

Last	First	Bio
Abude-Aribo	Juliana	Juliana Abude-Aribo, MLS, MSc, is a Health Sciences PhD candidate at the University of North Texas, Applied Aging and Rehabilitation concentration. Her research is primarily on neurocognitive disorders, comorbidities, and rehabilitation. Juliana has extensive experience in health systems strengthening, public health, and health economics, with a strong focus on improving healthcare access for vulnerable populations.
Adhikari	Saroj	Saroj Adhikari is a health services researcher and doctoral student with interdisciplinary training in applied aging and rehabilitation, health system management, primary healthcare, social health protection, and health policy analysis. He is currently pursuing a PhD in Health Services with a concentration in Applied Aging and Rehabilitation at the University of North Texas, United States. His doctoral training focuses on understanding how health systems, policies, and interventions can be designed and implemented to improve care delivery, decision-making, and functional outcomes for older adults within diverse healthcare settings. Mr. Adhikari holds a Master's degree in Primary Healthcare Management (Social Health Protection) from the ASEAN Institute for Health Development, Mahidol University, Thailand, where he graduated with distinction. His academic background emphasizes health financing, social health insurance, governance, and health economics, supported by strong methodological expertise in biostatistics, research methods, and program evaluation. Alongside his doctoral studies, he serves as a Teaching and Research Assistant, contributing to instruction and collaborative research in health services and public health. His research interests include advance care planning, chronic disease management, primary care strengthening, rehabilitation-oriented health services, and the design and evaluation of social health protection and universal health coverage policies. He has published in leading international journals, including The Lancet Regional Health – Southeast Asia, The Lancet Infectious Diseases, Springer Nature journals, PLOS Global Public Health, Frontiers in Public Health and contributes to the academic community as a peer reviewer.
Agbona	Mercy	Mercy Ayoola Agbonais a doctoral researcher in the Health Sciences department at the University of North Texas with a concentration in Applied Aging and Rehabilitation, whose work sits at the intersection of aging, chronic disease management, and quality-of-life-focused care. She holds a master's degree in applied gerontology and health sciences, and I developed a strong research agenda centered on understanding how aging-related physiological and social changes shape health outcomes among older adults living with complex chronic illnesses. Her scholarly work explores age-related changes in liver disease, palliative care integration, and the broader implications of chronic illness on functional ability, psychosocial well-being, and care decision-making in later life. She has contributed to international peer-reviewed publications and is currently advancing first-authored work examining age-related changes in liver cirrhosis management and palliative care options for older adults. Her research emphasizes person-centered, interdisciplinary approaches that moves beyond disease-focused models toward holistic care that prioritizes quality of life, dignity, and patient goals. Beyond academia, she has professional experience in healthcare coordination and patient-centered care, bringing applied insight into how research translates into clinical and community settings. She is an active science communicator and content creator, using digital platforms to translate complex health and aging research into accessible, culturally relevant conversations for broader audiences. Through her interdisciplinary approach, she is committed to advancing research, practice, and policy that support healthy aging, equity, and improved quality of life across the life course.
Aggarwal	Anjali	Anjali Aggarwal is a graduate student in the Master of Biomedical Sciences (MBS) program at the University of the Incarnate Word School of Osteopathic Medicine. She is a pre-medical student with extensive clinical experience and a strong academic focus on aging, disease processes, and patient-centered care. Her academic and research interests center on gerontology, ethical decision-making in clinical medicine, and improving health outcomes for older adult populations. Anjali has over eight years of experience in healthcare settings, including work as a Patient Care Technician, where she has cared for diverse patient populations across acute and long-term care environments. These experiences have shaped her interest in the medical, ethical, and social challenges faced by aging individuals, particularly in complex clinical decision-making and quality-of-life considerations. In the current project, Anjali contributed to the development of the study framework, synthesis of relevant biomedical and gerontological literature, and integration of clinical perspectives related to aging and patient care. Her role emphasized translating scientific and ethical concepts into clinically relevant insights applicable to older adult populations. In addition to her research work, Anjali has experience in laboratory research in biochemistry, microbiology, and immunology, and has participated in institutional research programs within hospital settings. She plans to pursue medical training and aims to integrate geriatric care, ethics, and research into her future clinical practice.
Akter	Rejina	Rejina Akter is a Master's student in the Department of Sociology & Gerontology at Miami University. She is very passionate about research that focuses on aging, mental health, social determinants of health, and late-life cognitive outcomes. She enjoys working with large data sets and learning new quantitative research techniques. Her long-term goal is to become a faculty member, where she will be able to conduct research and teach at the same time.
Allan	Alexa	Alexa is 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. Specifically, she is interested in the roles of educational, neighborhood, and household environments in further informing her understanding of mental and physical health outcomes.
Alvis	Kayla	Kayla Alvis, PhD, BCBA, is a Research Assistant Professor in the Center for Rural Health and Research and the Department of Health Services Management and Policy at East Tennessee State University. She is proficient in both quantitative and qualitative methodologies utilizing diverse data sources. Her research focuses on SDOH and rural health disparities among subpopulations, with a specific interest in the intersection of rurality, disability health, and reproductive health. She has also authored outreach materials advocating for policymakers' attention to rural hospital closures and the importance of addressing rural health care challenges. She has also served as a Health Policy Fellow for AcademyHealth.

Anglin	Emerald	Emerald Anglin, MA, is a Public Health Program Associate at Emory University with research expertise in aging, dementia, long-term care, and healthcare utilization and costs among older adult populations. She currently focuses on the analysis of data associated with Georgia Memory Net (GMN), a statewide initiative aimed at improving access to timely diagnosis of Alzheimer's disease and related dementias (ADRD). She has also contributed to several NIH-funded research studies examining effective engagement strategies used by caregivers when interacting with individuals living with dementia. Mrs. Anglin holds a Bachelor of Arts in Psychology from Emory & Henry University, a Master of Arts in Gerontology from Georgia State University, and a graduate certificate in Health Informatics from Georgia State University.
Aniemeke	Chidinma	Dr. Chidinma Aniemeke is an Associate Professor of Medicine in the Department of Family and Community Medicine at the University of Texas San Antonio. She received her medical degree from the Albert Einstein College of Medicine in New York and completed one year of Internal Medicine residency at the University of Medicine and Dentistry of New Jersey (now Rutgers New Jersey Medical School). She subsequently completed her residency in Family and Community Medicine, as well as a fellowship in Geriatric Medicine, at the University of Texas San Antonio. Board-certified in both Family Medicine and Geriatrics, Dr. Aniemeke provides comprehensive care across diverse clinical settings, including ambulatory clinics, inpatient units, and post-acute and long-term care facilities. Her academic work focuses on the education and mentorship of medical students and residents, in the field of Geriatrics. Dr. Aniemeke also holds several leadership and administrative roles. She actively contributes to the Post-Acute and Long-Term Care Medical Association (PALTmed) and is involved in committee work with the American Geriatrics Society (AGS).
Ansa	Benjamin	Dr. Benjamin Ansa is an Assistant Professor in the Department of Health Management, Economics and Policy at the Augusta University School of Public Health. His background is in Medicine, Clinical Research, and Public Health. Chronic disease and cancer prevention and control and Veterans Health are his primary research interest with the focus on understanding how physical activity, healthy diet, and screening promote healthy lifestyle and improve health outcomes among disadvantaged populations. Dr. Ansa teaches Health Performance Improvement, Strategic Management of Healthcare Organizations, and Ethics in Research. He also mentors and supervises the research work of graduate students and post-doctoral fellows. He has several peer-reviewed scientific publications and is a contributor to a book chapter.
Apeadu-Baah	Ganette	I am a PhD student at the University of North Texas with academic and clinical training in Neuropsychology and Cognitive Neuroscience. My interdisciplinary training over the years has provided a foundation for me to investigate how cognitive and neural processes change across the lifespan, with an emphasis on identifying factors that contribute to age-related cognitive decline. I am interested in uncovering mechanisms that may delay the progression of cognitive decline associated with aging. I am particularly interested in how biological, and lifestyle factors interact to support cognitive resilience in later life. By examining these interactions, my work aims to better understand why some individuals maintain cognitive functioning despite age-related brain changes, while others experience more pronounced decline. I aim to contribute to the development of preventative and intervention-focused approaches that support cognitive health in aging populations. The goal is to advance understanding of the aging brain and improve quality of life for older adults.
Appert	Karen	Karen Appert, MS, is a gerontology professional and advocate dedicated to advancing nutrition, caregiving, and policy solutions for North Carolina's aging population. She serves as Program Manager for the Seniors Farmers' Market Nutrition Program at the North Carolina Division of Aging and Adult Services, where she oversees statewide training, stakeholder engagement, program monitoring, and data analysis to expand access to fresh, local foods for older adults. Karen is co-founder and co-lead of the NC Caregiving Collaborative, convening partners across sectors to improve the quality, equity, and accessibility of services for family caregivers. She represents North Carolina in the Caregiver Nation State Network through the National Alliance for Caregiving and serves on the Steering Committee for Community Catalyst's Amplifying the Power of Family Caregiver Voices Project. She also leads the Caregiver & Patient Engagement work group for the NC Serious Illness Coalition. An active member of both the Southern Gerontological Society and the Gerontological Society of America, Karen has contributed to research, advocacy, and conference programming focused on caregiving and aging policy. She holds a Master of Science in Gerontology from Kansas State University and brings more than two decades of experience in marketing and strategic communications to her leadership in aging services.
Asma	Khunza	I am one of the emerging interdisciplinary scholars in the field of Aging Studies, currently pursuing PhD at the University of South Florida's School of Aging Studies. My research centers on the psychological, biological, and neurocognitive consequences of caregiving in Alzheimer's disease and cancer, with a particular focus on chronic stress, depression, dementia and hormonal and neuroendocrine biomarkers that shape cognitive decline in later life. I have master's degrees in Medical Psychology and Aging Studies. Across my academic career, I have contributed to publications, community-engaged research reports, and age-friendly initiatives supporting older adults. My scholarly output includes peer-reviewed work, policy briefs, and community research for organizations such as VINE Faith in Action and the Chesley Center on Aging. I have been recognized through multiple national awards and fellowships, including the GSA Diversity Mentoring & Career Development Fellowship, AGHE Careers in Aging Award, and the University Graduate Fellowship. At USF, I serve as a Teaching Assistant for undergraduate courses in aging and human development, where I mentor students and support curriculum delivery. Beyond research and teaching, I am deeply involved in service through leadership roles across GSA, AGHE, and other professional organizations. My long-term goal is to strengthen dementia and cancer caregiver research and advance translational science that improves the well-being of older adults and their families.

Awuku	Amos Elikplim	Amos Elikplim Awuku is a Master's student in Social Work in Health Care at the University of Debrecen, Hungary, with a specialization in gerontology, ageing, and mental health in later life. He holds a Bachelor's degree in Social Work from the Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology (Ghana) and has professional experience in policy related social work, community outreach, and research support within governmental and non governmental settings. His academic and research interests focus on resilient ageing in resource limited settings, with particular attention to community support systems, geriatric care gaps, and age responsive social work practice in Africa. Awuku has presented at international gerontology and health conferences in Hungary, the Czech Republic, and Central Europe. His ongoing Master's thesis examines the role of social work in addressing the mental health needs of older adults in African contexts. He is actively engaged in interdisciplinary learning and international academic collaboration in gerontology and health social care.
Babu	Keerthiga Devi Ramesh	Keerthiga Devi Ramesh Babu is a PhD student in Health Sciences with a concentration in Applied Aging and Rehabilitation Sciences at the University of North Texas. She holds a Master's degree in Health Services Administration from the University of North Texas and a Bachelor of Dental Surgery from India. Her interdisciplinary background includes clinical dentistry, health services administration, and electronic health record (EHR) management. Her research interests focus on aging, oral health disparities, health care access, rehabilitation outcomes, and the impact of health policy on older adult populations. She is particularly interested in understanding how oral health and financial barriers influence functional independence, resilience, and quality of life among aging individuals. In addition to her doctoral training, Keerthiga serves as a teaching assistant for undergraduate public health courses and has professional experience as an EHR administrator in outpatient care settings. Her work integrates clinical insight with population health and policy perspectives to support more equitable, age-friendly health systems.
Banks	Madeleine	Madeleine Banks is a graduate student in the Biomedical Sciences program at the University of the Incarnate Word School of Medicine. Her academic and research interests focus on neurodegenerative disease, specifically Alzheimer's disease, geriatric medicine, and evidence-based interventions for cognitive decline. As part of a three-member research team, Madeleine contributed to a comparative study examining the effects of cholinesterase inhibitors versus structured memory exercises on cognitive outcomes in female patients over the age of 65 diagnosed with Alzheimer's disease. Her contributions to the project included literature review, data synthesis, and analysis of therapeutic implications for clinical practice. Madeleine plans to pursue medical school to become a Doctor of Osteopathic Medicine at the University of the Incarnate Word School of Medicine, with the goal of integrating research-informed inquiry into patient-centered clinical care.
Bennett	Stephanie	Stephanie Bennett, PhD, MBA, RN, has over 25 years of experience in various clinical settings and leadership roles. She earned her BSN from the University of Southern Mississippi, her MBA from the University of Phoenix, and her PhD from the University of Cincinnati in 2020. Currently, Dr. Bennett is a WISDOM Data Science Postdoctoral Fellow, NeLL Scholar, and an Adjunct Associate Professor at the Nell Hodgson Woodruff School of Nursing, Emory University. Although most dementia care occurs at home, families often lack sufficient support for complex decision-making, especially when managing multimorbidity. Thus, her passion and research focus on developing knowledge and skills for caregivers of persons living with dementia, addressing three key gaps: access to information (GenAI), quality care drivers (EHR data), and care team communication and advocacy for care priorities (psychoeducational activity). These three areas intersect within the broader challenge of empowering family caregivers as partners in care coordination. Dr. Bennett is a Robert Wood Johnson Foundation Future of Nursing Scholar. She recently (2022-2024) served on the Board of Directors for NurseTRUST, an organization dedicated to amplifying nurse leaders' impact to improve health, health equity, and healthcare. She worked with Elsevier Health Sciences for over 12 years as a senior clinical editor and product owner of clinical eLearning and clinical decision support solutions. Recently, she served as a nurse executive at Emory Healthcare, where she led strategies for patient and family advisory councils, as well as patient-facing communication and education.
Bishop	Alex	Dr. Alex J. Bishop is a professor in the Human Development and Family Science Department and the Bryan Close Professor of Adulthood & Aging in the College of Education and Human Sciences at Oklahoma State University, Stillwater, Oklahoma. He is a fellow in the Gerontological Society of America and recognized expert in the application of mixed-methodologies and use of oral history narratives to theoretically model and understand the interconnection between lived experiences and human health and well-being in longevity. Dr. Bishop has also spent over a decade examining forgiveness as a faith-based intervention to enhance individual rehabilitation among older men and women held in correctional custody.
Boadi	Emmanuel Bosompem	Emmanuel "Sky" Bosompem Boadi is a PhD candidate in Urban Affairs and Public Policy at the University of Memphis. His research focuses on the political economy of housing stability, neighborhood disinvestment, and aging in place, with particular attention to historically disinvested Southern cities. His dissertation examines how housing conditions, neighborhood environments, and institutional repair and rehabilitation ecosystems jointly shape later-life residential stability among seniors and adults with disabilities in Memphis. Sky's work integrates perspectives from urban political economy, environmental gerontology, and governance studies to produce policy-relevant, place-based evidence for city and county decision-making. Methodologically, he employs census-tract-level analysis using American Community Survey data, spatial diagnostics, and administrative program records to translate research into actionable guidance for housing and aging policy. He holds prior graduate training in public administration and resettlement science and has collaborated with local nonprofits, planners, and housing practitioners on issues related to home repair, neighborhood revitalization, and equitable aging strategies. His broader professional interests include aging-in-place policy, housing quality and affordability, nonprofit and grant-funded housing systems, and the role of institutions in mitigating place-based inequality. Sky aims to bridge research and practice by supporting evidence-driven housing stabilization strategies that enable older adults and people with disabilities to remain safely and sustainably housed in their communities.

