



Meet Our Speakers

Welcoming of the Day



Cyril Francis (she/her/hers)
Passamaquoddy, Elder and Culture Language Advisor
Wabanaki Public Health and Wellness

Cyril Francis is a highly respected tribal elder with a lifetime of varied work in the Passamaquoddy and Wabanaki tribal communities. In addition to her role as Division Director of Community Healing at Wabanaki Public Health and Wellness, she serves on the Tribal Council at Sipayik.



Lauren Stevens (she/her/hers)
Passamaquoddy, Division Director of Community Healing
Wabanaki Public Health and Wellness

Lauren Stevens is a proud Passamaquoddy woman from Indian Township. She is an instructor for Project Venture; an experiential adventure-based learning curriculum designed for Indigenous Youth. She is also trained in the ASIST curriculum, QPR, a Be Proud; Be Responsible facilitator, and is a certified Wilderness First Responder. When Lauren is not working within the communities she enjoys singing and spending time with her family.

Welcome + Opening Remarks



Jess Maurer (she/her/hers)
Executive Director
Maine Council on Aging

As the Executive Director of the Maine Council on Aging (MCOA), Jess Maurer leads a broad, multidisciplinary network of more than 135 organizations, businesses, municipalities, and community members working to ensure we can all live healthy, engaged, and secure lives as we age in our homes and community settings, including diverse older Mainers. She leads a dynamic team and an engaged board to initiate and support data-informed policy change efforts through direct advocacy with federal, state, and municipal leaders. Recent successes include increased pay for direct care workers and significantly increased eligibility for the Medicare Savings Program in Maine. She creates shared-learning opportunities for community, social service, policy, and healthcare leaders across Maine and Northern New England. She

collaborates with members and partners to convene processes and events geared toward action on issues related to ageism, equity related to all forms of bias, poverty, housing, transportation, food security, social inclusion, workforce, community development, and care across all settings. The MCOA has committed to ending ageism in Maine by 2032 through conversation, education, and action. Jess co-designed the first of its kind initiative called the Leadership Exchange on Ageism, a program that is helping Maine's leaders take action on ageism. A licensed Maine attorney, Jess worked for 17 years in the Maine Office of the Attorney General. As Executive Director for the Maine Association of Area Agencies on Aging, she co-founded the MCOA in 2012, and became its first Executive Director in 2018. She graduated from the University of Maine School of Law and the University of Massachusetts at Amherst.

Keynote Panel: Honoring the Gift of Longevity



Franklin Brooks, MSW, PhD, LCSW (he/him/his)

Clinical Social Worker and Retired Assistant Professor of Social Work

Frank Brooks has been active in social justice change efforts in Maine for several decades (longevity matters!), including legislative advocacy for sexual and gender minorities. This activism informed his teaching of social welfare policy and practice courses when he taught in both the USM Social Work program 1993-2003 and the UNE School of Social Work MSW program from 2004-2021. He developed and taught courses on social work practice with LGBTQIA individuals as well as gerontological social work practice. Frank retired from teaching in 2021. His clinical social work practice focused on human sexuality issues, especially sexual orientation, and gender identity. He continues to provide consultation part-time.

He is former chairperson of the National Association of Social Workers (NASW), Maine Chapter's Committee on Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender Advocacy. He served on the Council of Social Work Education's Council on Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity. He is a former member of the Board of Directors of SAGE Maine, and he served on the Maine legislature's Joint Standing Judiciary Committee's Family Law Advisory Commission (FLAC) from 2012-2022. He has served on boards of the Kids First Center, the ACLU of Maine, and Maine TRANSNET. He was a founding member of the Portland Area LGBT Parents Group. He lives in Portland with his husband Marvin Ellison and is the proud father of a son, Sam and his wife, Keisha, and is now a grandpa to two wonderful granddaughters Maya and Zoe.



