Maude's Awards

2026

INNOVATIONS IN ALZHEIMER'S CARE



In appreciation

Maude's Awards wishes to extend our sincere appreciation to the following advisors for their invaluable counsel.

Advisory Board

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- Margaret Orem, participating Foundation board member
- Quentin S. Orem, Executive Director, Richard & Maude Ferry Foundation

Maude's Awards wishes to acknowledge The Innovations in Alzheimer's Caregiving Awards, a partnership of The Rosalinde and Arthur Gilbert Foundation, Helen Daniels Bader Fund, a Bader Philanthropy and Family Caregiver Alliance (www.caregiver.org/alz-caregiving-awards). We are indebted to them for generously allowing us to benefit from their years of experience. Our shared vision is to honor innovative community efforts towards improving the quality of life for individuals living with dementia and for those who provide for their care.



Richard and Maude Ferry

A Welcome from our Founder

As a successful corporate business and community leader and the co-founder of Korn Ferry International, I am delighted to share the seventh handbook of **Innovations in Alzheimer's Care**.

Maude and I have lived what is often called the American Dream, deeply rooted in our love and faith. Maude - a matriarch extraordinaire, with lasting love and friendship for all who walked in her path. A devoted wife of 65 years, mother of six children, grandmother of twelve and great-grandmother of three, she lived her life with grace and elegance and was a strong and generous role model for all that knew her.

In early 2011, things began to change. At first it was the search for words and sentences, relinquishing household bill paying and driving soon followed. Initially, we chalked it up to forgetfulness and those "senior moments" we sometimes experience. However, after exhaustive medical evaluations to find out what was happening, testing finally concluded that Maude had the early stages of dementia. Life went on though with travel, entertaining, golf and many family activities until 2013 when we left our dream house on Mercer Island and moved into a Continued Care Retirement Community on First Hill in Seattle to help manage her needs.

I began my new role as Maude's primary care partner—meeting with individuals and organizations, attending symposiums and reading everything I could get my hands on, seeking something new and innovative to bring joy and happiness to Maude's life. I kept searching and challenging people. How do we care for the individuals who are struggling with the illness, what can we do for them as the illness advances? Regrettably, I did not find all the answers I was looking for.

My search led me to create Maude's Awards, a forum dedicated to the discovery, celebration, and sharing of innovative ideas and practices of care to enrich the lives of individuals, family members, and care partners.

In this seventh volume, I hope you will find both comfort and ideas to enhance the lives of loved ones everywhere.

Richard Ferry

– Chairman, Maude's Awards for Innovation in Alzheimer's Care

UW Medicine
UNIVERSITY of WASHINGTON

MEMORY & BRAIN
WELLNESS CENTER

This has been another year of hope and progress for those living with memory loss or working with those who are. New treatments and blood tests for those early in the course of Alzheimer's disease are shining a spotlight on the good reasons to make an early diagnosis. New evidence for the effectiveness of systematic lifestyle changes has also come available. Together, these developments help people understand that you can make a difference in these diseases.

Maude's Awards recognizes community members who have developed innovative approaches to benefit those living with memory loss and dementia, and I continue to commend them in their vision and devotion to this mission. We at the UW Medicine Memory and Brain Wellness Center are proud to participate and partner with the Maude and Richard Ferry Charitable Foundation.



Thomas J. Grabowski, MD
Director, UW Memory and Brain Wellness Center

The Awards

Maude's Awards annually presents three $25,000 awards to organizations and up to five $5,000 awards to individuals excelling in one of the following categories of care for persons living with dementia and their care partners.

Making Connections

Awarded to the individual or organization that has created meaningful opportunities for persons living with dementia to connect with the people and world around them.

Cultivating Health

Awarded to the individual or organization that has provided exceptional care or education that supports the long-term physical health of persons living with dementia.

Supporting Care Partners

Awarded to the individual or organization that has provided impactful education, training or support for care partners of persons living with dementia.

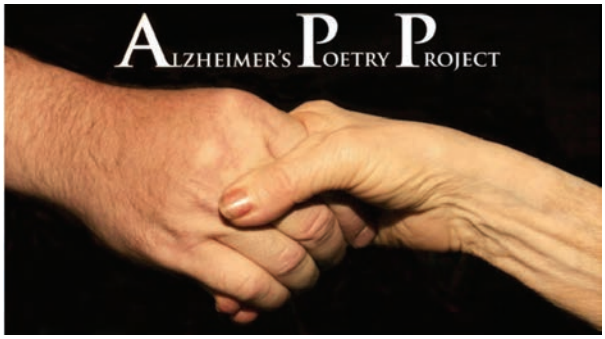
Treating by Design

Awarded to the individual or organization that has significantly improved the living spaces and/or mobility of persons living with dementia.