Bommagouni	Maharshini	Maharshini Bommagouni is a first-year PhD Health Sciences student at the University of North Texas. She received a Bachelor's degree in Nursing from Gandhi Medical College in India, and a Master's degree in Healthcare Administration from the University of Houston-Clear Lake in Texas, United States. Her current concentration is applied aging and rehabilitation. Her research interests include mental health and global health, with a particular focus on the population-level and cross-cultural perspectives.
Bower	Kyle	As Owner and Principal Consultant of Cardinal Direction Qualitative Research Consulting, Dr. Kyle Bower brings applied expertise in designing and conducting qualitative research studies, leading evaluation efforts, and training interdisciplinary teams in methodological rigor. Her work is grounded in human development and the study of intergenerational social connection, with a focus on how relationships, caregiving networks, and social contexts shape well-being across the life course. Dr. Bower is a Certified Professional Trainer for ATLAS.ti and MAXQDA, offering instruction in methodological reflexivity, data management and organization, conceptual strategies, and qualitative analysis. She has demonstrated expertise in digital data collection workflows and the thoughtful integration of technology into qualitative research. Her commitment to conceptual and methodological rigor is reflected in her peer-reviewed publications, research reports, and scholarly presentations.
Branch-Dogans	Tach	Tach Branch-Dogans is a health sciences scholar and thought leader whose work focuses on resilience, mental wellness, and intentional leadership across the lifespan. Rooted in education and self-empowerment, her work supports the Sandwich Generation as they balance the dual responsibilities of caring for aging parents and raising dependent children. A certified Strategic Life Coach Practitioner, Tach holds a Master of Arts degree in Psychology and is currently pursuing a PhD in Health Sciences at the University of North Texas. She intentionally weaves her academic research into real-world practice, creating a human-centered leadership model grounded in emotional intelligence, resilience, and relational influence. Her career spans more than 20 years at the intersection of business leadership and health sciences, where she brings strategic vision alongside deep empathy to cross-sector collaborations focused on meaningful impact. Tach's thought leadership has been recognized nationally through speaking engagements with organizations such as AARP Innovation Labs, Innovation Collective, and One Woman International, as well as presentations at leading conferences, including the American Society on Aging and the National Association of Social Workers. At the core of her leadership are integrity, growth, and fearless execution. By bridging science and soul, Tach equips professionals and organizations to lead with authenticity, clarity, and purpose—mobilizing teams and advancing resilience across diverse aging pathways.
Brown	C. Nathaniel	C. Nathaniel Brown is a Certified Dementia Practitioner, filmmaker, and author who has dedicated his life to entertaining, educating, and empowering people through the creative arts and media. He is founder of Expected End Entertainment and Expose Dementia Inc., a nonprofit organization that educates about dementia and advocates for those living with dementia and their care partners. Mr. Brown is the producer and director of the award-winning documentary, Remember Me: Dementia in the African American Community, and author of "Exposing Dementia: 8 Critical Takeaways for African Americans".
Brown	Jocelyn	Jocelyn L. Brown is a gerontologist and Assistant Professor of African American Studies at Ohio University. Her work combines humanistic gerontology, Black studies, and teaching under difficult conditions. She focuses on intergenerational storytelling, counter-archives, and community-based teaching. She creates practice-based frameworks rooted in fugitive pedagogy to help educators and practitioners who work with Black, Brown, immigrant, and LGBTQ+ elders in higher education, health, and community settings. Dr. Brown's current projects explore the effects of DEI retrenchment on belonging, faculty labor, and elder well-being. They also include oral histories of Black Appalachia and life-review methods as tools for policy and curriculum change.
Catlett	Lauren	Lauren Catlett, PhD, RN, CNL (they/them) is a postdoctoral researcher whose work centers on the care of older adults and adults with serious illness. With degrees in nursing and the fine arts, Dr. Catlett has integrated creative design approaches into the care of older adults over their 15 years working in aging services, long-term care, and hospice. Dr. Catlett earned their doctorate in nursing from the University of Virginia in 2025. In their dissertation study, they used a community-engaged approach to co-design an advance care planning resource and website with transgender older adults. As the recipient of a 2025 Innovative Projects Grant from the Southern Gerontological Society, Dr. Catlett has been able to test this resource and share it with the larger community. Dr. Catlett has presented at over a dozen conferences in the United States and Canada, and they have published in peer-reviewed journals on advance care planning and palliative care for older adults from historically marginalized communities.
Chemhaka	Garikayi	Garikayi Chemhaka, PhD, MPhil, is a Health Sciences PhD candidate at the University of North Texas, focusing on Applied Aging and Rehabilitation Science. His research examines the intersection of population dynamics, health, and successful aging in late adulthood. His current research aims to inform policies and programs that support successful aging and improve health outcomes in older adults.
Chrzanowski	Lauren	Lauren is a second-year clinical psychology Ph.D. student focused on geriatric neuropsychology. She is passionate about using whole-person and family-centered approaches to dementia care, including exploring meaning-based dyadic interventions that promote positive coping post-diagnosis.
Chung	Iris	Iris Chung is a BSN Honors student at the Emory University Nell Hodgson Woodruff School of Nursing. She is an intern with the Integrated Memory Care Clinic under the mentorship of Dr. Carolyn Clevenger and has been actively involved in the Integrated Memory Care (IMC) in Community program, which focuses on comprehensive dementia care for patients and their caregivers in senior residential communities. As an honors student, Iris is currently developing her senior thesis evaluating the effectiveness of the IMC in Community program on reducing Alzheimer's symptoms and caregiver distress.
Croucher	Madison	I am currently working with Drs. Matthew Peterson and Jennifer McCall on an exercise study for my Master's Capstone project in the MS Clinical Research program at UNCW. We will discuss results found among study participants.

de la Cruz	Jennie	Jennie de la Cruz is a physician assistant and health professions educator with expertise in geriatric care, age-friendly health systems, and health professions education. She serves as Chair of the Department of Physician Assistant Studies at Mercer University and maintains clinical practice in skilled nursing and long-term care settings. Jennie is also a PhD candidate in Public Health (Health Policy), with scholarly interests focused on dementia care, community-dwelling older adults, and educational strategies to prepare the future health workforce to meet the needs of an aging population. Her work integrates clinical experience, research, and education to promote compassionate, evidence-based care for older adults.
Daniels	Pastor Geraldine	Rev. Geraldine Adams Daniels is an ordained Elder in Full Connection in the Christian Methodist Episcopal Church. She is a graduate of Miles College in Birmingham, AL with a B.A. in English, and minor in Sociology. She also has a Master of Arts in Journalism from Texas Southern University in Houston, TX, Certificate of Theology from the Interdenominational Theological Center (ITC) in Atlanta, Georgia, studies in Christian Counseling, at the College of Biblical Studies and Psychology at the University of Houston. In May 2015 she earned her Doctor of Ministry from Perkins School of Theology. In 2007 she completed a one-year residency in Clinical Pastoral Education (CPE); worked as a hospital chaplain at St. Luke's Hospital in Houston, Texas. She served as a chaplain and bereavement coordinator with Solari Hospice in Houston. In August 2010, she was appointed as the Pastor of Southside CME Church, Birmingham, AL where she has served for the last fifteen years. Presently she is also Chair of the Ministerial Examination Committee and advisor/patron pastor to the Birmingham District Board of Christian Education and Formation. Dr. Daniels is involved with Faith in Action Alabama, Greater Birmingham Ministries, a member (UAB) Community Advisory Committee of Study, "African American Communities Speak to Healthcare Providers." A clergy partner with Samford University Center for Congregational Change, Washington School, K-8 and Sisters in Ministry Birmingham. Dr. Daniels is a mother and grandmother of one son (deceased) and one grandson
Delgado	Kimberly	Dr. Delgado is a Clinical Assistant Professor at East Carolina University's (ECU) College of Nursing (CON). Dr. Delgado is a nurse educator and nurse researcher with 20+ years of long-term care experience in New York (NY) and North Carolina (NC). Dr. Delgado is a member of ECU CON's Carolina Geriatric Workforce Enhancement Program (GWEP) team. The Carolina GWEP team provides education throughout eastern NC related to healthy aging, dementia care, and IHI's 4Ms Framework. In addition to her role on the GWEP team, Dr. Delgado teaches pre-licensure first-semester nursing student didactic, lab and clinical courses. Dr. Delgado earned her PhD in nursing from ECU CON in December 2022, with her doctoral studies research focusing on nursing staff identification of urinary tract infections in nursing homes. In 2022, she also completed the NC Area Health Education Center's Scholars program and the North Carolina Nurses Association's (NCNA) Leadership Academy. Dr. Delgado is a certified dementia practitioner (CDP) and a certified trainer for the National Council of Certified Dementia Practitioner's Alzheimer's disease and dementia care (ADDC) seminar, the prerequisite for CDP certification. She is also certified to teach Teepa Snow's Positive Approach to Care® methods. Dr. Delgado serves as Regional Engagement Coordinator for NCNA's Northeast Region (2023-2026). She is also a member of the following professional organizations: American Nurses Association, Sigma Theta Tau International Honor Society's Beta Nu Chapter, Association for Leadership Science in Nursing, Gerontological Society of America, American Geriatrics Society, Southern Gerontological Society, and Omicron Delta Kappa International Honor Society.
Dickerson	Anne	Anne Dickerson, PhD, OTR/L, SCDCM, FAOTA, FGSA is Professor in East Carolina University's Department of Occupational Therapy and Director of the Research for the Older Adult Driver Initiative (ROADI). As an occupational therapist, psychologist, and driving rehabilitation specialist, Dr. Dickerson is an international leader in research in areas of older adults, driving rehabilitation driver simulation, and teens/young adult drivers with autism spectrum disorder. She was awarded ECU's 2018 Lifetime Achievement Award for Excellence in Research and Creative Activity for her scholarly achievements, the 2025 Merit Award from the American Occupational Therapy Association and the 2024 North Carolina's Traffic Safety Partner award from the Governor's Highway Safety Program (GHSP). The GHSP has supported her development of educational films (N=4) to address older driver safety, and she is currently a co-investigator of a study on aging, life space, and social determinants of health from NIA. She has presented nationally and internationally on topics of aging, driving safety, driving technology, and fitness to drive, and drivers with autism and has over 100 peer reviewed publications in these areas.
Dobbs	Debra	Dr. Dobbs is an Associate Professor in the School of Aging Studies and the Academic Director of the Center for Hospice, Palliative Care and End-of-Life Studies at the University of South Florida. She previously served as the Associate Editor of Gerontology and Geriatric Medicine (GGM). She serves as Vice Chair of Gerontological Society of America, Social Research, Policy and Practice Section. Dr. Dobbs has research interests in palliative, hospice and end-of-life care, and palliative care education in assisted living with a specific focus on providers of persons living with dementia. Dr. Dobbs is also involved in disaster preparedness research and music and mindfulness studies in assisted living and other community-based settings for persons living with dementia and their caregivers.
Douglas	Natalie	Natalie F. Douglas, PhD, CCC-SLP, holds the Doris Hawthorne/Louisiana Education Quality Regents Support Fund Professorship IV and is an Associate Professor of Communicative Disorders at the University of Louisiana at Lafayette. Her scholarship focuses on improving communication access for people living with dementia, aphasia, and other acquired communication disabilities. She also examines how communication-related barriers in healthcare contribute to falls, safety risks, and poorer outcomes for people who speak languages other than English. She partners with healthcare and education teams to design pragmatic studies, build coaching supports, and test strategies that fit routine care. She additionally works as Evidence & Practice Strategist at The Informed SLP, where she translates research into practical guidance, curates evidence summaries, and develops usable tools for clinicians and educators. Alongside these roles, she practices PRN in skilled nursing facilities.

Easter	Bashir	Bashir R. Easter, MBA, PhD, is a scholar, dean, entrepreneur, and community leader with nearly three decades of experience advancing equity, wellness, and economic opportunity. He is the founder of Melanin Minded LLC and the Melanin Minded Foundation, where he leads culturally grounded initiatives focused on Frontotemporal dementia awareness, youth development, caregiver support, and community economic empowerment. His work includes leadership advancement workshops, the Caregiver Health & Wellness Series, and innovative dementia-care solutions such as Navigator Transportation, a ride-share program supporting Dementia-Friendly Communities and emerging Dementia Villages in underserved areas. Dr. Easter's groundbreaking research on African American adolescents caring for relatives with dementia informs national conversations on caregiving and brain health equity. He has also led large-scale community engagement efforts, including directing Milwaukee-site outreach for the NIH All of Us Research Program, building trusted partnerships across faith-based, nonprofit, and public-sector organizations. A dedicated educator, he has taught business, ethics, leadership, and management in higher education, emphasizing real-world application and culturally responsive learning. His work has earned numerous honors, including the Milwaukee Times Black Excellence Award, Unison Outstanding Partnership Award, the History Maker Award, and the Project Pitch It Grand Prize. He serves as Co-Chair of the Alzheimer's Disease Neuroimaging Initiative Community Advisory Board and previously served on the Wisconsin Alzheimer's Institute Community Advisory Board. Above all, he gives God all the glory for the work entrusted to him.
Ede	Caytra	Ms. Caytra Ede is a graduate of University of California, San Diego (UCSD). As an undergraduate, she was a research intern at the UCSD Shiley-Marcos Alzheimer's Disease Research Center (ADRC) assisting with a variety of dementia research studies. She is currently a medical assistant in Family Practice and will be attending medical school in 2026.
Elk	Ronit	Dr. Ronit Elk is a Professor in the Dept. of Medicine, University of Alabama, Birmingham, in the Division of Gerontology, Geriatrics and Palliative Care. Throughout her 30-year research career, Dr. Elk's focus has been on health equity. Over the last 10 years, in all her NIH funded studies, she has implemented a Community Based Participatory Research (CBPR) approach, an evidence-based, research and social justice focused approach, based on equitable partnerships with minoritized communities. The healthcare programs built in partnership with the community are based on that community's cultural preferences and lived experiences. The most recent is a training program developed BY the African American community to train healthcare providers in providing culturally appropriate and respectful care to older African Americans with serious illness. She leads a national CBPR Intensive Training every Summer, followed by mentoring trainees from all over the US and beyond in designing, writing and implementing their own community-engaged research grants. Dr. Elk has been awarded the Richard Payne Outstanding Achievement in Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Award, from the American Academy of Hospice and Palliative Medicine.
Elsden	Ariana	My name is Ariana Elsdén, and I am a first-year graduate student in the Experimental Psychology PhD program at Texas Christian University (TCU). I earned my Bachelor of Science in Psychology from Creighton University, where I worked in Dr. Amber Witherby's Cognitive Psychology Lab as both a research assistant and lab manager. In this role, I contributed to projects investigating factors that influence student memory performance. At TCU, I work with Dr. Uma Tauber in the Memory & Aging Lab, focusing on how cognitive psychology principles can support the learning of health-related information. Specifically, my research examines whether these principles can improve how caregivers of individuals living with dementia learn about behavioral symptoms associated with Alzheimer's and related dementias. I am also broadly interested in how older adults learn other types of health information, including medications and their side effects. Throughout my time at TCU, I aim to continue developing research that supports caregivers and adults in understanding complex health information in applied settings. Ultimately, I hope to become a psychology professor at a university where I can pursue this line of research in my own lab.
Fields	Noelle	Noelle L. Fields, Ph.D., LCSW, FGSA, FNAP is an Associate Professor and the Roy E. Dulak Professor for Community Practice Research in the School of Social Work at the University of Texas at Arlington. She is a gerontology researcher who focuses on the intersection between mobility, health, and aging friendly communities. Dr. Fields' work also seeks to improve home and community-based services and supports for older adults and their family care partners, particularly for persons with Alzheimer's disease and related dementias. One aspect of her research focuses on lay provider/volunteer delivered interventions, including the Senior Companion Program Plus, the PorchLight Project, and the Intergenerational Digital Memory Project. Utilizing mixed methodological approaches, Dr. Fields collaborates with community partners and interdisciplinary faculty from civil engineering, computer science, transportation planning, nursing, library science, and liberal arts. Building the nexus between community practice, interdisciplinary collaborations, and social work is a key aspect of her scholarship and research.
Finney	Pastor J.R.	Reverend Johnny R. Finney II, (Pastor Finney or J. R. as he is known) is in his 24th year as the Senior Pastor of Covenant Community Church, A United Church of Christ congregation in the Lakeview area of Birmingham, AL. He credits his family's strong church and community focus as the foundation for his belief that the local church must not only meet people's spiritual need, but also, when possible, help in the everyday struggles of living. He has a long history of serving in various leadership roles in local churches as well as regional and denominational roles. He is a Vietnam era veteran of the United State Air Force (1972-1976). In September 2000, Pastor Finney became the Pastor of Covenant after a 17-year career with the US EPA, Region IV, headquartered in Atlanta, Georgia. His last position was Chief, Financial Compliance Section, Waste Division. He also served five years as President of local Chapter 1706, of the National Treasury Employees Union. Pastor Finney serves as a member of the Community Advisory Board of the "African American Communities Speak" study at the University of Alabama, Birmingham. Pastor Finney is a much sought after speaker, lecturer, and panelist on a wide range of issues.

