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The Advancing Age Inclusivity in Higher Education Newsletter is a place where educators, administrators, scholars, and community members can share news about how colleges and universities are responding to aging populations and the rise of more age-diverse campuses. This issue brings together the perspectives of champions of age-friendly campus, community, and health system initiatives who share their views on integrating our mutual efforts.

Comments and suggestions about Newsletter content and special areas of focus are very much welcomed from our readers. Please send correspondence to ageinclusive@geron.org.

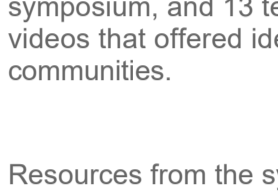
Feature Article

Enhancing Age-Friendly Initiatives Through the Intersection of University, Community, and Health Systems at the University of Utah

Katarina Friberg Felsted, PhD, Jacqueline Eaton, PhD, Linda Edelman, PhD, RN, and Valerie Greer, MA, AIA
University of Utah

The University of Utah is the flagship institution of higher learning in Utah with nearly 33,000 students enrolled in over 100 undergraduate and 90 graduate degree programs. Further, the University of Utah offers extensive community education and engagement opportunities and is home to the Osher Lifelong Learning Institute. University of Utah Health is the only academic health sciences center in the Intermountain West. It is committed to age-friendly care and is one of 72 hospitals and health care practices in the nation to receive the Age-Friendly Health Systems Committed to Care Excellence designation from the Institute for Healthcare Improvement. As an extension of a GSA Advancing Age Inclusivity on Campuses grant funded by AARP, University of Utah faculty are leading a university-wide initiative to pursue Age-Friendly University (AFU) endorsement, which has led to partnerships that intersect the Age-Friendly Health Systems and Age-Friendly Community initiatives already underway.

In September 2022, we had the opportunity to highlight the intersection of Age-Friendly Initiatives through the University of Utah—hosted online symposium, Age-Friendly Communities as Platforms for Equity, Health & Wellness. The overarching goal of the symposium was to bring together thought leadership from across the nation to envision innovative opportunities that can transform how neighborhoods, campuses, and health systems foster independence, productivity, and well-being of older adults. Symposium attendees came from 25 states and included aging service providers, local government representatives and policy makers, health care practitioners, educators, and college students.

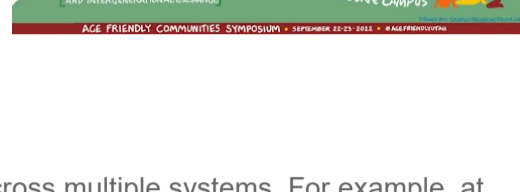


Age-Friendly Communities as Platforms for Equity, Health & Wellness

The symposium featured presentations from national experts focused on the age-friendly ecosystem, several core age-friendly sectors (Age-Friendly Health Systems, Age-Friendly Universities, Age-Friendly Communities), and the Reframing Aging Initiative. Presentations explored how issues such as rapid population growth, affordable housing, climate displacement, need for aging literacy, and challenges related to rurality impact communities in the Intermountain West. To engage the voices of participants, small group discussions, a World Café, and a series of evaluations were integrated with the presentations.

A student ideas competition (à la “Shark Tank”) was conducted as part of the symposium, and 13 teams from four universities participated. Students created videos that offered ideas to address barriers to healthy aging within their communities.

Resources from the symposium, including the collection of student videos, will be uploaded to the [conference website](#). Alece Birnbach, a graphic recorder in San Francisco, California, created several graphic notes during the symposium presentations. Illustrated here is the representation of our campus’s panel, focusing on strategies and examples of building age inclusivity within higher education.



Higher education has many elements that cross multiple systems. For example, at the University of Utah, we are linked to the Health System on campus and across our state, and we also have a Health Sciences Campus with students, faculty, and staff working across both systems. This is also true for our community, which interfaces with the University in many ways through education, research, and service.

An ecosystem is interconnected, and efforts throughout will have implications across sectors. This symposium allowed for the parts of the age-friendly ecosystem already in place at the University of Utah to interact, learn about, and collaborate with one another. Approaching AFU through the lens of an age-friendly ecosystem will facilitate our work across campus, accelerate our efforts, and elevate the endeavors of other age-friendly initiatives.

The symposium was a unique way to build momentum, synergy, and support for age-friendly efforts. As we move forward in seeking AFU designation, we are using this experience to identify the ways that we currently meet age-friendly principles, explore goals for the future, and foster support for AFU endorsement. We intend to improve our work as an AFU through collaboration with our partners already involved in Age-Friendly Community and Age-Friendly Health Systems initiatives. It is evident that community, health care, and university efforts are interconnected, and the work that we do in higher education will improve the ability of our students to cultivate future age-friendly initiatives.

