

Name	Bio
Dr. Carolyn Adams-Price, Mississippi State University	Carolyn Adams-Price is a professor of psychology at Mississippi State University, and was for many years, the chair of the Gerontology Program. Dr. Adams-Price received a master's degree in Social/Developmental Psychology from Brandeis University and a PhD in Life-Span Developmental Psychology from West Virginia University. She was a postdoctoral fellow in Gerontology at the University of Michigan. She is primarily known for her research on creativity and aging, and her research on well-being in older rural African Americans.
Morgan Alexander, Virginia Commonwealth University	Morgan Alexander is a Licensed Master Social Worker and currently works for Village MD-Atlanta Market. She has over fifteen years' experience in case management; from acute healthcare systems, outpatient clinics and hospice work. Morgan holds a bachelor's degree in psychology with a minor in African American studies and her master's degree in social work; both obtained from Virginia Commonwealth University, Richmond, Virginia. Presently, she attends VCU online pursuing a master's degree in gerontology, matriculating this May 2024. She serves as the Student Representative for the Southern Gerontological Society (SGS). In 2023, Morgan was chosen as one of the students to present her poster presentation at the conference in Norfolk. Morgan is also a student member with the Association for Gerontology Education and Social Work (AGESW) and a member of Pi Gamma Mu International Honor Society in Social Sciences, Virginia Nu Chapter. Morgan is also a member of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Incorporated where she continues to serve the community. Morgan has a bubbly personality and enjoys connecting with all people.
Alexa Allen, Pennsylvania State University	Alexa is a third-year human development and family studies (HDFS) graduate student at The Pennsylvania State University. She is broadly interested in examining the short- and long-term impact of social (e.g., race/ethnicity, sex/gender) and contextual (e.g., area deprivation indices) determinants of physical and mental health using a longitudinal design to attain a more comprehensive understanding of their effects on mental and physical health throughout middle to late adulthood. She has specific interests in the role of educational, neighborhood, and household environments to further inform her understanding of mental and physical health outcomes. Her research framework is largely informed by the socio-ecological model, a theoretical perspective that identifies the dynamic interrelationship between personal and environmental characteristics. Her research framework is also guided by the National Institute on Aging (NIA) Health Disparities Research Framework, which leverages the socio-ecological model to identify multilevel (e.g., biological, psychological, social, environmental) determinants relevant to our understanding of minority health and health disparities. Her long-term goal is to be a research scientist and conduct research with an emphasis on health disparities, equity, and intersectional identity while focusing on its impact on mid to late-life Black adults

<p>Dr. Laura Allen, UMBC Erickson School of Aging Studies</p>	<p>Laura D. Allen, Ph.D., is a Post-Doctoral Research Associate and Instructor at the University of Maryland Baltimore County, Erickson School of Aging Studies. She received her Ph.D. from Bar-Ilan University in Israel (2023), where she was a Marie Skłodowska-Curie grant recipient and early-stage researcher with the European Union Horizon 2020 Innovative Training Network EuroAgeism. Her doctoral research was on ageism and the long-term care setting, specifically the news media portrayals of residential long-term care. She was previously a U.S. Fulbright Scholar (2017-18) at Windesheim University of Applied Sciences, Zwolle, the Netherlands, conducting research on resident autonomy and long-term care administration. She graduated from Western Kentucky University with a Bachelor of Science in Health Care Administration, a minor in gerontology, and a certificate in long-term care administration.</p>
<p>Dr. Benjamin Ansa, Augusta University</p>	<p>Dr. Benjamin Ansa is an Assistant Professor in the Department of Health Management, Economics and Policy at Augusta university. His background is in Medicine, Clinical Research and Public Health, and his major research focus includes Chronic Disease Prevention, Health Disparities, and Health Outcomes Research. He has over forty peer-reviewed publications and has presented in several scientific meetings and conferences. Dr. Ansa is also a peer reviewer for several journals and board member for two journals. He teaches graduate students the "Health Performance Improvement" course in the Spring Semester. Traveling, reading and swimming are his hobbies.</p>
<p>Karen Appert, NC Division of Aging and Adult Services</p>	<p>Karen Appert is Program Manager for the Seniors Farmers' Market Nutrition Program at the North Carolina Division of Aging and Adult Services. She has an M.S. in Gerontology, a B.A. in Communications, and holds leadership positions in the NC Serious Illness Coalition and the NC Caregiving Collaborative. As a member of the Southern Gerontological Society, she is active on the SGS Development and Public Policy & Advocacy committees, and is also a member of the Gerontological Society of America in which she initiated and co-led the Family Caregiving interest group.</p>
<p>Dr. Tamatha Arms, University of North Carolina Wilmington</p>	<p>Dr. Tamatha Arms is a Professor at the University of North Carolina Wilmington. She is also an Adult/Geriatric Primary Care and Psychiatric Mental Health Care Nurse Practitioner. She maintains clinical practice along with academia. Her research focuses on Geropsychiatry with 30 journal publications, 5 book chapters, 1 co-authored book and numerous national and international presentations.</p>
<p>Lauren Arney, East Tennessee State University</p>	<p>Lauren Arney is a current Master of Public Health student with a concentration in community and behavioral health at East Tennessee State University. After earning her bachelor's in psychology from Western Carolina University she spent two years working with adults who have intellectual and developmental disabilities. Her areas of interest include caregiving for those with neurodevelopmental disabilities and family dynamics of those with substance use disorders.</p>

Dr. Corinne Auman, Winston Salem State University	Dr. Corinne Auman is the founder and CEO of Choice Care Navigators. She is a Nationally Certified Guardian and an Advanced Professional member of the Aging LifeCare Association. Dr. Auman received her Ph.D. from NC State University, where she studied developmental psychology with a specialty in adulthood and aging. She is an experienced educator and researcher, and author of the book Keenagers: Telling a New Story about Aging.
Natalia Babenko, University of South Florida	Natalia Babenko is a PhD student in the School of Aging Studies at the University of South Florida. She graduated with a master's degree in chemistry and teaching in 2013 from Donetsk National University, Donetsk, Ukraine. She then for several years in pharmaceutical development as a Regulatory Affairs Manager for the Russian Economic Union. In 2023, she obtained a Master's degree in Public Health with a concentration in Global Health Practice from the College of Public Health at the University of South Florida. Her research interests are in preventing Alzheimer's disease and related dementias, social connection & engagement, and health behavior and cognition of older adults. She currently has a Fulbright Scholarship and is president of the Global Health Student Association at the University of South Florida.
Dr. Sara W. Bailey, University of Lynchburg	Sara W. Bailey, Ph.D. (she/her/hers), is a counselor educator, researcher, collaborator, and counselor with a clinical and research emphasis on issues of later life, addiction, adoption, empathy, counseling supervision, and andragogy. She believes in and practices defying stereotypes and engaging in radical reflection in community with others. She is an Assistant Professor of Counseling at the University of Lynchburg and a counselor at Full Life Counseling and Recovery, PLLC. As an educator, Dr. Bailey seeks to demystify content knowledge and present novel material with humor, humility, and ample opportunity for engagement. As a supervisor and mentor, Dr. Bailey recognizes the power of authentic connection and relishes the opportunity to use her passion and life experience to link others with their "why" and support them in their dreams.
Dr. Christina Barmon, Central Connecticut State University	Christina Barmon joined the Central Connecticut State department of sociology in the fall of 2016, after completing her doctoral work at Georgia State University. She is an interdisciplinary scholar across feminist gerontology, medical sociology, aging and the life course, and sex and gender studies. Recent publications have focused on social relationships in long-term care, including residents' sexual and intimate relationships, the sexual harassment of care workers, and residents' self-care. Dr. Barmon teaches Introduction to Sociology, Research Methods, Sociology of Care Work, Sociology of Aging and Life Course, Introduction to Gerontology, and Aging and Intimacy. She is the gerontology minor co-chair, the chapter adviser to gerontology honor society Sigma Phi Omega, and the adviser to the gerontology club.

Zavera Basrai, Duke University Sanford School of Public Policy	Zavera is the Project Coordinator for the WECARE (Workforce Engagement with Care workers to Assist, Recognize, and Educate) at the Duke University Sanford School of Public Policy. She is a recent graduate (May 2023) of Duke University Trinity College of Arts & Sciences, earning a Bachelor of Arts in Neuroscience and a Certificate in Human Rights. Zavera has experience with a variety of research types, but is especially passionate about systems change work in the healthcare space, including centering the challenges/insights of those with lived experience.
Kami Batchelder, Florida Atlantic University	Kami Batchelder is a dedicated and aspiring Ph.D. student committed to advancing knowledge in educational leadership. Currently enrolled in the College of Education at Florida Atlantic University, Kami Batchelder brings a strong academic background and a passion for adult and community education. Having earned a Master of Public Administration and a Master of Arts from Florida Atlantic University, Kami Batchelder has consistently demonstrated academic excellence and a keen interest in education. Driven by a desire to contribute meaningfully to the academic community, Kami Batchelder served as the Director of an Osher Lifelong Learning Institute (OLLI) for more than 16 years. Kami Batchelder's research agenda centers around lifelong learning and social isolation, where she aims to study OLLI directors' strategies to reduce social isolation with their lifelong learning program following a pandemic. Beyond academia, Kami Batchelder is actively involved in the Mentor Collective at Florida Atlantic University and the Jupiter-Tequesta Rotary Club, demonstrating a commitment to both personal and professional growth.
Dr. Alexis Bender, Emory University	Dr. Alexis Bender, Associate Professor of Medicine, is a medical sociologist and social gerontologist based in the Division of Geriatrics and Gerontology. Dr. Bender completed her PhD in Sociology with a concentration in family, health, and the life course and an interdisciplinary certificate in gerontology from Georgia State University. Following her graduate work, Dr. Bender worked with the Army Public Health Center in Maryland conducting mixed methods research and evaluation of social and behavioral health among active duty soldiers and their families (e.g. behavioral health access, suicide, violence). Her research focuses on aging with disability and chronic disease with an emphasis on relationships over the life course, including patient-provider interactions and social and intimate relationships. Her research continues to explore the psychosocial aspects of disability and chronic disease management for patients, health professionals, and families over time. Dr. Bender is a Fellow of the Southern Gerontological Society, the past chair of the Disability and Society Section of the American Sociological Association, and an alumni of the UCSD Sustained Training in Aging & HIV Research (STAHR) Program (R25MH108389).

<p>Ian Blount, University of the Incarnate Word School of Osteopathic Medicine</p>	<p>Hello, my name is Ian Blount. I was born and grew up in Buda, TX. I graduated with a bachelor's degree in Biology from Trinity University in San Antonio. My life experiences in and outside the clinic have made me passionate about addressing health disparities, especially for those living in medically underserved areas like my hometown. Advocating for family members with life-altering disabilities has also taught me the importance of treating the whole person in clinical settings, rather than just a set of symptoms or lab values. The combination of those two passions have inspired a deeper interest in how lifestyle changes and behavioral interventions can improve health outcomes in ways that match or surpass drug-based interventions. My research goal is to emphasize the importance of a preventative approach and advocating for lifestyle changes in the clinical setting in a way that makes health and wellness more accessible to the medically underserved.</p>
<p>Alfred Boakye, University of Maryland, Baltimore and Baltimore County</p>	<p>Alfred Boakye is a doctoral student in Gerontology at the University of Maryland Baltimore and Baltimore County. His research interests center on improving the health and well-being of older adults by empowering the direct care workforce to become more resilient by identifying their unique challenges and matching up available resources to meet those challenges. This reflects his passion for interprofessional education as a starting point for practicalizing research in the aging field.</p>
<p>MaryLea Boatwright Quinn, Division of Aging Services, Georgia Department of Human Services</p>	<p>MaryLea Boatwright Quinn has been serving older adults and has worked in the Atlanta area for almost 30 years. She graduated from Auburn University with a BSW, completed her MSW at the University of Denver and became an LCSW in 1999. She worked in direct practice with older adults as a medical social worker in a variety of home & community-based settings for the including hospice, long-term care, adult day care, and home health. After years in direct practice, MaryLea was introduced to the power of advocacy and decided to shift to policy & advocacy when she started working for the Georgia Council on Aging. She spent almost 10 years advocating for policies and regulations that improve the lives of older adults and their caregivers both on the federal and state level. She lobbied and led advocacy efforts for the Alzheimer's Association Georgia Chapter and GCOA's CO-AGE. Since March of 2022, MaryLea has served as the Assistant Deputy Commissioner of Georgia's Department of Human Services, Division of Aging Services. In this role, she leads the State Unit on Aging administering the Older American's Act Services and Supports for adults age 60+ as well as adults with disabilities. In addition, the Division leads the states Adult Protective Services and Public Guardianship programs that ensure the health, safety, and welfare of vulnerable adults. MaryLea has served on numerous boards including GGS, NAIPC and the GARD Advisory Council.</p>

<p>Dr. Candace Brown, UNC Charlotte</p>	<p>Dr. Candace S Brown is an Assistant Professor of Gerontology in the Department of Public Health Sciences at the University of North Carolina, Charlotte. She holds affiliate appointments in the Gerontology Program and Department of Sociology at UNCC and is a collaborative researcher with the Motivated Cognition and Aging Brain Lab at Duke University. Her research passion is to examine motivation to exercise across the lifespan. She most recently worked with Amissa, Inc., in the development of a smartphone app designed to assist caregivers in monitoring people with dementia. Dr. Brown prefers conducting interdisciplinary mixed methods research because she likes to talk with people but also respects that everyone is not as talkative as she is. Outside of academia, Dr. Brown enjoys spending time with her family and racing triathlons.</p>
<p>Lydia Burton, CARE Center / Institute of Gerontology, UGA</p>	<p>Lydia Burton holds an MPH and specializes in working with and for older adults as the Cognitive Aging Research and Education (CARE) Center's Special Events and Project Coordinator at the University of Georgia. After losing both her Godmother Natalie and her Aunt Linda to Alzheimer's disease, Lydia is no stranger to the turmoil that comes with a dementia diagnosis. Meet Me at the Gardens, a pilot program developed for older adults living with Alzheimer's disease or a related dementia and their care partners, was inspired by watching these dyads grow weary, exhausted, and fearful in a world that does not fully understand them or their diagnosis. Meet Me at the Gardens utilized the powers of nature, curiosity, and a secure, welcoming environment to encourage attendees to do something they may not feel safe doing anywhere else: being themselves. Following the pilot stage of Meet Me at the Gardens, Lydia's next step is to develop community gardens at facilities specializing in older adult care and in underserved rural areas. She is currently involved with a charity effort entitled, "Flowers Beyond Visiting Hours," which donates houseplants to residential facilities.</p>
<p>Denise Butler, Martha W. Goodson Center at Riverside</p>	<p>Denise Butler holds a B.S. in Psychology from Old Dominion University, and an M.S. in Counselling from Long Island University. Denise began as a volunteer at the Martha W. Goodson Center (formerly the Riverside Center for Excellence in Aging) in 2011 in the Geriatric Assessment Clinic and in 2013 became the clinic coordinator. She is a Certified Senior Advisor and trained facilitator in Caring for You, Caring for Me, Chronic Disease Self-Management, received training in the New York University Caregiver Intervention program, is a certified trainer for Teepa Snow's Positive Approach to Caregiving trainer as well as certified as a Teepa Snow Consultant and an Advanced Consultant. Denise also serves SGS on the Membership Committee. In February 2016, she and other volunteers in Williamsburg began the Memory Café to provide a socialization opportunity for people living with dementia and their caregivers. Since then, several new Memory Cafes have opened with her leadership. Denise's interest in and dedication to geriatric health came from personal experience with family and friends.</p>

Dr. Cindy Cain, University of Alabama at Birmingham	My sociological interests reflect two defining aspects of my life. First, I grew up in a rural area of Oregon in a multi-generational household. Growing up with farm animals, fresh food, distant neighbors, and a big family taught me a great deal about communities, families, informal care, and health care. I became especially interested in end-of-life care from my experiences with aging family members and our desire to keep care at home. Second, I have had many jobs through the years: factory work, child and elder care, restaurant management, cell phone sales, and now teaching and research. Having these widely varying work experiences highlights commonalities between all types of work. Specifically, in each job it was clear that workers sought to create a sense of meaningfulness about the work. In my research and teaching, I examine how meaningfulness of health care work affects workers and is shaped by the organizational context.
Cristina Caldera Garza, University of the Incarnate Word School of Osteopathic Medicine	Cristina Caldera Garza is a Master of Biomedical Sciences candidate at the University of the Incarnate Word School of Medicine. She received her Bachelor's of Science in Genetics with minors in Spanish and Health from Texas A&M University in May of 2023. While at Texas A&M, Cristina participated in research and published work in Explorations, The Texas A&M Undergraduate Research Journal. She hopes to pursue gynecologic surgery and operate using DaVinci surgical robots. Her research goals are primarily focused in minimizing health disparities in women's health.
Arnesia Calk, Concordia University Chicago	My name is Arnesia F. Calk. I have my BA in Psychology with an emphasis in Mental Health and my MA of Gerontology from Webster University in St. Louis, Missouri. I am now currently perusing my PhD in leadership gerontology at Concordia University Chicago. I am officially a Certified Dementia Practitioner through the National Council of Certified Dementia Practitioners and a Credentialed Professional Gerontologist through the National Association for Professional Gerontologists. I aspire to be an advocate for geriatric adults to age in place at all levels of care with high quality of life and to assist families in locating appropriate resources and services for their loved ones.

