

ADVANCING AGE INCLUSIVITY IN HIGHER EDUCATION

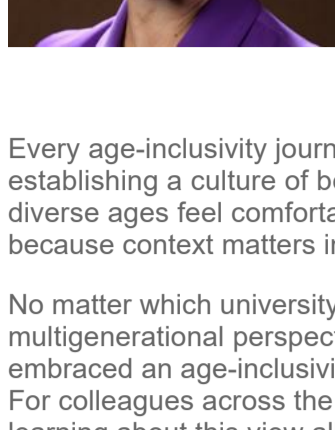
A NEWSLETTER OF THE GERONTOLOGICAL SOCIETY OF AMERICA

Spring 2022

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 features the perspectives of global partners in the Age-Friendly University (AFU) network on advancing age inclusivity in our classrooms, on our campuses, and with our communities.

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



Defining Your Village: Perspectives on Global Intergenerationalism

Dana Burr Bradley, PhD, FGSA, FAGHE
University of Maryland, Baltimore County
Chair, Academy for Gerontology in Higher
Education

Every age-inclusivity journey has a story. Where does your story begin? Certainly, establishing a culture of belonging and inclusion at the outset helps people of diverse ages feel comfortable. "Thinking globally and acting locally" has relevance because context matters in how we navigate between generations.

No matter which university you call home, likely your vantage point includes a multigenerational perspective—often in our workplace. For those who have embraced an age-inclusivity framework, this will not seem surprising nor a difficult lift. For colleagues across the hall or campus or outside the formal campus perimeter, learning about this view allows for new ideas from different perspectives that may take some effort. These perspectives may also introduce challenges to growth in our research teams, clinical settings, and classrooms, including disruption that not everyone agrees with or ideas that meet with resistance. This is a universal challenge—and opportunity—for universities that is informed by their cultural, legal, and structural context.

From a global perspective, what is it that can build bridges between generations and translate meaning across these contexts? What global lens can we use to advance our age-inclusivity efforts in higher education?

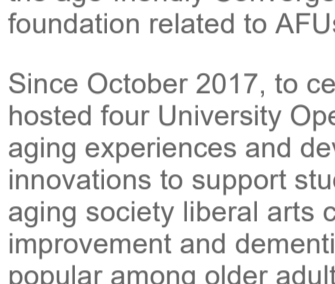
Focus on Language: "Sticks and stones may break my bones, but names (or "words"?) will never hurt me..." is blatantly false. Ingrid Eyers urged the critical exploration and discussion of the use of language about aging and how it is used in conversation as a necessary first step: "The fact that there are considerable cultural differences and sensitivities that underlie the words we use, even when speaking the same native language. Within a global society, there is also value in thinking about how the words we choose to use within an international context translate into other languages" (*IFA Global Café, March 2022*). How we identify and refer to older persons—and younger persons—is vital to the perception and experience, differs based on context, and can be a unifying experience across generations.

Focus on Valuing the Diverse Expertise: Age-inclusive university culture need not just emphasize age, but instead, foster an atmosphere of conversation and valuing multiple viewpoints to create a stronger institution. While it is true that universities play a unique role in their local and regional settings, the ability to include this expertise may be limited by how the university is perceived in community partnerships. Our colleagues in settings outside the United States have much to offer in terms of building community partnerships valuing different expertise and experience that is relevant to challenges.

Focus on Belonging and Inclusion: Historically, work environments rely on process and predictability, which may lead to divisiveness and disengagement. If our goal is an educational environment that is accepting of people of all ages, shifting to focus on belonging and inclusion makes sense. However, this means different things in different geographic or geopolitical contexts. When every generation has a voice and a seat at the table, engagement, productivity, and innovation increase.

Universities are key stakeholders in institutionalizing cross-generational collaboration. We have much to learn globally about the vital roles that language, expertise, and people play in supporting intergenerational work and advancing age inclusivity in higher education. I hope we will continue to turn to our international community of Age-Friendly University partners as a wonderful addition to our tool kit.

Campus Spotlights



Win-Win: Pai Chai University's Approach to Being an Age-Friendly University

**Myung-Bae Park, MPH, PhD, and
Jinseop Lim, DSW**
Pai Chai University, South Korea

Pai Chai University (PCU) in South Korea has been carrying out various age-friendly activities since we joined the Age-Friendly University (AFU) Global Network in 2017. We are proud that we were the first Asian university to join the network. Our overall aim in being age-friendly has been to create "win-win" opportunities by designing initiatives that benefit both the university and local older adults in the community. We strive to meet this aim by actively utilizing the university's diverse faculty and research expertise as well as by creating a tangible and intangible infrastructure to support various programs. Before joining the network, PCU led the development of the age-friendly Convergence Research Institute of Korea to establish a research foundation related to AFUs.

