

RIDING THE WAVE OF OPPORTUNITY TOGETHER

BIENNIAL REPORT 2022-2024



WELCOME

Dear Friends, Members, and Patrons,

In 2022, in the wake of the subsiding pandemic, the Maine Council on Aging (MCOA) boldly announced it would work to end ageism in Maine by 2032. To put this into context, in the world, only Australia and Great Britain join us in intentionally working to end ageism within all systems and organizations within a defined geographic area. There were those of us who doubted that shifting deeply held societal views about aging and older people was achievable in such a short time.

Two years and thousands of conversations later, we are convinced that we will meet our goal, largely because of **you**. You have engaged in these conversations, you have been inspired to take action, and your actions are turning many tiny ripples into a powerful wave. This is the wave of opportunity we are riding into the next two years together.

While we build on these successes to create an age-positive future for generations of older Mainers to come, we remain laser-focused on improving the lives of older Mainers right now. As you will read in this report, we have a lot to celebrate.

Last year we achieved, and this year successfully defended, a historic victory that will increase the financial security of more than 45,000 older Mainers. These Mainers are now eligible for the Medicare Savings Program, a federal health insurance program that pays their Medicare costs. They will save on average \$7,300... every year... for the rest of their lives.

We sought this increase to provide economic justice to older women, LGBTQ+ elders, older people with disabilities, and BIPOC elders who experienced a lifetime of intentional bias and income disparities, and who are often less well off in later life. That the Legislature unanimously supported this effort is a testament to their genuine understanding of the financial struggles older people are experiencing in Maine.





We must also celebrate our partnership with Hannaford Supermarkets and the \$1.3 million grant they gave us to increase the food security and social connection of older people in our region, prioritizing diverse older people, older people living rurally, and veterans. By completion of the project, MCOA will have helped Hannaford make over \$800,000 in investments in sustainable programs.

None of our work would be possible without the support of our funders, partners, members, and donors. We thank all of you and offer a special note of thanks to the Maine Health Access Foundation and Point32Health Foundation for their intentional grant programs supporting the health of older people. We also lift up and thank Maine’s Area Agencies on Aging for their partnership and on-going financial support of our work since 2018!

We are maturing in our ability to manage the complexity of our work, and have built an amazing team with deep skills, talent, and passion. We will continue to ask you to sit with us in the choppy water of social change, sometimes to guide our work, sometimes to lead it, and sometimes just to trust that we know where we’re going, even if the horizon is hard to see.

Thank you again for riding this wave with us. We can’t wait to see what happens next!

With Gratitude,

Jess Maurer, MCOA Executive Director

Leah Graham, MCOA Board Chair



CULTURE CHANGE: A RISING TIDE LIFTS ALL BOATS

MEDICARE SAVINGS PROGRAM: Stemming the Flow of Economic Inequity

In 2023, MCOA advanced LD 1522 - An Act to Provide Economic Justice to Historically Disadvantaged Older Citizens by Amending the Laws Governing the Medicare Savings Program. The bill proposed significant increases in eligibility for this life-saving health insurance program and the elimination of the asset test that kept many very low-income Mainers from qualifying for the program. We successfully advocated for the inclusion of these provisions in the Supplemental Budget. In 2024, we defended the proposed repeal of the program by the Governor. The new law took effect July 1, 2024.

This historic action makes Maine a national leader in protecting the financial security of older people, and it's a win-win-win!

- » 45,000+ older Mainers gain access to a benefit that will save them on average \$7,300 a year in Medicare costs;
- » \$38 million in federal dollars flow into Maine, making our economy stronger; and
- » Older people remain healthier and engaged longer, reducing avoidable healthcare and long-term care costs.

The Maine Health Access Foundation (MeHAF) is funding a year-long effort to increase outreach and enrollment in the program to make sure older Mainers know they can access this new support. In partnership with MeHAF, MCOA is coordinating the outreach and enrollment efforts of 10 statewide grantees and working with many other partners to get the word out!



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Older Mainers on a tight budget used to be able to rely on the Medicare Savings Program, but eligibility was cut and an asset test was imposed 12 years ago, forcing people like Fran Seeley, pictured, to make tough choices to make ends meet. One choice was to forego needed medical and dental care. "Not having my Medicare premium deducted from my Social Security will mean that I won't have to worry that I'm spending myself down to poverty. This change reflects how Maine values its older people," said Fran.

Medicare Savings Program champion Fran Seeley (right), with Representative Jessica Fay (left) and MCOA Executive Director Jess Maurer (center) at the State House.

