the individuals receiving care. Did you leave the QSLA Luncheon with questions about how you can use LEGO for building memories? Here is your opportunity to connect with Ms. Veney!

**PRESENTERS:** Loretta Veney, LEGO Brick Memories, Clinton, MD  
**ROOM AMBASSADOR:** Kris Lopez



## Telling the Story of Care: Leveraging Communication to Build and Enhance Senior and Aging Services Columbia 36

“No margin, no mission”. This powerful reminder speaks directly to the reality facing today’s aging and senior services providers: without financial stability even the most compassionate, purpose-driven organization cannot fulfill their purpose. As threats to aging-related funding grow and the future becomes increasingly uncertain, it is mission-critical for the leadership of aging-services providers to embrace innovative, strategic approaches to enhance census, generate new revenue, and build long-term sustainability. This session explores how intentional and effective communication, and the power of storytelling can elevate visibility, attract new clients, and reinforce the unique value of nonprofit aging services over for-profit competitors. Based on years of in-the-trenches experience, the presenter shares proven techniques, tactics, and examples for successfully growing census, shifting mindsets, and telling compelling stories. Participants will leave with actionable strategies and messaging tactics to assist aging services leaders in navigating today’s challenging financial environment and in serving their mission.

**PRESENTER:** Morgan Lyle, Founder & CEO, Strategic Marketing Innovations, Ocala, FL

## Health Buddies Columbia 37

Loneliness impacts more than mental health—it has devastating physical health consequences, especially for isolated seniors with chronic conditions. Health Buddies is a simple solution with TRIPLE THE IMPACT: transforming senior well-being, reducing hospital readmissions, and shaping the next generation of healthcare professionals. Our intergenerational model pairs compassionate, trained college students who are studying in health-related fields with seniors in need of support. Through weekly phone calls, Health Buddies volunteers provide social connection, encouragement, and tips for adopting a healthier lifestyle. Come learn how social connection is a game-changer in senior health!

**PRESENTER:** Aria Garling, Health Buddies Manager, Seniors in Service of Tampa Bay, Inc., Tampa, FL

## Managing Stress While Aging: Practical Techniques for Well-Being Winterpark 50



This presentation will focus on stress reduction techniques specifically tailored for the aging population, with an emphasis on understanding how the central nervous system responds to stress. We will explore the physiological differences between the fight or flight response and a relaxed, comfortable state. By understanding these processes, attendees will gain insight into how stress affects older adults both mentally and physically. We then introduce practical techniques for managing stress, including meditation, deep breathing, and cognitive-behavioral strategies. Emphasis will be placed on the effectiveness of these techniques in fostering relaxation and reducing anxiety in older adults. Strategies will be discussed within the context of aging, considering physical and cognitive changes that may impact stress response. Attendees will leave with actionable tools they can incorporate into their professional practice to support the mental and emotional well-being of older adults.

**PRESENTERS:** Beth Davalos, LCSW-S, Clinical Director, Sunshine Senior Counseling, Maitland FL and Tara Rose, PhD, Instructor of Research Neurology, Keck School of Medicine, University of Southern California, Los Angeles, CA

## How To Work With Community Partners Discovery 44

The presentation will showcase detailed case studies that highlight how different partners—such as healthcare providers, social workers, and community organizations—collaborate to meet the holistic needs of clients.

**PRESENTERS:** Linda Flores, Co-Founder and COO, Senior Advocacy Group, Naples, FL and Ashley DeVries -Healthcare Surrogate, Social Worker, Senior Advocacy Group, Naples, FL

## Maximizing Retirement Security: Social Security’s Role in Financial Planning Discovery 47



This session is designed to inform professionals working with older adults about the critical role Social Security plays in retirement planning. It will provide insights into eligibility rules, benefit optimization strategies, and financial stability techniques, empowering attendees to support informed retirement decisions. Participants will gain the expertise needed to help maximize Social Security benefits for a more secure future.

**PRESENTER:** Fred Bates, AARP Volunteer  
**ROOM AMBASSADOR:** Laura Streed, Senior Associate State Director of Advocacy and Livable Communities, AARP Florida, St. Petersburg, FL

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**AI for Aging Services: Transforming Senior-Focused Organizations Through AI-Powered Workflow and Innovation**



**Discovery 43**

Senior-focused organizations are increasingly turning to AI-powered tools like ChatGPT and Apo AI to improve workflow efficiency, client engagement, and innovation. This session will explore how artificial intelligence can help organizations streamline administrative tasks, automate communications, and enhance program delivery for aging populations. Attendees will gain insights into real-world applications of AI in aging services, including content creation, data management, and personalized support for seniors and caregivers. A live demonstration will showcase how AI can assist with day-to-day operations and service optimization. Experts will discuss ethical considerations, best practices, and strategies for integrating AI into senior-focused programs. Participants will leave with actionable knowledge on how to leverage AI for efficiency, cost savings, and improved service delivery in their organizations.