Fran Seeley (she/her/hers)

*Senior Foster Grandparent Volunteer
AmeriCorps*

Fran Seeley has been an AmeriCorps Senior Foster Grandparent for 22 years. Her reach and impact as a volunteer are remarkable. She supports research and education on aging through the University of New England's Center for Excellence in Aging & Health and in the College of Osteopathic Medicine. During the COVID crisis, she attended dozens of online sessions in support of student learning and intergenerational exchange, always expressing something insightful and uplifting. She served as a panelist for a special program on isolation in aging. She has served as a Geriatrics Education Mentor (GEM) at the UNE College of Osteopathic Medicine's

Maine Geriatrics Conference and in 2019 she was the Attendee Forum keynote speaker providing valuable insights on aging. Fran was awarded the Maine Council on Aging's Trailblazing Advocate Award; recognizing sustained contributions of older people whose passion, actions, and advocacy have made Maine a better place for us all. She was honored for giving voice to the challenges of living a purposeful life on a low fixed income, and for her effective state house advocacy for increased benefits and property tax fairness for low-income older Mainers. Through Fran's spirited dialogue and sharing her passionate self, she is changing aging in Maine!



Nancy Peckenham (she/her/hers)

Editor & Publisher

Crow's Feet: Life As We Age

Nancy Peckenham is the founder of *Crow's Feet: Life As We Age*, a publication on Medium and a podcast. She created *Crow's Feet* after moving to Maine to care for her 100-year-old mother who lived in an assisted living residence. Nancy wrote about her mother and the other residents who were defying stereotypes of being older and then started a publication to include more views on a range of issues, including how ageism affects them, how to work with parents or partners who show signs of dementia and how to accept your own aging process. Today, four years after its founding, *Crow's Feet* has published thousands of essays by 500 different authors and launched a podcast run by the *Crow's Feet* writers who want to get the word out that aging can be embraced. It releases new episodes of the podcast every other Wednesday. Like many of her cohorts at *Crow's Feet: Life As We Age*, Nancy applies many of the skills she learned over her lifetime to this project. She is a former CNN executive producer, documentary filmmaker, and local news reporter who enjoys shaking up old ideas.



Shirl Weaver, MT (ASCP), MA, PhD (she/her/hers)

Board Member

No Place Like Home

Shirl Weaver has a long history of involvement in health professions education, both in military and civilian capacities. She was the founding director of the Maine AHEC System and the Maine Geriatric Education Center at the University of New England College of Osteopathic Medicine, and Associate Director of the Harvard Geriatric Education Center at Brigham & Women's Hospital. Professionally she focused on workforce training and education issues at national and state levels to improve health care for rural and underserved communities. Now enjoying retirement in Kennebunk, she is involved in local and state organizations dedicated to building healthy communities and enhancing everyone's quality of life.



Panel Moderator

Jess Maurer

Panel Discussion with Leadership Exchange on Ageism Leaders:

Building an Age-Positive Maine One Action at a Time



Tabatha Caso, LSW (she/her/hers)

Executive Director

Eastern Area Agency on Aging

Tabatha Caso joined Eastern Area Aging on Aging in 2016 as the Director of Community Services and first transitioned to the Chief Program Officer before accepting the Executive Director position in 2022. Tabatha started her career in child protective services and transitioned to working with aging adults and caregivers in 2007. Prior to which she served at SeniorsPlus in several positions, including Care Coordinator (2007-2011), Case Management Supervisor (2011-2015), and Quality Assurance and Training Manager (2015-2016). She graduated from Framingham State University in 2005 with a Bachelor of Arts in Human Services and is a Licensed Social Worker. She is also dedicated to supporting community development by volunteering with Fusion: Bangor Community Committee, River City Athletics, AgingME Steering Committee, Freeman Forest, and Maine Council on Aging Wisdom Summit Planning Committee.



