



Breaking the Limits *Cultivating a Vision of Equity in Aging*

2022 Speaker Biographies

Keynote Speakers

Dr. Tracey Gendron, Chair, Gerontology, Executive Director, Virginia Center on Aging



Dr. Tracey Gendron serves as Chair for the Virginia Commonwealth University Department of Gerontology, as Director for the Virginia Center on Aging and is the author of the book *Ageism Unmasked: Exploring Age Bias and How to End It*. With over 25 years of experience as a grant-funded researcher and nationally recognized speaker, Tracey is dedicated to raising awareness and ending ageism through education. Tracey has a Master's degree in Gerontology, a Master's degree in Psychology, and a Ph.D. in Developmental Psychology.

Dr. Gendron has dedicated her career to changing the landscape develop an age-inclusive climate that facilitates growth and engagement in elderhood. Her personal and professional goal is to raise awareness of elderhood as the solution to the deeply embedded ageism pervasive within all cultures, settings, and individuals.

Dr. Leslie Hill, Professor Emerita of Politics, Bates College



As a member of the Bates College faculty, Leslie taught courses examining gender politics, African Studies, as well as the politics of race in U.S. law and policy. She helped found the Gender and Sexuality Studies as well as African American (now Africana) Studies Programs before serving as Special Assistant to the President for Diversity and Inclusion. Leslie retired from teaching but continued work as Faculty Fellow at the Harvard Center for Community Partnerships from 2020-22, enriching Bates instructors' knowledge of racial inequities and social justice advocacy in Maine, thus helping them to prepare students to think critically with, learn from, and work collaboratively with community partners to address white supremacy and advance racial justice.

Most recently, she joined the third cohort of participants in Maine Council on Aging's Leadership Exchange on Aging.

Special Guest Speakers

Mary Bonauto, Esq., Civil Rights Project Director, GLAD

Mary L. Bonauto has served as the Civil Rights Project Director at GLAD since 1990 and has litigated and done policy work in every New England state. She has litigated in the state and federal courts of New England on many types of discrimination issues, including addressing anti-LGBTQ discrimination as discrimination based on sex, establishing parentage protections, strengthening student rights, free speech, and religious liberty, relationship recognition, and marriage defense. In 2015 she successfully argued before the US Supreme Court in the historic case *Obergefell v.*

Hodges, which established the freedom to marry for same-sex couples nationwide. She is Lecturer on Law at Harvard Law School. Mary graduated from Hamilton College and Northeastern University School of Law.

Bennett Klein, Esq., Senior Attorney & AIDS Law Project Director, GLAD

Ben Klein is a Senior Attorney and has been the AIDS Law Project Director at GLAD since 1994. Ben has litigated precedent setting cases in all three of GLAD's mission areas. Ben's HIV litigation has challenged the profound and enduring stigma and discrimination faced by people with HIV. He was lead counsel in *Bragdon v. Abbott*, a 1998 U.S. Supreme Court decision that established nationwide protection against

discrimination under the Americans with Disabilities Act for all people with HIV. Ben is a 1982 graduate of Oberlin College and a 1987 graduate of Boston University School of Law.

James Moorhead, Aging Services Manager, Maine DHHS, OADS

James Moorhead, Jr., is the Aging Services Manager for the Maine Department of Health and Human Services Office of Aging and Disability Services. James oversees Older American Act funded services across Maine and serves as a subject matter expert in a variety of topics, including assistive technology and LGBT cultural humility. His previous role was with the Georgia Department of Human Services Division of Aging Services as an Aging Services Coordinator where he managed OAA funded In-Home Services in Georgia and served as a system administrator for non-Medicaid HCBS services in the WellSky Framework environment. James received his M.A. in Gerontology and B.A. in Sociology from Georgia State University.

Lauren Stevens, Injury & Violence Prevention Division Manager, Wabanaki Public Health and Wellness

Lauren Stevens (She/Her) is a citizen of the Passamaquoddy Tribe at Motahkomikuk and is the Culture, Connection, and Support Division Director of Wabanaki Public Health and Wellness. This division is home to programs focused on prevention of intentional and unintentional harm through suicide prevention, mental health promotion, elder support, and community response. The Division of Culture, Connection, and Support places emphasis on healthy Wabanaki relationship practices and caring for one another on the community level through culturally competent education strategies. Lauren enjoys spending time with her family and singing when not doing her great work for Wabanaki Public Health and Wellness.