<p>Dr. Meldrena Chapin, University of Maryland, Baltimore County</p>	<p>Dr. Meldrena Chapin has been researching innovative elderly care since the 1990s. Her research focuses upon aging and art, environments for aging, the culture change movement, and the organizations that lead transformative eldercare. Dr. Chapin is the author of <i>Creating Innovative Places: Organizational and Architectural Case Studies of the Culture Change Movement in Long Term Care</i>. As a professor, Dr. Chapin has taught undergraduate and graduate classes on environmental psychology, design research methods, evidence-based design, healthcare design, design for aging, culturally-sensitive design, innovation and design thinking. Dr. Chapin's approach focuses on a systemic/humanistic perspective aimed at creating environments responsive to user's needs. Dr. Chapin has served as an educator with the Gerontology Department at the University of North Carolina at Charlotte, the Interior Design Departments at SCAD and the Art Institute of Atlanta. Currently Dr. Chapin teaches art and environment-related aging courses at the Erickson School of Aging Studies at University of Maryland Baltimore County.</p>
<p>Yun-Zih Chen, UMBC Erickson School of Aging Studies</p>	<p>Yun-Zih (Stacy) Chen, a native of Taiwan, recently graduated with distinction from a master's program in Data Science at the University of Maryland, Baltimore County (UMBC) in 2023. Yun-Zih holds a bachelor's degree in nursing from Chang Jung Christian University in Tainan, Taiwan (B.S. 2009). Following her undergraduate studies, she dedicated four years to serving as a registered nurse in the Cardiovascular and Pulmonary Ward and the Cardiac Intensive Care Unit at National Cheng Kung University Hospital in Taiwan. Before UMBC, Yun-Zih earned her master's degree in Gerontology at Georgia State University (GSU). As a graduate research assistant at GSU, she actively contributed to a research team investigating the implementation of person-centered care in Georgia nursing homes. At UMBC, Yun-Zih excelled in her role as the Teaching Assistant/Graduate Research Assistant at the Erickson School of Aging Studies. She was a part of the research team focusing on student caregivers, showcasing her dedication to bridging the gap between research and practice. Yun-Zih's research interests encompass aging in place, best practices for dementia care, long-term care services, person-centered care, and aging policy. Actively participating in various committees at the Southern Gerontological Society, including the education committee, policy committee, and survey subcommittee, she demonstrates her commitment to shaping the future of gerontology. Looking ahead, Yun-Zih aspires to leverage her unique blend of nurse and data science expertise to become a trailblazing data scientist specializing in gerontology. Her ultimate goal is to address pressing aging issues and seamlessly translate evidence into impactful, real-world practices.</p>

<p>S.M. Cho, UNC Charlotte</p>	<p>I am a senior applied anthropology major minoring in gerontology and public health at the University of North Carolina at Charlotte, where I am also an early entry student in the gerontology graduate certificate program. As a proud critical medical anthropologist and gerontologist, I am studying to pursue a career in applied research where I can demonstrate the invaluable benefits interdisciplinary collaboration and person-centered care offer for all. My research explores how individuals' personal contexts influence the healthcare resources that are available to them, as well as how and why they choose to utilize them and interact with the healthcare system. Specializing in marginalized populations in the aging and dying settings, my academic interests include but are not limited to sexual & reproductive wellness, 2SLGBTQIA+ health, epigenetics, social and environmental determinants of health, infectious disease, health communication, and thanatology. In addition, I work part-time as a cultural anthropologist for a public arts studio, and volunteer at a hospice agency, community garden, and campus food pantry. I am committed to actualizing healthcare equity and building a better future for all!</p>
<p>Dr. Carolyn Clevenger, Emory University</p>	<p>Carolyn Clevenger, DNP GNP-BC earned a Bachelor of Science in Nursing from West Virginia University, a Master of Science in Nursing from Emory University, and a Doctor of Nursing Practice from the Medical College of Georgia. She then went on to complete a Fellowship in Veterans' Health Administration. Carolyn is a nationally recognized leader in gerontological nursing and education. She is Past President of the Gerontological Advanced Practice Nurses Association, as well as a Fellow of the American Association of Nurse Practitioners and the Gerontology Society of America. Her clinic, the Integrated Memory Care Clinic, provides both primary care exclusively for people living with dementia.</p>
<p>Dr. Kim Coddington, Regent University</p>	<p>Kimberley Coddington, Ph.D. is a Lecturer in the School of Psychology & Counseling at Regent University. She also serves as the Assistant Director of the Doctoral Program in Clinical Psychology. She received her doctorate in Counseling Psychology from Gannon University and completed a pre-doctoral internship and two years of post-doctoral training in neuropsychology. Her clinical specialty includes the provision of psychological and neuropsychological assessments for differential diagnosis and treatment planning. Dr. Coddington's research interests include factors impacting positive aging, cognitive rehabilitation, and the impact of neurological disorders on cognitive function including dementia, stroke, Parkinson's disease, seizure disorders, traumatic brain injury, and concussion.</p>

<p>Dr. Adrienne Cohen, Georgia Southern University</p>	<p>Dr. Adrienne Cohen is a professor of Sociology and Director of the Center for Social Gerontology at Georgia Southern University. She received a Bachelor's of Science Degree in Gerontology in 1986 and has held several professional positions in the field over the past 30 plus years. In 2011 she earned a PhD in Social Gerontology from Miami University. She was hired by Georgia Southern University in 2011 as a professor of Sociology. Since arriving at Georgia Southern she has developed and taught several gerontology courses including Introduction to Gerontology, Death and Dying, Sociology of the Life Course and Aging Programs and Policies. In her research career she published research on rural aging, family assistance, social supports for older adults and aging focused pedagogy in several journals and has done over fifty presentations at local, regional, national, and international conferences. In 2013 she opened the Center for Social Gerontology at Georgia Southern University. The Center hosts an annual conference for professionals and students each fall. Since arriving at Georgia Southern University she has generated over \$2.3 million in grant funds to support the needs of older adults in the Southeastern region of Georgia. She worked with a team of professors at the University to develop an Interdisciplinary Minor in Gerontology which has been in place since 2016.</p>
<p>Alicia Cooper, Regent University</p>	<p>Alicia Cooper, BSN, RN, is a second-year Advanced Practice Student studying for her Master's Degree as a Psychiatric Mental Health Nurse Practitioner (PMHNP) at Regent University. She has been in healthcare for approximately thirteen years, starting as a Certified Nursing Assistant from Bon Secours in 2011. She graduated with her associate degree as a Registered Nurse from Tidewater's Beazley School of Nursing in 2016 and obtained a Bachelor of Science in Nursing from Capella University in 2019. She has various clinical experiences, including geriatrics, home hospice, critical care, emergency nursing, psychiatric nursing, and bed coordination roles. Alicia is interested in psychiatric care as a hospital consult liaison, focusing on the acute needs of mental health nursing across the lifespan upon graduation with her APRN. Her clinical research focuses on holistic health and integrative collaboration through a multifaceted team approach.</p>
<p>Dr. Kia Countess, Western Carolina University</p>	<p>Dr. Countess' research areas of interest include Alzheimer's and dementia care, study habits of undergraduate nursing students, eosinophilic esophagitis and age-related trends and issues in healthcare. She is an accomplished nurse educator with over 11 years of experience in systematically improving student performance, substantially strengthening curriculum strategies, and continuously combining best practices with innovative instruction to drive progress. She cultivates positive and constructive learning environments while leveraging advanced didactic training methodologies to promote subject mastery and equip students with the tools and training necessary for long-term success. She relies on more than 26 years of nursing experience to guide best practice standards and nursing innovation. Dr. Countess resides in the Upstate of South Carolina with her husband and two sons. She enjoys serving in her church and all things outdoors.</p>

Dr. Jennifer Craft Morgan, Georgia State University	Dr. Jennifer Craft Morgan is Director and Professor in the Gerontology Institute at Georgia State University. Her research focuses on jobs and careers, attempting to understand how policy, population, workplace and individual level factors shape how work is experienced and how work is organized across care settings. She is a national expert on recruitment, training and retention of direct care workers. Dr. Morgan was a member of the Board of Directors for the Georgia Gerontology Society (2014-2020) and has served as co-chair on the GGS Program and Education Committee. Dr. Morgan is a Past President of the Southern Gerontological Society. Dr. Morgan has been a member of the Southern Gerontological Society since 2001 and has been actively engaged in the leadership of the organization as awards/GRITs co-chair, evaluation liaison, program chair and as a member of the Board (2012-2016) and the executive committee (2018-2022). Dr. Morgan has extensive experience leading teams in funded research and loves her connections with SGS because she is passionate about translating evidence into practice.
Dr. Stuti Dang, Miami Geriatrics Research Education and Clinical Center	Stuti Dang, MD, MPH, is a geriatrician and researcher in the Miami Geriatrics Research Education and Clinical Center (GRECC). She is a Professor of Clinical Medicine in the Department of Internal Medicine at the University of Miami Miller School of Medicine. In her work, she strives to improve the care for community dwelling high need high risk older Veterans by understanding their unmet needs and interventions to link them available home and community-based services, in order to improve their access to care in a more equitable manner. She leads the Innovation Core for the Elizabeth Dole Center of Excellence for Veteran and Caregiver Research (EDCoE), and is currently leading a study on Veteran Directed Care in VISN 8.
Dr. Boyd Davis, UNC Charlotte	I am an applied linguist who focuses on aging and dementia discourse in a range of situations and locations, and health communications about aging and language. I work in partnership with linguists, nurses and counselors across the world as well as in the Southeastern US; currently I am partnered by nurses and linguists in the US, Taiwan, Spain, China, Germany and New Zealand. My goal is to develop interventions for formal and informal caregivers and recipients of care that focus on communication situations in multiple languages in order to reduce agitation, abuse and apprehension.
W. Bennett Davis, Clemson University	William (Bennett) Davis is an undergraduate Health Science student at Clemson University. He has been a member of the Study of Healthy Aging and Applied Research Programs (SHAARP) Lab for 5 semesters.

<p>Jennie de la Cruz, Mercer University</p>	<p>Jennifer de la Cruz has been a practicing Physician Associate since 2001 and continues her clinical practice while holding the position of Associate Clinical Professor at Mercer University's Physician Assistant Studies Program where she is the Assistant Director of Clinical Education. Dedicated to the advancement of gerontological care, she serves on the Board of Directors for the Southern Gerontological Society and is a key contributor to a Geriatric Workforce Enhancement HRSA grant in collaboration with Emory University. Jennifer works with her team at Mercer University to develop an age-friendly care curriculum for students in healthcare. Her commitment to excellence is underscored by the Mercer University College of Health Professions Excellence in Teaching Award she received in 2022. Through her roles in course direction, advocacy, and curriculum development, Professor de la Cruz is committed to actively shaping the future of healthcare providers and contributing to the progress of gerontological care.</p>
<p>Matthew Dear, University of the Incarnate Word School of Osteopathic Medicine</p>	<p>Matthew Dear is a 4th year medical student at the University of the Incarnate Word School of Osteopathic Medicine and is enrolled in the Master of Public Health program. He is originally from Euless, TX. He received a B.S. in Biomedical Sciences from Texas A&M. He is pursuing a residency in Internal Medicine and plans to continue into a fellowship after finishing residency.</p>
<p>Suei Dipaola, Gerontology Institute, Georgia State University</p>	<p>Suei DiPaola is a prolific full-time author with a remarkable literary career, having published 24 books in the Chinese language in Taiwan. Her literary works have captivated readers across Asia. Suei DiPaola has a warm personality and loves multiculturalism. To learn about different cultures, she has been more than 50 countries with backpack. In addition to her literary pursuits, Suei DiPaola is a dedicated scholar currently pursuing a Master of Arts degree at the Gerontology Institute of Georgia State University. Her academic focus on gerontology reflects a deep-seated interest in the study of aging, a topic that resonates with her diverse readership. Suei DiPaola brings a unique perspective to the SGS conference, drawing from her rich experiences as an Asia recognized author and her academic endeavors in gerontology. Her insights into the human experience, aging, and cultural nuances are informed by both her literary achievements and her scholarly pursuits. As a student at the SGS conference, Suei DiPaola is prepared to observe and learn deeply about the intersection of literature and gerontology, shedding light on how her dual roles as an author and a student have shaped her understanding of aging and its portrayal in literature. This biography highlights the author's literary accomplishments, global impact, and academic pursuits, setting the stage for her participation in the SGS conference.</p>

Paulita Edwards-Childs, Mississippi State Department of Health	<p>Paulita L. Edwards-Childs, BSW currently serves as the Program Specialist for the Fall Prevention Program in the Office of Preventive Health and Health Equity at the Mississippi State Department of Health (MSDH). The Fall Prevention Program focuses on preventing falls and fall-related injuries within the older adult population across the state of Mississippi. The completion of evidence-based programs such as A Matter of Balance, Bingocize, and Walk With Ease programs has been impactful and proven to increase the health and well-being of participants. The Fall Prevention Program is one of many evidence-based programs within the Office of Community Health Improvement's Injury and Violence Prevention Bureau. Since working in the Fall Prevention Program, Mrs. Childs has shown excellence in collaboration through her work with fellow programs within the Office of Community Health Improvement. These collaborations focus on the incorporation of a life- span approach starting with collaborations of Early Childhood Education in the pre-school, Concussion and Traumatic Brain Injury in adolescent/young adult health, and Falls + Traumatic Brain Injury/Spinal Cord Injury with older adults. Paulita is also piloting the Yellow Dot Program in Mississippi to aid first responders in providing treatment for older adults involved in motor vehicle crashes that may not be able to communicate their medical history at the time treatment is needed. Paulita holds a Bachelor of Science in Social Work from the University of Mississippi and has worked with children and families living with disabilities for 20 years in roles such as Service Worker, Coordinator, Program Supervisor, and Disability & Mental Health Assistant. During her more than 10 years of public health experience, Mrs. Childs has gained an extensive background in case management, evidence-based practices, and public health advocacy. Mrs. Childs also leads the first Mississippi Fall Prevention Coalition and is a member of the Systemic Special Education Task Force with Disability Rights Mississippi where she passionately assists, informs, and guides individuals that seek information regarding living with disabilities and caring for others with disabilities to resources and services available to them.</p>
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Sarah Ekart, Guidehouse	<p>Sarah is an experienced social services leader with a master’s degree in Gerontology, Lean Green Belt, and Mental Health First Aid certifications. She also holds a journalism degree with an emphasis in strategic communication. She had experience with state governments, including multiple waiver programs for various populations and national non-profit program development and administration all focused on improving the lives of older adults and people with disabilities in the setting of their choice. Sarah’s specific expertise includes developing and implementing empathic, person-centered care delivery; stakeholder and program recipient engagement; application of qualitative and quantitative research methods and data analytics; and coordination of state, federal, and private pay programs for older adults, individuals with disabilities, and / or their caregivers to achieve better value and outcomes for the individual and all payers. Her work at Guidehouse has included coordination and facilitation of stakeholder and program participant interviews and listening sessions, report and journal article development, and development of multi-state comparative policy analysis including the dissemination of the outcomes and findings.</p>
Logan Elkins, UNC Wilmington	<p>Logan Elkins is a graduate student at the University of North Carolina Wilmington’s College of Health and Human Services. She plans to graduate in May with a Master of Science in Applied Gerontology degree. Logan is a graduate assistant under the direction of Dr. Tina Newsham, Gerontology Program Coordinator and Professor, and is a member of the Sigma Phi Omega gerontological honors society within the UNCW chapter.</p>
Gracie Ellington	<p>Gracie Ellington is a graduate student at the University of North Carolina Wilmington (UNCW), who is seeking a Master of Science in Applied Gerontology within the School of Health and Applied Human Sciences within the College of Health and Human Services. Gracie received her undergraduate degree in Recreational Therapy at UNCW. Gracie's area of focus is improving the quality of care within Medicaid-based skilled nursing facilities.</p>
Rose Marie Fagan, Live Oak Project	<p>Rose Marie Fagan is a co-founder and the founding Executive Director of the Pioneer Network, a National Network of individuals who are transforming the culture of aging for the 21st Century. Rose Marie coordinated the seminal meeting of Pioneers in 1997 in Rochester and co-authored the widely disseminated final report of that historic occasion. She also coordinated nine national Pioneer Network conferences from 1999 to 2009, with attendance growing to over 1000 from 48 states and 5 countries. Rose Marie speaks all over the nation on nursing home culture change and helps educate about how to implement change. Her activities have included being a resource to states forming statewide networks and coalitions for culture change. Rose Marie has been honored several times for her visionary work with and on behalf of residents of nursing homes. She is a member of the Live Oak Project which aims to transform the long-term care system in the U.S.</p>