Gant	Sharise	Sharise Gant is a Master of Biomedical Science student in the Research Methods department at the University of the Incarnate Word. Her primary research interest is osteoporosis, with a particular focus on preventative and non-pharmacologic interventions to preserve bone health. She is currently contributing to a research project examining the relationship between exercise and bone mineral density in postmenopausal women. In this project, Ms. Gant played an active role in formulating the PICOT research question and conducting systematic literature searches using databases such as PubMed and Cochrane Central. She contributed to the development of the search strategy, participated in defining inclusion and exclusion criteria, and assisted in the creation of the PRISMA flow diagram to document the study selection process. Ms. Gant is a recipient of the Soldier's Medal for her actions during the November 5, 2009 Fort Hood shooting, reflecting a longstanding commitment to service, leadership, and professionalism that informs her academic and research pursuits.
Germain	Cassandra	Dr. Cassandra Germain is an interdisciplinary researcher and educator in the health and behavioral sciences. Her research focuses on identifying modifiable risk factors that are associated with cognitive change, dementia, and functional impairment in late life. Dr. Germain is also interested in behavioral interventions that promote health and emotional well-being in older adults. Current research areas include Inflammation and Brain Health, Brain Health Education and Outreach and the exploring the impact of Music, on Cognition, and the Brain. Dr. Germain is an active mentor and advocate for aging health in the community and serves on several committees and board including the North Carolina Serious Illness Coalition and Guidance Carolina which provides fiduciary services coupled with care management to vulnerable persons. Dr. Germain was also received an SGS Victor W. Marshall Fellow in Applied Gerontology in 2025.
Ghimire	Saruna	Dr. Saruna Ghimire is an Associate Professor in the Department of Sociology and Gerontology and a Research Fellow at the Scripps Gerontology Center at Miami University. With a background in public health, her research focuses on the health and well-being of diverse communities, particularly in later life. She emphasizes the social determinants of health and is committed to addressing disparities through culturally informed, equity-driven approaches. Dr. Ghimire's recent work centers on improving health outcomes for individuals with refugee backgrounds, combining scholarly rigor with cultural sensitivity. Ghimire leads and collaborates on several ongoing projects in the U.S. (particularly in Ohio), Nepal, and Bangladesh. These projects are strengthened by her established partnerships with researchers and institutions across the globe, reflecting her dedication to interdisciplinary and transnational collaboration. Through her work, Dr. Ghimire continues to advance knowledge and practice in aging, public health, and equity-driven research, aiming to create more inclusive and responsive health systems worldwide.
Gibson	Ethlyn	Dr. Ethlyn McQueen-Gibson, DNP, MSN, RN-BC serves as Director for Health Equity, Education and Access for the Urban League of Hampton Roads, Inc., and as a Research Associate and Geriatric Clinical Nurse Specialist at the Glennan Center for Geriatrics & Gerontology at Eastern Virginia Medical School at Old Dominion University. She also holds academic appointments as Adjunct Associate Professor in the Division of Geriatric Medicine at Eastern Virginia Medical School, Professor in the Ellmer School of Nursing at Old Dominion University, Clinical Nurse Specialist at Riverside Health's Martha Goodson Center for Healthy Aging, and tenured Associate Professor at Howard University School of Nursing. Dr. McQueen-Gibson earned her Doctor of Nursing Practice and Bachelor of Science in Nursing degrees from Ursuline College and her Master of Science in Nursing from the Medical College of Georgia. She is a Fellow in Applied Gerontology through the Southern Gerontological Society. With more than 40 years of nursing experience, including service as a commissioned officer in the U.S. Army Nurse Corps, she has led clinical, academic, and community-based initiatives focused on aging, Alzheimer's disease, health equity, and vaccine confidence in underserved communities. Her research includes work on early Alzheimer's interventions, COVID-19 public health messaging, and caregiver stress among African American families. She has held Virginia gubernatorial appointments to the Commonwealth Health Research Board and the Virginia Board of Nursing and currently serves on several community and professional boards. Dr. McQueen-Gibson has received multiple honors for community leadership and engagement.
Greer	Tracy	Dr. Greer holds the Nancy P. and John G. Penson Endowed Professorship in Clinical Health Psychology. She has been a Principal Investigator or Co-Investigator on numerous clinical trials and clinical translational research projects funded by NIH, foundations, and industry. Her primary research interests and expertise include novel treatment paradigms for psychiatric conditions, examination of moderators and mediators associated with effective treatment response, and the examination of targeted treatments and lifestyle changes to improve cognition, functioning, and quality of life. She leads the Functional and Cognitive Wellness Lab, which broadly aims to evaluate cognitive contributors to overall health and well-being.
Gunter	Sonja	Sonja Gunter is a licensed practical nurse of 22 years, a licensed Evangelist, a Certified Dementia Practitioner, a Certified Alzheimer's Disease and Dementia Care Trainer, and the author of the book, "Professional Traits of a Healthcare Leader". Sonja is the founder and CEO of 3 businesses that immediately impact the lives of seniors and their families. Senior911, an all-inclusive, wrap around support and resource company that provides services for their seniors and their families, in the areas of private duty home care and Seawood Personal Care Homes, Benevolent Senior Living which is an owner/operator of senior care/memory care communities, and a mobile app, HomeCare Everywhere that brings homecare services right to the home at the consumers fingertips. Sonja also founded Angel911 Inc, a non-profit providing respite and caregiver resources. Sonja has been featured on various business radio and social media platforms and has even owned and hosted her own internet radio show where she highlighted other healthcare related business owners. Sonja is also a well sought-after speaker in the Atlanta area and abroad in the areas of Alzheimer's and dementia care and caregiver support. Sonja's years in nursing, her passion for helping others and her gift of public speaking, has created a platform that has given her an opportunity to provide education and resources on health-related matters to the communities that need it most. Due to her love of brain health she is now pursuing her Bachelor of Science in Neuroscience and Cognitive Science from the University of Arizona.

Gyimah	Clinton	Clinton Gyimah is a doctoral student at the University of Pittsburgh School of Social Work. He earned his bachelor's degree in social work from the Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology in Ghana and a Master of Social Work degree from the University of Georgia. Before beginning his doctoral studies, Clinton worked as a research assistant at the University of Georgia's Center for Social Justice, Human, and Civil Rights, where he contributed to several health equity and inclusivity projects across Georgia. He also gained clinical experience as a case manager during his specialization practicum at the Cognitive Aging and Education Research Center, where he supported older adults through early dementia diagnosis, facilitated support groups, and helped individuals and families manage the challenges of cognitive decline. In addition, Clinton served as a teaching and research assistant in the Department of Sociology and Social Work at Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology. His professional and research experience spans projects addressing child marriage prevention, trauma-informed care for immigrant populations in the United States, and advocacy for health equity. Through these efforts, he has co-authored four peer-reviewed articles. Clinton's research interests center on gerontology and caregiving (both formal and informal) for older adults living with dementia, health equity and inclusivity, and community-based participatory research. His faculty mentor is Dr. Cotton Quinton.
Hage	David	Dr. David Hage serves as MSW Program Director, Medical Social Work Certificate Coordinator, and Affiliate Faculty at the Shady Rest Institute on Positive Aging at Florida Gulf Coast University. He is a Licensed Clinical Social Worker (LCSW) and doctorally prepared gerontologist. Dr. Hage is a Fellow of the American College of Healthcare Executives (FACHE), a Feinstein Death & Dying Fellow, 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™, and Certified Dementia Practitioner (CDP) with over 20 years of practice, education, and leadership experience.
Hagedorn	Aaron	Aaron T. Hagedorn, PhD, is an Instructional Associate Professor at the University of Southern California Leonard Davis School of Gerontology. He previously served as Assistant Dean of Research and Faculty Affairs at the University of Texas at Arlington. Dr. Hagedorn earned his PhD, master's degrees in Health Administration and Gerontology, and bachelor's degree in Gerontology from USC. His teaching and scholarship focus on healthy life expectancy, cognitive and physical functioning, technology and aging, intergenerational programs, and global aging. He has published widely in leading journals, including the Journal of the American Geriatrics Society and Demography, with research spanning cross-national health comparisons, disability-free life expectancy, virtual reality interventions, and smart eldercare. An award-winning educator, Dr. Hagedorn received the USC Gerontology Alumni of the Year Award and the James and Betty Birren Outstanding Teacher Award. He is President-Elect of Sigma Phi Omega and actively contributes to professional organizations advancing gerontology education and practice.
Hancock	Cynthia	Dr. Cynthia Hancock is a Teaching Professor and Director of Gerontology at The University of North Carolina at Charlotte. She brings 25 years of teaching experience to her classroom, where she incorporates community-based learning at both the graduate and undergraduate levels. As Director of Gerontology, she works to build enduring community-university partnerships in the Charlotte region. She is the recipient of two teaching awards in the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences at UNC Charlotte, was awarded the Distinguished Faculty Award by the Academy for Gerontology in Higher Education, and is a Fellow of the Academy for Gerontology in Higher Education, the Southern Gerontological Society, and Sigma Phi Omega - the international Academic Honor and Professional Society in Gerontology. Her current research focuses on the role of micro-credentialing in aging and related fields, aging education in the K-12 classroom space, intergenerational community garden spaces, and the use and impact of language in the context of aging and older adults. She is a co-creator of the Exploring Careers in Aging website.
Hand	Michelle	Dr. Michelle D. Hand, MSW, LSW is an Assistant Professor of Social Work at George Mason University. Her research focuses on holistic strategies for addressing sexual violence and trauma across the life course among individuals and communities that are considered nondominant and/or at-risk, owing to structural inequalities and discrimination. Thus, she studies causes and impacts of violence and trauma as well as arts- and horticulture-based approaches (e.g., through community gardens and growing spaces) to promote healing, informed by extensive urban and rural interdisciplinary clinical and research-based experience. Her work has been published in premier scholarly journals as well as in books, and has been presented at several national and international conferences, including at Harvard Law School's "Just Food?" Forum, on social gardens for change. She welcomes multi-level transdisciplinary collaboration in her community-engaged research, to collectively develop community-based resources for recovery from sexual violence and trauma across the lifespan and particularly in later life.
Handique	Swasati	Swasati Handique (she/her) is a community-based social worker, and a Ph.D. student at the University of Texas, Arlington. Swasati's research focuses 1) on exploring the experiences of older adults and their informal caregivers who are receiving palliative or end-of-life care or undergoing chronic, terminal, or life-limiting illnesses, 2) examining the social inequalities and disparities that accompany the treatment of chronically ill older patients and how these factors impact both diagnosis and treatment outcomes. She employs a mix of qualitative and quantitative methods in her research. Swasati is an international student from India who holds a MSW from Tata Institute of Social Sciences, India.
Harrington	A. Katherine	Dr. Katie Harrington received both a PhD in adult development and aging psychology and a certificate in gerontology from the University of Akron, and previously worked as a research associate at Scripps Gerontology Center at Miami University of Ohio. She is currently employed as an assistant professor of psychology at Virginia Wesleyan University, where she teaches both undergraduate and graduate students. Additionally, she teaches each semester as part of the Prison Education Program with the Virginia Department of Corrections.
Hayslip	Bert	Dr. Bert Hayslip is a Regents Professor Emeritus at the University of North Texas. He earned his Ph.D. in Experimental/Developmental Psychology from the University of Akron in 1975. He taught at Hood College in Frederick MD for 3 years and was on the University of North Texas Psychology faculty from 1978 to 2013. His research interests include caregiving, grandparents raising grandchildren, death and dying, hospice care, cognition and aging, and gerontological counseling. He currently teaching courses on a variety of topics related to later life for the University of North Texas Ohser Lifelong Learning program.

Helmlly	Victoria	Victoria Helmlly is a postdoctoral fellow in the School of Public Health at Georgia State University. She received a B.A. in Sociology from Georgia State University in 2013 and an MSW with a graduate certificate in Gerontology from Georgia State University in 2016. She served as the Alzheimer's & Related Dementias State Plan Coordinator for the Georgia Department of Human Services, Division of Aging Services, from 2016 to 2019. She completed her Ph.D. in Criminal Justice and Criminology at Georgia State University in 2024. Victoria's research interests lie at the intersection of aging and the criminal legal system. She seeks to understand the experiences of older adults in prisons and on community supervision, as well as the policies and practices that impact this population. Her postdoctoral research primarily focuses on the experiences of people with frontotemporal dementia (FTD) who have encountered the criminal legal system. This research is funded by the Association for Frontotemporal Dementia.
Hemrajani	Girish	Girish Hemrajani, MS (ENT), MA (Gerontology) is a PhD student in the School of Aging Studies at the University of South Florida. With over three decades of clinical experience as an otorhinolaryngologist (ENT surgeon), Dr. Hemrajani brings a unique interdisciplinary perspective to gerontology, integrating medical expertise with aging research and policy. His research focuses on palliative care, advance care planning (ACP), hospice and end-of-life care, mild cognitive decline and Alzheimer's disease and related dementias (ADRD), sensory loss and cognitive decline, elder abuse, and disaster preparedness in older adults. He is particularly interested in leveraging technology and artificial intelligence to increase ACP adoption and improve care outcomes. His recent scholarly work includes policy briefs on hearing aid access in rural communities and research on social epigenomics, technology in advance care planning, and AI applications in aging services—earning the Best Student Poster Award at GSA 2025. Dr. Hemrajani serves as a Graduate Teaching Assistant in courses on Physical Changes and Aging, Death and Dying, and Program Evaluation in Healthcare. He is Treasurer of the GSA Student Chapter (2025–2026) and is fluent in English, Hindi, Marathi, Sindhi, and basic Arabic.
Henighan	Tonya	Tonya F. Henighan is a Project Manager II at the Wake Forest NCORP Research Base and Course Director at Wake Forest Biomedical Graduate School. She is pursuing a Ph.D. in Health Sciences at Liberty University, focusing on health literacy, and holds an MPH and a BS in Gerontology. Tonya has extensive experience managing multi-site clinical trials, promoting health equity, and mentoring future researchers. She has presented at national conferences, including NIH and the Society of Clinical Trials, and is committed to advancing culturally responsive research and equitable healthcare interventions.
Henke	Maria	Maria Henke is Senior Associate Dean of the University of Southern California Leonard Davis School of Gerontology, the oldest and largest school of gerontology in the world, and Director of the Ethel Percy Andrus Gerontology Center. Her career reflects a sustained commitment to building academic and professional pathways that respond to the realities of global aging. In recognition of this work, she received the Gerontological Society of America's Administrative Leadership Honor, awarded to administrators who have made exceptional contributions to gerontology and geriatrics education in 2020. Henke's leadership is defined by her ability to translate vision into successful academic program implementation. Under her guidance, the School has expanded both its student population and its academic reach. She pioneered distance learning efforts and has helped advance core programs such as the Master of Arts in Gerontology—the first online gerontology degree accredited in the western United States—while also envisioning and implementing more than a dozen professional programs serving practitioners, employers, and organizations across the aging ecosystem. These efforts complement the launch of forward-looking degree programs, including the Master of Applied Technology and Aging and the innovative Doctorate of Longevity Arts and Sciences. Beyond USC, Henke serves on the Board of Governors of the Accreditation for Gerontology Education Council and has held leadership roles with the American Society on Aging and the California Council on Gerontology and Geriatrics.
Hernandez	Carlos Chavez	Carlos Chavez Hernandez is a Master of Biomedical Sciences candidate at the University of the Incarnate Word School of Osteopathic Medicine. He is interested in research that examines the effects of diet and commonly prescribed pharmaceuticals on aging in urban populations, with particular attention to how diabetes and pain management interventions influence lifestyle recovery and organ system longevity. He plans to pursue a Doctorate in Osteopathic Medicine following graduation, with the goal of further investigating the role of pain management strategies in aging and longevity. Carlos contributed the current project as the database search expert and by identifying themes in the literature.
Hernandez	Denise	Dr. Hernandez received her PhD from the College of Architecture, Planning, and Public Affairs (CAPPA) in Public and Urban Administration at the University of Texas at Arlington (UTA). She earned her Master of Public Health from the Texas A&M School of Public Health, and a Bachelor of Science in Allied Health from Texas A&M University. Her research focuses on professional and social support for Community Health Workers (CHWs), CHW organizational development, as well as collaborating with CHWs to facilitate access between the community and healthcare/social services. She has worked alongside CHWs for over 10 years and is a Texas state certified CHW instructor. Dr. Hernandez is the founder of the DFW Community Health Worker Association as well as a member of the founding Board of Directors for the Texas Association of CHWs/Promotores. Denise is a member of UTA's inaugural research team awarded the Coalition of Urban Serving Universities Racial Justice, Equity Program Award. Dr. Hernandez currently teaches in the Public Health program at UTA and continues working to strengthen the support for the CHW workforce through research and policy at the local, state, and national level. In 2021, Dr. Hernandez received the Ford Mujeres Legendarias Award for her work and service to the Hispanic/Latinx community.