**PRESENTER:** Stefano Selorio, CEO & Founder, Carevocacy, Miramar, FL

**3:15 PM - 4:15 PM** *Plaza International D-G*  
**Exhibit Hall Closing Reception**

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4:15 PM – 5:15 PM

Concurrent Workshops

### Navigating the Complexities of Aging: Strategies for Cognitive Well-Being



**Winterpark 50**  
This session examines the latest insights into the neuroscience of aging, highlighting how targeted lifestyle choices can influence cognitive health. Participants will learn practical strategies—such as exercise, nutrition, and mental stimulation—that bolster brain function while reducing risk factors. By exploring emerging research on neural plasticity, attendees will discover how small yet consistent changes can have long-lasting benefits. The presentation will also address common barriers to forming healthy habits and offer proven tactics for building sustainable routines. Ultimately, this session empowers individuals and caregivers to integrate evidence-based practices into daily life, supporting both long-term cognitive vitality and overall well-being.

**PRESENTERS:** Joshua J. Freitas, PhD, Chief Research Officer, National Institute for Dementia Education / CERTUS Institute, Orlando, FL and Theda Heiserman, CERTUS Institute, Orlando, FL

### Thriving or Just Surviving? Building the Senior Center of the Future with Smart Leadership & Data-Driven Strategy



**Discovery 46**  
Do you know your data? Regardless of how you collect it, data is tremendously important. As we prepare for the future of aging services, it is essential for senior centers to navigate the changing terrain of data management. As the senior population grows and the demand for senior services becomes more critical to our nation, it is imperative to secure funding and develop effective programs. Our thought-provoking, fun and interactive discussion will reveal insights from data collected across our broad network of over 2,100 senior serving organizations. This data powers operational success and fuels strategic planning for the future. We will explore a variety of subjects such as Market Reach, Utilization of Location Data, What's in A Name, the Importance of Logos, Distinguishing Between Popular and Unpopular Programs in Senior Centers, and identifying the value of your time.

**PRESENTER:** Michael Lippert, Sales Manager - Central US, MySeniorCenter, Lexington, KY

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### Beyond the Capitol: The 2025 Legislative Scoop!

**Blue Spring**

Come get the real scoop! Join AARP Florida for an interactive and engaging recap of the 2025 Legislative Session! Dive into the key decisions made in Tallahassee and discover how they impact you and your community. From health care and long-term care to utilities and consumer protections, we'll break down the most pressing legislative, budgetary, and policy issues affecting Floridians 50+. Learn how AARP's advocacy efforts are fighting for fair utility rates, stronger consumer protections, and better policies for older adults.

**PRESENTERS:** Chante` Jones, Associate State Director of Advocacy, AARP Florida, St. Petersburg, FL and Laura Streed, Senior Associate State Director of Advocacy and Livable Communities, AARP Florida, St. Petersburg, FL



TUESDAY

**Is Your Ankle Bone Connected to Your Head Bone?**  
*Winterpark 49*

Did you know your ankle bone is connected to your head bone through neurological connections? These connections assist our body's ability to remain mobile, stable and balanced. This brain-activating and body energizing interactive session will have you laughing and moving (in your chair) in new ways to spark your creativity, imagination and adventurous spirit.

**PRESENTERS:** Marghi McClearn, Ageless Grace Brain Health Educator & Trainer, Ageless Grace, LLC, Tallahassee, FL; and Karen Haseley, CTRS, Ageless Grace Brain Health Educator & Trainer, Ageless Grace, LLC, Columbia, MD

**Opening the Door to Advance Care Planning and Dignity**  
*Discovery 43*



The best way to help people plan ahead of a serious illness is to keep it simple and meaningful. This session will provide practical examples and tools for beginning advance care planning conversations with the people you serve. It will include naming a healthcare agent, providing guidance about life-support treatment preferences, and focusing on what dignified care looks like for each person. It will be useful for all people involved in aging services, including those who work primarily in administration and direct care or services.