CHEF PROGRAM: Turning the Tide on Hunger and Social Isolation

Thanks to a \$1.3 million grant from Hannaford Supermarkets, MCOA launched the Connection, Health and Equity through Food (CHEF) Program in the fall of 2023 to improve older people's access to food and social connection in Maine, New Hampshire, Vermont, Massachusetts, and New York.



Hannaford Supermarkets' President Mike Vail (far left) presents MCOA Executive Director Jess Maurer (left) with a check for \$1.3 million to launch the CHEF Program. Also present were (left to right) Professor and Director of Geriatrics Research at the University of New England College of Osteopathic Medicine and MCOA board member Marilyn Gugliucci; Harpswell Aging at Home volunteer Hollie Vanderzee; and Equality Maine Board President John Hennessy.

This incredibly insightful and generous grant:

- » Created a year-long shared learning education program that has built a more informed, connected, and effective network of organizations focused on increasing the food security and social connection of older people across Hannaford's service area;
- » Created a micro-grant program that is supporting more than 100 organizations to sustainably promote the food security and social connection of older people;
- » Prioritized certain groups of older people including Black, Indigenous, People of Color (BIPoC) and Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Queer+ (LGBTQ+), as well as women, veterans, older adults with disabilities, and those living rurally; and
- » Provided 150 tablets to increase digital equity among older adults.



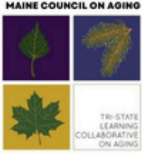
Farmer Habiba Salat packing produce grown at Liberation Farms in Wales, Maine for recipients of the Somali Bantu Elder Share Program. This program, run by the Somali Bantu Community Association, received a Hannaford Supermarkets CHEF grant to increase the production of culturally relevant crops, double the number of people in the program, and build sustainability into their work.

PHOTO COURTESY OF SOMALI BANTU COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION



The Berwick Community Garden Project, with a grant through Hannaford Supermarkets CHEF program and assistance from more than 30 volunteers, made and planted 26 raised vegetable beds that are providing fresh produce for their older neighbors in need.

PHOTO COURTESY OF BERWICK COMMUNITY GARDEN PROJECT



Connection, Health and Equity through Food (CHEF) Grant Program AWARDS

Focusing on programming and infrastructure to increase older adults' equitable access to food and social connections in communities across 5 Northeastern states



\$754,181*

Awarded Across MA, ME, NH, NY & VT



107*

Organizations Funded Supporting Nearly 294,000* Older Adults

\$7,252*

AVERAGE AWARD AMOUNT



*NUMBERS WILL CHANGE

Generously Sponsored by



Eat well. Be well.
A path to better health.

TRI-STATE LEARNING COLLABORATIVE: All Hands on Deck

Collaboration is the cornerstone of building strong, age-positive communities. The Tri-State Learning Collaborative on Aging (TSLCA) fosters conversations and connections between cross-border community members, leaders, and subject matter experts in Maine, New Hampshire and Vermont to ensure that everyone can age in their community with dignity, independence, and a high quality of life. In the past two years, the TSLCA:

- » Held two virtual summits, Age-Positive Culture: A Public Health Imperative in 2023 and the Inclusion Summit in 2024;
- » Launched Northern New England Connects, quarterly programs that brought together more than 350 people to discuss critical challenges to healthy aging initiatives;
- » Offered monthly, expert-led webinars that inspired creative and sustainable replication efforts to promote positive aging;
- » And, through the CHEF Program, offered two rounds of grants, a wide array of programs to support older adults, including Aging Outside the Lines, and training for facilitators working with older adults done in collaboration with the Foundation for Art and Healing.



With a CHEF grant, the New England Arab American Organization is helping older Arab women learn about healthy eating on a budget to address growing health and income challenges. The program also brings together women of all ages to explore the art of cooking healthy, culturally-inspired dishes, and offers meaningful opportunities to deepen relationships with others in the community.

PHOTO COURTESY OF NEW ENGLAND ARAB AMERICAN ORGANIZATION

CREATIVE AGING



INCORPORATE ART & the ARTS in MORE ASPECTS of LIFE

CREATIVE AGING IN MAINE

Through a grant from the Maine Arts Commission (MAC), MCOA did an environmental scan of Creative Aging Programs in the country, convened an advisory committee, and generated recommendations for the relaunch of a Creative Aging Program in Maine. We're thrilled to be partnering with MAC to implement the recommendations to launch the program in 2025.