Shiva Darbandi (she/her/hers)

Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Belonging Specialist

Maine Department of Administrative and Financial Services

Shiva Darbandi joined the State's Department of Administrative and Financial Services after two decades in academia and nonprofits, where she advocated for intersectionality and worked to affirm the importance of centering marginalized voices. In her current work, she focuses on identifying, attracting, and developing a high-performing, diverse workforce; facilitating DEIB-related presentations, trainings, and workshops; reviewing and developing equitable policies across state government; and establishing and growing affinity/employee resource groups. Shiva is also working on her PhD, and her research interests include intergenerational knowledge, intangible cultural heritage, and diaspora foodways.



David Greenham (he/him/his)

Executive Director

Maine Arts Commission

David Greenham is the Executive Director of the Maine Arts Commission. Prior to stepping into that position, he was the Associate Director of the Holocaust and Human Rights Center of Maine, where he developed educational outreach programs, curated exhibits, and presented various HHRC programs to schools and communities throughout the state. In addition to his work at the Maine Arts Commission, David is an adjunct lecturer in drama at the University of Maine at Augusta and is a frequent contributor to the online Boston-based arts magazine The ArtsFuse. David is a member of the boards of the New England Foundation for the Arts, the Cultural Alliance of Maine, the Friends of the Blaine House, and Ladder to the Moon/Amjambo Africa.



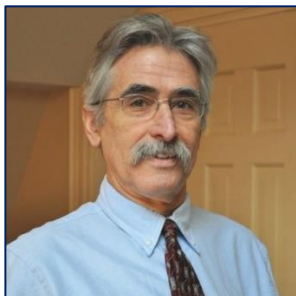
Leslie Hill (she/her/hers)
*Harvard Center Faculty Fellow and
Professor Emeritus of Politics Bates College*

Leslie Hill taught Politics courses at Bates College examining gender politics, the politics of race in U.S. law and policy, and African politics. Upon retirement, she organized opportunities at the College's Harvard Center for Community Partnerships for faculty to design learning projects preparing students to think critically with, learn from, and work collaboratively with community partners to address racial justice. Her own community engagement continues that effort in work as the Sewall Foundation's board Equity Committee chair, with Maine Initiatives' racial justice community grantmaking program, and as a member of the MPBN Community Advisory Board.



Garrett Martin (he/him/his)
*President and CEO
Maine Center for Economic Policy*

Before joining the Maine Center for Economic Policy (MECEP) as President and CEO in February 2009, Garrett Martin served on the MECEP Board of Directors. He has worked as Director of Program Strategy at the Maine Community Foundation and as Associate Director at the Genesis Community Loan Fund. Garrett has extensive experience in community economic development including work in the Mississippi Delta, India, and Ecuador. As an Adjunct Faculty member at the University of Southern Maine, he taught a graduate level course in community economic development. Garrett has an undergraduate degree from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and a master's degree in public affairs (economics and public policy concentration) from Princeton University.



**Panel Moderator
Don Harden** (he/him/his)
*Project Manager, Power In Aging
Maine Council on Aging*

Don Harden is a founding Board Member of the Maine Council on Aging (MCOA) and coordinates the Power in Aging Project, MCOA's anti-ageism campaign. He has been affiliated with Catholic Charities Maine for over 43 years most recently as Director of Aging Services. He was co-convenor of the Maine Aging Initiative's Workgroup on Workforce and the Economy, served on the Legislative Commission to Study Long-term Care Workforce Issues, and represents the voice of older workers on the State Workforce Board. He serves as a care partner with his mother, who lives independently and celebrated her 101st birthday on May 30th.

Building Longevity-Ready Communities in Maine: Setting the Pathway Forward

*A Conversation with the Governor's Office of
Policy Innovation and the Future, & the Cabinet on Aging*



Dan Brennan (he/him/his)

Director

MaineHousing

Daniel Brennan became MaineHousing's Director on April 9, 2018. He has served in several senior staff positions since 1993, including as Senior Director of Programs, Director of Energy & Housing Services, Director of Development, Director of Asset Management, and Internal Auditor. Prior to joining MaineHousing, Dan was employed as an internal auditor for Maine National Bank and RECOLL Management Corporation. Shortly after joining MaineHousing, he earned the Certified Internal Auditor designation. Dan received his BA from the University of Maine, Orono and his MBA from Thomas College.