**PRESENTER:** Paul Malley, President, Five Wishes, Tallahassee, FL

**Empowering Older Adults Through AI-Driven Digital Literacy: A Partnership Between SoFIA and Apo AI**  
*Columbia 37*



Older adults face significant challenges in navigating digital health tools such as telehealth services, patient portals, and online safety resources. To bridge this digital divide, the South Florida Institute on Aging (SoFIA) partnered with Carevocy's Apo AI, an AI-powered chatbot designed to provide real-time, personalized digital health literacy support. This session will explore how AI-driven education has empowered over 1,000 seniors through SoFIA's programs, increasing digital confidence and healthcare access. Attendees will gain insights into AI-assisted training models, real-world data on senior adoption, and best practices for scaling digital literacy programs. A live demonstration of Apo AI will showcase its interactive features and benefits for older adults. The session will conclude with a panel discussion and Q&A, providing actionable strategies for organizations, caregivers, and healthcare providers to implement AI-driven solutions in their own communities.

**PRESENTER:** Stefano Selorio, CEO & Founder, Carevocy, Miramar, FL

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Wednesday, August 6, 2025

8:00 AM - 8:30 AM Refreshment Break Plaza International Foyer

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2024 - 2025 Board of Trustees

WEDNESDAY

Seniors, Volunteerism and the Meaning of Life
General Sessions Part I
Break Out Sessions
General Session Part II & Closing Brunch



8:30 AM - 9:45 PM General Session Part I Plaza International H-K

Florida's Aging Network may be overlooking a tremendous resource that becomes even more valuable as economic and personnel challenges impact our ability to continue to deliver quality services. The three sessions on Wednesday morning address non-profit governance and voluntarism. National assessments indicate Florida is ranked behind most states in our participation of senior volunteers. Jan Masaoka, with extensive professional experience in volunteerism, offers a fascinating description the current status of volunteerism in the first session, followed by three breakout governance sessions, after which we conclude with a brunch and Jan offering us concrete approaches for expanding our success with volunteers going forward.



Jan Masaoka

Presiding: Jeff Johnson, State Director, AARP Florida, FCOA President
Introduction of the Speaker: Bob Harnach, CEO Florida Care Collaborative
Plenary Speaker: Jan Masaoka
Remarks & Ajourn to workshops: Jeff Johnson





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**10:00 AM – 11:00 AM**

**Concurrent Workshops**

### The Power of Giving Service: Volunteers as Leaders of Change

#### Plaza Ballroom D

Step into the shoes of volunteers who not only serve, but lead. This session explores the transformative role of volunteers as community leaders who organize, inspire, and drive collective action. Through firsthand stories and real-life examples, you'll hear directly from volunteer leaders about what it means to rally a cause, build trust, and turn vision into reality. Leave with encouraging, real-life examples and key insights to facilitate volunteer leadership development in your area.

**PRESENTERS:** Jovita Woodrich, Associate State Director of Outreach and Engagement, AARP Florida and Ken Thomas, State President, AARP Florida



**Beyond the Whistle: Turning Passion into Partnership - Leading Volunteers Who Serve by Choice**  
**Plaza Ballroom E**



Leading volunteers driven by passion highlights the importance of recognizing the unique motivations of volunteers, who aren't primarily driven by monetary compensation, but rather by personal choice and a desire to contribute to something they believe in. Leaders must learn to effectively harness this passion and guide these individuals. As the title suggests, shifting approach, and moving away from a hierarchical, "whistle-blowing" style of leadership toward a more collaborative and empowering "partnership" model, involves fostering meaningful relationships with volunteers, valuing their contributions, and allowing them to take ownership and lead. Empowering volunteers to take initiative and grow within the organization.

**PRESENTER:** David M. Walker, EdD, MDiv, The Leadership Referee, St. Cloud, FL

**Retention Begins at Recruitment - Why Storytelling Matters**



**Plaza Ballroom F**

Storytelling in recruitment is the practice of using compelling narratives to attract, engage, and persuade people to volunteer with the organization. Rather than simply listing job descriptions and requirements, it brings the company brand, culture, and work/assignment experiences to life. This approach humanizes the process and makes volunteer opportunities more relatable and memorable. Effective storytelling encourages candidates to apply by offering insight into what it is like to work/volunteer time at a agency. It also plays a key role in employer branding and loyalty, helping agencies stand out in a competitive recruitment market.

**PRESENTER:** Jacob Winge, Public Affairs Specialist, TLC Marketing & Creative Services, Bonita Beach, FL



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WEDNESDAY

11:00 AM - 12:30 PM

Plaza International H-K

General Session II & Closing Brunch



Jan Masaoka will use the Closing portion of the session to offer concrete approaches for expanding success with volunteers going forward.