POWER IN AGING + LEADERSHIP EXCHANGE ON AGEISM: Turning Ripples into Waves

Since 2022, MCOA’s Power in Aging Project has expanded quickly from the ongoing work of building awareness of ageism and the benefits of age positivity to also creating targeted initiatives that provide new ways of engaging with diverse audiences in the journey toward ending ageism in Maine by 2032. Along the way, we have continued to increase the number of champions taking action to address ageism in their spheres of influence through our Leadership Exchange on Ageism (LEA). Efforts include:

- » Opening doors for MCOA to deliver our high-impact programming, including Age-Positive Healthcare;
- » Inspiring a new, day-long Disrupting Ageism Intensive course for teams that combines core LEA content with facilitation to develop and implement customized action plans;
- » Piloting our first sector-specific LEA course – Conservation, Environment, and Climate;
- » Launching a Community Conversations program that engages grassroots groups in ending ageism; and
- » Laying the groundwork for expanding LEA to other states.



MEMBERS OF THE POWER IN AGING CLASS AT THE SENIOR COLLEGE IN LEWISTON.




“The community conversations were eye-opening, meaningful and surprisingly intimate for me. The moderated topics led us to deep conversations about our shared experiences, and I was inspired by the participants in our group. My own passion is to help improve the healthcare experience for myself and older adults who confront negative stereotypes about aging and receive care from professionals who have had little training in treating our demographic.

BARBARA BOCK, COMMUNITY CONVERSATION PARTICIPANT

MAINE COUNCIL ON AGING

POWER IN AGING

BUILDING AN AGE-POSITIVE MAINE THROUGH CONVERSATION & ACTION



The Power in Aging Project was launched in 2021 as part of the Maine Council on Aging’s campaign to dismantle ageism and build an Age-Positive Maine.

Since launching this Initiative:



2200 +

participants, in groups ranging from 8-273 people

100+

PRESENTATIONS

Including Harnessing our Power in Aging, Age-Positive Healthcare, Age-Positive Workplace, Leadership Exchange on Ageism, Community Conversations, and Disrupting Ageism Intensive.



735

AGE-POSITIVE PLEDGES

LEADERSHIP EXCHANGE ON AGEISM GRADUATES

BY THE END OF 2024

300



100+



ENGAGED COMPANIES, NONPROFIT ORGANIZATIONS, CIVIC GROUPS, GOVERNMENT AGENCIES, CHURCHES, SCHOOLS



« SCAN TO LEARN MORE





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By raising the voices and images of resilience through the photovoice project, we will foster community, strengthen intergenerational connections, and encourage change.

LESLIE HILL
PHOTOVOICE PROJECT LEAD
PROFESSOR EMERITA
BATES COLLEGE
PHOTO CREDIT: LUKE KANEB



EQUITY + HEALTHY AGING: Ensuring that EVERYONE is in the boat!

MCOA’s Equity & Health Aging work brings people together to support culturally responsive and inclusive services for ALL older Maine people. Since 2021, we have become an ally and collaborative partner on several initiatives to ensure that the voices of older people from historically marginalized communities are heard in program and policy arenas.

- » MCOA is the backbone support organization for the Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) Elders group (a growing group of native-born and immigrant black elders) that has decided to create a photovoice project; Making the Invisible Visible. Using photographs that participants take along with their stories, the photovoice project shares lived experience and perspectives with broader audiences.
- » MCOA is active in efforts to build relationships between elders in BIPOC and LGBTQ+ communities and aging service providers to support more culturally responsive services. As a leader in the Portland Health Equity Alignment and in partnership with Cross Cultural Community Services, MCOA has conducted focus groups of older adults in diverse communities and identified strategic goals to address community-identified priorities.
- » LGBTQ+ elders have shared their fear of needing to go back into the closet to avoid discrimination if they need residential care. MCOA believes no one should need to feel that and has partnered with EqualityMaine, MaineTransNet, the Maine Health Care Association, and others to create and promote training for residential care staff to help in providing inclusive care for LGBTQ+ elders which will launch this fall.

These are some highlights of our ongoing work. We continue to be guided and led by older adults from these diverse communities.



BIPOC GROUP MEETING FOR LUNCH IN JULY 2024, PHOTO CREDIT: KATHY VEZINA



CHANGE AGENTS

2023 marked the return of in-person events for MCOA with the Annual Summit being held live for the first time since 2019. In addition, we’ve rebranded our annual convening as the Change AGent Summit. Together, we can create an Age-Positive culture in Maine and ride the wave of opportunity before us by becoming agents of change in our own spheres of influence. In the spring of 2024, we launched our first ever Change AGent Series. We hosted three conversational events across the state, engaging over 100 attendees in Biddeford, Belfast, and Dover-Foxcroft to build the age-positive movement in Maine. In September 2024, we’ll host our statewide event in New Gloucester, joined by over 250 leaders, stakeholders, and community members and keep riding the wave of opportunity!