Huang	Qian	Dr. Qian Huang is a research assistant professor at the East Tennessee State University Center for Rural Health and Research and the Department of Biostatistics and Epidemiology. Her work focuses on rural health, social determinants of health, social vulnerabilities and resilience, maternal and child health, and aging. She has led multiple federally and state-funded projects, including analyses of suicide mortality and the development of interactive public health and GIS dashboards. Dr. Huang is also a National Rural Health Association (NRHA) Rural Health Fellow, a program dedicated to developing leaders who can articulate a clear and compelling vision for rural America. Her work combines spatial analysis with public health to inform data-driven policy and program development aimed at improving health outcomes in underserved communities.
Hultquist	Lauren	Lauren Hultquist is a second-year graduate student at the University of North Carolina at Charlotte, earning her Master of Arts in Psychology and Graduate Certificate in Gerontology. Upon graduating, she plans to pursue her PhD in Industrial-Organizational Psychology or Organizational Science. She holds a bachelor's degree in Psychology and a second bachelor's degree in Criminal Justice from Wingate University. Her research interests include age, meetings, and personality. In 2025, she was the recipient of UNC Charlotte's NMR Gerontology Scholarship and Shenk Gerontology Research Award. In 2024, she won first place in UNC Charlotte's Three Minute Thesis Competition and represented her university regionally.
Ivey	Kimberly	Kim Ivey is the Director of Education Services for the Virginia Center on Aging and Department of Gerontology. She contributes to several initiatives of the Geriatric Workforce Enhancement Program, the Virginia Memory Project, and the Virginia Long-Term Care Clinicians Network, and serves on the Board of Directors of the Lifelong Learning Institute in Chesterfield. She works with current and prospective VCU Gerontology graduate students, helping to ensure their success in the program. Kim has been associated with VCoA since 1994, and earned her Master of Science in gerontology from VCU's Department of Gerontology. She has many years of experience working in long-term care and in educating caregivers and professionals about Alzheimer's disease and related dementias.
Jang	Soeun	Soeun Jang, MSW is a PhD candidate in the School of Social Work at the University of Texas at Arlington, where her research focuses on gerontology, Alzheimer's disease and related dementias, and social determinants of cognitive health. Her work examines how social, environmental, and behavioral factors, including neighborhood social cohesion, physical activity, caregiving burden, and social isolation, shape cognitive health and well-being among older adults and family caregivers. Ms. Jang is a recipient of multiple scholarships and fellowships, including the AGESW Pre-Dissertation Fellowship, Dallas Area Gerontology Society Scholarship, Stacie McGee Student Scholar Award. She has served as a graduate research assistant on several interdisciplinary projects, including NIH/NIA funded R21 study on digital biomarkers for Alzheimer's disease, and is an active member of social determinants of health lab. Her work has resulted in peer-reviewed publications and national conferences such as the Gerontological Society of America (GSA) and the Society of Social Work and Research (SSWR). Beyond academia, Ms. Jang is also engaged in community-based aging services, currently serving as data analyst for adult day care and dementia-focused community program. She is also president of Gerontology Student Organization at UTA. Her long-term goal is to inform dementia-friendly policies and community interventions that promote equity, aging in place, and quality of life for diverse older adult populations.
Joiner	Jhazzmyn	Jhazzy Joiner is a Ph.D. student in Communication Studies at Georgia State University. Her research interests include aging, media, Black womanhood, and sexuality, sometimes engaging creative forms of communication to explore identity and representation. Through both her academic and creative pursuits, she seeks to expand how we understand communication as a tool for equity, expression, and connection across generations.
Jones	Mary	Mary Jones is a research assistant and graduate student in the Gerontology program at Georgia State University. With a strong interest in neurodegenerative diseases, her research focuses on modifiable lifestyle factors, such as sleep quality and physical exercise, and how these may alleviate or potentially prevent the onset of dementia symptoms. In addition to her academic work, Mary is passionate about dementia advocacy, particularly in promoting low-cost, accessible interventions and providing comprehensive education. Looking ahead, she is committed to exploring innovative approaches that can improve the lives of adults living with dementia and reduce the impact of these diseases on caregivers and their families.
Jones	Raymond	Dr. Raymond Jones, Assistant Professor in the Division of Gerontology, Geriatrics, and Palliative Care in the University of Alabama at Birmingham's Heersink School of Medicine, is an exercise physiologist with a focus on developing interventions to combat vascular and cognitive dysfunction in older adults living with HIV. His current NIH-funded work explores the impact of high-intensity exercise on vascular and cognitive health in older adults living with HIV. Dr. Jones is particularly interested in elevating the community's voices to build feasible and acceptable interventions with and for older adults living with HIV. His work aims to increase the relevance, effectiveness, and sustainability of his interventions, ultimately improving health outcomes and promoting greater participation in exercise among older adults with HIV.
Jordan	Robyn	Dr. Robyn Jordan has a Bachelor of Science (BS) in Zoology, a Master of Science (MS) in Biology, and a Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) in Marriage and Family Therapy. With almost three decades at the University of Louisiana Monroe, she has served in numerous roles such as the Director of Admissions and Scholarships, Assistant Director of International Students, Instructor in Biology, Assistant Professor in Marriage and Family Therapy, and is currently Assistant Professor and Graduate Coordinator for the Gerontology program. Funding for equipment utilized in this research was provided by Dr. Jordan's Professorship, Pfizer Inc. -B.J. and Mary Jo Robison Professorship in Gerontology. There is no conflict of interest with any researchers involved in this project.

Thorpe Jr.	Roland	Roland J. Thorpe, Jr., PhD, MS, is a Professor in the Department of Health, Behavior, and Society, Founding Director of the Program of Men's Health Research in the Hopkins Center for Health Disparities Solutions (HCHDS), Deputy Director of HCHDS, and Co-Director of the Johns Hopkins Alzheimer's Disease Resource Center for Minority Aging Research at Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health. He is the inaugural Associate Vice Provost of Faculty Diversity. Dr. Thorpe is a social epidemiologist whose research focuses on the association of how social and structural determinants of health impact cognitive, functional, and physical health outcomes among African Americans with a focus on men across the adult life course. Dr. Thorpe serves as multiple principal investigator (MPI) on several NIA funded grants and is an MPI of AIM-AHEAD. He participates in several training programs designed to develop scholars at across career stages. He is a past recipient of the Johns Hopkins School of Public Health Advising, Mentoring, and Teaching Recognition Award, the inaugural annual 2018 NHLBI OHD PRIDE Roland J. Thorpe, Jr. mentoring award, recipient of the 2020 Minority Issues in Gerontology Outstanding Mentorship Award, and the 2020 JHBSPH Dean's Award of Distinction in Faculty Mentoring. Dr. Thorpe is also the Editor in Chief of Ethnicity & Disease, Associate Editor for Innovation in Aging, Journal of Gerontology: Medical Sciences, and American Journal of Men's Health.
Duah Jr.	Isaiah Osei	Isaiah Osei Duah Junior is an emerging interdisciplinary scholar in sensory neuroscience, vision science, and cognitive neuropsychobiology, with a strong focus on aging and cognitive health. He earned his Doctor of Optometry and Visual Science degree from Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology (KNUST), Ghana, and an M.S. in Biological Sciences with a concentration in Neurobiology and Physiology from Purdue University, USA. He is currently pursuing a Ph.D. in Applied Psychology with a specialization in Cognitive and Behavioral Neuroscience at North Carolina Agricultural and Technical State University. As a student researcher and educator, Isaiah's research integrates ophthalmology, neurobiology, and psychology to examine how neural and physiological mechanisms underlying vision influence cognitive aging and functional outcomes in older adults. His work in retinal neuroscience and visual neuropsychology emphasizes retinal electrophysiology, particularly altered electroretinogram (ERG) responses, as a noninvasive early biomarker of cognitive decline. He is also interested in investigating sensory-based interventions, including music exposure, to modulate neural, neurovascular, and plasticity-related molecular signaling that may enhance cognitive resilience in aging populations. Isaiah has authored 21 peer-reviewed publications in high-impact Q1 journals and serves as a reviewer for ten journals, including Nature Scientific Reports and BMC Ophthalmology. Motivated by a long-term goal of becoming a professor and academic leader, he is deeply committed to education, mentorship, and advancing transparent, rigorous, and reproducible research in gerontology and brain health.
Glenn	Kaylie	Kaylie Glenn is the founder of The Day By Day Project, a 501(c)(3) nonprofit she launched at just 14 years old to support individuals living with dementia. She is the inventor of the Memory Disco™ Program, a multi-sensory music experience that transforms senior living and memory care by prioritizing preserved brain functions and fostering joy, connection, and purpose. Her innovative work has been featured in UK Neuro Times, Alzheimer's Today Magazine by the Alzheimer's Foundation of America, and TEDx.
Kalaw	Karel	Karel Joyce D. Kalaw, PhD, is an Associate Professor of Sociology and Gerontology at the University of Central Oklahoma. Her work centers on caregiving, aging across the life course, memory, and the relational dimensions of health and well-being. Drawing from qualitative methods, trauma-informed perspectives, and lived experience, her scholarship and teaching explore how care practices shape aging, identity, and resilience within families and communities. She is currently engaged in curriculum redesign and community-focused work in gerontological education.
Kelly	Christopher	Dr. Christopher M. Kelly, PhD, is currently 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.
Kemp	Candace	Dr. Candace L. Kemp is a Professor of Gerontology at Georgia State University and has an appointment in the Department of Sociology. She earned her Ph.D. in Sociology at McMaster University in Hamilton, Ontario, Canada and completed postdoctoral fellowships at Western University in London, Ontario, Canada, and at Georgia State University. Dr. Kemp was the Gerontology Institute's first Undergraduate Director, supervised the Internship program, and previously served as Graduate Director. A long-standing editorial board member for the Journal of Applied Gerontology and a former associate editor of the Journal of Gerontology: Social Sciences, Dr. Kemp is a Fellow of the Gerontological Society of America (GSA) and a Victor W. Marshall Fellow and GRITS award recipient, both given by the Southern Gerontological Society. Dr. Kemp is a member of Georgia's Long-term Care Ombudsman Advisory Council. She is a former co-convenor of GSA's Assisted Living Special Interest Group. Dr. Kemp's research recent examines long-term care arrangements, partnerships, networks, and experiences, including ethics; dementia care; meaningful engagement; and end-of-life experiences from the perspectives of older adults and their myriad of paid and unpaid care partners. Much of her research is funded by the National Institute on Aging (NIA) at the National Institutes of Health (NIH) and seeks to improve quality of life for older adults and those who support them. Her recent research is focused on persons living with dementia and includes three overlapping areas of work.

Keyser	Tyson	Tyson Keyser is a graduate student in the Master of Biomedical Sciences program at the University of the Incarnate Word School of Osteopathic Medicine (UIWSOM). He earned a Bachelor of Science degree in Neuroscience from Baylor University, where he completed a premedical curriculum and developed a strong interest in the intersection of clinical care, research, and ethical decision-making. He also has hands on clinical experience as a Patient Care Technician at Baylor Scott & White, working closely with patients and interdisciplinary healthcare teams in acute care settings. Tyson's academic and research interests include neurodegenerative disease, evidence-based medicine, and clinical ethics, particularly as they relate to aging populations and patient-centered care. His contribution to the current project involves a systematic analysis of Alzheimer's disease guided by the PICOT question: In women aged 65 and older with Alzheimer's disease, how does the use of memory exercises compared to cholinesterase inhibitor therapy affect short-term memory over a six-month period? His role includes synthesizing existing literature, evaluating therapeutic effectiveness, and comparing non-pharmacologic and pharmacologic interventions through an evidence-based framework. In addition to his academic work, Tyson has participated in community service initiatives such as Habitat for Humanity and mental health support lines and has held leadership roles related to diversity, equity, and inclusion. He plans to pursue a career in medicine, with the goal of serving medically underserved communities and advocating for ethically grounded, patient-centered healthcare.
Kim	Joseph	Dr. Joseph Kim is assistant professor in the Department of Human Development and Family Science (HDFS) at Oklahoma State University. He also has a dual appoint in the Research, Evaluation, Measurement and Statistics (REMS) department at Oklahoma State University. He serves as the HDFS department's research methodologist and also teaches research methods for REMS. His research agenda is driven by four major concerns: promoting health and psychological well-being across the lifespan, improving accessibility to research through the development and implementation of interventions, recommending policy innovations through evidence-based research, and rigorous evaluation of the psychometric properties of measurement constructs.
Kimzey	Michelle	Dr. Michelle Kimzey is an Associate Professor of Nursing at Texas Christian University. She is the Founder and Director of Rethinking Dementia: Awareness, Education and Research at the Harris College of Nursing and Health Sciences. Her passion and commitment are evident through her work which seeks to increase awareness of persons living with dementia and to offer strategies and education to those providing care. She has created a collaborative environment between students, people with dementia, and the community. Engaging people living with dementia in research is the priority. She incorporates people living with dementia into all aspects of our research.
Klinedinst	Tara	I am an occupational therapist and Assistant Professor in the Department of Rehabilitation Sciences, College of Allied Health at OUHC located at the Schusterman Campus in Tulsa. I was thrilled to join OUHC in October of 2021 following doctoral training at Colorado State University and a two-year Postdoctoral Fellowship at the University of Pittsburgh. My research projects address two core areas 1) interventions to prevent and reduce disability and improve participation in health management in adults and their care partners with chronic conditions, and 2) integrating occupational therapy into primary care clinics using evidence-based screening and referral pathways. I am interested in growing interdisciplinary partnerships that will improve health care experiences and outcomes for older adults and their care partners. During my free time, I enjoy camping, hiking, biking, and swimming with my husband, daughter, and dog, Ziggy.
Knutson	Jenni	Jenni Knutson is the Founder and Executive Director of Olive Branch Seniors, where she acts as an Aging Care Strategist. She is a Certified Dementia Specialist with the NCCDP and holds a certification from John's Hopkins as a Dementia Care Specialist. She has many years of experience as an Executive Director leading Independent Living, Assisted Living and Memory Care Communities. Jenni is on the board of the Dallas and Northeast Texas Alzheimer's Association, where she is also a community educator and a public policy advocate.
Krawczyk	Julie	At The Senior Source, Julie leads a nationally recognized, first-of-its-kind model focused on preventing, protecting against, and prosecuting elder financial crimes. Her strategic leadership, wit, and candor have enabled her to bridge social services and the justice system through a unique partnership with the Dallas County Probate Courts and the District Attorney's Office. Under her leadership, this collaborative model has served more than 71,500 clients, resulting in a financial impact of \$227 million and over 1,800 criminal indictments. Julie also oversees a specialized 12-member team dedicated to elder justice and has personally facilitated the protection of more than 500 incapacitated adults. Julie drives innovation by leveraging institutional resources to address modern financial crimes, transforming how jurisdictions nationwide approach undue influence and fraud. She holds a Master of Arts in Management from Dallas Baptist University and is a frequent national speaker and educator.
Kumar	Suresh	Dr. Suresh Kumar, MD, Diplomate ABPN, TBIM. Headache Medicine (UCNS) is triple Board Certified Neurologist, Practicing In Shreveport Louisiana since 2007 and moved to Texas in 2017. Dr. Kumar unwavering commitment to patient care and his innovative approaches to treating complex neurological conditions, particularly in the areas of traumatic brain injury, memory disorders, and chronic headache management. What truly distinguishes Dr. Kumar, however, is not just his clinical competence but his dedication to advancing the field through research and community engagement. His work at the Headache, TBI & Memory Research Institute stands as a testament to his commitment to both scientific inquiry and public service. Dr. Kumar has consistently sought to bridge the gap between research and real-world application—designing patient-centered research and tools and programs, contributing to important clinical trials, and offering hope to individuals and families dealing with cognitive and neurological challenges. Dr. Kumar Strengths, as developed multiple tools / protocols that are used in real clinical settings, not just theory mostly focus on mild TBI, concussion, memory loss is important; as many research fall through clinical cracks, he has developed the tools through clinical research presented in national and international conferences, to help his patients. Philanthropy activity of Dr. Suresh Kumar for Young Scientists of America 5013c non profit Inspire Future Leaders in Science and Medicine. Encourage students from diverse backgrounds to pursue careers in science, technology, engineering, and medicine, providing them with mentorship, research exposure, and academic guidance.