Campus Spotlights

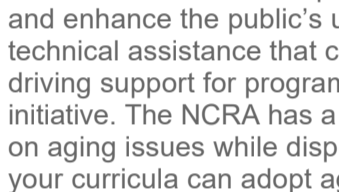
Join the Caravan to Reframe Aging on Your Campus

Patricia D’Antonio, BSPHarm, MS, MBA, BCGP
GSA Vice President of Policy and Professional Affairs

The [National Center to Reframe Aging](#) (NCRA) is generating a groundswell for change—from local efforts to national leaders—to tell a complete story of aging. This story explains that good ideas now age limit and that experience and wisdom can be tapped to benefit us all. Additionally, we realize more now than ever that our words matter: changing how we communicate will change attitudes about aging and ultimately will advance policies and programs that support us at every age and stage of life. This initiative is powered by [research](#) and proven to change how people think about aging.

Reframing Aging efforts are essential components for advancing age inclusivity in higher education and in the age-friendly ecosystem more broadly. Through the Reframing Aging efforts, we can influence how our students, colleagues, university leadership, and community acknowledge and honor the significant life experience and skills older people contribute to our communities. Misperceptions about aging are deeply rooted at a very young age. The jokes we hear, the birthday cards we buy, and the emphasis on decline as we age perpetuate the misconceptions. The good news is that researchers Busso, Volmert, and Kendall-Taylor have shown that [we can decrease this implicit bias](#) about aging by using well-framed messages that promote an enhanced understanding of the aging process.

As the central hub for implementing proven communication strategies that advance and enhance the public’s understanding of aging, the NCRA provides training and technical assistance that can increase campus communication effectiveness in driving support for programs and policies as part of the Age-Friendly University initiative. The NCRA has a [robust](#) library of tools and resources to raise awareness on aging issues while dispelling deep-rooted myths. Consider how your research and your curricula can adopt age-inclusive language as recognized by the American Medical Association, the American Psychological Association, and the Associated Press style manual.



If you want to [expand this work at your institution](#), we provide services to support organizations develop good framers, define a local vision for implementing the evidence-based communications strategies, and provide technical assistance to sustain a local initiative. Contact us at reframingaging@geron.org to learn more.

Remember

Aging: So Cool Everyone’s Doing It!

Join the Movement

Campus Voices



A Conversation About the Age-Friendly Ecosystem With Terry Fulmer

Terry Fulmer, PhD, RN, FAAN, FGSA, is President of The John A. Hartford Foundation.

What is an age-friendly ecosystem and why do we need it?

The term “age-friendly” is now becoming ubiquitous, and we should be really happy about that. Bringing the issues of aging to the scientific community at large, as well as the public, is an important pathway toward eradicating ageism. But it does beg the question, what does the term age-friendly mean?

We have written about this previously (Fulmer et al., 2020) and worked with a group of scholars from the various sectors of the age-friendly movement —[Cities/Communities, Public Health, Employers, Universities, Health Systems](#)—to begin to create a standard lexicon and approach for evaluating whether something is truly age-friendly. That group proposed that an age-friendly ecosystem is responsive, healthful, equitable, engaging, active, and respectful.

How do we measure these conditions?

As the largest scientific interdisciplinary community of scholars dedicated to aging and older adults, The Gerontological Society of America is in a unique position to engage all of us in research that provides the empirical data necessary to understand progress toward an age-friendly ecosystem. Furthermore, the [Age-Friendly Institute](#) has a rich array of content, open to all of us, to begin and continue the critical discourse needed among us so that we are using the term in a way that all of us can understand. The [Compendium of Measures of an Age-Friendly Ecosystem](#) lists 130 measures for assessment.

How can universities be involved?

Without meaningful data, the term age-friendly is at risk of becoming a moniker that means many things to many people. We have the opportunity now to shape the term through our research, and universities can play a large role in providing data that drive age-inclusive efforts and highlight best practices across the five sectors.

Interdisciplinary research teams from a range of fields can contribute to the use and testing of the new measures developed by the Age-Friendly Institute, and making use of measures by other Age-Friendly University researchers such as Silverstein and colleagues ([Age-Friendly Inventory and Campus Climate Survey](#)) and Lim and colleagues ([Indicator Inventory](#)).

Familiarizing your colleagues about what it means to be age-friendly and developing programs of research to advance the concept is a strong way to generate the science we need to make all universities and colleges age-friendly.