TRANSPORTATION EQUITY FOR HEALTHY AGING: Expanding Opportunities in Maine

Over the last two years, through a grant from the Maine Health Access Foundation, MCOA worked to strengthen Maine's volunteer transportation network by better connecting programs with each other, with Maine's public transit system, and with health systems.

The project also piloted an approach between small volunteer programs and GoMaine, utilizing GoMaine's new trip planning technology to help people find rides and recruit new volunteer drivers statewide. Using the model we developed, Age Friendly Biddeford is piloting an effort to expand its driver base through GoMaine by targeting specific towns where it needs more volunteer drivers.

Through this work, we created the Maine Volunteer Transportation Network, a permanent network that increases access to technical assistance, offers shared learning opportunities, and forges new partnerships for transportation programs. There are nearly 40 programs engaged that are listed on MCOA's website.



FRIENDS IN ACTION VOLUNTEER DRIVER PROGRAM IN ELLSWORTH PHOTO CREDIT: JO COOPER

DIRECT CARE WORKFORCE PARTNERSHIP: Shoring Up the Support Network

For the past two years MCOA has been co-leading a new, ground-breaking effort, Maine's Essential Care & Support Workforce Partnership, to grow a robust and resilient direct care workforce across services for older adults, for people with behavioral health needs, and for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities. We have partnered with the Maine Center for Economic Policy and PHI to form a coalition of partners across the care work spectrum to engage in advocacy, research, and movement building to cause a cultural shift in how this essential workforce is perceived and valued. This included:

- » Building a coalition;
- » Releasing two policy reports;
- » Advocating for legislation that supports the direct care workforce;
- » Hosting a planning summit;
- » And, developing a strategic plan to grow this workforce over the next five years.



Without effective solutions, this workforce shortage costs our economy an estimated \$1 billion per year in lost economic activity and will require a mosaic of solutions and concerted efforts to ensure all Mainers who need care and support services receive them.

BECOME a
POLICY MAKER/
INFLUENCER



MAKING DECISIONS
CONSIDERING:

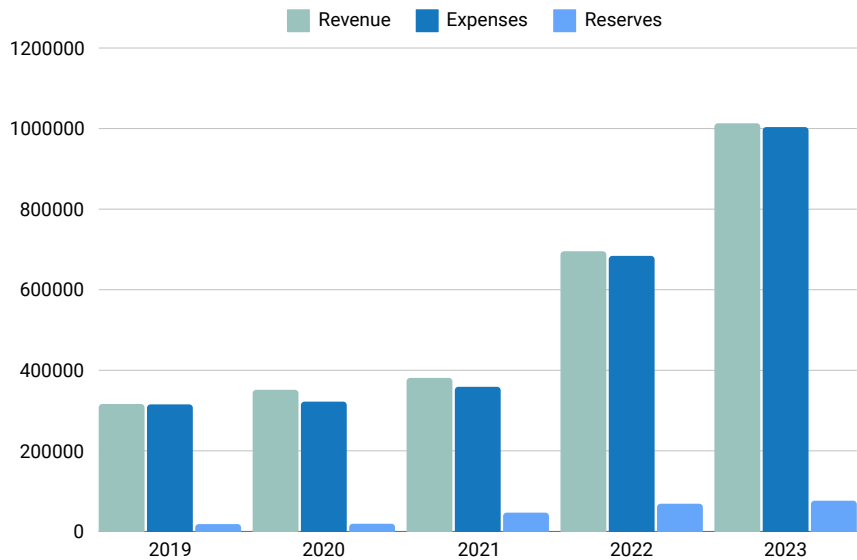
- 7 GENERATIONS
OUT
- AGING across
the LIFESPAN



SCAN HERE TO LEARN MORE ABOUT
OUR LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES

FINANCIAL STATEMENT

FIVE YEARS OF GROWTH: 2019-2023



GRANTS, DONORS + MEMBERS

Grant support enables MCOA to launch new initiatives, strengthen existing programs, drive system change, and extend our impact. We are grateful for the funds entrusted to us by our partners to build an age-positive Maine.

2022-2024 GRANTS RECEIVED

- AARP Maine
- Betterment Fund
- Bingham Program
- Eaton Peabody
- Endowment for Health
- Hannaford Supermarkets
- Maine Arts Commission
- Maine Community Foundation
- Maine Health Access Foundation
- Maine Initiatives
- Next50 Initiative
- Point32Health Foundation
- Permanent Commission on the Status of Racial, Indigenous and Tribal Populations
- Southern Maine Agency on Aging
- The John A. Hartford Foundation
- Vermont Community Foundation
- Vermont Department of Aging & Independent Living



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MCOA is the leader in advocating for older adults in Maine. The depth of its membership is unique and powerful in bringing together a variety of voices to make Maine the best place to age. Both professionally and personally, my support for their work is unwavering!