Kusek	Veniece	Veniece Kusek is a Licensed Clinical Social Worker and Certified Dementia Practitioner through the National Council of Dementia Care Providers (NCCDP). She is deeply committed to supporting individuals living with dementia, as well as the caregivers and families who walk alongside them. Drawing from both personal experience with family members and extensive professional work in hospice, nursing homes, and senior-living settings, Veniece provides compassionate, relationship-centered care aimed at enhancing quality of life. Veniece is currently in private practice, where she works with older adults through a blend of therapeutic support and structured cognitive exercises. Her approach focuses on supporting emotional well-being, reducing anxiety and depression, and helping clients maintain cognitive engagement, purpose, and dignity. She partners closely with caregivers, offering guidance, education, and emotional support as they navigate the challenges of aging and cognitive change. Veniece earned her Master's Degree in Social Work with a focus on aging from the University of Texas at Arlington. She has participated in several research initiatives dedicated to improving the lives of older adults, including the Caring Caller Program, which fosters companionship through peer-to-peer connections, and Feathered Friends, a program designed to introduce birds and nature into senior-living environments to promote engagement and well-being.
Kusi	Vera	I am a registered nurse and a graduate student in gerontology at Georgia State University, with a strong commitment to improving the health, mobility, and overall well-being of older adults. I hold a Bachelor of Science in Nursing from the University of Cape Coast, Ghana, where I graduated with a GPA of 3.4 out of 4.0 and received multiple awards, including the Dean's Award for the Best Performing Student in my department. I have gained diverse clinical experience across acute care hospitals, assisted living facilities, and community-based organizations in Ghana and the United States. I served as a nurse officer in the Adult Health Unit at the Tafo Government Hospital, providing comprehensive care for patients and older persons with chronic conditions such as hypertension, diabetes, and cerebrovascular accidents. My professional practice is complemented by hands-on work with older adults through NGOs and senior living facilities, where I supported long-term care and health promotion initiatives. My research interests include fall prevention, aging and technology, and long-term care in gerontology. During my university days, I served as a research assistant and completed my undergraduate thesis on the needs and support systems available to persons living with cancer at the Cape Coast Teaching Hospital. I am passionate about translating research into practice to enhance patient-centered and evidence-based care. Beyond academics, I have served in leadership roles and remain actively engaged in community service and professional development. My long-term goal is to advance elderly care practices through education, research, and empathic nursing leadership.
Kyeremeh	Ebenezer	Ebenezer is a PhD student in Nursing Science at Drexel University and a Doctoral Research Fellow. He is interested in conducting research that addresses health inequalities among older adults, with a particular focus on the role of telehealth in addressing health inequalities. Currently, he is working to understand factors that influence older adults' use of telehealth services and identify strategies to increase telehealth adoption. His doctoral training integrates nursing and public health perspectives, supported by quantitative and qualitative research approaches. Beyond his individual research, Ebenezer is actively engaged in academic leadership and service. He serves as the Director of the Research Board for the International Graduate Students Association (IGSA) at Drexel University and as a Board Member of the Board of Culture, Climate, and Belonging at the Drexel University College of Nursing and Health Professions. As a registered nurse from Ghana, he brings clinical experience in patient care, health promotion, and community outreach, which meaningfully informs his scholarly work and commitment to equity-driven health research.
Lane	Sandi	Dr. Sandi Lane is an Associate Professor and the Director, of the MHA Program, Department of Health Management and Policy. Dr. Lane is an ACHE Fellow, and a licensed nursing home administrator. Her operational experience includes acute care, long-term care, and ancillary services. She is an active member of the Southern Gerontological Society and reviewer for the National Association of Long-Term Care Administrator Boards. Dr. Lane has published in Health Care Management and Review, the Gerontologist, Natural Hazards, International Journal of Disaster and Risk Reduction, Journal of Applied Gerontology, and Science of the Total Environment. Her interests center around the impact of policy, health system structure, management processes, and financing on quality of care for older adults.
Lee	Evelyn Egyir	Evelyn Egyir Lee is a Gerontology graduate student at Georgia State University focused on cognitive aging, social cognition, and pathways to resilience in older adulthood. She also explores how technology can support aging well, including work related to auditory and cognitive health. She is preparing for doctoral training in clinical neuropsychology with an emphasis on aging-related assessment and research.
Lee	Jungjoo	Jungjoo Lee, PhD, is an Assistant Professor in the Department of Environmental and Occupational Health at the School of Public Health, Texas A&M University, with expertise in digital health and data science. His research focuses on two main areas: geriatric health and behavioral health. First, he specializes in big data analysis, investigating multilayered confounding structures in the progression from mild cognitive impairment to dementia. He employs innovative analytical methods such as random forest algorithms, recurrent network models, Bayesian VAR/GP models, and mixed-effects models to estimate the slope of cognitive decline and dementia risk. Second, he evaluates wearable technologies to enhance behavioral health, integrating cranial electrotherapy stimulation, virtual reality, and biometric assessment tools. These technologies aim to develop an AI-driven self-care system that incorporates clinical interventions and monitors gait, language and speech features, as well as brain signals. Dr. Lee has published over 40 peer-reviewed articles and secured research funding from multiple institutions, serving as PI, Co-I, and research coordinator.
Lei	Man Kit	Man Kit (Karlo) Lei is an associate professor in the Department of Sociology. He holds a Ph.D. in Sociology from the University of Georgia. Dr. Lei's teaching and research areas encompass diverse topics, including the sociology of health, criminology, structural inequality, family and neighborhood studies, and quantitative methods.

Lentz	Jeffrey	Jeffrey Lentz, PhD, CPG, CDP, FSGS, is a sociologist and Postdoctoral Fellow in the Division of Geriatrics and Gerontology at Emory University School of Medicine. His research interests include aging and the life course, dementia and dementia caregiving, disability, and sexual and gender minority health and aging, with a focus on informal caregiving in assisted living and long-term care settings. Dr. Lentz is a Credentialed Professional Gerontologist and Certified Dementia Practitioner and has received funding from the National Institute on Aging. He teaches undergraduate and graduate courses in gerontology and sociology and is actively engaged in professional service within gerontological and sociological associations.
Li	Shuang	Dr. Shuang Li is a multidisciplinary sociologist whose research examines racial and ethnic disparities across multiple health domains, including chronic disease, environmental health, aging populations, and digital health solutions. Grounded in health equity frameworks, Dr. Li's scholarship investigates the complex interplay of historical, environmental, and social determinants that produce health inequalities, with particular attention to underserved rural communities. Employing mixed-methods approaches and spatial analysis techniques, Dr. Li's current work focuses on three critical areas: (1) Decoding Neighborhood Environments with Large Language Models (2) occupational health risks among aging agricultural populations, and (3) the development and evaluation of technology-enabled interventions to improve health outcomes for older adults. This research advances both theoretical understanding and practical solutions for reducing health disparities at the intersection of place, race, and life course.
Lin	Zhiyong	Zhiyong Lin is an assistant professor in the Department of Sociology and Demography at the University of Texas at San Antonio and a faculty affiliate in the Population Research Center at the University of Texas at Austin. His research focuses on the social determinants of health and family dynamics across the life course and in diverse social contexts. His work has appeared in <i>Demography</i> , <i>Social Forces</i> , <i>Social Science Research</i> , <i>The Gerontologist</i> , among others.
Maiden	Robert	Dr. Maiden joined Alfred University in 1982 and currently serves as Director of the Gerontology Program for the BA degree. He is a Fellow of the Gerontological Society of America and the Association for Gerontology in Higher Education, as well as a Diplomate-Fellow in psychopharmacology certified by the International College of Prescribing Psychologists. In 2017, he was elected a member of the Accreditation for Gerontology Education Council (AGEC) and serves as Vice President of the Board of Governors. He maintains a part-time practice as a licensed clinical psychologist specializing in marriage and family issues, child and adolescent concerns, substance use disorders, and geriatric mental health. In 2017, he was named Professional (Psychologist) of the Year by the Allegany County Mental Health Association. Dr. Maiden has authored or co-authored numerous journal articles, book chapters on grandparents raising grandchildren, and a book addressing aging in rural communities. An active conference presenter, he has delivered over 150 professional papers, many co-authored with students. He regularly mentors student researchers and recently received the Faculty Scholar Award from Alfred University's College of Liberal Arts.
Mareverwa	Amos	Amos Mareverwa, MPH, BScN, is a PhD candidate in Health Sciences Research at the University of North Texas, with a specialization in Aging and Rehabilitation. His research focuses on social determinants of health, access to care, and community living and participation among older adults. He also examines aging-related issues in neurodivergent populations, with particular emphasis on autism in older adulthood and dementia, addressing persistent gaps in healthcare access and long-term services and supports. Amos has experience in public health program coordination, health data analysis, and community health education. He has also worked directly with older adults living with dementia in the United Kingdom and with multiple organizations in Zimbabwe, contributing to healthcare initiatives aimed at improving health outcomes in underserved and vulnerable populations.
Mayo	Ann	Dr. Ann Mayo is a professor at the University of San Diego. She completed a postdoctoral fellowship in gerontology at the University of California, San Francisco. She currently conducts clinical research examining functional status among persons with dementia in affiliation with the University of California, San Diego, and community-based research examining the effects of textile art upon socialization among persons with dementia in Florida.
McKenna	William	Dr. William McKenna is dual board-certified in Geropsychology and SMI who practices at Piedmont Geriatric Hospital, the only state psychiatric facility solely serving older adults with complex medical, cognitive, and forensic needs in Virginia. He provides individual and group interventions, conducts comprehensive risk, capacity, and forensic evaluations, and regularly consults on high-risk clinical situations, including inappropriate sexual behavior, serious mental illness, and neurocognitive disorders in late life. Dr. McKenna serves on hospital and system-level committees focused on ethics, health equity, privileging, and fall reduction, and is frequently asked to present on geriatric assessment, capacity, psychosis, and risk management to interdisciplinary teams and community stakeholders. He is admitted as an expert in clinical and forensic psychology, including sexually violent predator and competency evaluations, in multiple Virginia courts and maintains an active private and telehealth practice. His teaching experience includes adjunct and visiting faculty appointments, where he has taught courses in biological psychology, forensic psychology, and psychospiritual care, as well as supervising trainees and non-psychologist professionals in inpatient psychiatric settings. Dr. McKenna's recent professional writing and presentations emphasize autonomy, patient choice, and recovery-oriented, person-centered care for individuals with serious mental illness in public sector settings, with a particular focus on restoring voice and choice for older adults in institutional environments.
Meng	Hongdao (Daniel)	Dr. Meng is a Professor in the School of Aging Studies and the Aging Sciences PhD Program Director at the University of South Florida. His research focuses on examining the efficacy and cost-effectiveness of integrative healthcare interventions to improve outcomes in both clinical and community settings. Currently, he is investigating the role of innovative integrative health interventions - including diet, physical activity, sleep, mind-body practices, and social engagement - in promoting positive aging among middle-aged and older adults. He is also the Director of the Positive Aging Lab (PAL).

Mohammed	Adam	Adam Mohammed is a third-year PhD Nursing student at the University of Virginia. His research is focused on improving the well-being of people living with ADRD and their informal caregivers through the utilization of community-based resources. His clinical experience as a registered nurse in a geriatric unit exposed him to the challenges faced by older adults and their informal caregivers, particularly those caring for persons with dementia. This experience deeply informed his research interests in caregiving and dementia care.
Moore	Ami	Dr. Ami Moore is a Professor in the Department of Rehabilitation and Health Services at the University of North Texas. My research interests have evolved as I go through the different phases of my academic journey. First, as a social demographer, my scholarship focused on the social and economic assimilation of immigrants in the United States. Second, as HIV/AIDS became a global epidemic with great racial, ethnic, social and economic disparities, I began examining the social and structural dimensions of HIV acquisition and prevention among vulnerable populations with a focus on the determinants of disclosure of serostatus on one hand, and caregiving challenges on the other hand. I also, examined health disparities, focusing on the social determinants of health.
Morgan	Jennifer Craft	Dr. Jennifer Craft Morgan is a Professor at and the Director of 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. Dr. Morgan uses a life course perspective paying particular attention to issues of social stratification related to aging and gender. Her work ties to research, education and service together by focusing on the translation of lessons learned. This translation of research into lessons and tools serves to help stakeholders, such as employers, program implementers, and workers, to build evidence-based solutions to pressing problems. Dr. Morgan is a national expert on recruitment, training and retention of frontline health care workers highlighting the impact of good jobs and high-quality training. Dr. Morgan has received numerous awards including the Gordon Streib Distinguished Academic Gerontologist award from the Southern Gerontological Society, the Dean's Early Career Award, College of Arts and Sciences, Georgia State University and has achieved Fellow designation from the Gerontological Society of America and as a Victor W. Marshall Fellow in Applied Gerontology designation from the Southern Gerontological Society. Dr. Morgan has extensive experience leading teams in funded research and loves her connections with the Georgia Gerontology Society, The Culture Change Network of Georgia and Southern Gerontological Society because she is passionate about translating evidence into practice.
Motta-Mena	Laura	Dr. Laura Motta-Mena is the Director of Healthy Aging at Methodist Health System in Dallas, Texas, where she leads the Generations program. In this role, she oversees a comprehensive health education and wellness initiative designed to enhance the quality of life for adults age 55+ through physician-led seminars, fitness programming, and innovative digital outreach. Dr. Motta-Mena brings a diverse background spanning biomedical research, entrepreneurship, and medical communications to the field of gerontology. She earned her Ph.D. in Biological Chemistry from UT Southwestern Medical Center and a Bachelor's degree in Microbiology from The University of Texas at El Paso. Her extensive research background includes significant contributions to the field of optogenetics and molecular biology, with her work published in high-impact journals such as Molecular Cell and Nature Chemical Biology. As a leader in healthcare innovation, Dr. Motta-Mena served as the CEO and co-founder of Optologix, Inc., a startup focused on developing light-controllable gene expression systems for research and therapeutic applications. Her transition from laboratory research and startup leadership to hospital administration allows her to apply a data-driven, innovative lens to community health. She is dedicated to bridging the gap between clinical expertise and community wellness, fostering resilient aging through accessible education and strategic healthcare advocacy.
Murphy	Sara	Dr. Murphy has expertise in research methods, specifically survey design, quantitative and qualitative data collection and analysis, and project management. With over 15 years of research experience in various scientific and applied projects, Dr. Murphy is involved with a broad range of consulting projects utilizing her background and training in organizational psychology and experience with evaluation, process improvement, and representative survey sampling. As Assistant Professor at the COA, she leads the development of evaluation tools and federal performance reporting. In addition, she is Co-Director for the Geriatric Practice Leadership Institute, an HHSC Innovation in Aging awarded program that trains interdisciplinary teams to determine and address organizational gaps in geriatrics care through needs assessment and quality improvement projects. Dr. Murphy received a Bachelor of Business Administration from The University of Texas at Austin and a Master of Arts in Industrial/Organizational Psychology from the University of Illinois. She also completed a Ph.D. in Industrial/Organizational Psychology from the University of Minnesota.
Murray	Louise	Dr. Louise Murray is a Clinical Associate Professor at the University of Maryland Baltimore County's Erickson School of Aging Studies (ESAS). She holds an EdD in Educational Leadership and an MA in Gerontology from the University of North Carolina at Charlotte, and clinical training and a BSc in Physiotherapy from the United Kingdom. Dr. Murray's areas of focus within aging studies are dementia and person-centered dementia care, health and the aging process, and program design and evaluation. Dr. Murray is committed to best practice curriculum design and advancing high-quality pedagogy and andragogy, particularly in the context of online education. She is a Quality Matters Certified Peer and Master Reviewer.