Laura Fortman (she/her/hers)

Commissioner

Maine Department of Labor

Commissioner Laura Fortman is responsible for labor standards enforcement, employment and training programs, unemployment insurance, labor market information, and vocational rehabilitation services. She brings more than 20 years of public policy and advocacy experience to the Department of Labor, which she also led under Governor John Baldacci from 2003 to 20011. Laura also served as Deputy Administrator for the Wage and Hour Division at the U.S. Department of Labor from 2013 to 2017, where she was responsible for enforcing our nation's most fundamental labor standards, including requirements for minimum wage, payment of overtime, prohibitions on child labor, the right to take leave under the Family Medical Leave Act, worker protections in immigration-related programs, such as our H-visa programs, and government contracting programs.



Jeanne Lambrew, PhD (she/her/hers)

Commissioner

Maine Department of Health and Human Services

Commissioner Jeanne Lambrew is charged with leading the Department of Health and Human Service's efforts to serve Maine's most vulnerable, including providing health care and social service support to low-income children, families, the elderly, and Mainers with disabilities or substance misuse disorders. Jeanne has worked on improving the health system throughout her entire career. She held senior positions at the White House for ten years and the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) for four years. From 2011 to January 2017, she worked at the White House as the Deputy Assistant to the President for health policy. In that capacity, she helped ensure execution of the President's health policy agenda including implementation and defense of the Affordable Care Act (ACA). Her portfolio also included policy regarding Medicare, Medicaid, the Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP), long-term services and supports, and public health. From 2009 to 2010, she was the Director of the HHS Office of Health Reform. In that role, she coordinated work toward passage and the implementation of the Affordable Care Act.



Hannah Pingree (she/her/hers)

Director

Governor's Office of Policy Innovation and the Future

Hannah Pingree was appointed to lead Governor Mills' Office of Policy Innovation and the Future in January 2019. Hannah previously served as Speaker of the Maine House of Representatives from 2008 to 2010. She also served as the Maine House Majority Leader, Chair of the Committee on Health and Human Services, and as a member of the Committee on Appropriations and Financial Affairs during her terms in the Maine Legislature from 2002 - 2010. Hannah spearheaded successful legislation on energy, broadband, housing, environmental health, and health care during her time in office. Hannah has worked for a technology start-up in New York City; managed several family small businesses; led the development of rural housing, energy efficiency, and eldercare projects for a coalition of community non-profits; chaired her local school board; and served on numerous state and community non-profit boards.



Amanda Rector (she/her/hers)

Maine State Economist

Department of Administrative and Financial Services

Amanda Rector is the State Economist for Maine. In this capacity, she conducts ongoing analysis of Maine's economic and demographic conditions to help inform policy decisions. Amanda is a member of the State of Maine's Revenue Forecasting Committee and serves as the Governor's liaison to the U. S. Census Bureau. She started working for the state in 2004 and has been State Economist since 2011. She earned a BA in Economics from Wellesley College and her Master's in Public Policy and Management from the Muskie School of Public Service at the University of Southern Maine.



Panel Moderator

Elizabeth Gattine (she/her/hers)

Senior Policy Analyst & Cabinet on Aging Coordinator

Governor's Office of Policy Innovation and the Future

Prior to joining the Governor's Office of Policy Innovation and the Future, Elizabeth Gattine was a Senior Policy Associate specializing in disability and aging issues at the Catherine Cutler Institute, part of the Muskie School of Public Service at the University of Southern Maine. Elizabeth has extensive knowledge and experience in the design, implementation, and evaluation of policy and programming for older adults at the national, state, and local level, particularly in the delivery of long-term services and support. Prior to joining the Catherine Cutler Institute, she spent over fifteen years in state government, including as program manager in the Office of Aging and Disability Services overseeing Maine's system of long-term services and supports for older adults and adults with physical disabilities. Elizabeth also served as Maine's Legal Services Developer, a position established by the Older Americans Act to help coordinate and promote the state's legal and advocacy services for older adults. Elizabeth is a graduate of Dartmouth College and the Columbia University School of Law.