BETSY SAWYER-MANTER, PRESIDENT & CEO, SENIORSPLUS, MCOA BOARD TREASURER, MCOA LIFETIME FRIEND, AND MCOA RIPPLE SOCIETY



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When I choose to financially support MCOA, I know I'm supporting even more than the goals of creating an Age-Positive Maine and ending the negative impacts of ageism. I'm helping to support the 'how' those goals are accomplished - which includes the dedicated and knowledgeable people working daily with and for Maine's older adults.

SHARON FOERSTER, HEALTHY AGING PROFESSIONAL, MCOA BOARD MEMBER, AND FRIEND OF MCOA

2024 DONATIONS

Individual donors to MCOA provide critical support to end ageism and create an age-positive Maine. Our shared principles are rooted in the belief that all older Mainers should be seen, valued, and included in all aspects of community life.



TRAILBLAZER SOCIETY (\$5,000+)

Carol Wishcamper

MOMENTUM SOCIETY (\$1,000+)

Dr. Jeremy J. Nobel

RIPPLE SOCIETY (\$500+)

Ramsey Alwin
Jo Cooper
Marilyn Gugliucci
William Jenks
Kevin Lewis
Jess Maurer
Thomas Newman
Roger Renfrew
Betsy Sawyer-Manter
Jim & Sandy Toulouse
Shirl Weaver
Susan & Barry Woods

MCOA LASTING LEGACY SOCIETY

Marilyn Gugliucci
Shirl Weaver

LIFETIME FRIENDS (\$1,000+ CUMULATIVE GIVING)

Jo Cooper
Marilyn Gugliucci
Don Harden
William Jenks

Kevin Lewis
Jess Maurer
Dr. Jeremy J. Nobel
Roger Renfrew
Betsy Sawyer-Manter

Cyndy Taylor
Jim & Sandy Toulouse
Shirl Weaver
Carol Wishcamper

SUPPORT THE MCOA



SCAN HERE TO GIVE



Venmo @MECOA

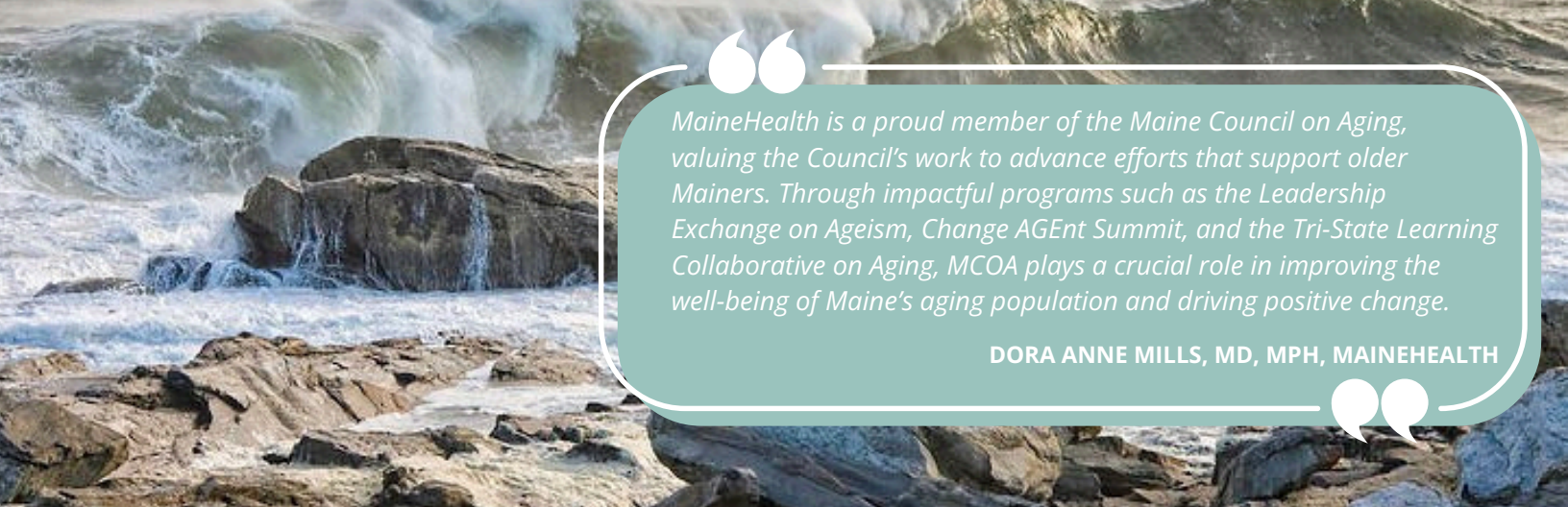
FRIENDS (\$100+)