Nerkowski	Summer	Summer Ashlea Nerkowski is a Master of Biomedical Sciences (MBS) student at the University of the Incarnate Word School of Osteopathic Medicine. Her academic interests center on aging populations, musculoskeletal conditions in older adults, and the application of evidence-based medicine to improve geriatric patient outcomes. In the current research project examining spondylolisthesis in geriatric populations, Summer contributed primarily to the writing and synthesis of the manuscript, integrating clinical relevance with current research findings. Summer brings hands-on clinical and research experience to her work. She has shadowed in a DNA research laboratory, where she gained exposure to electrophoresis and foundational molecular biology techniques. Additionally, she has extensive patient-care experience as a Certified Nursing Assistant in a nursing home setting, providing direct care to older adults, including hospice patients. This experience has reinforced her interest in geriatric care and patient-centered decision making. Her background also includes prior leadership and emergency-response experience as an aquatics supervisor and lifeguard, as well as ongoing volunteer service with individuals with disabilities. Summer aspires to attend medical school and pursue a career in cardiothoracic surgery. She is deeply committed to service, interdisciplinary collaboration, and advancing compassionate, evidence-based care for vulnerable and aging populations.
Novak	Laura	Laura Novak is an Assistant Professor of Occupational Therapy at Texas Christian University in Fort Worth, Texas. She has 25 years of experience as an occupational therapist and specializes in working with people living with dementia and their care partners. Her research has focused on helping care partners address behaviors associated with dementia. She is board certified in gerontology by the American Occupational Therapy Association. She previously served as the founding OT clinician for the Glenn Biggs Institute for Alzheimer's and Neurodegenerative Diseases in San Antonio, TX, under the direction of Dr. Sudha Seshadri.
Nwatu	Uche	I am a PhD candidate at the University of Alabama School of Social Work, and my research interest centers on the health and mental health of older adults within the context of climate change and extreme weather events. I am particularly drawn to understanding how climate-related disasters impact the well-being, resilience, and social inclusion of aging populations. I am currently working on my dissertation on the impact of extreme heat on the mental health and coping strategies of older adults in rural Alabama, inspired by my lived experiences, and deep-seated commitment to addressing climate change's impact on vulnerable populations.
Ortega	Abriana	Abriana Ortega is a Master of Biomedical Science student in the Research Methods department at the University of the Incarnate Word. Abriana Ortega has previous research experience in a microbiology laboratory analyzing the bacterial disease Leptospirosis in regions affected by harsh weather conditions, contributing to literature review, data analysis, and research paper development. Her current research interests are primarily in osteoporosis, concentrating on preventative interventions to aid in the preservation of bone health in post-menopausal women. In her current project, she contributed to formulating the PICOT research question and the synthesis portion of the report by conducting literature searches, screening and appraising selected studies, and collaborating with team members to ensure consistent application of inclusion and exclusion criteria.
Owens	Rajan	Mr. Rajan Owens is a graduating senior in the Department of Psychology at North Carolina A&T State University. Mr. Owens plans to pursue a degree in clinical psychology.
Patel	Arti	I am a University of North Carolina at Charlotte senior double-majoring in Sociology with a Medical Sociology Concentration and in Interdisciplinary Studies with a Gerontology Concentration. Additionally, I have a minor in Health and Medical Humanities and am a student in the Early Entry Graduate Certificate in Gerontology. I have completed a 10-hour conversational service-learning with an older adult in the community, a 90-hour gerontological field placement with a home care agency, and am embarking on a 150-hour practicum with a care management company. I am the president of the Sigma Phi Omega Honors Society chapter at UNC Charlotte. I work as a Communication Consultant for a Critical Thinking and Communication class and am a GA for the Gerontology Program at UNC Charlotte.
Patel	Jenil	Jenil Patel, M.B.B.S., M.P.H., Ph.D., is an Assistant Professor in the Department of Epidemiology and the Department of Environmental and Occupational Health Sciences at The University of Texas Health Science Center at Houston (UTHealth Houston) School of Public Health in Dallas. He also serves as Director of the Occupational Epidemiology Doctoral Training Program and the Pilot Projects Research Training Program at the Southwest Center for Occupational and Environmental Health (SWCOEH), where he plays a key leadership role in workforce development and interdisciplinary research training. Dr. Patel received his medical degree (M.B.B.S.) from Smt. B.K. Shah Medical Institute & Research Centre, Gujarat University, India, followed by a Master of Public Health in Health Education from Western Kentucky University. He earned his Ph.D. in Epidemiology from the University of Texas School of Public Health with Delta Omega honors, with doctoral training in biostatistics and occupational health research. Following his doctoral training, Dr. Patel completed a postdoctoral fellowship in perinatal and birth defects epidemiology at the University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences, where he worked on large, multi-state studies in collaboration with the CDC and Prevention. He also contributed to statewide COVID-19 surveillance, forecasting, and public health response efforts. Dr. Patel's research focuses on pediatric and perinatal epidemiology, occupational and environmental health, chronic and infectious diseases, and health disparities. His work has been published in leading peer-reviewed journals and supported by national and international collaborations. Dr. Patel is committed to advancing evidence-based public health practice and training the next generation of epidemiologists.
Patrick	Tommy	Tommy Patrick is a seasoned executive with over 15 years of leadership in healthcare outreach, Caregiver education, and large-scale event management. Currently serving as an Account Manager at Careforth, Tommy works directly with caregivers, helping them navigate resource eligibility, and facilitating clinical and financial support. His work not only improves access to essential services but also strengthens the support networks around aging populations.

Pham	Nhu	Nhu Pham is a Master of Biomedical Sciences candidate at the University of the Incarnate Word School of Osteopathic Medicine. She earned her B.S. in Exercise Science with a minor in Nutrition from the University of Houston in 2024. In her current research and training experiences, she has supported resistance-training and functional testing protocols and contributed to literature synthesis and program design considerations for older adults. Her research goals include advancing geriatric and neurocognitive health research by developing scalable physical activity interventions that enhance functional capacity and day-to-day independence in older adults. She intends to pursue osteopathic medical training and a career as a physician, with a long-term focus on improving care for older adults through prevention and function-centered approaches.
Pinkston	Saria	I am a senior Clinical Research student at the University of North Carolina Wilmington. I am working with faculty member, Dr. Matthew Peterson, on his research examining how exercise affects cognitive function in older adults to fulfill my internship requirement. During my internship, we have been able to identify how common medications affect inflammatory markers during a dual exercise/cognitive task.
Pope	Taylor	Taylor Pope is a Ph.D. student in sociology and gerontology at Purdue University. She holds a B.S. in Psychology from Purdue University and an M.A. in Gerontology from Georgia State University. Her research focuses on aging, social relationships, technology, and health.
Price	Lauren	Lauren Price, LCSW-C, As a licensed clinical social worker (LCSW-C), Lauren has dedicated her career to improving the lives of older adults, particularly those living in assisted living and nursing homes. With a strong background in aging, Lauren has a commitment to providing compassionate and effective care to individuals with complex needs. Lauren's experience includes advocating for and promoting the rights of older adults, management of a dementia care spaces, and providing behavioral health services to older adults coping with unique challenges, especially during the COVID-19 pandemic. Ms. Price is currently serving as a lecturer at the Erickson School of Aging Studies at the University of Maryland Baltimore County (UMBC). Lauren works to impart her knowledge, experience, and passion for elder care to aspiring professionals, equipping them with the skills and insights necessary to make a meaningful impact on our growing older adult population. Through her experience as a clinician, manager, and educator, Ms. Price continues to advocate for the well-being and dignity of older adults.
Pudur	Rekha	Rekha Pudur, PhD is an Assistant Professor of Long-Term Care Administration in the Department of Health Sciences at Florida Gulf Coast University (FGCU). She earned her PhD in Aging and Rehabilitation Sciences and has interdisciplinary training in gerontology, long-term care administration, and health services research. Dr. Pudur's scholarship focuses on quality of care in assisted living and nursing homes, social engagement and well-being of older adults, and interprofessional education in long-term care settings. She teaches undergraduate and graduate courses in long-term care administration and health sciences and is actively engaged in mentoring students and advancing evidence-based practices to improve outcomes for older adults.
Raffi	Habiba	My name is Habiba Raffi, and I am a freshman at UNC Charlotte majoring in Biology with a minor in Gerontology. I am particularly interested in the biological mechanisms of aging and age-related neurodegenerative diseases, including Alzheimer's and Parkinson's disease. Through my coursework, I hope to develop a strong foundation in human physiology, neuroscience, and cellular biology to better understand how aging impacts the nervous system. In the future, I plan to pursue research and clinical opportunities focused on improving quality of life and care outcomes for older adults, as well as contributing to advancements in the prevention and treatment of neurodegenerative disorders.
Ravinuthala	Ranjani Priya	I am a PhD student in Health Sciences, specializing in Aging and Rehabilitation, at the University of North Texas, Denton. I am also a Registered Dietitian Nutritionist (RDN) with experience in clinical, community, and research settings. My current research focuses on promoting healthy aging and functional independence through nutrition and rehabilitation interventions. I earned my Master's degree in Nutrition from Texas Woman's University, where my thesis examined cardiovascular risk factors in Denton firefighters, combining physiological assessments, laboratory data, and personalized nutrition counseling. I completed a Dietetic Internship with a focus on clinical nutrition, gaining hands-on experience in medical nutrition therapy, food service management, and community outreach programs. Through my work, I have led nutrition education initiatives for underprivileged populations, coordinated volunteer teams, and conducted research on metabolic and cardiovascular health. I have also contributed to several peer-reviewed publications exploring clinical and computational nutrition applications. I am passionate about translating scientific evidence into practical strategies that improve health outcomes for older adults and diverse populations. I aim to combine research, clinical expertise, and community engagement to enhance quality of life and empower individuals to make informed choices about their health.
Reyes	Mateo	Mateo Reyes is a graduate student pursuing a Master's degree in Biomedical Sciences at the University of the Incarnate Word School of Medicine. His research focuses on examining the impact of exercise on bone mineral density scores in postmenopausal women diagnosed with osteoporosis. In his role, Mateo is responsible for appraising selected research articles and systematically evaluating their methodological quality to determine the reliability of the findings. This process supports evidence-based conclusions by identifying key strengths and limitations within each study. Following graduation, Mateo plans to pursue a career in medicine to continue evaluating non-pharmacological approaches to treating chronic diseases.
Rhodes	Annie	Annie Rhodes, PhD is a health scientist whose work centers on health systems, workforce development, dementia policy, and evidence-driven program evaluation. As Director of the Epidemiological Dementia Registry "Virginia Memory Project" (VMP) she has extensive experience leading statewide data infrastructure, mixed-methods evaluation, and rapid-cycle policy translation. Her portfolio includes designing and implementing surveillance systems, assessing program scalability and sustainability, and producing actionable insights for government agencies, health systems, and community-based organizations. She frequently collaborates across sectors, including public health departments, aging services networks, and nonprofit organizations, to support initiatives focused on health equity, workforce capacity, and community-based care for older adults. Her recent work includes quality improvement programs for nursing homes, evaluations of caregiver support initiatives, and the development of data-driven models to predict and respond to dementia burden across diverse populations.

Richings	Stephanie	Stephanie Richings is a speech-language pathologist, Director of Rehabilitation, and PhD student in Applied Language and Speech Sciences at the University of Louisiana at Lafayette who works at the intersection of dementia care, communication, and interdisciplinary collaboration. Her professional work centers on supporting people living with dementia and the care partners who work alongside them, with a strong emphasis on person-centered approaches in skilled nursing facilities. Stephanie brings extensive hands-on experience in skilled nursing environments, where she collaborates closely with frontline staff, families, and interdisciplinary teams to translate evidence into meaningful, everyday practice.
Roberts	Cory	Dr. Cory Roberts is a Professor of Psychology and Social Work at Panola College and an expert in interdisciplinary aging research. He holds a Psy.D. in Organizational Management & Consulting and an MIS in Aging, Research, and Technology. As Director of the Panola College Gerontology Initiatives (PCGI) and the Generations Initiative, Dr. Roberts specializes in bridging the "generation gap" by using technology as a collaborative tool between young adults and seniors. His research focuses on technology adoption among rural seniors and the use of Photo Reminiscence Therapy (pRT) to foster intergenerational connections. By integrating these tools into his curriculum, he empowers students to serve as technology mentors, reducing social isolation and preserving community legacy. As the Principal Investigator for the current Panola College Generations Initiative pilot, he creates structured opportunities for students and older adults to engage in reciprocal learning, ensuring that digital literacy and historical narrative are shared across ages. Dr. Roberts serves as the Research and Co-Psychology Chair of the Texas Community College Teachers Association and on the Society for the Study of Human Development's "Diversity Science Initiative." His work further explores health disparities among rural LGBTQ+ seniors and is deeply informed by his time spent with Indigenous communities. Additionally, as a member of the Screen Actors Guild with numerous Hollywood credits, Dr. Roberts brings a unique narrative expertise to his work in gerontological education and advocacy.
Roberts	Rochelle	Rochelle Roberts, MOL, serves as Tennessee's State Dementia Director at the Department of Health's Office of Healthy Aging. With over a decade of public health experience—including environmental health, STD surveillance, and managing chronic diseases—she leads statewide efforts to improve dementia care and support for individuals with Alzheimer's disease and related dementias (ADRD) and their caregivers. Roberts oversees the BOLD (Building Our Largest Dementia Infrastructure) Grant, which prioritizes early detection, reducing risk factors, workforce development, and caregiver support initiatives. She also facilitates the TN Dementia Action Collaborative (TDAC) and the TN ADRD Advisory Council, bringing together key partners to advance initiatives that reduce ADRD risk, enhance early detection and care, educate, and support across the state. Roberts envisions a person-centered system of care that supports individuals with dementia, empowers caregivers, and promotes brain health statewide. By leveraging innovation, collaboration, and data-driven approaches, Tennessee is building a BOLD future where individuals and families affected by dementia can live with dignity and thrive.
Rothman	Marc	Dr. Marc Rothman has dedicated his professional career to helping older adults. As CEO of Lizzy Care, a full-service dementia care management company, Dr. Rothman draws from his decades as a practicing physician and executive to design programs that deliver care more safely and effectively. Dr. Rothman is also founder of Dementia Spring Foundation, a 501(c)3 nonprofit that supports artists and innovators who are telling new stories of dementia, curating programs engaging those living with dementia, and harnessing creativity to foster community and hope. Dr. Rothman's full CV and previous experience at the podium can be found in detail on his LinkedIn.
Roy	Moushumi	I have more than 7 years of teaching experience in higher Ed. I have varied teaching interests and taught a range of courses in sociology at the undergraduate and graduate levels. I am also an experienced mixed-methods (qualitative & quantitative) social science researcher. Broadly, my research examines the relationship between the intersection of social determinants (e.g., race, ethnicity, SES, gender, geography) and social processes (e.g., discrimination, assimilation, and the intersections of assimilation and discrimination) on the outcomes of health among immigrant and minority populations in the US and India.
Sadeq	Nasreen	Dr. Nasreen Sadeq is an Assistant Professor of Instruction and the Academic Director in the School of Aging Studies at the University of South Florida. Her research and teaching interests include cognitive aging, developmental psychology, and personality.
Saju	Sachin	Dr. Saju obtained his MD from the Medical University of Varna, Bulgaria and is now pursuing a Master of Public Health with a concentration in Epidemiology at The University of North Texas Health at Fort Worth. He has experience in clinical quality improvement at the Royal National Orthopedic Hospital in the UK with a primary focus on supporting patient autonomy and optimizing clinical efficiency. His current research interests focus on health systems improvement to protect patient safety, especially vulnerable groups, and the application of population-level methodologies to clinical practice.
Sanchez	Eduardo	Dr. Eduardo Sanchez serves as Chief Medical Officer for Prevention at the American Heart Association (AHA). He leads the Association's clinical efforts for Target: BP™, a joint blood pressure control initiative with the American Medical Association, and its Cardiovascular-Kidney Metabolic (CKM) Health initiative. From 2021 to 2024, he was Principal Investigator of the National Hypertension Control Initiative, a cooperative agreement with the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Office of Minority Health and the Health Resources and Services Administration. Before joining AHA, Dr. Sanchez was Vice President and Chief Medical Officer for Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Texas, where he focused on clinical prevention, chronic disease management—particularly diabetes and cardiovascular disease—health disparities, and workplace wellness. He previously directed the Institute for Health Policy at the University of Texas School of Public Health and served as Texas Commissioner of Health and state health officer, leading both the Texas Department of Health and the Texas Department of State Health Services. Earlier in his career, he was the public health officer for Austin-Travis County. Dr. Sanchez serves on the boards of Trust for America's Health and the Public Health Foundation and has held numerous advisory roles, including chairing the CDC Advisory Committee to the Director. He has received multiple national and state awards recognizing his leadership in public health and health equity. He earned his M.D., M.P.H., and graduate degrees in biomedical engineering and is a Fellow of the American Academy of Family Physicians and the American Heart Association.

