



**SOUTHERN
GERONTOLOGICAL
SOCIETY**

Bridging Aging Research & Practice

SGS Advocacy in Aging Virtual Forum
Finding Your Path To Advocacy
OCTOBER 4 & 5, 2022

Supercharge your work bridging research and practice by integrating advocacy and leveraging regional and national legislative and policy tools curated for SGS members. This forum will help participants find their path to gerontological advocacy. Spend two afternoons learning from researchers, policymakers, and grassroots activists about how we can all be effective advocates for older adults and why advocacy is a best practice.



As President of the Southern Gerontological Society, one of the six domains for our Annual Meeting and Conference is *Advocacy for or by Older Adults*. Policy advocates play an important role in uncovering evidence, developing policy agendas, and advocating for *and* with older adults. We have a strong commitment to social policy issues, to practice and research on practice to improve the quality of life of older Americans.

Dr. Leland "Bert" Waters
SGS President

Day 1: October 4th, 2022 1:00 - 3:30 PM

A key component of impactful gerontological practice is staying informed and actively involved in policy about older adults. Learn how national and state advocacy groups have affected policy change and get an idea of different ways to get involved. It doesn't matter if you are a seasoned legislative aide or just getting started on your advocacy journey--- come away from this afternoon refreshed and energized with ideas about how to get involved in policy and advocacy.

1:00 PM - 1:05 PM

Welcome

Annie Rhodes

SGS Advocacy and Public Policy Committee Chair

1:05 PM - 1:40 PM

The Value of Understanding Policy for Researchers

Dr. Lindsay Peterson

School of Aging Studies, University of South Florida



No matter what you do in gerontology, your work applies to public policy. It determines who reads your publications, how they interpret your results, and potentially how much support is available to fund your research. This session will focus on how to find and highlight the policy applications in your work.

1:40 PM - 1:50 PM

Sponsorship Appreciation Break

Thank you to our Sponsors for their support of our first virtual advocacy form. Please take time to learn more about our sponsors by reviewing their descriptions in this program.

1:50 PM - 2:35 PM

Yes. You Are an Advocate.

Audrey Galloway and Lisa Riegel

AARP North Carolina



How do you show up" as an advocate? Many of us view advocacy through the lens of formal lobbying or the advancement of a cause. However, we can and do show up as advocates in our everyday interactions. When pursuing our interests and passions, we are advocates. Join us in a conversation exploring the distinctions between community, local, state, and federal advocacy and how you show up as an effective advocate.

2:35 PM - 3:20 PM

How to Effectively Advocate to Your Elected Officials

Matt Hudson

Florida PACE Providers Association



As a former state legislator, Matt Hudson will share tips on what to do and what not to do when presenting your message to decision-makers. He will also discuss the importance of grassroots advocacy and how the collective voices of constituents can have an impact.

3:20 PM - 3:30 PM

Closing

Amanda James

SGS Executive Director

Please be sure to visit our new Advocacy Resources webpage for additional resources and advocacy organizations to assist you on your advocacy journey.

<https://southerngerontologicalsociety.org/advocacy-resources.html>

Day 2: October 5th, 2022 1:00 - 3:30 PM

Take the lessons from day one a step further. Meet organizations across three states that are advocating for the direct care workforce. Then join us for a special report from SGS about problems and concerns in the south. End the day by joining fellow attendees and voicing your ideas about what advocacy ideas SGS should prioritize and making an action plan!

1:00 PM - 1:15 PM

Welcome

Dr. Leland "Bert" Waters

SGS President

Annie Rhodes

SGS Advocacy and Public Policy Committee Chair

1:15 PM - 2:30 PM

Panel Discussion on Direct Care Workforce Advocacy



*Advocating for Direct Care Workers: Some Lessons
from Work in Georgia*

Jennifer Craft Morgan, Ph.D., Georgia State University
Gerontology Institute and Culture Change Network of Georgia

COVID-19 profoundly impacts long-term care residents, families, and staff. Layered on top of the impact of COVID are the effects of economic and political turmoil and systemic racism. The direct care workforce is predominately female, largely people of color, and includes a significant number of immigrant workers. Before 2020, this workforce was already vulnerable due to low pay, few benefits (e.g., paid leave, health insurance), and heavy workloads. Supporting this workforce is vital across the long-term care service and supports (LTSS) sector to address recruitment, retention and spur the professionalization of this work across settings. This short presentation will offer educational resources for organizations and stakeholders to focus on your culture change journey and implement employer-of-choice strategies to support this workforce. A brief overview of the Georgia coalition will be provided, and implications for developing or strengthening your statewide or regional coalition will be addressed.