<p>Andrew Ferguson, FEMA Community Emergency Response Team</p>	<p>Andrew Ferguson is a public safety professional, with over 36 years of military, law enforcement, emergency medicine, technical rescue, and emergency management experience. For over a decade he served as the Senior Lecturer of Homeland Security and Disaster Management for Appalachian State University. He now serves as a FEMA Type III Incident Management Team Liaison Officer for the Western Branch of North Carolina Emergency Management, and is involved in FEMA Community Emergency Response Teams at the local, state, and federal level. His current activities include evaluating and training basic level community emergency services to underserved portions of the Bay Islands, Honduras, currently serving as the contractual Chief of Public Safety/Police and Fire for the Municipality of Guanaja.</p>
<p>Dr. Lee Ann Ferguson UMBC Erickson School of Aging Studies</p>	<p>Lee Ann Steffen Ferguson, PhD, is the Director of Graduate Programs and a Clinical Assistant Professor at the University of Maryland Baltimore, Erickson School of Aging Studies. She holds a Ph.D. in leadership and gerontology from Concordia University, Chicago. As an environmental and geographical gerontologist, Dr. Ferguson’s research focuses on aging and aging policy in rural and remote environments; specifically among island countries within the Caribbean region and coastal municipalities of Central American countries. Dr. Ferguson is the former executive director of the Southern Gerontological Society. Throughout her career, Dr. Ferguson has also maintained adjunct and visiting professor appointments at Lenoir Rhyne University, Caldwell Community College, and Appalachian State University. Prior to engaging her academic career, Dr. Ferguson worked as Director of Social Services, Director of Marketing, and as a clinical liaison in various continuing care retirement community settings. She is a member of the Southern Gerontological Society, for which she serves on numerous committees and subcommittees, and is also a member of the Gerontological Society of America. Dr. Ferguson actively volunteers in her community as a program manager and trainer of the Alexander County Community Emergency Response Team. She and her family have operated a Nigerian Goat dairy farm for over 10 years. She completed her training as a North Carolina Extension Master Gardener in 2023 and has recently been working to revive the dormant (due to Covid) gardening club in her county.</p>
<p>Dr. Michael Forder, Virginia Commonwealth University - College of Health Professions</p>	<p>Michael Forder serves as the Director of E-Learning for the VCU College of Health Professions. In this role he drives the creation of engaging student-centered learning experiences through curriculum development, program assessment, and the implementation of emerging instructional technologies and innovative andragogical practices.</p>

<p>Dr. Alyssa Gamaldo, Clemson University</p>	<p>Dr. Alyssa Gamaldo is a Professor in the Department of Psychology at Clemson University. She has a Ph.D. in Lifespan Developmental Psychology from North Carolina State University and completed a post-doctoral fellowship at the National Institute on Aging (NIA). She is an expert in aging and health disparities, particularly cognitive aging disparities. Her research focuses on identifying adverse (e.g., poor sleep, financial strain, and exposure to discriminatory experiences) and protective factors (e.g., education, life satisfaction and social support) associated with cognitive functioning, particularly in populations at risk for AD/ADRD diagnosis such as Black adults.</p>
<p>Dr. Cassandra Germain, North Carolina A&T State University</p>	<p>Dr. Germain is a faculty member in the department of Psychology at North Carolina A&T State University and Associate Director of Education for the Center for Integrative Health Disparities and Equity Center. Dr. Germain's research is focused on improving functional outcomes in older adults who are at risk for Alzheimer's disease, reducing disparities in brain health and reducing caregiver burden.</p>
<p>Dr. Ethlyn Gibson, Norfolk State University - School of Nursing</p>	<p>Dr. McQueen-Gibson currently serves as an Adjunct Associate Professor in the Department of Internal Medicine, Division of Geriatric Medicine at Eastern Virginia Medical School in Norfolk, VA focusing on Alzheimer's research and holds appointments as adjunct professor at Old Dominion University School of Nursing in Norfolk, VA and Norfolk State University School of Nursing. From August 2019 until January 2023, she served as an associate professor at Hampton University's School of Nursing and Inaugural Director for the Center for Gerontology Excellence and Minority Aging. She holds a Doctor of Nursing Practice degree from Ursuline College Breen School of Nursing in Cleveland, OH, a Master of Science degree in Nursing from the Medical College of Georgia in Augusta, GA, and a Bachelor of Science degree in Nursing from Ursuline College Breen School of Nursing. She holds the distinction as a Fellow in Applied Gerontology conferred by the Southern Gerontological Society. She has practiced nursing for over 40 years to include clinical and administrative positions and is a veteran having served as a commissioned officer in the U.S. Army Nurse Corps on active and reserve duty. Dr. Gibson has the following Virginia gubernatorial appointment to the Commonwealth Health Research Board and completed service to the Virginia Board of Nursing from 2017-2021. Recently, awarded in January 2023 by the Hampton Roads Community Action Coalition (HRCAP), with the "Community Builders 2023 of the Year Award" for outstanding contributions in community engagement.</p>

<p>Dr. David Hage, Misericordia University</p>	<p>Dr. David Hage began his full-time appointment with Misericordia University's Social Work Program in August of 2016 as an Assistant Professor of Social Work/Director of Field Education. Dr. Hage coordinates the department's undergraduate Gerontology Minor, directs the post-graduate Geriatric Care Management Certificate within the Occupational Therapy Department, and serves as the Faculty Liaison for the university's Institute on Aging. Dr. Hage earned a BSW degree from Misericordia University, an MSW from Marywood University, and a Ph.D. from Concordia University Chicago in Leadership & Gerontology. Dr. Hage is a Licensed Clinical Social Worker (LCSW) in the states of Florida and Pennsylvania, a member of the Academy of Certified Social Workers (ACSW), a Certified Advanced Social Work Case Manager (C-ASWCM), a Certified Advanced Aging Life Care Professional™, a Certified Dementia Practitioner (CDP), a member of the American College of Healthcare Executives (ACHE), and the National Society for Leadership & Success (NSLS). Dr. Hage is a Jewish Healthcare Foundation Feinstein Death & Dying Fellow. He serves as a member of the National Association of Social Workers (NASW)-PA Chapter's Aging Committee (former Chair), as a member of the Southern Gerontological Society's Survey Priorities Team, as a member of the biomedical ethics and palliative care committees at Wilkes-Barre General Hospital, and as a community advisory council member for Geisinger Behavioral Healthcare. Dr. Hage also maintains an active part-time counseling and geriatric care management consulting practice.</p>
<p>Chloe Hale, GA Department of Public Health</p>	<p>Ms. Hale's area of expertise is health education, program evaluation, and chronic disease prevention. She earned her Master's degree in Health Education and Behavior from University of Florida. She has worked in public health for seven years and is a Certified Health Education Specialist. As an evaluator for the Injury Prevention Program at the Georgia Department of Public Health, Chloe coordinates evaluation activities and reports for the Building Our Largest Dementia (BOLD) project for Georgia, funded by CDC. This project aims to incorporate public health into dementia, including Alzheimer's work happening in the state. In addition, she provides guidance on health education communication projects. Other professional experiences include management of health education programs involving, tobacco prevention, breast and cervical cancer early detection, and diabetes prevention.</p>

Babs Hall, Guidehouse	Babs is an accomplished professional who has served a wide range of populations in the health and human services field, She is recognized as a proven leader at the local, regional, and state levels for home and community-based programs. She has more than 20 years of experience managing and directing successful multi-level service delivery initiatives. Babs demonstrates the ability to break down echo chamber silos to create collaborative relationships across several different systems of care. Her committed multi-disciplinary approach to building diverse coalitions while strengthening existing networks has proven successful in solving problems and facilitating systems change. Babs has a solid reputation for identifying and understanding complex issues and is skilled at applying evidence-based practices to achieve positive outcomes.
Marsha Hampton-Jarmon, Clemson University	Marsha Hampton Jarmon has Bachelor of Liberal Arts in Black studies from Amherst College. She is a project manager for several projects (e.g., Healthy Aging in Neighborhoods of Diversity across the Life Span Sleep Study), She has been working in community health and well-being research and/or service for 12 years. She is dedicated to identifying and finding outreach strategies to improve awareness, engagement, and participation in health and aging research, particularly in socially marginalized and underrepresented communities.
Dr. Cynthia Hancock, UNC Charlotte	Cynthia Hancock, PhD, FAGHE is a Teaching Professor of Sociology and the Director of the Gerontology Program at UNC Charlotte. She earned her PhD in Sociology from The University of North Carolina in Chapel Hill. She has spent twenty plus years at Charlotte supporting the Gerontology program and its students as undergraduate coordinator, experiential learning coordinator and now director of the program which includes a minor, concentration in the Interdisciplinary Studies BA, and a graduate certificate. She was instrumental in the creation of the concentration in the IDST BA. Dr. Hancock has taught a variety of both gerontology and sociology courses and now focuses on teaching the undergraduate introductory and capstone courses - both of which include experiential learning. She also teaches the foundational graduate certificate course Current Issues in the Diverse Experiences of Aging. Dr. Hancock is passionate about gerontological education and believes that all degrees and career paths benefit from this knowledge. With colleagues, she has been deeply involved in an extensive revision of the Exploring Careers in Aging website, the development of a Charlotte Teachers Institute seminar helping K-12 teachers incorporate aging content into their curricula, and the development of lesson plans for P-2 teachers to disrupt the ageist narrative around the 100 Days of School Celebrations. Dr. Hancock is active in the Southern Gerontological Society Education committee and is an SGS Victor W. Marshall Fellow in Applied Gerontology, Sigma Phi Omega Emeritus Fellow, as well as a Fellow of the Academy for Gerontology in Higher Education.

Dr. Julie Hartmann, Bellarmine University	Dr. Julie Hartmann is an Assistant Professor in the Doctor of Physical Therapy program at Bellarmine University. She has been a physical therapist for 38 years with a primary focus in geriatrics for the past 20 years. She is a Board-Certified Clinical Specialist in Geriatric Physical Therapy through the American Physical Therapy Association. She assumed the role of the Director of the Bellarmine University Geriatric Residency in June 2021. Her current teaching responsibilities focus on geriatrics, rehabilitation techniques, teaching and learning, and community engagement/service learning. Her research interests include fall prevention, the impact of oral health on overall health, and team teaching.
Girish Hemrajani, Gerontology Institute at Georgia State University	As an accomplished ENT Surgeon with 32 years of experience, my journey through the medical field has been one of continuous learning, growth, and dedication to improving the lives of people. My fascination with the field of Gerontology/Aging Studies began to take shape during my years as a medical practitioner in the UAE and India. Witnessing the diverse and complex health issues faced by elderly patients, particularly those dealing with cognitive decline and Alzheimer's Disease and Related dementia (ADRD), ignited a passion within me. This realization led me to embark on a master's degree in Gerontology/Aging Studies at GSU in Atlanta, Georgia. Under the guidance of Dr. Morgan, I have had the privilege of participating in numerous research endeavors and am her graduate research assistant for the entire duration of my master's program. It is my goal to contribute to the field through rigorous academic exploration, groundbreaking research, and active involvement in policy development. I am deeply committed to improving the quality of life for our elderly population.
Alexis Hernandez, University of North Carolina Wilmington	Alexis Hernandez is a senior at the University of North Carolina Wilmington, who is majoring in Exercise Science in the School of Health and Applied Human Sciences within the College of Health and Human Services. Alexis served as an undergraduate assistant on the Mobile Health and Resource Fairs project during 2023. Alexis serves as the Vice President of new member education, and actively participated as a member of the exercise science student association. Upon graduation, Alexis plans to get involved in community health outreach and being involved in the health and wellness field.
Adrienne Hollowell Eldridge, Regent University	Adrienne H. Eldridge, MA, is fourth year student in the PsyD program at Regent University where she currently serves as the Clinical Research Coordinator for the Center for Clinical Research in Neuropsychology. Adrienne completed a Master of Arts in Clinical Psychology at Regent University in 2022, a Master of Arts in Psychology at Fayetteville State University in 2017, and a Bachelor of Arts in Psychology with a minor in Neuroscience from Wake Forest University in 2008. She has clinical experience working with adults with developmental intellectual disorders, inpatients with severe and persistent mental illness, outpatients, and inmates. Adrienne's research interests include neuropsychology and personality assessment.

<p>Faith Hopkins, University of the Incarnate Word School of Osteopathic Medicine</p>	<p>Faith Hopkins is a Master of Biomedical Science student at the University of the Incarnate Word School of Medicine. She obtained a bachelor's degree in 2023 in Rehabilitative Sciences with a minor in Biology with a pre-physician assistant concentration from the University of the Incarnate Word. During her studies, Faith has worked as a Certified Pharmacy Technician and is currently working towards her CPhT-Adv to strengthen her knowledge about medication before going to professional school. She has a research background in underrepresented groups and focused on examining how healthcare workers can enhance their ability to understand and relate to these individuals. Her research goals include learning more about underrepresented groups and researching understudied topics.</p>
<p>Dr. Grace Ijitade, East Tennessee State University</p>	<p>Grace Ijitade is a Public Health master's student at East Tennessee State University. She is passionate about promoting healthy aging and advocating for enhanced services and support systems for rural older adults to improve their well-being. Her expertise includes social determinants of health, the biology of aging, and intergenerational activities. Grace has contributed to publications and delivered presentations on the impact of social determinants of health on aging-related illnesses in rural communities.</p>
<p>Dr. Jenny Inker, Virginia Commonwealth University</p>	<p>Jenny Inker, PhD is an assistant professor of gerontology and the co-program director for the Assisted Living Administration Specialty Area in the M.S. in gerontology program at VCU. She serves as the Chair of the Board of Long-term Care Administrators in the Commonwealth of Virginia which governs the practice of licensed Nursing Home and Assisted Living Facility Administrators. She teaches Sociology of Aging, and Aging and Human Values (ethics) and supervises masters students completing their Assisted Living Administrator-in-Training practicum, as well as doctoral students in the Health Related Sciences PhD program. Dr Inker co-leads a number of popular workforce trainings throughout the year, including a leadership master class series, ethics workshops, and an exam preparation class for the Residential Care Assisted Living (RCAL) national exam. Dr Inker's translational research explores how to improve attitudes to aging among healthcare and long-term care professionals and the needs of family and professional caregivers with regard to education and support. The goal of her service, teaching, and research are to raise conscious awareness of the potential for elderhood as a time of life which enriches individuals and society and to disrupt ageism and other barriers to developing elderhood.</p>
<p>Lukas Isley, University of the Incarnate Word School of Osteopathic Medicine</p>	<p>My name is Lukas Isley. I graduated from the University of Houston with a Bachelor of Science in Biology and a minor in Psychology in 2023. I worked at the Trauma and Stress Studies Center research lab as an assistant, producing manuscripts for publication. I am attending the University of The Incarnate Word School of Medicine Masters of Biomedical Science program, intending to matriculate into the associated Doctor of Osteopathic Medicine program. I intend to become a geriatric psychiatrist to care for the mental health of aging populations.</p>

Tanjina Jalil, University of South Florida	Tanjina recently graduated with a Master's of Gerontology at the University of South Florida, where she continues to do research. Her/their research interests are personality, work productivity, chronic illness, and aging. She is a project manager in the 'Positive Aging Lab' in the School of Aging Studies and a research assistant in the 'Work Stress Lab' in the Department of Psychology. Tanjina hopes to pursue an MD/PhD in preventative medicine and successful aging.
Tara Jenkins, Harmony in Dementia	Tara Jenkins, MT-BC, CDP, CMDCP, is a board-certified music therapist, certified dementia practitioner, and certified Montessori dementia care professional with experience working in dementia care since 2007. As the founder of Harmony in Dementia, Tara has become a beacon of expertise in her field, offering both group and individual music therapy services. Her company also extends its reach through music consultation support and engaging workshops and education developed for older adults, caregivers, professionals, and students. Tara's unwavering commitment is rooted in extensive training and profound knowledge in caring for individuals living with dementia and cognitive decline. She collaborates closely with caregivers, sharing the transformative power of music and co-creating meaningful experiences for people living with dementia. In addition to her hands-on contributions, Tara is a co-author of the book, "Music, Memory, and Meaning: How to Effectively Use Music to Connect with Aging Loved Ones." A sought-after speaker, she frequently presents on pivotal topics encompassing music, dementia, and self-care, further solidifying her impact and influence in the field.
Dr. Mijin Jeong, Clemson University	Dr. Mijin Jeong is a Post-Doctoral Fellow in the Department of Psychology at Clemson University and an affiliate of the Assessing Daily Activities and Perceptions with Technology (ADAPT) lab. Her research is interested in exploring socio-contextual factors that influence the aging process across diverse communities.