Sanyaolu	Opemipo	Opemipo "Ope" Sanyaolu is a Master of Biomedical Sciences student at the University of the Incarnate Word School of Osteopathic Medicine. She holds a background in Biomedical Engineering with specialized training in biomaterials, cellular and tissue engineering, and plans to pursue a career in medicine grounded in translational research and patient-centered care. Ope's primary research interests include regenerative medicine, wound healing, and the application of evidence-based methodologies to improve clinical outcomes. Her work on degenerative lumbar spondylolisthesis was completed as part of a project in her previous semester's Research Methods and Evidence-Based Medicine course. For that project, she contributed to the formulation of the research question and played a key role in structuring the critical appraisal to ensure alignment with evidence-based practice frameworks. Ope has presented her work at the Annual Biomedical Engineering Society Meeting and is a published author in the peer-reviewed journal Cells, Tissues, and Organs. In addition to her scholarly work, Ope is actively involved in leadership and service initiatives and is passionate about mentorship and advancing equitable healthcare. She intends to continue integrating research, service, and clinical excellence throughout her medical career."
Sardina	Angela	Dr. Angie Sardina is a Research Associate Professor in the Department of Psychology within the College of Behavioral, Social and Health Sciences at Clemson University. Dr. Sardina's research focuses on the interconnections between physical (e.g., pain, sleep), psychosocial (e.g., leisure and constraints, mental health), and contextual mechanisms (e.g., home and neighborhood environments) that support/constrain health and well-being in middle-aged and older adults. Dr. Sardina is interested in multimodal health promotion/protection interventions/programs to address social determinants of health and promote health, independence, and well-being with age. Dr. Sardina is co-PI of the Tailoring Activities for Active Life Engagement Study, as sponsored by the Southern Gerontological Society, which is exploring relationships between home usability, cognitive function, and Alzheimer's disease and related dementias (ADRD) risk. She is also a Co-Investigator on several National Institutes of Health/National Institute on Aging funded studies, which aim to improve understanding of biopsychosocial factors/mechanisms that influence cognitive health (R01AG079388-01 and UF1AG072619-01), as well as development of the NIH Precision Brain Health Network to provide the research community with open, flexible, and usable tools to enhance measurement of cognitive change and promote brain health (1U24AG092760-01). She is the co-Lead for the Outreach, Recruitment, and Engagement Core of the South-Carolina Alzheimer's Disease Research Center and has served on the Editorial Boards for the Psychological Section of the Journals of Gerontology, Series B: Psychological and Social Sciences, as well as the Long-Term Care Section of the American Journal of Recreation Therapy.
Saurbaugh	Lauren	I am a current Master's student at Clemson University in the Applied Psychology program. Previously, I graduated from the University of North Carolina Wilmington with a degree in Recreation Therapy and obtained my Certified Therapeutic Recreation Specialist certification. Currently, I serve as a research assistant at the Institute for Engaged Aging, specifically in the Mind and Body Initiatives for Dynamic Africanities lab. In the lab, I support two primary projects: the Black African United Memory and Aging Project (BAUMAP) and the Healthy Aging in Neighborhoods of Diversity across the Life Span (HANDLS) sleep sub-study. My current research interests lie in sleep health and the benefits of leisure engagement. I enjoy utilizing my recreation therapy background to explore ways to enhance overall well-being through the use of leisure activities.
Schafer	Donna	Donna Schafer, PhD, CPG is President of the National Association for Professional Gerontologists (NAPG), a 501c3 organization that credentials the academic and professional experience of practicing gerontologists and advocates for the professionalization of the field. Prior to her affiliation with NAPG, she retired from the California State University (CSU) as Dean of Research, Graduate Studies, and International Programs at Humboldt State University. At Humboldt, she was also Professor of Sociology and Executive Director of the HSU Sponsored Programs Foundation. Before taking her positions at HSU, Donna was a member of the Gerontology faculty at San Francisco State University where she was also Associate Dean of the Graduate Division. Donna is currently Secretary of the Board of Governors of the Accreditation for Gerontology Education Council (AGEC), having been one of the founding members of the Board. She is past President of the California Council on Gerontology and Geriatrics, the CSU Graduate Deans Council, and the Western Association of Graduate Schools. Donna is the author or co-author of three books and numerous articles and presentations. Her teaching, research, and professional interests focus on professionalizing gerontology, measuring gerontology competencies, life satisfaction, reminiscence and activity programming in nursing homes. She has been a member of AGHE task force groups and has served on the boards of social service, community, and professional organizations in Sonoma County (California), San Francisco, and Kansas City. Donna received her PhD from the University of Kansas where she began her career as a Research Associate in the Gerontology Center.
Sesay	Benjamin	Benjamin Sesay, MSW, M.Sc., MBA, is a PhD student at the School of Social Work, University of Texas at Arlington (UTA), and holds a Master of Social Work from UTA (2024). He also earned a Master of Business Administration and a Master of Science in International Development and Management from the University of Gavle and Lund University, Sweden (2015 and 2017), respectively. He earned his first degree in Business Administration with honors, specializing in Human Resources Management, from the University of Sierra Leone in 2010. Besides, he holds a Certificate in Human Rights, Peace, and Security from the International Training Program of the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA), Uppsala, Sweden, and Siem Reap, Cambodia (2009). Additionally, he is an alumnus of the Swedish Institute. Benjamin has a longstanding commitment to youth development, regional peace and security, smallholder farmers' land rights, and food security for older adults experiencing food insecurity. Since June 2022, he has served as a Graduate Research Assistant at UTA, gaining a broad range of research skills and experience. Over the years, his research interests have evolved to focus on gerontological issues, particularly the links between food insecurity, dementia risk, mental health outcomes, and overall well-being among older adults. His work also explores the well-being of resettled older adult refugees and the Use of Robotic Animals among older adults enrolled in Palliative or Hospice Care, among others. He collaborates with interdisciplinary teams, presents findings at conferences, mentors graduate students, and contributes to innovative applied social research projects.

Sharp	Travis	Originally from Nashville, Travis is a lifelong creator. His obsessions with drawing, writing, music, and performance convinced him at a young age that advertising was the industry to bring them all together. A graduate of the world renowned Portfolio Center, he's brought his Creative Direction to firms in London, New York, and Atlanta. Travis can't stop creating when he's not at Reckon—in his free time he's an improv comic, actor, and playwright.
Sherburne	Dale	Dale Ruth Sherburne is a caregiver advocate and speaker whose work focuses on the emotional health and well-being of family caregivers, particularly those supporting loved ones with dementia. She brings a lived-experience perspective shaped by more than twenty years spent caring for her husband following his early-onset dementia diagnosis. Drawing from this journey, Sherburne authored <i>Neither Wife nor Widow</i> , a collection of narrative reflections that explore the often-unspoken emotional realities of long-term caregiving. Her work centers on helping caregivers acknowledge and accept feelings such as grief, loneliness, inadequacy, resentment, and guilt—emotions that negatively affect caregiver health yet are frequently overlooked in day-to-day practice. Her writing and presentations focus on the need for understanding that these emotions are normal and expected, and the importance of awareness and continuing education among healthcare and social service professionals to create opportunities where difficult caregiver feelings can be addressed and resources provided. Dale Ruth Sherburne's work has been favorably reviewed, including a book review in the <i>Journal of Applied Gerontology</i> (February 2026). She is committed to improving caregiver health, quality of life, and has a special interest in the availability of support for low-income caregivers and those in rural areas with limited access to services.
Shiroma	Kristina	Kristina Shiroma is an Assistant Professor in the School of Information Studies at Louisiana State University. She received her Ph.D. from the School of Information at the University of Texas at Austin. Dr. Shiroma's research examines how older adults and underserved communities seek, interpret, and use health information, and how digital systems (including online directories and AI-enabled tools) shape equitable access to care. She uses mixed methods and community-engaged approaches to study health information practices, digital and eHealth literacy, and the design of trustworthy, culturally responsive information environments. Dr. Shiroma's current projects include grant-funded work on building networks of rural libraries to strengthen community health information access and resilience, and on developing AI literacy resources and workshops for rural older adults. She is also leading research on the representation of older adults and aging-related mental health needs in online platforms, as well as systematic reviews focused on empathy in AI responses to caregiver questions and older-adult care contexts. Her scholarship connects information science, aging, and health equity, with an emphasis on reducing representational harms and supporting older adults' agency in digital health ecosystems. Dr. Shiroma collaborates with community organizations and interdisciplinary researchers to translate findings into practical tools, training, and policy-relevant recommendations to improve access to information and services for diverse aging communities.
Siepkner	Kathy	Dr. Kathy L. Siepkner is a scholar and educator whose work focuses on promoting healthy aging and improving quality of life for older adults. Her research examines cognitive health and the lived experiences of individuals affected by Alzheimer's disease and related dementias, with a focus on developing and testing innovative, non-pharmacological, and person-centered interventions. Dr. Siepkner also studies ways to strengthen family caregiving and community supports for older adults, emphasizing practical approaches that enhance their well-being and independence. Since joining the University of Texas at Arlington in September 2018, Dr. Siepkner has successfully secured funding from prestigious sources, including the National Institutes of Health (NIH), the Alzheimer's Association, and the Borchard Center on Law & Aging. Her outstanding dedication to gerontological social work research and education earned her the Faculty Achievement Award for Outstanding Early Career Scholarship and Teaching from the Association for Gerontology Education in Social Work (AGESW) in 2021. Dr. Siepkner has further enhanced her expertise through competitive training programs, such as the Research Career Institute in Mental Health of Aging and the Alzheimer's Association Interdisciplinary Summer Research Institute, both funded by the NIH. Actively engaged in advocacy, she serves the aging community at local, state, and national levels. Her roles include Community Educator for the Alzheimer's Association Dallas and Northeast Texas Chapter, and she has been recognized as a Dementia Friends Champion for Dementia Friendly USA.
Simon	Lena	Lena is a PhD student in the Health Psychology Program at Clemson University. Previously, Lena earned an MA in Humanistic Psychology from the University of West Georgia. For the last 2 years, Lena has worked as a research assistant in the Mind and Body initiatives in Dynamic Communities (MBIDC) lab, which is affiliated with the Institute for Engaged Aging (IEA) at Clemson University. In this role, Lena has worked on funded longitudinal studies (e.g., Black American United Memory and Aging Project [BAUMAP], Healthy Aging in Neighborhoods of Diversity across the Life Span - Sleep Study [HANDLSleep]). Lena's research interests are focused on social determinants of health in the Black community. Specifically, she has a particular interest in understanding how social determinants of health impact mental health for the Black community.
Skowronski	Jordan	Assistant professor and occupational therapist with research expertise in gerontology and public health.
Smith	Matthew Lee	Matthew Lee Smith, PhD, MPH, CHES, CHW-I, is a Professor in the Texas A&M School of Public Health. As an evaluator and interventionist, his research addresses health risk across the life-course, chronic disease management, and the dissemination of evidence-based solutions for older adults. Dr. Smith has devoted his career to creating synergistic partnerships and initiatives to encourage positive lifestyles and reduce preventable morbidity and mortality. His translational work bridges research and practice issues across the health care sector, aging services network, and public health system.

