

First of Its Kind “Leadership Exchange on Ageism” Receives National Funding from NextFifty Initiative

Brunswick, Maine August 3, 2022 — Last fall, the [Maine Council on Aging](#) (MCOA) launched the [Leadership Exchange on Aging](#), the first leadership skill-building course focused on ageism in the nation. The third cohort of leaders graduated from the program in early June, making 60 Maine and New Hampshire leaders who have graduated from the program. The program has been garnering national attention and just received funding from [NextFifty Initiative](#), a Colorado-based foundation that supports efforts to improve the lives of older adults and their caregivers. This funding will allow the MCOA to host 40 additional leaders in the program, evaluate program effectiveness, and build a strategy to replicate the program in other states.

“We can build a more equitable and inclusive Maine with healthier people and communities, and a stronger economy by eliminating age-bias and promoting an age-positive culture,” said Jess Maurer, Executive Director of the Maine Council on Aging. “This investment from NextFifty Initiative will help fuel the Leadership Exchange on Ageism, an innovative participatory and reflective peer-learning leadership experience, not only for 40 more Maine leaders, but for others around the country.”

In response to the extreme ageist rhetoric heard throughout the pandemic, in 2021 the MCOA launched the [Power in Aging Project](#), the umbrella project that hosts the Leadership Exchange on Ageism. This project recognizes that ageism is holding us back from living our best lives long into old age and is a significant barrier to older people being seen as valuable contributors to a healthy economy and society, leading to less support for systems changes needed to support healthy aging. Maurer said, “The Leadership Exchange on Ageism helps Maine leaders understand their own age-bias, how age-bias operates at every level, and offers tools to help create a more age-positive culture in our communities, institutions and systems.”

“We’re grateful for the work that the Maine Council on Aging is doing to improve quality of life for people aged 50 and older,” said Diana McFail, president and CEO of NextFifty Initiative. “Older adults are vital to building and maintaining strong and healthy communities. We’re proud to support this and other efforts to help people age with dignity and purpose.”

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About Maine Council on Aging

The Maine Council on Aging is celebrating its 10th year working to create a Maine where we can all live healthy, engaged, and secure lives as we age in our homes and communities. We’ve woven together a broad, multi-disciplinary network of more than 130 organizations, businesses, municipalities, and older people that defies typical social and political constructs and shares the common goal of building an age-positive culture in Maine. To learn more, visit www.mainecouncilonaging.org.

About NextFifty Initiative

NextFifty Initiative is a Colorado-based, private foundation supporting efforts to improve the lives of older adults and their caregivers. The foundation works with community leaders, experts in the field of aging, and front-line professionals to support programs and projects that positively impact aging and longevity. They focus on education, sharing best practices, and supporting innovation that will transform aging for generations to come. To learn more, visit www.Next50Initiative.org.