<p>Dr. Christopher Kelly, University of Nebraska Omaha</p>	<p>Dr. Christopher M. Kelly, PhD, is Professor and Chair of the Department of Gerontology at the University of Nebraska at Omaha (UNO). He was awarded Fellow status from the Gerontological Society of America (GSA) through the Social Research, Policy, and Practice Section (FGSA). He has been an active member of GSA since 1998. Dr. Kelly's research interests include the extent and effectiveness of state nursing home survey activity, the development of alternatives to long-term care, including home and community-based services (HCBS), and the recruitment, training, and retention of the direct care workforce. His research has documented the shift in this workforce towards industries such as assisted living and home health care services and towards occupations such as personal and home care aides, which reflect the growing tendency of older adults to age in place. Since returning to his native Nebraska and joining the UNO Department of Gerontology in 2006, Dr. Kelly has contributed to this department's mission as the leading provider of gerontological education in the state. He has taught a wide range of courses, including Introduction to Gerontology, Community Resources for Older Adults, Literature and Aging, Politics and Aging, and Applied Social Gerontology. Dr. Kelly has been recognized for his service to his profession, receiving the Southern Gerontological Society (SGS) Applied Gerontologist Award in 2017. He was recognized as a Victor W. Marshall Fellow by SGS in 2020. He has served GSA and SGS in several capacities, including Treasurer of SGS and Chair of the SGS Publications Committee.</p>
<p>Emma Kennedy, S.C. Dept. of Health & Environmental Control</p>	<p>Emma Kennedy holds an undergraduate degree in Biology and a Master of Public Health in Epidemiology and Biostatistics, both from West Virginia University, her home State. While attaining her MPH, Emma worked with the West Virginia University Injury Control Research Center to complete her practicum work, evaluating the State's ATV training program. Since graduation, Emma has worked in the HIV care and surveillance fields but returned to Injury as the Director of Injury and Substance Abuse Prevention (DISAP) in March of 2019. DISAP is home to the CDC Cooperative agreement BOLD Public Health Programs to Address Alzheimer's Disease and Related Dementias (ADRD) in South Carolina. The cooperative agreement has a public health lens and works to educate on risk reduction and early detection/diagnosis of ADRD. Emma serves as the representative for the South Carolina Department of Health on the State's Alzheimer's Resource Coordinating Center's (ARCC) advisory council and is the ARCC public health subcommittee chair. The ARCC serves as a statewide focal point for ADRD coordination, service development, information, and education.</p>

<p>Anjali Khakharia, Emory University</p>	<p>Anjali is Sr. Biostatistician for Georgia Gear. She is part of Coordinating Core and provides data support for the Georgia Gear Program. When Anjali is not working on Georgia Gear matters, she is Sr. Biostatistician for various research projects at the Emory University School of Medicine Division of General Medicine & Geriatrics providing data support to gerontologists and geriatricians on their awarded research studies and quality improvement projects. She is also affiliated with VA Atlanta and provides data extraction, management, and data analytic support to the number of researchers at Atlanta VA hospital. Anjali has been working at Emory University for almost six years. In the past, she worked as Research Associate at the University of Medicine and Dentistry of New Jersey (UMDNJ) and VA hospital in New Jersey for over 8 years. Her research interests are improving Diabetes care and its management, looking at the long-term complications of diabetes and its management, identifying the risk factors, and managing chronic kidney disease. Health services research related to vascular interventions for cardiovascular diseases. She is also interested in research related to the geriatric population including Parkinson’s disease, dementia, and falls.</p>
<p>Richard Mutua Kilonzo, East Tennessee State University</p>	<p>Richard Mutua Kilonzo is a committed Doctor of Public Health student in the Department of Community Health at East Tennessee State University (ETSU). Holding academic distinctions, including an MSc. and MPH in Public Health from Umeå University, Sweden, and an M.A. and B.A. (Hons.) in Counseling from Nkumba University, Uganda, he is recognized as a proficient counseling psychologist. Beginning his career with a focus on caregivers of HIV/AIDS orphans and vulnerable children, Richard developed a keen interest in caregiving. His career has evolved, demonstrating growth in research capacities as he employs implementation science to advance ongoing projects dedicated to improving the quality of care for the targeted population. He has actively shared his expertise through numerous oral and poster presentations, disseminating evidence-based best practices in this domain. In a recent accomplishment, Richard published a scientific paper with his project colleague addressing women's health, specifically focusing on the psychosocial well-being of vulnerable young and adult girls. Currently, he is actively engaged in an aging research laboratory, aligning his work with the overarching goal of his doctoral program at ETSU. Richard's diverse experiences and valuable contributions position him as a high-profile individual dedicated to making significant impacts in the fields of public health and caregiving.</p>
<p>Kameron Kishaba, University of the Incarnate Word School of Osteopathic Medicine</p>	<p>Kameron Kishaba is a 4th year medical student at the University of the Incarnate Word School of Osteopathic Medicine and is enrolled in the Master of Public Health program. He is originally from San Diego, CA. He received a B.S. in Biology from Oregon State University and Master in Biomedical Science from University of the Incarnate Word. He is pursuing a residency in Internal Medicine and plans to become a hospitalist once finishing residency.</p>

<p>Kyle Kopp, University of the Incarnate Word School of Osteopathic Medicine</p>	<p>Kyle Copp is a fourth-year medical and MPH student at the University of the Incarnate Word School of Osteopathic Medicine. Graduating Magna Cum Laude with a B.S. in Cellular and Molecular Biology and a minor in chemistry laid the foundation for his medical journey. Kyle’s primary goal is to complete his residency in emergency medicine, with a particular focus on extending his expertise to serve underserved and rural communities on a global scale.</p>
<p>Dr. Ann Marie Kopitzke, Hampton University</p>	<p>Dr. Ann Marie Kopitzke an Associate Professor at Hampton University, in the School of Nursing - Health Sciences, collaborative research focuses on aging health issues. Dr. Kopitzke has a broad background in health services research, with specific emphasis on the access to care and treatment options, given financial constraints. She has worked on diverse grants that include: childhood immunizations, cultural competency, nurse practitioners and the elderly, medication management; domestic abuse (heterosexual/same sex partners), teen obesity, and neighborhood satisfaction. In addition, collaboration with other researchers produced several peer-reviewed publications and presentations. Dr. Kopitzke has familiarity with all phases of research: 1) designing research studies; 2) conducting; 3) supervising and 4) research support (survey administration, data collection & entry; database management; as well as statistical analysis using SPSS/SAS). Dr. Kopitzke has taught Health Services Research to emerging undergraduate scholars with classes (in-person & online) of 60+ students per semester). Dr. Kopitzke has over 20 years of aging research experience. Dr. Kopitzke’s work with Senior Services of Southeastern Virginia (SSEVA), allowed her to assist older adults with managing their chronic illnesses and aging in place. Her focus is on healthy aging across the lifespan. Her diverse background in business, public administration, holistic health practices and health services research make enable her to contribute to evidence-based healthy aging practices and interventions. In summary, Dr. Kopitzke has the research experience, administrative and leadership skills, as well the expertise working with aging populations (with chronic illnesses) necessary to successfully carry out proposed healthy aging research projects.</p>
<p>Tyler Larkin, University of the Incarnate Word School of Osteopathic Medicine</p>	<p></p>
<p>Andrew Lawendy, University of the Incarnate Word School of Osteopathic Medicine</p>	<p>Hello, my name is Andrew Lawendy. I grew up in Las Cruces, New Mexico, and moved to the state of Texas with my family eight years ago. I graduated with a Medical Humanities degree from the University of Texas at San Antonio. I have been striving to pursue medicine as a career since going to college in 2015 and have faced many difficulties along my journey. Through close experiences with patients as an Office Manager at Fullcare pediatrics and personal interests, I have developed a passion for reviewing outcomes of different treatment modalities and their effectiveness in patients of different age ranges. My research goal is to help determine where surgical repair or physical therapy has better long-term outcomes in meniscus tears in patients 45 and older.</p>

Abrielle LeBlanc, UNC Wilmington	Abrielle LeBlanc, BSW, is the Aging Compliance Specialist for the Cape Fear Council of Governments Area Agency on Aging and a student in the Master of Social Work program at the University of North Carolina Wilmington. As an Aging Compliance Specialist, Abrielle coordinates the execution of the Home and Community Care Block Grant funding for a four-county region: Brunswick, Columbus, New Hanover, and Pender County.
Dr. Sung-Jin Lee, North Carolina A&T State University	Dr. Sung-Jin Lee is a Professor of Housing Research in the Department of Family and Consumer Sciences (FCS) at North Carolina A&T State University. Regarding her research interests, she has focused on housing for an aging society, social and environmental issues, sustainable communities, and secondary data analyses. Since 2010, Dr. Lee has been the principal investigator for several research projects funded by, e.g., HUD and USDA on assessing strategies utilized by North Carolina older adults aging in place (home and community), with special emphasis on older, limited-resource households. Regarding her teaching career at N.C. A&T, Dr. Lee has 13 years of teaching experience in FCS/housing and research-methods courses at both undergraduate and graduate levels; and has engaged in the design and execution of curricula, marketing and recruitment/retention plans, and assessment, which has been utilized through extramurally funded USDA NIFA projects. Besides, Dr. Lee has enthusiastically pursued service and leadership roles for the department, the college, and the university (e.g., committee membership) as well as professional organizations at the state, national, and international levels (e.g., top-tier journal manuscript reviewer; board member/committee chair; [international journal] editorial board member).
Dr. Jeffrey Lentz, Emory University	I am a Post-Doctoral Fellow at Emory University's School of Medicine in the Department of Medicine, Division of Geriatrics and Gerontology. I work under Dr. Molly M. Perkins. In addition, I am a part-time faculty member in the Institute for Healthy Aging at the University of North Georgia and in the Department of Human Services and Sociology at Post University. My research centers on aging, health, and disability among sexual and gender minorities.
Dr. Yang Li, University of Lausanne	Yang is a Senior researcher at the National Centre of Expertise in Life Course Research in Switzerland. His research emphasizes the economic aspects of aging, social-spatial inequalities, capability and development in later life. Yang has held teaching and research positions in the Department of Gerontology, University of Southampton as well as the Institute of Gerontology, University of Massachusetts. Yang holds a PhD and an MS in Gerontology (University of Massachusetts), an MA in Economics (Boston University), and a BA in Economics (New York University).

<p>Rhianna Lopez, University of the Incarnate Word School of Osteopathic Medicine</p>	<p>My name is Rhianna Lopez and I am from a small town in south Texas called Sabinal, Texas. I earned my Bachelor of Science degree in Biomedical Engineering with a pre-medical concentration from St. Mary's University in May of 2023. I graduated from Sabinal High School as the Class of 2020 Salutatorian with an Associates of Arts degree prior to earning my high school diploma and a commendable academic certificate for maintaining perfect attendance from pre-kindergarten through 12th grade. Alongside my academic endeavors, I've been the proud proprietor of a shaved ice business since the age of 16. Growing up in a medically underserved area, I witnessed the scarcity of healthcare resources in rural settings, directly impacting lives, including my own. Personal encounters with family members battling chronic illnesses and disabilities have fueled my passion for pursuing medicine and aspiring to be an osteopathic physician. These experiences have steered my unwavering commitment to address healthcare inequalities. Recognizing the significance of holistic care, I firmly believe in a whole person approach to medicine to treat an entire patient rather than just their symptoms with a focus on preventative health care. My research endeavors focus on emphasizing the importance of preventative healthcare to help patients develop lifestyles that don't just fight illnesses, but help prevent it, too. Ultimately, my aim is to enhance the accessibility of healthcare and well-being for medically underserved communities.</p>
<p>Dr. Mari K. Mackiewicz, Virginia Commonwealth University</p>	<p>Marissa "Mari" Mackiewicz, RN, CNS, PhD, is a post-doctoral fellow at the University of Chicago, Section of Hospital Medicine. She received her PhD in Nursing from the University of San Diego in 2018. Her research focuses on urban-dwelling populations of underserved older adults with substance use disorder.</p>
<p>Elisa Mangosing-Lemmon, Riverside Doctors' Hospital Williamsburg</p>	<p>Elisa Mangosing-Lemmon is the Staff Development Coordinator with Riverside Doctors' Hospital Williamsburg, in Williamsburg, Virginia. She obtained her Master of Science Degree in Nursing, with a concentration in Nursing Administration, from Old Dominion University. She holds specialty nursing certifications as a Certified Medical-Surgical Registered Nurse (CMSRN) and a board-certified Registered Nurse in Nursing Professional Development (NPD-BC). She completed the NICHE (Nursing Improving Care for Healthsystem Elders) Geriatric Resource Nurse (GRN) Program. Riverside Doctors' Hospital Williamsburg holds the NICHE Exemplar designation, which demonstrates the hospital's organizational commitment to ensure that all our older adult patients receive high-quality care throughout their hospital experience. The hospital also holds recognition as an Accredited Geriatric Emergency Department through the American College of Emergency Physicians and is certified by the American Hospital Association as a Level 1 Age-Friendly Health System. Elisa co-led this initiative with Christine Jensen.</p>