Snyder	Jennifer	Jennifer Snyder has spent more than 15 years stepping into homes where life has become complicated: homes marked by hoarding disorder, squalor, cognitive decline, physical limitations, grief, or isolation. As the founder of Neat as a Pin Organizing Experts and Discreet Clean Biohazard Cleaning Services, she leads teams who specialize in environmental safety and compassionate, trauma-informed support for older adults and vulnerable individuals. Known for her engaging teaching style, Jennifer presents at regional, national, and international conferences on aging, mental health, neurodiversity, and complex home environments. She offers insight rooted in hands-on experience, helping professionals notice the early, often quiet signs of home decline and respond with understanding, clarity, and confidence. Her work strengthens collaboration across clinical, social service, and community systems, ensuring that clients are seen and supported rather than judged or overlooked. Jennifer lives in Waco, Texas, where her family brings her joy and purpose. At the heart of her work is a simple passion: helping all people by recognizing their stories, seeing them fully, and meeting them where they are.
Sokan	Amanda	Amanda E. Sokan, PhD, MHA, LL.B, is an Associate Professor in the Department of Public Health Practice & Translational Research at the Mel and Enid Zuckerman College of Public Health, University of Arizona, where she develops and teaches courses on aging. She previously served as Director of the Executive MS in Clinical and Translational Science Program and as Regional Associate Director for the All of Us Research Program. Dr. Sokan holds a PhD in Gerontology and an MHA from the University of Kentucky, and an LL.B from the University of Buckingham, England. Her work bridges gerontology and healthcare, with expertise in elder rights and justice, elder abuse, cultural competence, LGBT aging, long-term care, healthcare navigation, health promotion, and workforce development. She has extensive experience in program evaluation, including work on a HUD-funded senior housing services grant. She provides consultancy, advocacy, and counseling to caregivers of persons with dementia and is a trained dementia caregiving facilitator. Dr. Sokan serves on Arizona's CDC/ASTHO Healthy Brain Initiative Lab team, helping develop a statewide dementia strategy. Her work centers on translating research into practice to improve the aging experience.
Solis	Guillermina	Dr. Solis is an Associated Professor at UTEP's College of Nursing Graduate Program. She received her PhD in Interdisciplinary Health Science from The University of Texas at El Paso and completed her Post Doctorial training from the University of Utah, Salt Lake City, UT where she focused on end-of-life care communication patterns between home care nurses, patients, and caregivers. She is the PI for UTEP's GWEP in the Borderland and under her direction has expanded community and academic outreach exponentially. Her research focuses on safety issues in the older adult population, specifically falls, and end-of-life decision making in Hispanic older adults. Dr. Solis maintains clinical her practice in El Paso, TX and is highly involved in community projects serving marginalized Hispanic population in the US-Mexico Border
Subramanian	Anbu	Anbu Subramanian is a high-achieving undergraduate student at the University of Texas at Dallas, where he is pursuing a Bachelor of Science degree with a 4.0 GPA as a member of the UTD CV Honors College. Recognized on the Dean's List, Anbu is driven by a strong interest in the intersection of science, healthcare, and community engagement, with a focus on translating research and education into meaningful societal impact. Anbu currently serves as a Research Intern at the University of Texas Southwestern Medical Center, where he conducts biomedical research on the role of the gut microbiome in enhancing immunotherapy outcomes in cancer patients. His work includes the use of MALDI-TOF mass spectrometry to characterize microbial communities and laboratory assays to study metabolite-driven inhibition of pathogenic organisms. In addition to research, Anbu is an EMT Captain with the University Emergency Medical Response team, leading emergency responders and providing patient care in high-pressure settings. He is also actively involved in education and outreach as an Assistant Debate Coach and as Outreach Team Lead for Mini Medical School, coordinating health education programs across the Dallas-Fort Worth area. Anbu's commitment to service is reflected in his leadership roles within community health advocacy organizations and his volunteer work supporting children with special needs and global hunger relief initiatives. His achievements include the Presidential Volunteer Service Award (Gold) and a National Speech & Debate Association National Championship. Anbu aspires to continue bridging research, clinical care, and public education to advance equitable healthcare and inspire future generations.
Sugar	Judith	A life-span developmental psychologist by training, Dr. Sugar's research, teaching, and service have been focused on gerontology for more than 30 years. She is now Associate Professor Emerita in the School of Public Health at the University of Nevada, Reno, where an Endowed Professorship in Gerontology has been established in her name. Dr. Sugar currently serves on the Board of Directors of the National Association for Professional Gerontologists, and is an active member of the Gerontological Society of America as well as the American Psychological Association's Division of Adult Development and Aging. She has received numerous awards, including the Distinguished Faculty Award from the Academy for Gerontology in Higher Education, and the inaugural award for Distinguished Faculty Scholar from the Sanford Center for Aging. She has also been honored to serve on Nevada's Commission on Aging. Dr. Sugar has led gerontology programs at the University of Nevada, Reno, Colorado State University, and UCLA, and has published widely in the fields of gerontology and psychology. Among her most influential publications is her textbook, Introduction to Aging: A Positive, Interdisciplinary Approach, which she wrote with the overriding goal of engaging more students in appreciating the opportunities and addressing the challenges of an aging society. Dr. Sugar currently lives in Reno, NV, where she finds the abundant sunshine and short winters much to her liking!
Suggs	Andy	Born and raised in Atlanta, Andy started solving brand and marketing problems as a high school sophomore by helping the Roswell Hornet cheerleaders concept and design football banners. Andy graduated from UGA in 1997 and became a Partner at Reckon Branding in 2004. His goal is to foster an environment in which strategy-backed creative can flourish in solving marketing and branding problems. For 15 years, Andy has specialized in Gerontology & Aging Marketing and Branding Strategy working with clients like Emory University, Georgia Memory Net, Integrated Memory Care (IMC), ALTER Dementia, Georgia Gear, and the Gerontology Society of America (GSA). Andy lives in Roswell with his wife, son, two dogs, a cockatiel, and a few dozen koi. He can often be found fishing down the street from his house (don't tell the koi) or getting crushed on Xbox by his son.

Tabachnick	Ashley	Ashley Tabachnick is a recent graduate of the University of South Florida (USF), where she earned a Master of Arts in Gerontology from the School of Aging Studies. She also holds a Bachelor of Arts in Psychology with a double major in Aging Sciences from USF. During her time at the university, Ashley served as a Center Coordinator and research assistant with the Center for Innovation, Technology, and Aging (CITA), where she contributed to initiatives focused on improving outcomes for older adults with new technology and innovations. She is passionate about enhancing the quality of life for older adults and is eager to begin her career in the field of aging. Currently working as a Patient Care Secretary for VITAS Healthcare and research assistant for CITA, Ashley looks forward to seeing where her career brings her and aims to help as many older adults as she can.
Templeman	Maureen	Maureen Templeman is an Assistant Professor in the Department of Sociology, Anthropology, and Gerontology at Missouri State University, where she serves as coordinator for the gerontology program, overseeing the undergraduate major, minor, and certificate programs. She also advises the MSU CARE Bears, a student organization focused on intergenerational relationships and aging advocacy, and the Beta Iota Omicron chapter of Sigma Phi Omega. Her research focuses on end-of-life, family caregiving, and gerontology education. Current projects include investigating aging anxiety among college students and developing the CARE Collective, a peer-to-peer practical support platform for caregivers in Southwest Missouri. Dr. Templeman's work bridges research and practice, connecting gerontological scholarship with community needs. Dr. Templeman is committed to quality gerontological education. Her courses, including Aging Identities in Art & Media, Families in Later Life, and Social Forces and Aging, emphasize experiential learning and community engagement. She has received internal grants supporting curriculum innovation and community-engaged learning, including projects that connect students with older adults to combat ageism through educational programming.
Torrence	Caitlin	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.
Trainer	Linda Michelle	Linda Michelle Trainer is a Certified Dementia Practitioner, author, and caregiver advocate with nearly two decades of hands-on caregiving experience. For more than eight years, she simultaneously cared for her mother across two states, and her husband, whose journey with dementia ended in a skilled nursing facility in 2025. That season of sacrifice and devotion inspired her book "Who Cares That YOU CARE." Today, Linda Michelle equips medical professionals and family caregivers with self-care strategies and dementia sensitivity training, empowering them to lead with compassion, prevent burnout, and uphold dignity in every stage of care.
Troutman-Jordan	Meredith	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 they are 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. To this end, along with my research team, I have utilized AI as a tool for the development and expansion of our caregiver education/support resources. I have worked in psychiatric nursing for the past 31 years, with emphasis on the older adult population. My clinical experience includes inpatient, home health, and outpatient settings.
Turgut	Alp	I am a second year medical student, originally from Long Island, New York and Istanbul, Turkey. I attended UAB for my BS in Neuroscience, along with my MBA and my MPH. I am currently interested in urology. Outside of academics, I am involved with community advocacy, currently with children with autism. Outside of medical school, I am an avid hiker and love to travel.
Vernon	Andrew	Andrew A. Vernon, MD, MS, MPH, PhD(s) is a physician and Research Assistant at the University of Texas at El Paso (UTEP) College of Health Sciences, where he also serves with the Geriatrics Workforce Enhancement Program. Trained in general medicine, Dr. Vernon brings a clinical and public health perspective to dementia care, caregiving systems, and workforce development within community-based and long-term services and supports. He is certified in Alzheimer's disease and dementia care and supports the implementation and evaluation of experiential caregiver training initiatives, including Dementia Live®. His work emphasizes culturally responsive dementia care, caregiver capacity-building, and applied program evaluation in underserved and Hispanic/Latino communities along the U.S.-Mexico border. Dr. Vernon is currently completing doctoral training in Interdisciplinary Health Sciences with a focus on aging, caregiving, and health systems.
Vickery	Joshua	Joshua Vickery began his role as the new Chief Executive Officer (CEO) for the organization in October of 2021. Joshua was drawn to the mission and vision of Encore Creativity and is thrilled to be a part of this team. He plans to bring his experience and passions to the table to have great influence across the nation in creative aging. Prior to joining Encore, Vickery served as Executive Director of Central Florida Community Arts (CFCArts), an organization which he founded in 2010 consisting of thousands of artists in multiple choirs; an adult and youth symphony orchestra; children/youth arts program; theatre; School of Performing Arts and programs for seniors, vulnerable communities and arts and wellness. He holds an Associate of Arts Degree in Vocal Performance, and a Bachelor of Arts Degree in General Education/Music. Vickery has been a featured soloist in countless venues, produced musical recordings, and has been a director of numerous productions. He has been an entertainment leader, casting director, and vocal coach for Walt Disney Entertainment. He also serves as a consultant for other arts organizations in their beginning stages and a voice for local, state, and national arts advocacy. Vickery has received numerous leadership and community accolades and serves on multiple local, state and national boards. Joshua is excited to be with Encore, to honor the incredible legacy and to build on its foundation for impact into the future.

Voight	Rick	Rick Voight is the CEO and Co-Founder of Vivid-Pix and a leader in the "AgeTech" sector, focusing on the intersection of imaging technology and cognitive wellness. With a career spanning four decades, including leadership roles at Kodak and Hewlett-Packard, Voight has transitioned from traditional photography to developing non-pharmacological interventions for the aging population. Under his guidance, Vivid-Pix has pioneered the practical application of Photo Reminiscence Therapy (pRT). By collaborating with the National Institute for Dementia Education (NIDE) and Archorat, Rick has supported research into how restored family photographs can serve as cognitive prompts to reduce social isolation and improve the quality of life for those with memory impairment. His commitment to community-based solutions led to the development of the Vivid-Pix Memory Station, now used in public libraries and community centers across the United States. Through partnerships with the Southern Gerontological Society (SGS) and initiatives such as the Panola College Gerontology Initiatives (PCGI), Rick promotes intergenerational mentorship, in which students assist older adults in preserving their digital legacies. A regular speaker at national conferences, he remains dedicated to fostering human connection through the power of shared memories.
Walton	Allison M.	Allison Walton is a research lab associate at Clemson University Institute for Engaged Aging and a graduate non-degree student in Behavioral, Social, and Health Sciences. Her research focuses on cognitive aging, neuroimaging, and Alzheimer's disease risk, with experience in healthy aging and cognition in older adults.
Washington	Jayla	Jayla Washington is a fourth year dedicated student at Howard University, majoring in Health Science. She is a strong leader on campus as a Co-Founder of Keepinupwitwaxes, a beauty & self care business; Co-Founder and Co-President of Sisters in Serenity, a program empowering young women through mentorship and guidance. She is also a proud Spring 2024 initiate of Gamma Chapter, Beta Kappa Chi Honor Society. Jayla has a deep passion for maternal and mental health, particularly within the Black community, and is committed to advancing health equity through her work. She plans to pursue a Master of Science in Physician Assistant Studies with a focus on surgical and trauma care, while continuing to serve underprivileged communities and advocate for social action. Her leadership, academic achievements, and dedication to service reflect her commitment to making a meaningful, lasting impact.
Watts	Miriam	The intersection of low health literacy and the digital divide poses a significant challenge to improving health outcomes among older adults. As healthcare systems increasingly rely on digital technologies such as telehealth, patient portals, and online health education, older adults with low health literacy and limited digital skills are at heightened risk for poor disease management, increased hospitalizations, and reduced access to essential care. This qualitative research explores the health consequences of digital exclusion in older adults, using a Geragogy based theoretical framework to understand how age-specific learning needs, cognitive changes, and motivational factors influence their engagement with digital health tools. This narrative inquiry, qualitative research, examines 30 semi-structured interviews of older adults ages 60-88 years old. The results emphasize tailored educational strategies that respect older adults' learning styles, autonomy, and lived experiences, offering a pathway for more inclusive health interventions. This research highlights systemic barriers such as usability issues, lack of support, and socioeconomic disparities, and it identifies geragogical strategies that can enhance digital health literacy, promote equitable access, and ultimately improve health outcomes for aging populations. This proposed research emphasizes the need for age-responsive design and educational outreach to ensure that older adults are not forgotten in the digital transformation of healthcare.
White	Kina	Dr. Kina White is a published author and nationally recognized healthcare leader, researcher, and community advocate with more than 20 years of experience advancing health equity, aging, and rural health. She has secured and directed multimillion-dollar initiatives that have strengthened health systems, expanded access to care, and influenced policy at state and national levels. A former hospital administrator turned public health strategist, Dr. White has represented her state on national and international stages, where her voice has been instrumental in shaping equitable health outcomes for diverse populations.
Williams	TimMarie	Dr. TimMarie (Chloe) Williams is a distinguished bilingual educator and clinical research scientist with over 20 years of expertise in Gerontological and Geriatric education. A Georgia Governor's Teaching Fellow, she completed a Graduate Certificate in Academic Medicine as a Geriatric Scholar and Fellow at the University of North Texas Health Science Center, Texas College of Osteopathic Medicine. Recognized for her excellence in bridging original research and clinical practice, Dr. Williams is a recipient of the Southern Gerontological Society's Victor W. Marshall Fellow in Applied Gerontology. Her leadership spans academia and government, notably serving as a Research Policy Analyst Aide for the Honorable Senator Jane Nelson on the Texas State Senate Committee on Health and Human Services. Dr. Williams currently serves on the Board of Directors for the Southern Gerontological Society and the Texas Public Health Association's Governing Council. Her teaching and research focus on research methods, evidence-based medicine, and global health, with a specific emphasis on health disparities and the role of technology in managing chronic conditions. A certified National Mental Health First Aid Instructor, she remains a dedicated advocate for the long-term care needs and social policy initiatives of aging populations.
Williams	Sonya	Sonya Williams is a Certified Recreation Therapist working at A.G. Rhodes and is a graduate student working on a Masters in Gerontology, Administration Track, with Georgia State University. Her focus areas are improving cognitive outcomes of older adults through engagement and intergenerational programming. Sonya plays a key role as the Director of Culture & Life Enrichment at A.G. Rhodes, where she educates care partners on Person Directed Care, Engagement with Persons Living with Dementia, and the value of Intergenerational Engagement for Older Adults. Sonya helps facilitate older adult/intergeneration partnerships at A.G. Rhodes with Emory, Georgia Tech, and the SWAGR program at GSU.

Yalung	Jered	Jered Yalung, PharmD, CDP, is a clinical pharmacist and Certified Dementia Practitioner who owns Options Home Care, a pharmacist-owned non-medical home care agency serving the Triad region of North Carolina. After years in long-term care pharmacy watching preventable medication problems go unaddressed, he now focuses on translating medication complexity for families navigating cognitive decline. He developed the MEDIC framework to systematically identify medication-induced cognitive impairment before families accept dementia diagnoses. His work has been published in McKnight's Home Care, and he was named a 2026 Triad Business Journal 40 Under 40 honoree.
Yang	Yuan	Yuan Yang is a PhD student at Stony Brook University. Her research focuses on cognitive aging and cognitive reserve, with interests in how life-course and health factors shape cognitive trajectories. She applies advanced quantitative methods, including meta-analysis, longitudinal modeling, and causal inference, to population-based and clinical cohort data. In this presentation, she examines the utility of neurodegenerative plasma biomarkers (such as pTau and NFL) in characterizing neurodegenerative risks among World Trade Center responders. Her long-term goal is to develop data-driven approaches to identify individuals at elevated risk for cognitive decline and to support prevention and intervention planning.
Yanks	Robert	Since graduating from the University of Florida with a degree in Advertising, Robert has built brands, strategized marketing plans, and managed integrated multi-channel campaigns for clients in a wide range of industries. With a specialization in Gerontology & Aging, Robert manages the Emory University, Gerontology Society of America (GSA), ALTER Dementia, Frost Lab, and Georgia Gear clients for Reckon Branding. After working in Florida, North Carolina, Tennessee, and even Israel, he settled down in Atlanta after falling in love with Shrimp and Grits, Chicken and Waffles, and oh yea... his beautiful wife, Katy. When he's not tethered to a laptop, Robert can be found taking a hike, kicking a soccer ball, playing board games, and watching Ms. Rachel with his his son, Rhys, and daughter, Maeve.
Zellous	Erreannau	Erreannau Zellous is a Ph.D. student in Social Gerontology at Miami University, committed to advancing equity-centered aging practices through research, community engagement, and policy translation. With a Master's in Gerontology and experience working in community-based care, Erreannau brings both academic rigor and lived experience to her work, focusing on Black older adults, culturally relevant practices, and innovative approaches to holistic interventions, specifically adult day programs and human-animal interaction. Her research examines how communities can better support older adults and those living with dementia through inclusive programming and participatory methods that center marginalized voices. Her work brings a qualitative and mixed-methods lens to understanding aging experiences. Beyond the research, she volunteers weekly at a local senior center, building relationships while learning what matters to the people her work aims to serve.
Zhan	Rongfang	Rongfang Zhan is a doctoral candidate in the Department of Rehabilitation and Health Services at the University of North Texas. Her research focuses on social resourcing and physical activity among older adults, leveraging technologies such as information and communication technology (ICT), virtual reality (VR), artificial intelligence (AI), and wearable devices to enhance cognitive function and well-being.