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Making Connections



MAUDE'S AWARD RECIPIENT

"It is hard to communicate with my stepfather through conversation. The poetry session was wonderful in that it showed me a powerful tool for communicating with Stanley, who is now in the late stages of dementia. When Gary started to read, Yeats' "Second Coming," Stanley became very attentive and emotions registered in his face. Tears welled up in my own eyes as I witnessed this moment of communication. Gary invited Stanley to read the poem, and it was astonishing to me that Stanley was not only able to read the poem but also to discuss it, talking about "his favorite line" in the poem. I did not anticipate the powerful impact the poetry would have on my stepfather and, by extension, on me. I left the session deeply moved."

Organization: Alzheimer's Poetry Project – *Chicago, IL*



Our The mission of the Alzheimer's Poetry Project is to facilitate the creativity of people living with Alzheimer's disease and related dementia. We perform and create poems, stories, songs and use improvisation and movement with care partners, healthcare workers, educators, and students. We do not set boundaries in our beliefs in what is possible for people with dementia to create. By saying to people living with memory loss that we value you and your creativity, we are saying we value all members of our community.

We began programming in 2004. Since that time, we have held 3,019 sessions, serving 63,648 people in 36 states and internationally in Australia, Canada, England, Germany, Italy, Malaysia, Mexico, Poland, South Korea and Turkey. Participatory arts, the concept of performing and creating together is at our core of the APP methods: 1) Call and Response, 2) Discussions, 3) Using Props to stimulate senses, and 4) Creating Poems, Stories and Songs by asking the participants open-ended questions and writing down their answers. Much of our work is teaching family and professional caregivers to use APP methods to help better communicate with their clients and loved ones.

Since 2004, we have hosted an average of 150 Poetry Parties per year. In 2025, Glazner was featured at the Poetry and Aging at Festival Internazionale di Poesiaterapia in Monza, Italy. Since 2010, our main teaching artist is Fabu Carter, who was the Madison Poet Laureate from 2008 to 2012. Carter is the Wisconsin Alzheimer's Disease Research Center African American Outreach Specialist, a position she was hired for in part due to her work with the APP. Michelle Otero is

our Spanish Language Teaching Artist, who is leading a new 2026 initiative to train Spanish speaking home health workers, in New Mexico, to use creativity to better communicate with their clients. "Nutreme Hoy (Nurture me today)" is our Spanish anthology. Poetry on Wheels is our project to address social isolation for people living with dementia at home. This year we expanded programming to serve Native Americans with the Oneida Nation, in Wisconsin. https://www.alzpoetry.com/poetry-on-wheels.

In 2025, we launched Person-Centered Care Creativity Training, a new direction for us. By using the technique of "BEING WELL KNOWN," we collect information about a person's life stories and interests in dance, food, humor, music, sports, etc. That information helps us develop a creativity care plan for the person. Glazner's book, *"Dementia Arts: Creativity in Elder Care,"* informs the curriculums. All our programs are designed to help reduce social isolation and reframe what it means to live with dementia.





Alzheimer's Poetry Project – Chicago, IL
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Making Connections

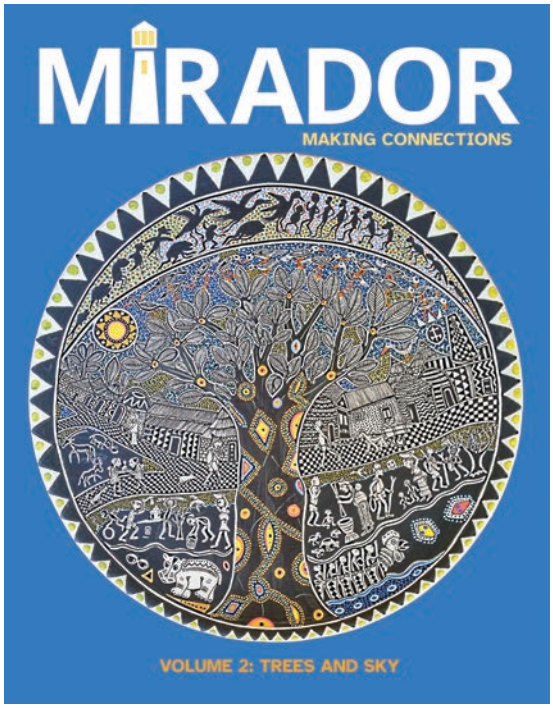
MIRADOR
MAKING CONNECTIONS

MAUDE'S AWARD RECIPIENT

Mirador Magazine is "the first thing her husband reads in the morning, and the last thing he reads at night. The publication is a "life saver, and that he loves sharing about what he's reading and feels happy contributing to conversations. This was particularly helpful as we had been away from home, out of our normal environment. The magazine was able to anchor him to his own familiar routine, as well as give other family members an opportunity to chat with him about the stories he shared.