<p>Tejan Mansaray, East Tennessee State University</p>	<p>Tejan Mansaray is a highly motivated and enthusiastic Public Health master's student at East Tennessee State University. He is a strong believer in the power of community and is passionate about promoting healthy aging across the lifespan. He is also a vocal advocate for enhancing services and support systems for young adults to improve their overall well-being. Tejan's research interests lie in exploring the social determinants of health and understanding the biology of aging and chronic illness among younger adults. His research is focused on identifying effective interventions to address these issues and promote better health outcomes for all. Overall, Tejan represents a new generation of public health professionals who are committed to promoting health equity and improving the well-being of all members of society.</p>
<p>Dr. Sarah A. Marrs, Virginia Commonwealth University</p>	<p>Dr. Marrs is an Assistant Professor in the Department of Gerontology and the Director of Research for the Virginia Center on Aging. She teaches statistics and research methodology courses and oversees CIRCAA - a faculty and clinician professional development program focused on interprofessional geriatrics. Her research interests focus on the impact of ageism on healthcare, professionals' recognition of and response to abuse in later life, and geriatrics workforce enhancement through interprofessional training. She is the Principal Investigator of the Virginia HEAR project, a federally funded project awarded by the Administration for Community Living (ACL). Her scholarly activity includes peer-reviewed publications and presentations utilizing quantitative, qualitative, and mixed methodologies.</p>
<p>Dr. Stephen M. Marson, University of North Carolina at Pembroke</p>	<p>Stephen M. Marson attended Ohio Dominican University (BA), The Ohio State University (MSW) and North Carolina State University (Ph.D. – Sociology) with a minor in Social Work from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. He is involved in ongoing research addressing social inequality. In addition, he is the founder and editor of The Journal of Social Work Values and Ethics and the author of three books and numerous articles. After 40 years, he retired from his professorship at the University of North Carolina at Pembroke.</p>
<p>Ebenezer Martey, Georgia State University</p>	<p>Mr. Martey is a master's student in Gerontology at Georgia State University.</p>
<p>Dr. Diane Martin, University of Maryland, Baltimore and Baltimore County</p>	<p>Diane J. Martin is an associate professor in the Graduate School at University of Maryland, Baltimore. She also serves as director of the university's Geriatrics & Gerontology Education and Research (GGEAR) program, a state-funded program developed in 1987 to support interprofessional educational and research activities in the field of geriatrics and gerontology. Programs are designed to bolster the well-being of older adults and improve quality of later life. In partnership with the Maryland Area Health Education Centers and other agencies and organizations throughout Maryland, Dr. Martin develops interprofessional training opportunities related to aging and older adults for undergraduate, graduate, and professional students in health science and social science programs, as well as conferences and programs for professionals and the public.</p>

<p>Carlo Martinez, University of the Incarnate Word School of Osteopathic Medicine</p>	<p>Carlo Martinez is a Master of Biomedical Science candidate with the University of the Incarnate Word School of Medicine. His undergraduate degree was a BS in biology acquired from Schreiner University. He is a Licensed Paramedic with several years of experience operating as a lead medic in a rural community as well as acquiring certifications as an EMS instructor and AHA instructor. With his extensive clinical knowledge and invaluable first-hand experience, he hopes to expand his knowledge and skillset, returning to practice in rural and underserved communities as an EM physician. His current research goals include evaluation of new areas which may require elucidation, especially with regard to populations which are generally under evaluated. In his scant free time, he enjoys historical documentaries, dungeons and dragons, and fantasy novels.</p>
<p>Vanessa Martinez, Clemson University</p>	<p>Vanessa Martinez is an undergraduate Psychology student at Clemson University. She has been a member of the Study of Healthy Aging and Applied Research Programs (SHAARP) Lab for 4 semesters.</p>
<p>Dr. Erin Mauck, East Tennessee State University</p>	<p>Dr. Erin Mauck is an assistant professor in the Department of Community and Behavioral Health at East Tennessee State University. For the last twelve years her research focus has been on various areas of end-of-life healthcare and policy, Current areas of research include aging stereotypes, the family caregiver, aging and social isolation, and advance directive use. Other interests include end-of-life healthcare quality, access, policy reform, and expanded options for those facing end-of-life choices. She is currently the Co-Chair of the Tennessee Public health Association Aging Section.</p>
<p>Dr. Tracy McClinton, University of Tennessee Health Science Center</p>	<p>Dr. Tracy McClinton, DNP, AGACNP-BC, APRN, EBP-C is currently associate professor at the University of Tennessee Health Science Center (UTHSC) College of Nursing, where she teaches in the Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP) Program in the adult gerontology acute care nurse practitioner concentration. She is certified in evidence-based practice and teaches evidence-based competencies to prepare DNP students to improve patient safety and health care outcomes. Her areas of scholarship include management of acute illnesses in adult and geriatric patients in the hospital setting, prevention of opportunistic infections in patients with HIV, and evidence-based practice. She has been invited to present her work on implementing evidence-based practice in doctoral education nationally and internationally.</p>
<p>Dr. Julian McKoy Davis, The University of the West Indies Mona Ageing and Wellness Centre</p>	<p>Dr Julian McKoy Davis is a passionate advocate representing the issues of older adults. She was appointed as the Chairman of the Board of the National Council for Senior Citizens of Jamaica in November 2023. She has a Doctorate in Social Policy from the University of the West Indies (UWI), Mona. She is a Social Gerontologist and the Team Lead for Community Outreach at Mona Ageing and Wellness Centre at UWI. Her research interests are focused on social and economic issues affecting older adults.</p>

<p>Christian McLaren, University of Florida</p>	<p>Christian McLaren's overarching research interest revolves around the utilization of lifestyle interventions to promote healthy aging in older adults. During Christian's undergraduate studies at the University of Florida, he acquired a robust foundation in basic and behavioral sciences. Under the guidance of Dr. Stephen Anton at the Institute on Aging, Christian researched lifestyle interventions for age-related conditions, co-authoring three manuscripts and presenting findings at conferences. An internship at UF Health Rehab Hospital deepened Christian's understanding of conditions such as dementia and stroke, inspiring his focus on behavioral and cognitive interventions. After graduating, Christian concurrently worked as a scribe at UF Health and a research assistant under Dr. Anton and Dr. Heather Vincent. His research centered on lifestyle interventions in older adults, resulting in three publications and a poster presentation. As a graduate student, Christian is actively engaged in the Aged Garlic Extract study and contributes to upcoming pilot studies like FAR-2 and Fasting ENHANCE, exploring the effects of time-restricted eating on cognitive and physical performance in older adults.</p>
<p>Kim McRae, Culture Change Network of Georgia</p>	<p>Kim McRae is a consultant, speaker, educator and a "FCTA" (Family Caregiver Turned Advocate). Kim is also an Educator and Mentor for The Eden Alternative®. She comes to person-centered care and culture change through a twelve-year history as a family caregiver and a consumer of aging services and long-term care. Kim is nationally known as a vigilant advocate for people who are living with dementia and family caregivers ("consumers").</p>
<p>Dr. Mary Helen McSweeney-Feld, Towson University</p>	<p>Mary Helen McSweeney-Feld, Ph.D. is an Associate Professor and Program Director of the MS in Health Science at Towson University in Towson, MD. She is an active member of numerous long-term care and gerontology organizations and is a Fellow of the American College of Health Care Administrators (ACHCA). She has given numerous presentations on emergency preparedness for long-term care organizations and received grant funding from the State of Maryland in 2015 for a state training program for emergency preparedness for nursing homes and assisted living communities. Dr. McSweeney-Feld is the lead editor and chapter author for the long-term care administration textbook, Dimensions of Long-Term Care Management: An Introduction (third edition) published by Health Administration Press. She has published numerous articles in Disaster Medicine and Public Health Preparedness, the Journal of Health Administration Education, and the Journal of Health Care Finance. She has a B.A. from Wellesley College, an M.I.A. and M.Phil. in Economics from Columbia University, and a Ph.D. in Health Economics from the Graduate Center, City University of New York, and is a licensed nursing home administrator.</p>

<p>Laura Medders, Emory University</p>	<p>Laura is the program director for Emory’s Integrated Memory Care team, a primary care clinic for people living with dementia. She previously served as the IMC’s clinical social worker and provided family psychotherapy, care partner coaching, and psychoeducational groups. She has previously served as the social services lead for the Georgia Memory Net, a statewide program dedicated to the diagnosis and treatment of Alzheimer's disease and other dementias. Through this program, she provided education, supervision, and support for GMN’s community service educators working throughout the state. Since 2016, she has served on the Georgia Alzheimer’s and Related Dementias State Plan committee.</p>
<p>Dr. Hongdao Meng, University of South Florida</p>	<p>Hongdao Meng is a Professor in the School of Aging Studies at the University of South Florida. His ongoing research focuses on examining the effectiveness and cost-effectiveness of integrative health interventions to improve outcomes among middle-aged and older adults in the community. He has interdisciplinary training in medicine, public health, and health economics that enables him to address research questions centered on the issue of how to achieve health in mind, body, and spirit over the life course. While the quest to delineate specific mechanisms for these integrative health approaches is ongoing, he approaches research with the view that the lack of complete mechanistic explanations should not preclude societies from implementing simple, low-cost lifestyle interventions in their populations. His current research focuses on interventions in residential and community-based settings using music to manage agitation in individuals living with dementia.</p>
<p>Alaina Mgbere, University of the Incarnate Word School of Osteopathic Medicine</p>	<p>Alaina Mgbere, a Houston native, received her Bachelor’s of Science in Microbiology from Texas State University. Volunteering at a nursing home, shadowing community physicians, and gaining experience as a medical assistant led to her interest in health-awareness in disadvantaged and elderly populations. Alaina is currently a Master of Biomedical Science candidate at the University of Incarnate Word School of Osteopathic Medicine. She plans to deepen her medical knowledge and become an experienced physician. Alaina’s passion for advancing medical education has led her to explore prevention of sexually transmitted diseases amongst the elderly.</p>

Dr. Chivon Mingo, Georgia State University	<p>Dr. Chivon Mingo is a gerontologist who joined the Gerontology Institute in the fall of 2012. In 2003, Dr. Mingo received a B.S. in Psychology from Georgia State. Subsequently, she received an M.A. in Gerontology (2005) and a Ph.D. in Aging Studies (2010) both from the University of South Florida (USF) in Tampa, FL. Prior to joining the Georgia State Gerontology Institute, Dr. Mingo completed a postdoctoral fellowship in the Institute on Aging at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. Dr. Mingo's current research interests span the areas of psychology, health disparities, and aging. Specifically, her work has concentrated on identifying reasons for arthritis health disparities and ways to address those health disparities through community-based healthcare interventions. The ultimate goal of Dr. Mingo's research is to focus on designing and evaluating culturally appropriate, appealing, and effective interventions for older adults with arthritis. In addition, use this research as a template to address disparities in other conditions (e.g., cancer, cardiovascular disease, diabetes) through community-based health care interventions. Dr. Mingo is the recipient of numerous awards and honors including the National Institutes of Health/National Center on Minority Health and Health Disparities Loan Repayment Award, McKnight Doctoral Fellowship, Arthritis Foundation Student Fellowship, Aging Exchange Day Best Research Award, USF Office of Research & Innovation and Graduate School Research Excellence Award, Southern Regional Student Conference in Gerontology and Geriatrics Keynote Speaker and the USF College of Behavioral and Community Sciences Research Excellence Award.</p>
Amy Money, UNC Charlotte	<p>Amy L. Money is a faculty member at Central Piedmont Community College in the Occupational Therapy Assistant Program. Currently pursuing a master's degree in public health and a graduate certificate in gerontology at the University of North Carolina Charlotte, Amy combines academic expertise with extensive clinical experience in working with older adults. Her passion for healthy aging is fueled by exploring the impact of purposeful, meaningful experiences on brain health. Amy thrives in qualitative research, finding it a powerful means to connect with people and delve into their lived experiences. Beyond her academic and career pursuits, she finds joy in creative activities like bread baking and watercolor painting.</p>
Dr. Ami Moore, University of North Texas	<p>Ami Moore is a professor of Rehabilitation and Health Services at the University of North Texas. She is a social demographer and a public health professional. Her areas of interest are the social and health dimensions of HIV/AIDS, health disparities, and chronic health conditions.</p>

Dr. Miranda Moore, Emory University	<p>Dr. Moore is an Associate Professor in the Department of Family and Preventive Medicine, Research Coordinator for the Family Medicine Residency Program, Research Champion for the Emory Seavey Clinic, Evaluation Lead for the GA Gear, and Population Health Lead for the Georgia Memory Net. Dr. Moore received her MA and PhD in Economics from Stony Brook University in Stony Brook, NY. Dr. Moore's research centers on primary care access to care, workforce, and delivery/physician practice transformation; lifestyle and preventive medicine, including teaching kitchens; and cognitive impairment. Dr. Moore develops grant applications that will fund primary care research, collaborates on peer-reviewed journal articles and policy briefs, and leads analytic efforts to provide timely evidence for health policy development. Dr. Moore also mentors Family Medicine residents and teaches research methods lectures. Before joining the faculty at Emory, Dr. Moore was most recently an economist and health researcher at the Robert Graham Center for Policy Studies in Family Medicine and Primary Care within the American Academy of Family Physicians. She has also worked for the U.S. Department of Labor, Employee Benefits Security Administration in the Office of Policy and Research, Division of Research and Economic Analysis. She has taught Statistics at Hofstra University and Game Theory at Stony Brook University.</p>
Daniel Moss, Clemson University	<p>Daniel Moss is an undergraduate Psychology student at Clemson University. He has been a member of the Study of Healthy Aging and Applied Research Programs (SHAARP) Lab for 3 semesters and plans on working for federal law enforcement as a behavioral psychologist. Daniel's research interests include anything concerning personality.</p>

<p>Dr. Louise Murray, University of Maryland, Baltimore County</p>	<p>Louise Murray has an EdD in Educational Leadership and a MA Gerontology from the University of North Carolina at Charlotte, a BSc in Physiotherapy Studies from the University of Greenwich, London, UK and a Diploma in Physiotherapy from the Royal Liverpool Hospital College, Liverpool, UK. In her early career in the United Kingdom she worked as a physiotherapist, ultimately becoming a Senior Clinician in Geriatrics/The Care of the Elderly. After relocating to the US and obtaining her MA in Gerontology, Dr. Murray worked as the Circle of Hope Coordinator for the Western Carolina Chapter of the Alzheimer’s Association. Before coming to UMBC, Dr. Murray has gained considerable experience in higher education, most recently as a Clinical Assistant Professor in the Gerontology Program at the University of North Carolina at Charlotte. Dr. Murray has both taught and developed courses in higher education and for community education programs and has a specific interest in online teaching and learning. She is a Quality Matters peer reviewer and held a Quality Matters Faculty Fellow position in the Center for Teaching and Learning at UNC Charlotte. Her academic and research interests are dementia and dementia education, the scholarship of teaching and learning, online course development and pedagogy, person centered care, and programs and services for older adults. Dr. Murray has also endeavored to form close ties with the aging community, specifically with those providing services and support to those living with dementia. She has developed an undergraduate and graduate class focusing on the experience of dementia, has volunteered for and served on the Board of the Western Carolina Chapter of the Alzheimer’s Association, and has participated in the Dementia Friendly Charlotte Mecklenburg initiative, with additional responsibilities on the committee developing the Dementia Friendly Business guide and protocol. Dr. Murray has presented at local, regional, and national conferences and has published eight peer reviewed articles on the topics of educational leadership, geriatric and gerontological education, transitions of care for older adults, and resilience and vulnerabilities of the older adult population following natural disaster.</p>
<p>Jaminette Nazario, University of Maryland, Baltimore County</p>	<p>Jaminette Nazario is a gerontologist and public health specialist with a research interest in exploring the association between social relationships among older adults and their health outcomes. In addition, she has researched the sociocultural determinants that impact older Hispanic adults living in the United States. Her current research is centered around examining the role of social ties, such as marriage, and the various determinants that contribute to marital quality, all within the established framework of the socioemotional selectivity theory.</p>

Dr. Tina Newsham, UNC Wilmington	<p>Tina Newsham, PhD, FAGHE, is a professor of Gerontology in the School of Health and Applied Human Sciences at the University of North Carolina Wilmington. She earned her doctorate in Gerontology from the University of Kentucky in 2011, with her dissertation research focusing on responses to a diagnosis of mild cognitive impairment. She created the undergraduate Gerontology certificate program at Indiana State University and is now the Gerontology program coordinator at the University of North Carolina at Wilmington. Dr. Newsham teaches a variety of aging-related courses and is active in several research projects. Her work includes community-based participatory research studies related to physical and mental health, primarily conducted with residents of low resource areas (for example, rural locations or low-income neighborhoods). She has collaborated on a variety of public art and placemaking projects, drawing on and expanding her planning and assessment skills as well as her background in engaging communities. Recently, she has engaged in efforts to disrupt ageism through the implementation of intergenerational activities and the development of educational strategies to promote positive and accurate views of growing older among young children. Dr. Newsham is passionate about promoting health and well-being for all and views access to resources and the appropriate use of finite resources throughout the life course as a human rights issue.</p>
Negar Nik Bakht, Miami University	<p>Negar Nik Bakht is a PhD student in Social Gerontology. Her areas of interest in the field of gerontology are healthy and productive aging. Her studies are particularly focused on cognitive impairments and neurological disorders. She completed her bachelor's and master's degrees in the field of occupational therapy. Her previous presentations and publications are primarily on older people with dementia and Parkinson.</p>