Visioning Session: What would an Age-Positive Maine look like?



Kate Crary (she/her/hers)

Project Director

Institute for Health Policy and Practice
Center on Aging and Community Living
University of New Hampshire

Kate Crary joined the Institute for Health Policy and Practice (IHPP) in October of 2011. Kate is a Project Director, and her work includes assisting with policy and procedure development, project management, group and organizational strategic planning, and curriculum delivery and development. In addition to this work, Kate serves as a Person-Centered Systems and Planning Educator for the Center on Aging and Community Living. She is also a certified long-term care Ombudsman, and much of her work focuses on advocacy, person-centered systems change, and resident's rights. Previously, Kate spent over a decade working in the landscape construction field as Operations Manager for a local family-owned firm. Kate has experience in transitions of care, care planning, caregiver issues, conflict resolution, and has an extensive background in customer service, marketing, video production, hand-drawn videography, and graphic design. Kate earned a BS in Human Services from Springfield College.



Valerie Jackson (she/her/hers)

Senior Program Manager

Workforce Development and Training
MCD Global Health

Valerie Jackson is the Senior Program Manager of Workforce Development and Training for MCD Global Health where she leads the design, implementation, and evaluation of workforce development and training programs and consultative service agreements. In this role, Valerie also serves as the Apprenticeship Administrator for MCD's Community Health Worker Training Program and is the Training Coordinator for the Rural Behavioral Healthcare Workforce Center. Valerie is MCD's representative to the Maine Council on Aging, co-facilitating one of their three cohorts of Leadership Exchange on Ageism, and serves on the Tri-State Learning Collaborative on Aging Summit Planning Committee.

Valerie has more than 30 years of experience in healthcare and manufacturing, specializing in team-based care, quality coaching and management, and group training and facilitation. She also offers expertise in healthcare payer spaces, accreditation leadership (i.e., Patient Centered Medical Home, AAHRPP Association for the Accreditation of Human Research Protection Programs and network contracting). Before joining MCD in 2021, Valerie served as the Manager of Clinical Systems Improvement at InterMed and prior to that, as the Director of Practice Improvement at the MaineHealth ACO. As a co-leader of the MaineHealth/Maine Medical Center Physician Hospital Organization's Patient-Centered Medical Home Collaborative, Valerie served as the primary facilitator and trainer for over forty primary care teams from across the state of Maine. Valerie received her certificate in Leadership and Management through the University of New Hampshire in 2015. She is a trained DEI&B (Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging) Facilitator, Clinical Microsystems Healthcare Improvement Coach through the Dartmouth Institute, a trained facilitator in Ariadne Lab's Serious Illness Conversations, Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ), and TeamSTEPS Teamwork System for Healthcare Master Trainer.



Panel Introductions

Betsy Sawyer-Manter (she/her/hers)

President and CEO

SeniorsPlus

Betsy Sawyer-Manter is the President & CEO of SeniorsPlus — the Area Agency on Aging for Western Maine. She currently serves as President of the Maine Association of Area Agencies on Aging and is the Treasurer for the Maine Council on Aging. Betsy also is a co-convenor of the Speaker's Maine Aging Initiative for the Health and Well-Being Workgroup. Prior to joining SeniorsPlus in May 2009, Betsy worked for the People's Regional Opportunity Program (PROP), the Community Action Agency for Cumberland County. During her 20 years at PROP as a senior manager, Betsy was responsible for the oversight of all programming and was also responsible for the development of five affordable housing projects. Betsy holds a BA in Social Work from University of Southern Maine and a MSW from University of Connecticut.

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