Jan Masaoka

**Presiding:** Jeff Johnson, State Director, AARP Florida, FCOA President 2024 - 2025

**Introduction of the Speaker:** Bob Harnach, CEO Florida Care Collaborative

**Plenary Speaker:** Jan Masaoka

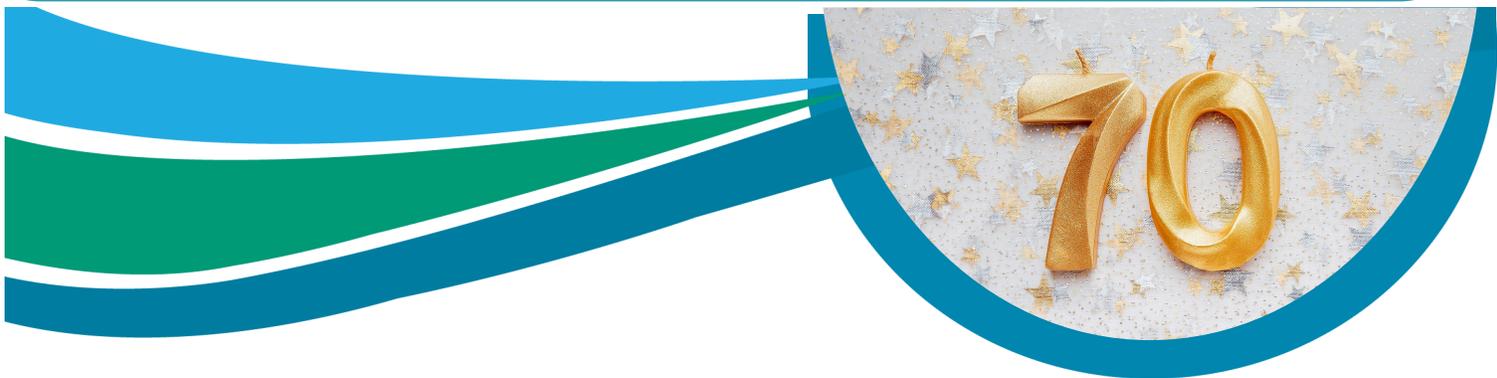
**Remarks & Farewell Message:** Jeff Johnson

**Remarks & Vision for 2025-2026:** Erin McLeod, CEO, Senior Friendship Centers, President 2025- 2026

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**Conference Center Exhibit Hall - Plaza International D-G**

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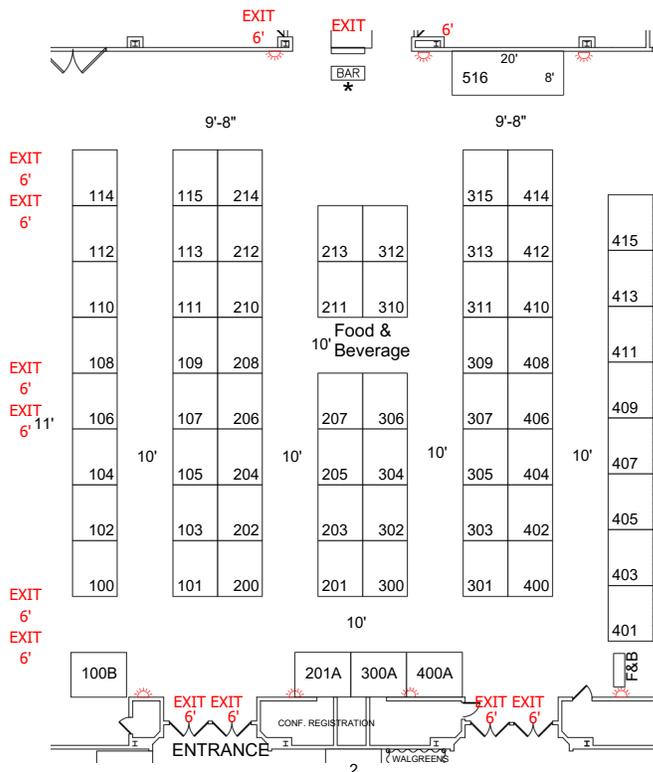
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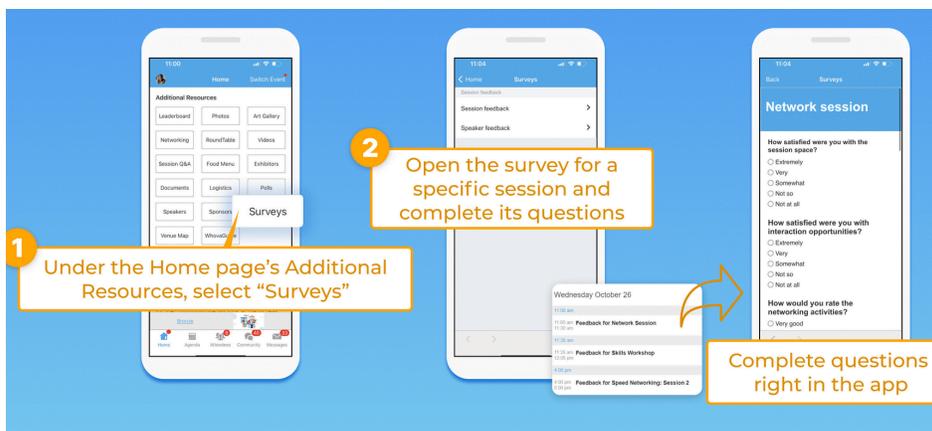
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1 Under the Home page's Additional Resources, select "Surveys"