<p>Dr. Bahar Niknejad, Eastern Virginia Medical School</p>	<p>Dr. Niknejad is an Assistant Professor of Geriatric Medicine at the Glennan Center for Geriatrics and Gerontology at Eastern Virginia Medical School (EVMS). After completing her medical school in Iran, she completed her residency and fellowship training in Internal Medicine and Geriatrics at EVMS. Her area of expertise is caring for patients with cognitive disorders, including Alzheimer’s disease and other types of dementia. She provides patient-centered care and offers comprehensive cognitive and functional assessment, treatment and counseling at the Comprehensive Memory Center of Goldrich Neurohealth Institute at EVMS. She also provide specialty care at the Geriatric Inpatient Consultation Service. Her research areas of interest are diagnostic modalities and also new therapeutics for Alzheimer’s disease and other neurodegenerative disorders. She also has special interest in investigating innovative community-oriented outreach strategies to increase diversity in dementia and Alzheimer’s disease clinical trials. Dr. Niknejad is involved in several local and national dementia and Alzheimer’s disease research project in collaboration with different organization including Alzheimer’s Association. Currently she serve as the PI for the AHEAD Study Diversity Recruitment Program for increasing clinical research participation through a Community-Informed Education & Recruitment Program.</p>
<p>Dr. Hamid Okhravi, Eastern Virginia Medical School</p>	<p>Dr. Okhravi is the Alfred Abiouness Distinguished Professor of Geriatrics at the Eastern Virginia Medical School. He received his MD from Mashhad University of Medical Sciences in Iran and completed his internship at Saint Louis University and finished his Internal Medicine Residency at Hurley Medical Center in Michigan. He completed his geriatric fellowship at the Mayo Clinic in Rochester, Minnesota. He joined the Glennan Center at Eastern Virginia Medical School as a full-time faculty in 2010. He serves as the Medical Director of the Glennan Center Memory Consultation Clinic. His research interests are management of neuropsychiatric symptoms in dementia, early detection and AD biomarkers discovery. He is the principal investigator for several clinical trials and also biomarkers studies. He serves as the editorial board for several peer-reviewed journals in the area of cognitive disorders and geriatrics.</p>

Cherrie Park, The Ohio State University	Cherrie Park is a PhD candidate at the College of Social Work. She majored in English literature for her bachelor's degree at Korea University and earned MSW from Ewha Womans University in South Korea. During her doctoral studies, she has participated in research projects, including 'GRANDcares Plus,' 'Age Friendly Columbus and Franklin County, and 'Adapting Simulation for Online Social Work Education,' as a graduate research associate. She has published multiple articles in peer-reviewed academic journals. Her work has been presented at national and international conferences such as GADE, SSWR, and the Gerontological Society of America Annual Meetings. She also has contributed to the field of gerontological social work by joining the Young Professional Council of the Benjamin Rose Institute on Aging and serving as the board of directors at the Association for Gerontology Education in Social Work. In recognition of her accomplishments and contributions, Korean American Social Work Educators Association awarded her Dr. Paul Kim Outstanding Achievement Grant in 2022.
Min Kyoung Park, University of Maryland, Baltimore and Baltimore County	Min Kyoung Park is a doctoral candidate in gerontology at the University of Maryland Baltimore and Baltimore County. Her research endeavors aim to identify protective and detrimental factors that impact the relationship between challenges and health outcomes among specific subpopulations. Furthermore, Ms. Park has gained valuable experience in enhancing interprofessional education in geriatrics through her graduate research.
Khushbu Patel, Virginia Tech	Khushbu Patel, MS is a doctoral candidate at Virginia Tech in the Department of Human Development and Family Science, specializing in Marriage and Family Therapy and pursuing a graduate certificate in Gerontology. Her research focuses on caregiving and intergenerational relationships, specifically in understanding the experiences of young adult grandchildren who are caregiving to grandparent(s) with dementia. Ms. Patel approaches research from a systemic perspective, incorporating her skills as a therapist to understand relational processes for grandchildren caregivers.
Blake Peeples, University of Alabama	Blake is a senior at the University of Alabama, and he is graduating with a BS in Psychology with a minor in Advertising/Public Relations. He is also graduating with honors as a member of the Honors College. In addition, Blake is a student-athlete for the Swim and Dive team. He was born and raised in Jackson, Mississippi. After graduation, Blake hopes to pursue a PhD in Clinical Psychology with a geropsychology focus. Blake's specific research interests center around the well-being of older adults and those who care for them with application to memory disorders, health disparities, the LGBTQ+ community, obesity, and hoarding disorder.

<p>Harvonya Perkins, University of the Incarnate Word School of Osteopathic Medicine</p>	<p>My name is Harvonya Perkins. I am a graduate student in the MBS Program at the University of Incarnate Word. I earned my bachelor's degree in Biochemistry from Texas A&M University. My previous lines of work include six years as a teacher in a private school and seventeen years in clinical research. In clinical research, I was certified as a clinical research coordinator (CCRC) by the Association of Clinical Research Professionals and currently serve as the President of the Greater San Antonio Chapter. I worked on three randomized clinical research trials for treatment of COVID 19 infection during the Pandemic. Inspired by the sense of cooperation throughout the industry to provide quality data in a condensed time frame, I desire to assist with the coming changes in research and in medicine.</p>
<p>Dr. Lindsay Peterson, University of South Florida</p>	<p>Lindsay Peterson, PhD, is a research assistant professor in the School of Aging Studies at the University of South Florida. She spent many years as a journalist, working for newspapers in Kansas and Florida. In Florida, she spent many years at the Tampa Tribune, writing about a range of topics, including education and politics. But it was after many years of writing about aging that she applied to the PhD program in Aging Studies at the University of South Florida. She graduated in 2016 and is now in a research/teaching position in the USF School of Aging Studies. She researches long-term care support and services and the quality of care in nursing homes and assisted living, focusing largely on the effect of disasters and disaster preparedness in both residential and community-dwelling populations of older adults. Additionally she directs the School of Aging Studies' Health Care Administration internship program and is interim director of the Florida Policy Exchange Center on Aging.</p>
<p>Dr. Matthew Peterson, UNC Wilmington</p>	<p>Matthew Peterson, PhD, FGSA, is a tenured Associate Professor in the UNCW School of Nursing Clinical Research Program. He joined the UNCW faculty in 2021 after working for over twenty years in a variety of roles at several academic institutions. From 2001-2014 he served in several roles at the Durham VA Medical Center and Duke School of Medicine, where he was principal and co-investigator on several foundation, VA, and NIH-funded studies on the benefits of exercise on aging-related health outcomes. Peterson also served a clinical role as program manager for Gerofit, an outpatient exercise program at the Durham VA. He has had leadership roles as Director of Geriatrics Research at Wright State University and Program Director for Stride at Home, a VA clinical demonstration program. In 2013 Dr. Peterson completed a postdoctoral fellowship in comparative effectiveness and biostatistics at Duke University, and he has served as epidemiologist and statistician on numerous funded research projects. Over his career Dr. Peterson has led or collaborated on research teams that have secured over four million dollars in external funding. His teaching responsibilities include statistics, epidemiology, scientific writing, research design and methods, and directing graduate capstone projects and theses. Dr. Peterson also provides research design and statistical expertise for faculty in the UNCW School of Nursing.</p>

Scarlett Peterson, Georgia State University	Scarlett Peterson is a poet and nonfiction writer from Georgia with additional research focuses in Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies and Gerontology. Her first poetry collection, <i>The Pink I Must Have Worn</i> is available from Kelsay Books. She is a PhD candidate at Georgia State University, an Adjunct at Chattahoochee Technical College, and a substitute teacher. Her work can be found in <i>Moon City Review</i> , <i>The Lavender Review</i> , <i>Cosmonauts Avenue</i> , <i>Gargoyle Magazine</i> , <i>Counterclock Journal</i> , <i>The Shore</i> , <i>Poetry Online</i> , <i>Eunoia Review</i> , and more.
Taylor Pope, Georgia State University	Taylor Pope is a graduate student in the Gerontology Institute at Georgia State University. She earned her BA in Psychology at Purdue University. She currently serves as Vice President of the GSU's National Gerontology Honor Society (Sigma Phi Omega) chapter. She is currently working on her MA thesis, and plans to pursue a Ph.D. in Sociology or Gerontology.
Dr. Zahra Rahemi, Clemson University	Dr. Rahemi is currently an Assistant Professor at Clemson University, School of Nursing. She has studied older adults from culturally and ethnically diverse populations and those with Alzheimer's disease and related dementia, their treatment preferences, and end-of-life care planning. Her current research interests focus on interdisciplinary approaches to enhance older adults' quality of life and end-of-life care. Dr. Rahemi has authored and co-authored multiple related articles in peer-reviewed journals. Her publications and research projects mainly focus on older adults, end-of-life planning, treatment decisions, quality of life, and complementary treatments. Dr. Rahemi has had collaborations with researchers with a broad range of interests and seeks further interdisciplinary research to ultimately enhance older adults' quality of life and end of life. Her goal is to use innovative technologies to improve early advance care planning before cognitive decline. The ultimate goal is to improve the quality of end of life and reduce end-of-life care disparities among diverse older adults.
Chanel Reid, Georgia State University	Chanel Reid, a second-year student in Gerontology at The Gerontology Institute of Georgia State University, joined the GSU H.O.P.E. lab with a focus on comprehending the impact of social isolation, loneliness, and elevated suicidality (SILES) on the older adult population. Her interest in this area was sparked during enrollment in the "Death, Dying, and Loss" course. Post-graduation, she aspires to forge collaborative solutions for older adults, actively engaging in warm calling programs, presenting SILES concepts in community forums, and advocating for a national crisis hotline tailored to the needs of older adults. Her upbringing included rich relationships with great-grandparents, both sets of grandparents, and great-uncles and aunts. Witnessing the continued growth and maturation of the older adult community each year, Chanel considers her ongoing research into their challenges and triumphs a lifelong and personally fulfilling aspiration.

<p>Dr. Annie Rhodes, Virginia Commonwealth University</p>	<p>Annie Rhodes is the brain health triage coordinator for the Richmond Brain Health Institute. She also is an instructor in the Master's program and research analyst for The Virginia Center on Aging. She has been awarded for her work in inclusive gerontology, is a 2018 age wave scholar, and a 2021 "VCU ten under ten" honoree. She currently serves as the chairperson for the public policy and advocacy committee for Southern Gerontological Society.</p>
<p>Bailee Ridlon, Appalachian State University</p>	<p>Bailee Ridlon is a first-year graduate student at Appalachian State University in the Masters of Science Dietetics program. She received her undergraduate Nutrition and Dietetics degree from Appalachian State University and an Associate of Science Degree from Rockingham Community College. Bailee plans on specializing in clinical nutrition but is open to working with multiple populations and exploring different specialties under the scope of practice. She has a passion for nutrition and helping others stay healthy with preventative medicine.</p>
<p>Amy Riedesel, Guidehouse</p>	<p>Amy is a consummate leader in the work of long-term services and support across populations and has more than 18 years of experience building and leading successful community-based programs. Her work is founded on a person-centered philosophy and true community inclusion for people with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (IDD) and aging and disability populations. She has been a state-level leader in transformational change in health and social programs. Amy has a keen ability to lead change through collaboration across partners. She can take complex issues and break them down into digestible ways to build efforts to work toward a common goal across internal and external partners, advocates, and stakeholders. She is committed to working to improve systems to recognize, respond to, and meet individual needs, and engage partners to find common ground to make it happen.</p>

<p>Dr. Julie Robison, University of Connecticut</p>	<p>Dr. Julie Robison, a gerontologist and health services researcher, is a Professor of Medicine and Public Health Science in the Center on Aging at the University of Connecticut (UConn) School of Medicine. She conducts evidence-based health services research and intervention studies focused on aging families and long-term services, supports and policy, using quantitative and qualitative research methods. Her research aims to improve quality of life and quality of care for people who need long-term services and supports (LTSS), and their families. Dr. Robison is the director of the UConn Center on Aging's Evaluation and Population Assessment Core and Recruitment and Community Engagement Core. She studies how well LTSS funded by Medicaid, Medicare, and other public-sector sources affect health and well-being outcomes. Specific areas of expertise include effectiveness of LTSS for older adults and their families, designing evaluations of innovative LTSS designed to promote person-centered care and independent living, LTSS for individuals with dementia, and health disparities in the population needing LTSS. The results of her work have direct impact on the implementation of policies and programs that serve extremely vulnerable populations in Connecticut and nationally. Dr. Robison is the past Editor-in-Chief of Journal of Applied Gerontology, an international forum for research with clear and immediate applicability to the health, care, and quality of life of older adults, providing comprehensive coverage of all areas of gerontological practice and policy.</p>
<p>Dr. Ed Rosenberg, Appalachian State University</p>	<p>Ed Rosenberg, Sociology professor emeritus, received his PhD in Sociology from the University of Southern California in 1978. From 1978-1988 he developed and directed gerontology programs at Western Washington University, the University of Pittsburgh-Bradford, and LaRoche College. He came to Appalachian State University (Boone, NC) in 1991, directed the Graduate Program in Sociology from 1994-2002 and 2010-2017, and the Graduate Program in Gerontology from 2000-2017. In 2003 he designed and implemented North Carolina's first completely on-line gerontology graduate program. He spent 2004-05 as an exchange professor in France and a Fall 2015 sabbatical with two universities in Thailand. Promoting a global approach to gerontology, he continues collaborations with colleagues in France and Thailand. His aging-related publications topics include the aging of the prison population, eating disorders among aging women, media images of aging and elderly self-esteem, fall prevention, and caregiver empowerment. He is a Fellow of the Association for Gerontology in Higher Education (AGHE), a Founding Fellow of the University of North Carolina Institute on Aging, a Past President of the Southern Gerontological Society, and a recipient of the Southern Gerontological Society's Academic Gerontologist Award and AGHE's Mildred M. Seltzer Distinguished Service Honor.</p>

Dr. Graham Rowles, University of Kentucky	<p>Graham Rowles is Professor Emeritus at the University of Kentucky. He received his Ph.D. in Geography from Clark University in 1976 and has held faculty appointments at West Virginia University and the University of Kentucky where he was founding director of the Graduate Center for Gerontology. His research focuses on the lived experience of aging and the meaning of place in different contexts. He has conducted in-depth ethnographic research with elderly populations in urban (inner city), rural (Appalachian), and nursing facility environments. His applied research has included leadership of the Kentucky Elder Readiness Initiative (KERI), a statewide project to explore the implications for communities of the aging of the Baby Boom cohort. His publications include Prisoners of Space? Exploring the Environmental Experience of Older Adults, seven co-edited volumes, and more than 100 book chapters and articles. A past President of the Southern Gerontological Society and the Association for Gerontology in Higher Education, he is a Fellow of the Gerontological Society of America and the Association for Gerontology in Higher Education. He serves on the editorial boards of the Journal of Applied Gerontology and the Journal of Aging and Environment. An avid gardener, focusing on the preservation of endangered irises, his horticultural interests were seeded in infancy while “helping” his grandfather.</p>
Anna Rubin, University of North Carolina Wilmington	<p>Anna Rubin is a junior in the Recreation Therapy program, at The University of North Carolina at Wilmington. Her interests lie in adaptive sports and non-pharmacological approaches to treatment. She passionately assists with training service dogs for veterans at a local nonprofit, Canines for Service. Anna spends her free time riding her bike on local trails and shell-searching along Wilmington’s beautiful beaches. Open to new experiences and wherever they take her career, she is dedicated to helping others enhance their quality of life while improving the surrounding community.</p>
Katherine Rush, Atrium Health Cleveland	<p>Katherine Rush is a certified Adult-Gerontology Clinical Nurse Specialist (CNS). Ms. Rush is a clinical nurse with several years of direct patient care experience in settings ranging from cardiac telemetry to cardiac and medical-surgical intensive care. Ms. Rush is dedicated to assisting with positive health outcomes for aging adults.</p>
Tess Ryan, UNC Wilmington	<p>Tess Ryan, BS, is a graduate student in the Master of Applied Gerontology program at the University of North Carolina Wilmington. Since January 2023, Tess has served as a Public Health Education Intern at Brunswick Senior Resources Inc. (BSRI), contributing to the development of a community program through the Village-to-Village network.</p>