Since October 2017, to celebrate the International Day of Older Persons, PCU has hosted four University Opening Programs with older adults in the community to share aging experiences and develop community. PCU has also developed curricular innovations to support students' knowledge of aging through the development of aging society liberal arts courses and service-learning courses for cognitive function improvement and dementia prevention. One PCU program that has been particularly popular among older adults and other community members is the Old and Young Companion Program. This program facilitates services between students and older adults to reduce their psychological distance and contribute to intergenerational communication and harmony among participants. These services include telecare (by smartphone), emotional support services through Zoom, COVID-19 kits (such as hand sanitizers), and hygiene education developed for older adults who are not as active as they previously were owing to COVID-19.

Looking toward the future, we are continuing to expand and strive to carry out other age-friendly activities that reflect the needs and preferences of local older people. In South Korean society, we are gradually attracting attention as an exemplary model of how a university can respond to an aging population—and we are excited about creating new AFU partnerships.

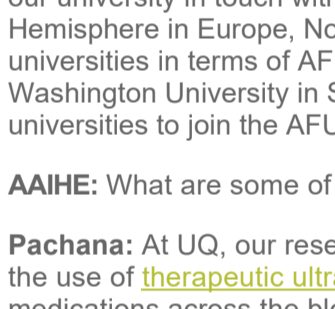


Smartphone education with older adults as part of PCU's Old and Young Companion Program.



Pandemic handwashing education as part of PCU's Old and Young Companion Program.

Campus Voices



An Age-Friendly Conversation

Nancy Pachana, PhD
The University of Queensland, Australia

Advancing Age Inclusivity in Higher Education (AAIHE): Tell us about your engagement with the Age-Friendly University (AFU) Global Network.

Pachana: The University of Queensland (UQ) in Brisbane, Australia, was the [first university in the Southern Hemisphere to join the AFU Global Network](#). Although UQ has been quite active internationally, with partnerships with well over 100 universities globally, in the domain of ageing we felt it was of particular importance to join the AFU Global Network, led by [Dublin City University \(DCU\)](#), not least because it situates us within the World Health Organization's age-friendly ecosystem and puts our university in touch with the other 85+ AFU network members across the Northern Hemisphere in Europe, North America, and Asia. We are partnering with many AFU universities in terms of AFU events (with DCU) and ageing research (e.g., Washington University in St. Louis), and we are a catalyst for more Australian universities to join the AFU Global Network.

AAIHE: What are some of your age-friendly research efforts?

Pachana: The university is now attempting a broader platform of engagement with key stakeholders with respect to ageing agendas—for example, having our public-facing spaces (such as our art museum and our UQ Healthy Living Centre) certified by Dementia Australia as "Dementia Inclusive." The UQ Healthy Living Centre is a unique space for older persons in the community to gain tailored advice on exercise and mobility, nutrition, psychological strategies, and audiological advice to recover from injury or simply enhance healthy ageing. Our agenda this year is focused on two issues of relevance both in Australia as well as globally: combatting ageism and enhancing care in nursing homes.

Regarding ageism, UQ has installed an "Ageism Awareness" module for all staff and students to access as part of a broader Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion suite of professional development modules; (other modules cover racism and LGBTI+ issues). Our university is also leading a major training and quality improvement program with a national nursing home provider: here our global partners, including our AFU Global Network colleagues, will be important to gain a sense of international best practices in this area, such as that demonstrated by [Maastricht University](#) in the Netherlands.