Advocating For a Minimum Staffing Standard: Lessons from Virginia

David DeBiasi, RN, AARP Virginia

Approximately 30,000 Virginians live in nursing homes and deserve safe environments and high-quality care. Nearly 80% of Virginia nursing homes do not meet the U.S. Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) staffing recommendations. Studies consistently have found that low staffing increases falls, pressure sores, the spread of infections, life-threatening dehydration, costly preventable hospital admissions, and resident death. The harm from staffing shortages can affect residents of all income levels and disproportionately affects low-income and Black residents. For nearly 20 years, Virginia legislators have rejected bills to set minimum nursing home staffing standards, despite 7 in 10 Virginia voters supporting such standards. In 2020, a coalition was formed on the premise that staffing standards are the first step to improving quality for nursing home residents. This presentation will review the coalition's work, including the advocacy campaign for 2023. Strategy and lessons learned will be shared.



Unlikely Partners: Supporting Wage Increases for North Carolina's Direct Care Workforce

Heather Burkhardt, MSW, NC Coalition on Aging

North Carolina's long-term care services and supports providers have had long-standing challenges in attracting and retaining direct care workers. During the pandemic, advocates, providers, and workers' rights groups sought a collaborative approach to addressing the multiple challenges of this essential workforce. This presentation will discuss the development of a collective strategy, its successes, and lessons learned.

2:30 PM - 2:40 PM

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2:40 PM - 3:15 PM

Facilitator-Led Breakout Discussion Groups

SGS surveys priority issues facing older adults in the South every three years. The most recent survey identified the direct care workforce as a priority issue. Representatives from the SGS survey subcommittee will discuss a white paper being developed by SGS on this issue. Attendees will then be assigned to breakout groups to provide feedback on this process and the direction of SGS advocacy efforts.

3:15 PM - 3:30 PM

Closing

Amanda James
SGS Executive Director

The graphic features the Southern Gerontological Society (SGS) logo on the left, which includes a stylized blue and white arch over the letters "SGS". To the right of the logo, the text "SOUTHERN GERONTOLOGICAL SOCIETY" is written in a bold, sans-serif font, with the tagline "Bridging Aging Research & Practice" underneath. A large, light blue arrow points from the meeting details on the left towards the theme on the right. The meeting details include "44th Annual Meeting and Conference", "April 11-15, 2023", and "Hilton Norfolk the Main Norfolk, VA". The theme is "ADVANCING EFFECTIVE SOLUTIONS: The Interplay of Social Determinants of Health and Health Disparities".

SOUTHERN GERONTOLOGICAL SOCIETY
Bridging Aging Research & Practice

44th Annual Meeting and Conference
April 11-15, 2023
Hilton Norfolk the Main
Norfolk, VA

ADVANCING EFFECTIVE SOLUTIONS:
The Interplay of Social Determinants of Health and Health Disparities

<https://southerngerontologicalsociety.org/meeting.html>

SGS Advocacy in Aging Virtual Forum Sponsors

Accreditation for Gerontology Education Council (AGEC)



AGEC is a 501c3 organization that collaborates with but is independent of the Gerontological Society of America and the Academy for Gerontology in Higher Education. It is overseen by a Board of Governors consisting of nine members representing higher education gerontology programs and entities associated with the field of aging. The organizational structure includes review teams, site visitors, an executive director, and staff. Our mission is to serve societies, national and global, by establishing and applying standards that assure quality and continuous improvement in the preparation of gerontologists reflecting the evolving nature of higher education, research and practice.

Learn more at <https://geroaccred.org/>

Georgia Council on Aging (GCOA)



The Georgia Council on Aging was created by the Georgia General Assembly and has been advocating for Aging Georgians and their families since 1977.

Advocacy efforts include:

- Recommending legislation
- Developing and presenting testimony at public hearings
- Training advocates across the state
- Providing leadership to the Coalition of Advocates for Georgia's Elderly (CO-AGE)

Learn More at <https://www.gcoa.org/>

Georgia State University Gerontology Institute



The Gerontology Institute builds on more than 40 years of gerontology education. It is among the oldest and most accomplished gerontology programs in the Southeast. Gerontology students receive individual attention and mentorship but also have all the benefits of being at a large, urban university. In downtown Atlanta, Georgia State is in proximity to numerous programs, services and organizations that provide students with first-hand experiences in the field of aging. The Gerontology Institute offers a Master of Arts degree and a certificate in Gerontology for students who wish to prepare for careers in the field of aging. The Gerontology Institute offers several programs at the undergraduate level: Bachelor of Interdisciplinary Studies (B.I.S.), a certificate in gerontology and a dual-degree program - bachelor's in sociology/master's in gerontology.

Learn more at <https://gerontology.gsu.edu/>

National Association for Professional Gerontologists (NAPG)



NAPG is a not-for-profit organization recognizing a core body of Gerontological knowledge held by individuals who provide quality services and programming for older adults.

NAPG Offers:

- Credentialing for gerontology professionals
- Promotion of discipline standards and credibility
- Consultation for the public and private sectors
- Networking for professional aging specialists
- Testing and evaluating gerontology competencies
- Administrating and scoring exit exams

Learn more at <https://www.napgerontologists.org/>