News and Notes

- [Wayne State University](#) (WSU) joins the AFU global network under the leadership of GSA President Peter Lichtenberg, Director of the WSU Institute of Gerontology, who convened a steering committee representing 18 campus units to explore current age-friendly practices and goals for improvement. The committee garnered support of WSU’s Provost, Vice President for Research, Council of Deans, and President M. Roy Wilson, who noted that “The benefits to WSU are wide-ranging...attaining age-friendly status generates much energy around older adult issues, and it invigorates the way we teach and connect. It also provides a structure for us to focus on visionary goals like reducing ageism and increasing intergenerational experiences.”
- [University of Colorado Denver](#) (CU Denver), the most racially and ethnically diverse research university in Colorado, is adding another dimension to how it defines diversity, equity, and inclusion—CU Denver joined the AFU global network. “Our new Age-Friendly University designation affirms CU Denver’s commitment to the important role of higher education in supporting longer, healthier lifespans,” said Chancellor Michelle Marks, adding that the university has assured its commitment to older adults in its [2030 Strategic Plan](#).
- The [University of Wisconsin–Superior](#) recently joined the AFU global network and launched the effort with new programming geared toward adults 55 years of age and older. A four-part series, Music in the Movies, launched in September on campus, and Remembering Home, a two-part virtual offering, is upcoming in November; [additional AFU programming](#) for older adults is planned for spring.
- [The University of Zurich](#) (UZH) has joined the AFU global network with the goal of advancing the AFU principles and agenda in a variety of ways, including extending UZH’s focus on healthy aging, lifelong learning, support of aging-related research projects, and combating cases of systemic ageism.
- Film Premiere! Art + Medicine: Healthy Aging—The [University of Minnesota](#), an AFU campus, has partnered through the Geriatric Workforce Enhancement Program (a member of the AFU Council) with the Center for the Art of Medicine and Twin Cities Public Television to create a film based on age-friendly principles, including the Age-Friendly Health System’s 4Ms framework of Mobility, Mentation, Medication, and What Matters to older adults, all through an artistic lens. [The film airs in Minnesota on October 28, 2022](#).
- AFU partner Lasell University hosted the [5th Annual Intergenerational Symposium](#) with co-sponsors Encore Boston Network; the Massachusetts Gerontology Association; the GSA Interest Group on Intergenerational Learning, Research, and Community Engagement; Interthe Narrative; and Encore.org. Assistant Professor Michael North of the New York University Stern School of Business shared findings from his research on “Youngism: The Content, Causes, and Consequences of Prejudice Toward Younger Adults,” and an intergenerational panel explored personal experiences of younger and older adults and offered suggestions for how to disrupt ageism across generations.
- AFU partner [Quinnipiac University](#) received positive feedback from community members aged 50 years and older who participated in the [“Bobcat Stride”](#) indoor fall/winter walking program. Over the summer, the University also offered an outdoor walking program for students, staff, and community members, opening another intergenerational opportunity to mingle and enhance fitness.
- The Personal Enrichment, Action, and Knowledge Series (PEAKS), a lifelong learning initiative for older adults hosted by AFU partner University of North Georgia (UNG) continues to grow with in-person programs and events every Thursday on the UNG Blue Ridge Campus. The [wide array of PEAKS offerings](#) is hosted with no membership or registration fees.
- Looking toward age-friendly aspirations, LaTricia Perry, Associate Dean in the School of Nursing at Nevada State College, and colleagues were awarded a \$19,857 mini-grant from the Nevada Institute on Educator Preparation, Retention, and Research to explore perceived age-friendliness within a School of Education and identify recruitment, development, and retention initiatives for internal stakeholders. The findings will serve to bolster the teacher pipeline in Southern Nevada by describing prevalent trends in perceived age-friendliness with proposed enhancements to the subjective well-being of participants at Nevada State College in Henderson.
- The [University of Minnesota Retirees Association](#) (UMRA) is stronger than ever, helping the University of Minnesota develop more fully as an AFU campus. UMRA represents retirees’ interests to diverse University groups and administrative bodies, and its 800+ members enjoy access to lectures, workshops, and special interest groups. With its recent re-integration with the University Retiree Volunteer Center, UMRA now provides service to the wider community by offering a clearinghouse for volunteer opportunities.
- Students from a variety of disciplines at AFU partner Western Kentucky University have been visiting local communities to assist in facilitating [Bingocize](#) sessions, which allows students to engage with older community-based exercise intervention designed for older adults across a spectrum of care services from senior centers to skilled nursing facilities.

Resource Center

Check out these age-friendly presentations in the GSA Annual Scientific Meeting archives

Symposia

- [Integrating Age Inclusivity with DEI Efforts on Age-Friendly University \(AFU\) Campuses](#) (Age-Inclusivity in Higher Education (AIHE) Workgroup and AFU Interest Group)
- [Making Classrooms More Age-Friendly: Strategies for Intergenerational Exchange](#) (AFU Interest Group and the Intergenerational Learning, Research, & Community Engagement (ILRCE) Interest Group)
- [Evolving Age-Friendly Universities: Enhancing Student Support Services and Promoting Skill Development](#) (A. Graf & K. Terhune, Chairs)
- [Innovations in Age-Friendly University \(AFU\) Campus Practices: Engaging Community](#) (R. Gautam, Chair)

Posters

- [Creating an Age-Friendly University: The Case of St. Cloud State University](#) (P. Greenberg et al.)
- [Discussion of Age-Friendly University Principles with Older Learners](#) (E Takagi et al.)
- [Age-Friendly Campus Practices in Higher Education: A Heat Map View](#) (Fassi et al.)
- [Working Toward an Age-Friendly UIndy: Examining the Process as it Unfolds](#) (L. Borrero et al.)
- [Moving from Endorsement to Action: Aligning AFU Efforts with University Strategic Plans and Goals](#) (Walsh et al.)

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