Kristin Aiello
Meredith Anderson
Robert Anderson
Peter Baker
Paula Banks
Suzette Bergeron
Glen Besa
Stina Brazelton
Michael Brennan
Frank Brooks
L. David Brown
Micaela Cassily
Maria Chutchian
Lydia & Andre Cocquyt
Barbara Colby & Larry Gross
Laura Cordes
Morris Fisher
Jennifer Fitzgerald
Sharon Foerster

Sara Forgione
Raymond Gagnon
Susan Gatti
Roy Gedat
Leah Graham
William Hall
Don Harden
Neal Harden
Rebecca Hatfield
Healy & Associates
John Hennessy
Jennifer Hermann
Leslie Hill
HillHouse Assisted Living
Kim Humphrey
Morgan Hynd
Idyllworks of Maine
Valerie Jackson
Patrice Jones

Ruta Kadonoff
Donna Kelley
Ethna Kelly
Jud Knox
Laura Ruth Lane-Reticker
Susan Lavigne
Kathleen Leavis
Laura Lee
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Jess Maurer
Rodney Mears
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Priscilla Miller
Jennifer Minkowitz
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Laura O'Hanlon

Maureen O'Connor
Jean Potuchek
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Steve Rowe
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Deborah Ruhe
Catherine Ryder
Maureen Schnellmann
Rebecca Sky
George & Penelope Smith
Michael Smith
Mark Swann
Denise Vachon
Dana & Delores Verrill
Kathy Vezina
Constance Wark
Debby Willis



MaineHealth is a proud member of the Maine Council on Aging, valuing the Council's work to advance efforts that support older Mainers. Through impactful programs such as the Leadership Exchange on Ageism, Change AGent Summit, and the Tri-State Learning Collaborative on Aging, MCOA plays a crucial role in improving the well-being of Maine's aging population and driving positive change.

DORA ANNE MILLS, MD, MPH, MAINEHEALTH

MEMBERSHIP

SUSTAINING PATRONS

Sustaining Patrons support the visionary work of MCOA to move toward a Maine where we can live healthy, engaged, and secure lives with choices and opportunities as we age in our homes and communities. We value and appreciate the support of our Sustaining Patrons and partners.

Katahdin (\$8,000)

- Alpha One
- Aroostook Area Agency on Aging
- Eastern Area Agency on Aging
- ME Association of Area Agencies on Aging
- SeniorsPlus
- Southern Maine Agency on Aging
- Spectrum Generations

Sugarloaf (\$5,000)

- GT Independence
- Martin's Point Health Care
- UnitedHealthCare

Bigelow (\$2,500)

- Northern Light Home Care & Hospice
- UNE College of Osteopathic Medicine

Saddleback (\$1,500)

- Bangor Savings Bank
- Senscio Systems, Inc.



135

MEMBERS STRONG

BECOME A MEMBER

Together, we can realize our vision for an age-equitable Maine that helps us all live healthy, engaged, and secure lives with choices and opportunities as we age in our homes and communities.



SCAN HERE TO LEARN MORE

MCOA LEADERSHIP

MCOA is guided by a talented, committed, and impressive Board of Directors and blessed with a deep talent pool when it comes to our staff and project leaders. We are so fortunate that people with significant subject-matter experience and serious skills have been willing to help advance the work of the organization. Over the past two years our core team has grown exponentially to make an incredible amount of impact in our region.

When they all come together to lead this organization, it is electric! MCOA's members and staff are grateful for the steady and inspired leadership of the Board and the impact we make together.