News and Notes

- The AFU [University of Minnesota](#) (UMN) Council will host an Age-Friendly University Day in June. Marking the 10 AFU Principles, the event will welcome lifelong learners, retirees, and older adults to campus to explore cutting-edge topics in aging, hear about UMN learning opportunities, and socialize with peers. Former Minnesota Viking and State Supreme Court Justice Alan Page will kick off the event with a fireside chat about his own aging experience. Breakout sessions on age-friendly communities, finding purpose in later life with author Richard Leider, and [Dementia Friends USA](#) will be part of the day. Support for the event comes from the UMN Center for Healthy Aging and Innovation, Minnesota Northstar Geriatrics Workforce Enhancement Program, and AARP Minnesota.
- The AFU Global Network welcomes new partner [The University of Texas at Austin](#). Championed by Karen Ringerman (Director, Texas Aging and Longevity Center; Director of Research, Center on Aging & Population Sciences), the institution's age-friendly vision aims to advance research and teaching around aging as well as to provide educational opportunities to meet the needs and interests of older learners in central Texas, which has one of the fastest growing older adult populations in the United States.
- The [University of Colorado Anschutz Medical Campus](#) becomes an AFU partner for its commitment to older adults, advancing age inclusivity, promoting more equitable education, and expanding research opportunities. It is one of the growing number of academic medical campuses to join the increasingly diverse AFU Global Network.
- [The University of Maine](#) (UMaine) is the first public university in the state to join the AFU Global Network, engaging older adults in diverse ways in the daily life of its colleges, schools, departments, and administrative units, and providing older adults with opportunities to participate in research programs as part of the UMaine Center on Aging and Cooperative Extension Citizen Science initiative.
- [Florida Atlantic University](#) is pleased to join the AFU Global Network. With a number of age-friendly efforts in motion, Provost Bret Denilowicz says, "A pillar of the university's Strategic Plan for the Race to Excellence, healthy aging and initiatives that facilitate a continued focus on improving not only the overall well-being of the aging population, but its relationship with the wider community, remain a priority for Florida Atlantic and will for years to come."
- The AFU initiative at the [University of Utah](#) funded by a GSA-AARP seed grant and led by professors Katarina Friberg Felsted and Jackie Eaton offered tuition waivers for the House Bill 60 registration of Utah residents ages 62 and older to enable them to audit university courses. As a result of the awareness initiative—an 875% increase in registrations across several semesters was found—showing the power of lifelong learning opportunities.
- Los Angeles County recently formed an **Age-Friendly Colleges Interest Group** to build a supportive coalition that will foster the work of participating institutions and support the county in research, advocacy and community engagement, and workforce development. Staff and faculty representing the County of Los Angeles Purposeful Aging Initiative, the City of Los Angeles Department of Aging, and academic institutions including California State University Long Beach, California State University Northridge, Long Beach City College, Los Angeles Mission College, Pasadena City College, Los Angeles Pierce College, Santa Monica College, University of California Los Angeles, and University of Southern California will support each other in advancing age-inclusivity. "I see our team of universities and community colleges helping each other grow in age-friendly practices. Community colleges and universities offer a wide range of resources, from gerontological research and training, to lifelong learning and reskilling programs that support career development in later life. Together we can learn how to leverage our academic/educational programs as pivotal resources for the Los Angeles region's aging network," said Andrew West, County of Los Angeles Purposeful Aging Initiative.
- The [University of Nebraska Omaha](#) (UNO) AFU team members have been exploring options for enhancing dissemination of the good news that UNO has become an AFU partner and gathering information about lifelong learning initiatives within or related to UNO to inform their plans for recruiting key allies for new AFU initiatives.

Resources

- Get your copy of the new Academy for Gerontology in Higher Education (AGHE) Standards and Guidelines.** The 7th edition of the *AGHE Gerontology and Geriatrics Curricular Standards and Guidelines in Higher Education* is [now available for purchase](#). All chapters have been comprehensively rewritten to include the standards and guidelines for competency-based education (CBE). This publication offers tools to identify and implement CBE in programs and to develop students' skills and abilities needed in our workforce. The curricular standards and guidelines also serve to guide existing programs through academic or institutional reviews for Program of Merit (POM), providing matrices for mapping health professions and gerontology competency-based education and documentation. Ultimately, this document provides an integral resource for colleges and universities implementing and revising programs in liberal arts, the sciences, and health professions education. *Purchase your copy today at the member price!*
- Psychologists Against Ageism: Promoting Productive Narratives and Inclusivity about Aging:** The American Psychological Association (APA) Committee on Aging (CONA) is partnering with GSA to drive a more productive narrative about aging and combat ageism in domains in which psychologists are active. CONA will host a *Psychologists Against Ageism* series to build on efforts related to ageism broadly, observed disparities in care by age highlighted by the COVID-19 pandemic, the GSA Reframing Aging Initiative, and the recent adoption of the APA updated Resolution on Ageism as APA policy.

June 1 (1 pm ET) A Generation's Work—Reframing Aging Together

July 6 (1 pm ET) Strategies for Detecting and Addressing Ageism

[REGISTER HERE](#)

- Required Reading!** In her book *Ageism Unmasked: Exploring Age Bias and How to End It*, Tracey Gendron, Director of the [Virginia Center on Aging at Virginia Commonwealth University](#) (VCU), challenges myths, cultural norms, and unconscious prejudices about aging, and why the concept of generations divides us more than it brings us together. Gendron co-lead VCU efforts as Virginia's first university to join the [Age-Friendly University Global Network](#).

The *Advancing Age Inclusivity in Higher Education* Newsletter is produced by The Gerontological Society of America and is supported by AARP.

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