Cyril Francis, Culture and Language Advisor, Wabanaki Public Health and Wellness

My name is Cyrilla (Cyril) M. Francis. I am a citizen of the Passamaquoddy Tribe at Sipayik, Maine, a mother of three and a grandmother of three. I am employed by Wabanaki Public Health and Wellness (WPHW) as the Culture and Language Advisor. This organization provides services to all five of the tribal territories in Maine. For over 10 years, I was, intermittently a chairperson and board member in my community for our elementary school through Maine Indian Education. These years, in addition to my personal years of experience in education, have given me the key to freedom to being who I am today. In 1995, I graduated from the University of Maine in Machias with a Bachelor of Arts degree in Behavioral Science and a master's degree from the School of Social Work at University of Maine Orono. I enjoy spending time with my grandchildren, making quilts, gardening, scrapbooking and reading.

Newell Lewey, MS, Culture and Education Division Manager, Wabanaki Public Health and Wellness

Newell Lewey is a citizen of the Passamaquoddy Tribe and serves as the Culture and Education Division Manager at Wabanaki Public Health. In this capacity, Newell teaches Passamaquoddy language and culture and collaborates with other tribes to discuss best practices for language learning and teaching. Prior to this role, Newell taught an introductory Passamaquoddy language

and culture course for 2 semesters at the University of Maine in Machias and was a fluent language comprehender at the Passamaquoddy Language Immersion Pre-School. He has served Wabanaki communities for over 20 years, with a diverse background in computer systems management, community and health planning, grant writing and budgeting, linguistics, and two terms on tribal council for the Passamaquoddy Tribe at Sipayik. Integrating cultural teachings with wellness and fitness, he is dedicated to supporting Indigenous peoples in building their relationships with wellness. Newell has mentored Native youth participating in the North American Indigenous Games, organized and participated in 10 sacred runs to unite Wabanaki people, and volunteered at the Maine Correctional Institution to support Native Americans in recovery. Newell has been in recovery and following Passamaquoddy traditional ways for over 30 years. Newell holds an M.S. in Linguistics from MIT with a focus on Indigenous languages.

Amy Tomah, Elder Service Coordinator, Wabanaki Public Health and Wellness

Amy Tomah, (She/Her) is a citizen of the Passamaquoddy Tribe at Motahkomikuk and Maliseet Tribe of Tobique First Nation. She is the Elder Service Coordinator for Wabanaki Public Health and Wellness working with the 5 tribal territories offering support to all Tribal Elders. Amy enjoys learning and listening to the elders of the communities. She has 4 children and loves spending time with her family as much as she can

Additional Speakers/Panelists

Franklin Brooks, Ph.D., LCSW, Community Member; former SAGE Maine board member

Micaela Cassily, Volunteer Coordinator MaineTransNet

Gia Drew, Executive Director, EqualityMaine

Daryl Fort, Leadership and Organizational Development Consultant

Elizabeth Gattine, Senior Policy Associate, Catherine Cutler Institute, University of Southern Maine

Donald Harden, Maine Council on Aging, Power in Aging Project Manager, Board Member

Elizabeth Hart, MD, HMDC, Director Medical Services/Hospice Medical Director, Androscoggin Home Healthcare + Hospice, Exclusive Keynote Sponsor

Gabe Martinez, Director, FQHC Champion & Community Engagement, UnitedHealthcare, Exclusive Awards Sponsor

Jess Maurer, Executive Director, Maine Council on Aging

Kim Moody, Executive Director, Disability Rights Maine

Claudette Ndayininahaze, Executive Director, In Her Presence Ruby Parker, Community Member

Joy Barresi Saucier, Executive Director, Aroostook Agency on Aging

Betsy Sawyer-Manter, President & CEO, SeniorsPlus

Fran Seeley, AmeriCorps Senior Foster Grandparent, MCOA Community Member

Destie Hohman Sprague, Executive Director, Maine Women's Lobby

Sara Squires, Public Policy Director, Disability Rights Maine

Carl Toney, Health Care Planning Consultant/Director-at-Large, Board of Directors, Southern Maine Agency on Aging

Shirl Weaver, M.A. Ph.D., University of New England College of Osteopathic Medicine, Geriatrics Education Mentor Program Consultant