MCOA STAFF & CONSULTANTS

(Front Row, L-R)

Kathy Willette, Tri-State Learning Collaborative on Aging Project Manager

Jo Cooper, Transportation Equity for Healthy Aging Project Coordinator

Laurie Gilman, CHEF Grants Manager

(Back Row, L-R)

Maureen O'Connor, Power in Aging Project Director

Valerie Jackson, Power in Aging Facilitation Specialist

Jess George, Outreach & Education Specialist

Katlyn Blackstone, Outreach & Education Coordinator

Rebecca Howes, Development Director

Jess Maurer, Executive Director

Don Harden, Leadership Exchange on Ageism Project Director

Leslie Roberts, Communications & Operations Assistant

Krista George, Director of Strategic Initiatives, Culture, and Community

Kathy Vezina, Equity and Healthy Aging Project Manager

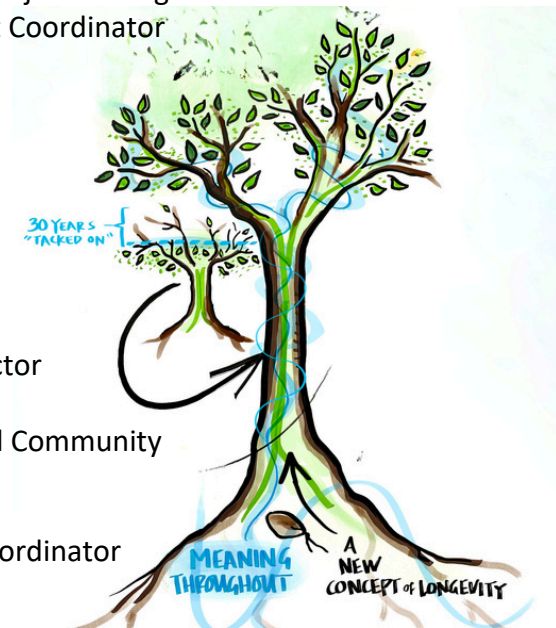
(Not Pictured)

Brenda Peluso, Essential Care & Workforce Partnership Coordinator

Libby Edwardson, Maine Creative Aging Project Manager

G Cherichello, CHEF Consultant

Leslie Hill, Co-Lead, BIPoC Photovoice Project



MCOA BOARD OF DIRECTORS



(Top Row, L-R)

Sara Forgiore, Director of Assisted Living, Avesta Housing
 Franklin Brooks, Community Member, Clinical Social Worker & Retired Assistant Professor of Social Work
 Claudette Ndayinahaze, Executive Director & Co-Founder, In Her Presence
 Angela Cole Westhoff, President & Chief Executive Officer, Maine Health Care Association
 Sharon Foerster, Senior Program Manager, Geriatrics Workforce Enhancement Program

(Middle Row, L-R)

Bill Jenks, Community Member
Immediate Past Chair: Mary Jane Richards, Chief Executive Officer, North Country Associates
 Kevin Lewis, President & Chief Executive Officer, Maine Community Health Options
 Catherine Ryder, VP of Special Projects, Spurwink Services
 Marilyn Gugliucci, Director for Geriatrics Education and Research, College of Osteopathic Medicine, University of New England, College of Osteopathic Medicine

(Bottom Row, L-R)

Treasurer: Betsy Sawyer-Manter, President & Chief Executive Officer, SeniorsPlus
Board Chair: Leah Graham, Program Director, Maine Cancer Genomics Initiative, Jackson Laboratory
Board Vice Chair: Donna Kelley, President & Chief Executive Officer, Waldo Community Action Partners
Secretary: Peter Baker, Program Manager for Geriatrics, MaineHealth





WHAT'S NEXT?

While we have had some tremendous successes over the last two years, including making critical investments in Maine's essential care workforce, Maine's "care gap" continues to grow, and far too many older Mainers are going without the care they are entitled to receive. We are developing a significant legislative strategy to address this and ensure that people who are not getting care are supported, including through case management and navigation services, and can access other programs that can help, like Meals on Wheels.

Another significant piece of our work in the coming years will be to coordinate outreach, education, and enrollment efforts for the Medicare Savings Program. It is wonderful that 45,000 people are eligible – now we have to find them and get them enrolled! Thanks again to the Maine Health Access Foundation for supporting the work of 10 organizations engaged in getting the word out and helping people enroll.

We are expanding the conversation about ageism in Maine and the benefits of age-positivity. For the last two years, we have been building a transformative view about the value of older people in Maine. We have focused our attention on sharing this view with "early adopters" – respected leaders who are willing to consider new views. The rapid adoption of the view and the actions taken by these early adopters have been inspiring and are leading to real change.