Dr. Nasreen Sadeq, University of South Florida	Dr. Nasreen Sadeq is an Assistant Professor of Instruction and the Assistant Director for Academic Affairs in the School of Aging Studies at the University of South Florida. Her research interests include early detection of cognitive decline, risk and protective factors for Alzheimer’s disease and related dementias, and personality as a predictor of healthy aging. She is also the Director of the Undergraduate and Master’s degree programs offered in the School of Aging Studies, and teaches undergraduate and graduate courses on developmental psychology and aging. Dr. Sadeq is a USF alumna and earned a Ph.D. in Aging Studies in 2019 and a B.A. in Psychology in 2013. She received the Outstanding Graduate Student Teaching Award from the College of Behavioral and Community Sciences, and the USF Provost's Award for Outstanding Teaching by a Graduate Teaching Assistant.
Dr. Celina Salcido, University of the Incarnate Word School of Osteopathic Medicine	Celina is a fourth-year medical and MPH student at the University of the Incarnate Word School of Osteopathic Medicine. Prior to her medical school career, Celina received a PhD at The University of Texas at Arlington in Experimental Psychology with an emphasis in Health and Neuroscience assessing the neural underpinnings of physical pain. Celina is currently applying for residency in psychiatry where her goal is to work as a geriatric psychiatrist in rural, underserved areas.
Zach Salling, Georgia State University	Zachary N. Salling is a third-year Clinical Neuropsychology Ph.D. student at Georgia State University in Dr. Vonetta Dotson’s lab. He is interested in the intersection of neuropsychology and cognitive rehabilitation for older adults with various interventions. In terms of research, his interests involve how depression and aging-related brain changes influence episodic memory, in addition to how modifiable lifestyle factors can mitigate cognitive decline in diverse populations in late-life. He aspires to practice as a rehabilitative neuropsychologist with older adults in the future.
Dr. Jonas Sandberg, Sophiahemmet University	Jonas Sandberg is a registered nurse and has a PhD in geriatrics. Jonas is currently holding a position as senior researcher and programme director at Sophiahemmet University, Stockholm, Sweden. During the last 15 years Jonas have been researching informal caregiving, support for carers to older people in later life and for the last 10 years on informal caregiving from a gender perspective. Jonas have together with colleagues been responsible for the project MeCaLL – Men as Carers in Later Life, that aims to research the strategies in which older men internalize their caregiver experiences and how the processes involved may conflict their daily activities but also normalize over time. During the last 5 years I have been researching domestic abuse in relation to informal caregiving,

Dr. Angela Sardina, UNC Wilmington	<p>Dr. Angie L. Sardina earned her Ph.D. in Gerontology from the University of South Florida, her Master's degree in Parks and Recreation Management from the University of North Carolina Greensboro, and her undergraduate degree in Health Sciences from Florida Gulf Coast University. Dr. Sardina is a Licensed Recreation Therapist as credentialed by the North Carolina Board of Recreational Therapy Licensure and is also Certified Therapeutic Recreation Specialist as credentialed by the National Council for Therapeutic Recreation Certification. Dr. Sardina's research is focused on understanding the physiological (e.g., musculoskeletal pain, sleep, and comorbidities), psychosocial (e.g., coping, stress, life purpose, loneliness/depression, leisure engagement), and contextual mechanisms (e.g., immediate home environment, neighborhood quality, and age-friendly environments) that support or constrain cognitive and physical health, and well-being, amongst racially and socioeconomically diverse middle-aged and older adults . Particularly, Dr. Sardina is interested in exploring how the aforementioned mechanisms interact with sociodemographic characteristics (e.g., race and socioeconomic status) to influence health and function over time. Dr. Sardina is also focused on translational research, by which she is engaged in the development, implementation, and testing of recreational therapy and health promotion-based interventions to maximize health, function, and quality of life in middle-age and older adulthood.</p>
Lauren Saurbaugh, University of North Carolina Wilmington	<p>Lauren Saurbaugh is a junior at the University of North Carolina Wilmington, who is majoring in Recreation Therapy. Lauren has served as an undergraduate assistant on the Mobile Health and Resource Fairs project since the beginning of 2023. She is the Secretary of the Association of Recreation Therapy Students and a member of Alpha Chi Omega Sorority. Lauren is interested in pursuing a career as a Recreational Therapist providing services for community-dwelling older adults and/or older adults residing in long-term care.</p>
Dr. Abby Schwartz, East Carolina University	<p>Abby Schwartz is an Associate Professor in the School of Social Work. She also serves as the Director of the BSW Program and Coordinator of the Gerontology Program (minor and certificate). Dr. Schwartz's current research interests include increasing access to healthcare and improving the health and well-being of disadvantaged rural adults. This includes transportation programs, development of community-based supports for vulnerable caregivers of older adults, and vaccine equity.</p>
Dr. Deneisha Scott-Poe, Converse University	<p>Deneisha Scott-Poe, PhD, LMFTA is an Assistant Professor and Clinic Director at Converse University. She uses an intergenerational systemic approach in her clinical work. Dr. Scott-Poe holds a certificate in Gerontology and her research focuses on aging Black families, Alzheimer's disease caregiving, and how clinicians can better work with older Black adults and their families.</p>

Denise Scruggs, National Council of Certified Dementia Practitioners	Denise Scruggs is the Director of Education for the National Council of Certified Dementia Practitioners. She has over 30 years of experience in dementia care and education in memory care, long-term care, assisted living, adult daycare, hospital care, and home settings. Denise holds certifications as a Certified Dementia Practitioner, Certified Alzheimer’s Disease and Dementia Practitioner, and Montessori Dementia Care Professional and Trainer. She is also a Victor W. Marshall Fellow in Applied Gerontology, a former member-at-large Board Member for SGS, and the former director of the Beard Center on Aging at the University of Lynchburg.
Dr. Francine Sheppard, Western Carolina University	Dr. Sheppard is a nurse researcher and educator with clinical nursing practice specialization in geriatric and mental health. Focused research areas include explorations of mental health outcomes of older adults during life transitions, including retirement, loss, and relocation. Dr. Sheppard’s studies also include older nurse retention as a part of maintaining a strong and healthy nursing workforce. Examinations include measurements of stress biomarkers, predicting and addressing health changes, and exploring implications for holistic healthcare practice and policies for the aging. Dr. Sheppard teaches courses in nursing research, mental health, gerontology, women’s global health studies, and applied statistics. As a nursing educator, Dr. Sheppard is committed to nursing education that reflects an interprofessional and whole health approach.
Kelsie Short, Jefferson Area Board for Aging (JABA)	Kelsie has been involved in the healthcare field for the past 11 years. She developed a strong love for the Geriatrics population during her Certified Nurse Aid course while attending high school. After high school, Kelsie went on to pursue an undergraduate degree at Radford University in Recreation, Parks, & Tourism, with a concentration in Therapeutic Recreation. While at Radford University, she also received a minor in Psychology. Upon graduation from Radford University, Kelsie obtained her Certified Therapeutic Recreation Specialist License. She started her career in the Assisted Living realm as Director of Activities. As Kelsie continued her love of working with Seniors, she completed a Master's Degree from Liberty University in Developmental Psychology. As she continued her work with Seniors, she has since become a Certified Dementia Practitioner. She now continues her professional career at Jefferson Area Board for Aging (JABA) as the Respite and Enrichment Center Program Manager.
Dr. Amy Schuster, Clemson University	Amy M. Schuster is a Research Assistant Professor in the Department of Psychology at Clemson University. Her research examines the influences and impacts of information and communication technology use by older adults, particularly surrounding aging health, well-being, and environment.

<p>Lena Simon, Clemson University</p>	<p>Lena Simon has a Bachelor of Science in psychology from Georgia Southern University and a Master of Arts in humanistic psychology from the University of West Georgia. Her interest includes intersections of social and health psychology. She has been working in the field of psychological research for 4 years. She completed my master's thesis on intergenerational communication between black women and their maternal figures and examined the social stereotype of the strong black woman. She currently works on several projects with a particular focus on using quantitative and qualitative methods to understand knowledge and communication within families from socially marginalized communities.</p>
<p>Dr. Antonius D. Skipper, Georgia State University</p>	<p>Dr. Antonius D. Skipper is a gerontologist at Georgia State University's Gerontology Institute. Dr. Skipper received a B.S. in Exercise Science and a M.A. in Gerontology, both from Georgia State University. Following two years of service with the Atlanta Housing Authority, Dr. Skipper obtained a M.A. in Education, with a specialization in Applied Research, Measurement, and Evaluation, and a Ph.D. in Social Work, both from Louisiana State University. Dr. Skipper's research largely involves examining the relationships, religiosity, and health of African Americans across the life course. Dr. Skipper's research appears in numerous journals on aging and family studies. He has also shared his work via national radio platforms and conference presentations. His awards and honors include fellow of the Butler-Williams Scholars Program, fellow of the Michigan Integrative Well-Being and Inequality Program, scholar with the Michigan Center for Urban African American Aging Research collaborative, and selection into Georgia State University's 40 Under 40.</p>
<p>Dr. Patricia Slattum, Virginia Center on Aging, Virginia Commonwealth University</p>	<p>Patricia W. Slattum, PharmD, PhD, is a geriatric clinical pharmacologist and Professor Emeritus of Pharmacotherapy and Outcomes Science at Virginia Commonwealth University. She serves as Co-Director of the Virginia Geriatric Education Center's Geriatrics Workforce Enhancement Program at the Virginia Center on Aging and as faculty in Virginia Commonwealth University's Mobile Health and Wellness Program, an interprofessional teaching and care coordination program serving older adults residing in low-income housing that she co-founded in 2012. Her role in these efforts is facilitating integration of age-friendly practice into community-based care and interprofessional education. She is also a Visiting Scholar at the Gerontological Society of America. She received her BS in Pharmacy, graduate Certificate in Aging Studies, PharmD and PhD from Virginia Commonwealth University.</p>

Dr. Megan Smith, UNC Charlotte	Megan Smith, PhD, is an Assistant Teaching Professor of Sociology and Gerontology at University of North Carolina at Charlotte. She coordinates the Gerontology Undergraduate Program and is the Co-Advisor for the Gerontology Club and SPO Honors Society. Megan’s teaching focus over the past 14 years is in mental health, loneliness, health, and deviant behavior of all ages cohorts with a specialty on the experience of older adults in these contexts. Her published ethnography, entitled, Ties That Enable, explores the experiences of those with persistent and severe mental illnesses. Her forthcoming textbook, Sociological Insights on Mental Health and Distress, focuses on various aspects of mental health in the United States and internationally.
Tatiana Spence, Georgia State University	Currently pursuing my Master’s degree in Gerontology at Georgia State University with a specialization in Program Administration, I am deeply devoted to advancing the understanding and discourse surrounding aging. My academic pursuits equip me with specialized knowledge and skills necessary to delve into the multifaceted dimensions of aging, particularly emphasizing the intersectional experiences of diverse older adult populations. Passionate about Gerontological Research: With a tailored focus on comprehending the intricacies of aging within varied societal frameworks, my academic background lends depth to gerontological studies. My research endeavors prioritize investigating the diverse influences of social contexts, cultural nuances, and healthcare accessibility on the well-being and quality of life of older adults, specifically those within the LGBTQ+ community. As an advocate for inclusive and equitable aging practices, my aim is to fill gaps in existing literature by highlighting the intersectional experiences of marginalized populations. Through my work, I underscore the urgent necessity for targeted interventions and policy measures aimed at improving healthcare access and the standard of care for older adults from diverse backgrounds. I am committed to sharing insights, fostering collaboration, and engaging with fellow researchers and practitioners dedicated to enhancing the quality of life for older adults across diverse communities.

<p>Dr. Abigail Stephan, Clemson University</p>	<p>Dr. Abigail (Abby) Stephan is a Research Assistant Professor in the Department of Psychology and an affiliated faculty member at the Institute for Engaged Aging. Her research a) explores the influence of intergenerational relationships in family, community, and educational contexts on learning, development, and well-being across the lifespan and b) examines social and psychological factors that promote healthy aging. In addition to taking an ecological, systems-oriented perspective, her work often employs a mixed methods design and is interdisciplinary, drawing from gerontology and aging studies, family and community science, developmental psychology, youth development, education, anthropology, and sociology. She earned her Certified Family Life Educator (CFLE) credential to further the translation of research to applied settings. Beyond research, Dr. Stephan is committed to advancing the development, implementation, and evaluation of evidence-based educational opportunities that support learners across the lifespan. Two primary avenues for this work include a) creating resources and fostering mentorship opportunities to ensure high-quality training exists for current and future professionals in the field of gerontology and b) promoting lifelong learning through engaging and fulfilling learning experiences for older adults. Dr. Stephan is a member of two active research labs at Clemson: the Study of Healthy Aging and Applied Research Programs (SHAARP) Lab and the Contexts of Learning and Development (CLAD) Lab.</p>
<p>Dr. Jodi Southerland, East Tennessee State University</p>	<p>Dr. Jodi Southerland is an assistant professor in the Department of Community and Behavioral Health at East Tennessee State University. Her research interests include caregiving, intergenerational activities, and aging in place. Dr. Southerland has published and presented extensively on rural social determinants of health. She serves on the American Society on Aging Health and Well-being Advisory Council and is the Chair of the Tennessee Public Health Association Aging Section. She uses her platform as a family caregiver to advocate for improved services for rural older adults and those who provide them with care.</p>
<p>Ashley Staton, Virginia Commonwealth University</p>	<p>Ashley Staton serves as the social worker on the Virginia Memory Project, where she provides interested VMP enrollees with a memory screening and/or resources to refer for formal services provided by the Richmond Brain Health Initiative and other Qualified Health Care professionals. Her work is dedicated to ensuring older adults within Virginia have access to equitable brain health, memory and caregiving resources. She holds a Bachelor's Degree in Psychology and African American Studies, Masters of Social Work and a Certificate in Aging Studies.</p>

<p>Colby Takacs, University of Lynchburg</p>	<p>Colby M Takacs, MPH, CHES, CDP. (she/her/hers), serves as an Instructor of Health Promotion for the College of Health Sciences at the University of Lynchburg. As an educator, she has developed a pedagogical approach founded on a profound belief in the transformative potential of education. She is driven by a passion for instilling empathy and fostering advocacy development, equipping others with tools to make a meaningful impact on the well-being of both individuals and communities. She promotes a holistic approach to life and fosters educational empowerment for herself and all she meets. Her favorite quote is from Dolly Parton, "Find out who you are and do it on purpose."</p>
<p>Dr. Althea Taylor Jones, Independent Gerontologist Consultant</p>	<p>Dr. Taylor Jones holds a BA degree in Therapeutic Recreation from TN State University, Nashville, TN and a MA degree in Rehabilitation Psychology and Counselor Education from Appalachian State University, Boone, NC. She completed her PhD degree in Human Development and Family Studies, and a Graduate Certificate in Gerontology from Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University (VA Tech), Blacksburg, VA in 1998. She retired in 2009 after serving as Director of University Counseling Services, Professor and Gerontology Program Administrator at Winston-Salem State University, Winston-Salem, NC. Her gerontological emphases encompasses the development and facilitation of workshops, seminars, conferences, lectures, forums, and keynote addresses on the local, state, regional, national and international levels. She is involved with the North Carolina Senior Tar Heel Legislature – Forsyth County Alternate and Delegate (2006-Present); Chairman of the Health/Wellness/Prevention/Quality-of-Life Committee (2011-2015); Speaker Pro Tempore (2013-2015); Speaker (2015-2017) and current Chairman of the Advocacy Committee (2017-2021). She has served with AARP in various capacities since 2002 - (Volunteer, North Carolina Executive Council, Forsyth Chapter Officer and Mentor, Legislative Advocate and Triad Leadership Team). Dr. Taylor Jones has been recognized with numerous awards, including the NC Governor's Award; the NWOA City/Community Leadership Award; SGS's Rhoda Jennings Older Advocate Award; and the AARP North Carolina's 2018 Andrus Award. She has been actively engaged with SGS's Development Committee over the past 4 years and served as Co-Chair 2019-2021.</p>