2 Open the survey for a specific session and complete its questions

Complete questions right in the app

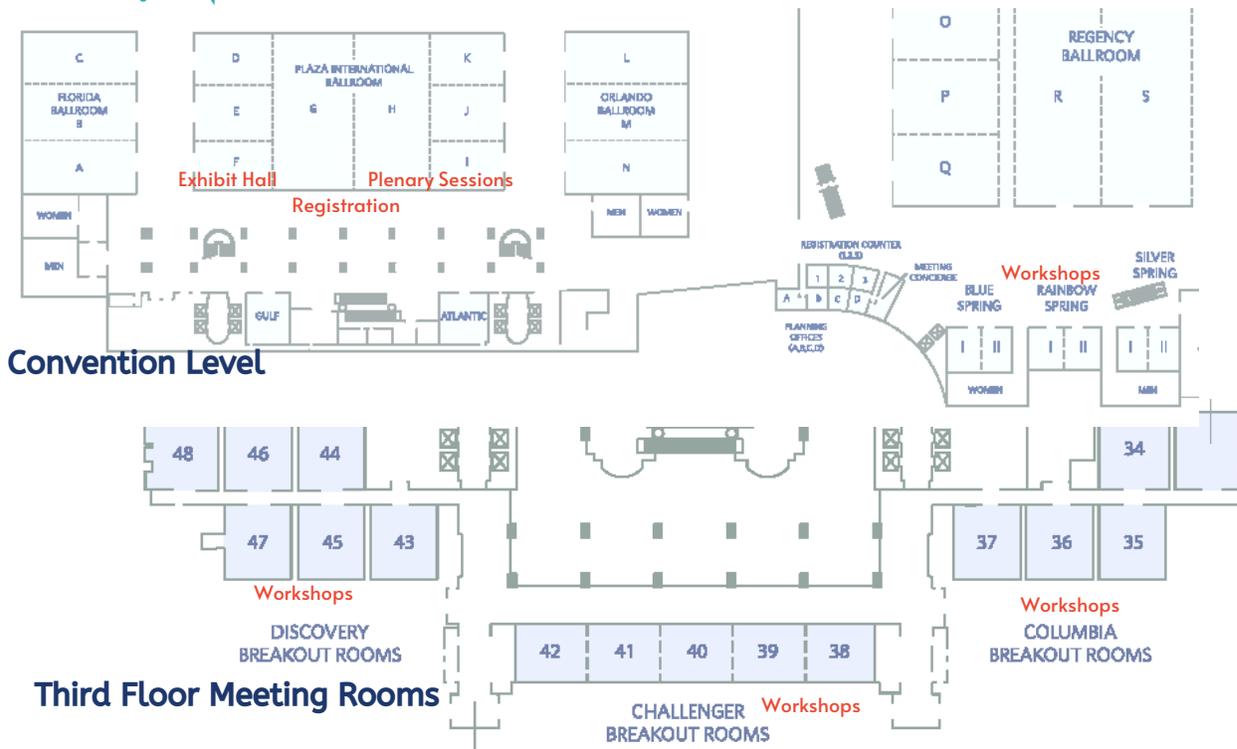
Please visit the WHOVA conference app to complete session feedback and the final conference evaluation.

You can log in from your browser at [whova.com](http://whova.com).

1. Session feedback is on the WHOVA Home page under Additional Resources the "Surveys".
2. You can only access feedback forms after a session has started.
3. Session feedback will also show during the live session it is assigned to.



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