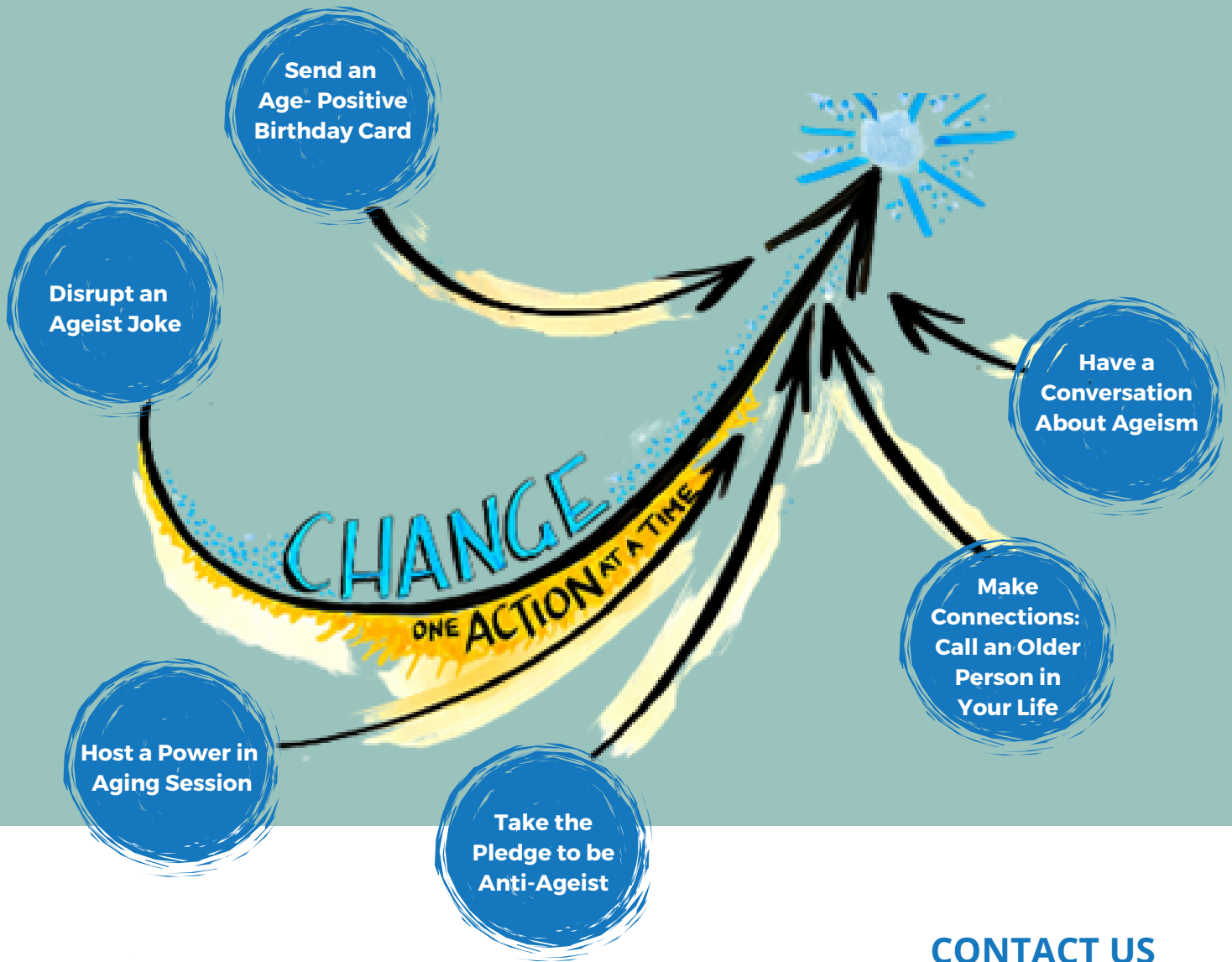
We are now looking to bridge what is called the "innovation chasm" and begin to engage the "early majority" – those who adopt new ideas just before others in a social system. **Here is where we need your help. We need to connect with more people like you who are already making waves by embracing important new ideas. Can you make some introductions or share our work with your colleagues and friends? Can you join us to be trained as a co-presenter or co-facilitator to move our Age-Positive work forward?** At the same time, we are going big! In an exciting turn of events, we will be helping other states and a couple of national organizations begin to replicate our Leadership Exchange on Ageism.

Even as we engage in these bigger conversations, we are shifting our focus more intentionally to community. Through a relaunched Creative Aging Program, in partnership with the Maine Arts Commission, and our Community Conversations, Reducing Ageism in Healthcare, and BIPOC Elders photovoice projects, we will be facilitating and hosting conversations and using creative processes to engage older people in discussions about their experiences with aging in Maine.

As we are charting the course for building an age-positive Maine, we need your continued support, engagement, and inspiration. We can only be successful riding this wave together. Let's go, the surf's up!

JOIN THE MOVEMENT

Become a Change AGEnt!



CONTACT US

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www.mainecouncilonaging.org

MCOA is registered in Maine as a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization.

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