<p>Dr. Jodi Teitelman, Virginia Commonwealth University</p>	<p>Jodi Teitelman is currently a retired Professor Emerita of the Departments of Occupational Therapy and Gerontology at Virginia Commonwealth University (VCU), Richmond, VA. Since 2020, she has served as a Plenary Member of the Geriatric Workforce Education and Preparation project at VCU's Virginia Center on Aging/Geriatric Education Center. Prior to these positions, she worked on a contract basis with the (then-named) Virginia Department for the Aging and Virginia Department of Human Services. Jodi earned her doctorate in psychology and a post-baccalaureate Certificate from Aging studies at VCU in 1985. Since that time, her research and service interests have been focused on family caregivers of persons with dementia, including 10 years as an Alzheimer's Association Board Member and support group co-facilitator. She has been an active and engaged member of SGS since the early 1980's, presenting regularly at the annual conference and receiving a Gerontologists Rooted in the South (GRITS) award in 2020.</p>
<p>Sarah Tesar, UNC Charlotte</p>	<p>Sarah Tesar is a senior at the University of North Carolina at Charlotte in the Bachelor of Social Work program with a minor in gerontology, as well as an early entry Graduate Certification in gerontology. She is the current president of the Gerontology Club/SPO Honor Society, a Community Educator for the Alzheimer's Association, and a sitting board member of The Charlotte-Mecklenburg Council on Aging. As a function of her duties with the CM-COA she is on the Education Committee and helped develop the Brain Booster Club which is a joint effort with the Alzheimer's Association to help older adults learn about ways to improve their biopsychosocial health as well as destigmatize Alzheimer's and Dementia diagnosis. Sarah is also acting as a liaison between the Social Work and Gerontology programs at UNC Charlotte's upcoming Race and Social Equity forum to help the University navigate the inclusion of aging in equity discussions.</p>

<p>Junyan Tian, Pennsylvania State University</p>	<p>Junyan Tian is a Ph.D. candidate in Human Development and Family Studies at Pennsylvania State University. She holds an M.S. in the same field from Penn State and an M.S.Ed. in Interdisciplinary Studies in Human Development from the University of Pennsylvania. Her research focused on the intersection of aging, mobility, cognition and well-being, with a strong interest in understanding older adults' experiences in their living environments. She has presented her research at various conferences, including the Gerontological Society of America, where she explored relationships between leisure constraints and modes of transportation among older adults. Joanne's commitment to interdisciplinary research is evident in her mixed-methods study on daily leisure activity engagement and its connection to physical health. Junyan's research is also featured in peer-reviewed publications, including an investigation of the impact of cognition, vision and physical health on older adults' driving safety and a study on correlates of transportation modes among older adults in subsidized housing. Her work on feasibility and enjoyment of exercise video games in older adults has been published in <i>Frontiers in Public Health</i>. Her long-term career goal is to pursue a research position after obtaining her Ph.D. degree. She would like to apply her knowledge to improve older adults' daily living experience, especially focusing on older adults' mobility and leisure constraints.</p>
<p>Dr. Caitlin Torrence, Western Carolina University</p>	<p>Caitlin Torrence's primary research areas include aging, Alzheimer's disease and related dementias, and caregiving. She is particularly interested in health disparities that arise from the interaction of these areas and the health care system. Torrence aided in the development of several funded grants including the Alzheimer's Resource Coordination Care Grant to establish the Institute for Engaged Aging Brain Health Club, an Alzheimer's respite in Central, SC, the Duke Endowment grant to expand the Greenville Health System's Memory Health Program to Oconee County, SC, and the Clemson University Doctoral Dissertation Grant to fund her dissertation, Health care utilization among persons with Alzheimer's disease and related dementias.</p>

<p>Dr. LaVona Traywick, Arkansas College of Health Education</p>	<p>LaVona Traywick, PhD, MA, is Senior Executive Director of Transformative Wellness Initiatives and Professor in the School of Physical Therapy at Arkansas Colleges of Health Education, Research Institute Health & Wellness Center. Dr. Traywick’s academic credentials include a BS in Health Sciences from the University of Central Arkansas, a graduate certificate and Master’s in gerontology from the University of Arkansas at Little Rock, and a graduate certificate in Medical Behavioral Sciences and PhD in gerontology from the University of Kentucky. She also graduated from the Lead 21 Leadership Academy for the 21st Century from the University of Georgia. Dr. Traywick held academic positions at the University of Arkansas at Pine Bluff, University of Arkansas Division of Agriculture, University of Central Arkansas, and Arkansas Colleges of Health Education. She is an active member of the Gerontological Society of America (GSA), the Southern Gerontological Society (SGS)—where she served as President for the 2013-2014 term, the Arkansas Gerontological Society (AGS), the American Physical Therapy Association (APTA), and the American Occupational Therapy Association (AOTA). With over fifty peer-reviewed publications, her research interventions span the gamut of healthy aging encouraging those she encounters to live healthy lives today so that they can be healthy senior adults tomorrow. Current personal community service initiatives include working for Community Connections—a non-profit that provide extra curricular activities to children with disabilities, “Friends of the RAM” volunteer for the Fort Smith Regional Art Museum and coaching a youth mountain bike team for the National Interscholastic Cycling Association (NICA).</p>
<p>Dr. Meredith Troutman-Jordan, UNC Charlotte</p>	<p>I am an American Nurses Credentialing Center certified psychiatric mental health clinical nurse specialist. My research aims to identify and develop effective and personalized self-management strategies, tailored for the person living with dementia and their caregiver, to age as successfully as able. My research strives to develop evidence-based interventions to promote optimal functioning, meaning, and purpose for each individual in the caregiving dyad. The desired outcomes of my research are prevention or slowing of disease and aging-associated complications, improved quality of life, reduction of unnecessary healthcare utilization, avoidance of medication complications/injury and abuse/neglect of persons living with dementia.</p>

<p>Cara Vandergriff, University of South Carolina</p>	<p>Cara Vandergriff is a PhD student in Communication Sciences and Disorders at the University of South Carolina. She earned a master's degree in writing and linguistics from the University of Tennessee at Knoxville in 2011. In 2018, she earned a master's degree in speech-language pathology from Western Kentucky University. After obtaining the Certificate of Clinical Competence in Speech-Language Pathology (CCC-SLP), Cara practiced as a medical SLP in her home state of Tennessee, as well as Georgia and Oregon in a variety of sub-acute settings. Her areas of clinical interest in techniques and tools to promote independence, connection, and communication among individuals with neurogenic communication disorders intersect with her current research role in the Aging Gracefully lab. Cara is an avid fly angler who enjoys fishing the rivers of Southern Appalachia in her free time.</p>
<p>Mary Walton, Clemson University</p>	<p>Mary Jade Walton is an undergraduate Psychology student at Furman University. She has been a member of the Study of Healthy Aging and Applied Research Programs (SHAARP) Lab for 3 semesters.</p>
<p>Dr. Donna Washburn, Regent University</p>	<p>Donna J. Washburn, DNP, is an advanced practice nurse and assistant professor in the College of Behavioral Health Sciences at Regent University. Currently serving as the interim director of the Doctor of Nursing program, she brings over 30 years of nursing direct care, clinical research, and leadership experience to the field. With a background as a Clinical Nurse Specialist since 2006, specializing in the care of adult oncology patients, Dr. Washburn holds certifications in Advanced Oncology Clinical Nurse Specialist (AOCNS) and Advanced Adult Health Clinical Nurse Specialist (ACNS-BC). Her 2017 doctoral research at Liberty University focused on barriers to medication adherence in adults on Medicare actively treated for cancer. Dr. Washburn is an active member of professional organizations, including Sigma Theta Tau, National Association of Clinical Nurse Specialists, American Nurses Association, and the Oncology Nursing Society. Her research interests include mentoring student nurses in developing evidence-based improvements in healthcare and ongoing involvement in oncology clinical research to improve cancer treatment. Dr. Washburn is expanding research involvement through the exploration of innovative approaches to the online education of healthcare professionals.</p>
<p>Dr. Leland Waters, Virginia Center on Aging, Virginia Commonwealth University</p>	<p>Dr. Waters is the Associate Director of the Virginia Center on Aging and is the Director of the Virginia Geriatric Education Center, a consortium of five Virginia universities. He is the Principal Investigator for Virginia's Geriatrics Workforce Enhancement Program (GWEP). He serves as Administrator for the statewide Geriatric Training and Education initiative at the Virginia Center on Aging. He is also the Co-Principal Investigator for the Virginia Long-Term Care Facility Network, a project funded by the Virginia Department of Health to establish a peer clinician network and associated website of free information which will establish a monthly forum through which clinical issues in long-term care medicine can be discussed among peers. Dr. Waters' recent research interests include geriatric workforce development, social determinants of health, and long-term care.</p>

<p>Miriam Watts, California State University Long Beach</p>	<p>Miriam Watts has worked in the field of Gerontology for over ten years, starting out as a Caretaker then moving into a role as a Care Manager, Activity Director, then Social Services Director and Executive Director of a large Southern California Convalescent hospital. Miriam has also taught at California State University Long Beach in the Gerontology program for the past seven years and at Texas A&M University for the past 3 years. Miriam is passionate about working with older adults and researching best practices in brain function and naturopathic, nonpharmacological remedies. Miriam emphasizes brain health in her current research and teaching practices and has worked with over 100 dementia patients and their families to age well.</p>
<p>Dr. Cynthia Williams, University of Central Florida</p>	<p>Dr. Cynthia Williams is an Assistant Professor and at the University of Central Florida. She has a Bachelor's in Science in Exercise Physiology (University of Florida) and in Physical Therapy (FL A&M University). She also earned a Master's in Health Administration and Ph.D. in Health Services Research (University of Central Florida). Dr. Williams has an interdisciplinary background that enhances her ability to serve the community. She has used technology to facilitate patient care, health education, self-care management, and inter professional engagement. As an entrepreneur she owned a homecare agency for Older Adults for 8 years. In current her roles, she provides program evaluations and examines business/clinical outcomes in telehealth/telemedicine, chronic disease management and health equity among Older Adults. Dr. Williams partners with community-based agencies to help them implement and evaluate telehealth and population health programs.</p>
<p>Dr. Ishan Williams, University of Virginia</p>	<p>Associate Professor at the University of Virginia, School of Nursing. Her background and PhD are in human development and family studies. She also completed a postdoctoral fellowship in the Institute on Aging at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, focused on recruitment and health care inequities among older adults and family caregivers. Her current research focuses on quality of life among older adults with dementia and their family caregivers, chronic disease management for older adults with Type 2 diabetes, and culturally appropriate community-based interventions among African American/Black adults. Her research further concentrates on understanding the health care needs of older adults and their family caregivers within social, cultural, and geographical contexts. Her research has been published in various peer-reviewed journals (e.g., Journal of Gerontology: Social Sciences, Journal of Applied Gerontology, Journal of Immigrant and Minority Health). She has been an active member in the Gerontological Society of America and is a Fellow of GSA. She recently served as the President of the Southern Gerontological Society as well.</p>
<p>Jonathan Williams</p>	<p>Jonathan is a recent graduate of Virginia Commonwealth University who received his BS in Psychology. Currently, he is exploring health and wellness for older adults through a food-is-medicine program at VCU. His future plans are to do a postdoc in cognitive psychology and neuroscience and to do research in neuropsychology.</p>

<p>Dr. TimMarie Williams, University of the Incarnate Word School of Osteopathic Medicine</p>	<p>Dr. TimMarie C. Williams is an Assistant Professor of Clinical and Applied Science Education at the University of the Incarnate Word School of Osteopathic Medicine. She holds a doctorate in Applied Gerontology from the University of North Texas and a Master of Clinical Gerontology from Baylor University. TimMarie is a Graduate Certificate in Academic Medicine Fellow and Geriatric Scholar of the University of North Texas Health Science Center, Fort Worth, TX/Texas College of Osteopathic Medicine, a state of Georgia Governor's Teaching Fellow and Certified Adult Mental Health First Aid Instructor. Her research interest includes public and social policy issues in aging, disparities among the aging and minority populations, the role of e-health in managing chronic health conditions and patient-provider relationships and planning for health and long-term care needs of an aging population.</p>
<p>Natalie Willis, University of the Incarnate Word School of Osteopathic Medicine</p>	<p>Graduated from Truman State University with a degree in Biochemistry and Molecular Biology in 2023. Prior research experience includes psychology research, presented at the Midwest Psychology Association (MPA) conference. Currently attending the University of Incarnate Word School of Medicine in the Master of Biomedical Science program. Career aspirations include matriculating into UIW School of Osteopathic Medicine and becoming a DO.</p>
<p>Jayson Wright, Guidehouse</p>	<p>Jayson (Jay) has nearly 15 years of experience working with state Health and Human Services agencies supporting Long-term Services and Supports (LTSS) through a wide variety of projects and programs. His is passionate about improving the lives of the aging and disability populations by enhancing the services and support systems that allow these individuals lead independent lives. Jay specializes in creating programs and systems to address new challenges or take advantage of new opportunities. He has supported the development and implementation of nursing home transition programs, Community Health Hubs that bridge clinical and home and community based services, and as of 2023: Multisector Plans on Aging.</p>
<p>Jessica Yauk, University of South Florida</p>	<p>Jessica Yauk, MGS, is a doctoral candidate in Aging Studies at the University of South Florida. She received her master's degree in gerontology from Miami University. Her research interests include end-of-life decision-making, caregiving, advanced care planning, long-term care and policy, and hospice and palliative care utilization. Since 2022, she has also served as the administrative assistant at the University of South Florida's Center for Hospice, Palliative Care, and End-of-Life Studies. She received the graduate assistantship award to research Black caregivers' perceptions of care recipients' end-of-life planning.</p>

Cheng Yin, University of North Texas	<p>As a PhD Candidate within the Department of Rehabilitation and Health Services at the University of North Texas in Denton, Texas, Cheng Yin is immersed in advanced research. His dissertation, titled "Long-Term Care Facility Residents with Dementia: Their COVID-19 Infections Hospitalization Outcomes," reflects his dedication to understanding and addressing crucial healthcare challenges. His ongoing research pursuits span a diverse array of topics, demonstrating a commitment to making a meaningful impact. These include the prevention and management of Covid-19 outbreaks and fatalities in nursing home facilities, the prevention of sacral ulcers in rehabilitation hospitals, and the exploration of neurocognitive disorders within the aging population. Furthermore, his research extends to critical areas impacted by the pandemic, such as the Meals on Wheels program. In this context, he delves into understanding and improving community-based behavioral health programs, encompassing falls risk management, type-two diabetes self-management, and chronic disease self-management. His multifaceted research agenda underscores a dedication to advancing knowledge and addressing pressing health concerns within various healthcare settings.</p>
Caroline Yoon, Duke University Sanford School of Public Policy	<p>Caroline Yoon is a sophomore at Duke University (May 2026), studying Computer Science and Biology in the Trinity College of Arts & Sciences. She serves as the research assistant for the WECARE (Workforce Engagement with Care workers to Assist, Recognize, and Educate) project at the Duke University Sanford School of Public Policy and is involved in various healthcare organizations on campus. Caroline is especially interested in addressing challenges and disparities within the direct care worker space.</p>
Meghan Young, Miami University	<p>Meghan Young, MGS is the Associate Director of Opening Minds through Art (OMA). Her career in aging and the arts began in 2013 during a service-learning class her first year at Miami University. Since then, she earned her Master's degree in gerontology, which included a thesis on social media use among middle age and older adults; worked on research projects dedicated to making communities more age- and dementia-friendly; instructed 6 semesters of virtual, intergenerational service-learning courses; co-trained over 200 long-term care providers to implement the OMA program in their communities; and provided arts-based activities to long-term care residents. She has also presented at the annual conferences of the Gerontological Society of America, American Society on Aging, Generations United, Ohio Health Care Association, and more on the topic of intergenerational connections and the arts. She believes everyone, regardless of age or ability, can share their life stories through the arts.</p>

Erreannau Zellous, Gerontology Institute at Georgia State University

Erreannau Zellous' passions for the aging field began as a young girl volunteering within her community. She received her Bachelor of Science from Georgia Gwinnett College in human development and aging services and is a current graduate student at Georgia State's Gerontology Institute. Her career goals are to investigate social isolation and the use of non-pharmacological interventions to enhance quality of life. Her aim is to utilize evidence-based knowledge to highlight the influence of meaningful engagement for older adults. Erreannau's desire is to combine her love for animals and aging to enrich quality of care and quality of life. Her goal is to pursue research through a PhD in Gerontology and use her advanced knowledge to serve her community.