Individual: **Nikki Jardin –** *Port Townsend, WA*

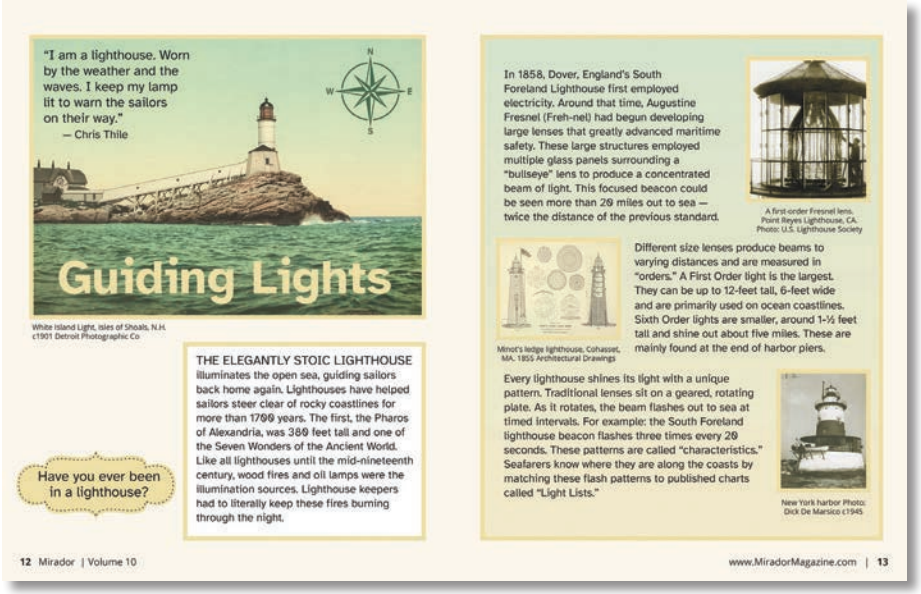
Program: **Mirador Magazine**

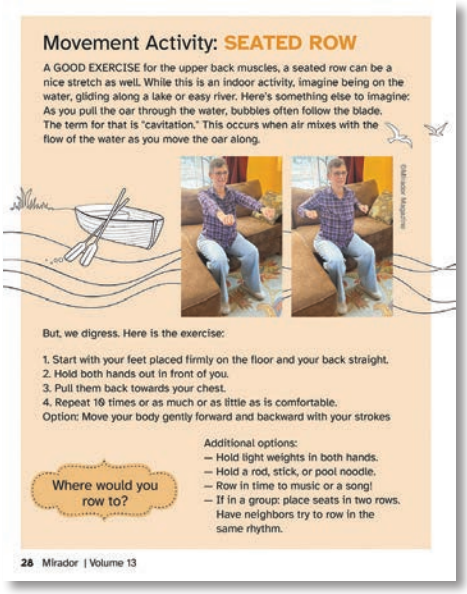


My Aunt Rebecca, diagnosed with Young Onset Alzheimer's, struggled to read her beloved magazines. Rebecca had always been a curious person and she loved sharing what she learned with others. She had worked as a research assistant for the University of Washington's Conservation in Practice journal, as a volunteer for the Seattle Aquarium, and read to kids during story time at her local library. Reading was a huge part of her life. When Rebecca moved into residential care, she insisted that her magazines move with her. Her magazines came as requested, yet I noticed that she carried them around but wasn't reading them. After learning more about Alzheimer's, I wondered if Rebecca's difficulty reading wasn't just about her illness but the magazine formatting itself, with small typefaces, columns and detailed stories. I searched for publications designed for people living with dementia but found nothing that would appeal to Rebecca. This was the beginning of ***Mirador***.

Mirador debuted in June 2021 with the mission of celebrating the experience and education of readers with cognitive change through an accessible and engaging magazine. Our 32-page, ad-free publication features a variety of content, appealing to a wide range of interests. We have 16 issues and two Anthologies. In Fall 2026 we launched a companion publication, *The Lantern Room*, featuring stories and art solely contributed by people living with dementia. During the past five years ***Mirador*** has sold more than seven thousand issues in the U.S., Canada, and the UK, and donated hundreds more. Our magazines have found their place on bedstands and coffee tables of individuals, in totes of hospice workers, on public library shelves, and with activity directors in care communities.

A survey done by the Innovations in Dementia in the UK (2020) reported that more than 80% of respondents living with dementia have difficulty reading, impacting self-confidence, independence, and well-being. Reading has been shown to reduce stress, help maintain cognitive health, and create opportunities for connection, both with others and within oneself. ***Mirador*** reaches thousands of readers at home and via public libraries. ***Mirador*** is part of OverDrive, where digital editions are available through platforms like Libby, expanding access to underserved communities.





Mirador Magazine – Port Townsend, WA
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Making Connections

MAUDE'S AWARD RECIPIENT

One participant living with dementia had gradually become unable to participate in regular social engagement before joining Memory Garden. Her family joined in February with uncertainty, hoping she might try attending. Staff discovered she had a beautiful singing voice and a strong emotional connection to familiar Chinese songs. The team incorporated songs she knew and loved, creating opportunities for her to participate, feel successful, and reconnect with others.

Individual: **Karen Xin** – *Bellevue, WA*

Program: **Memory Garden**



Memory Garden, a program under the nonprofit Touchstone Alliance, supports Chinese-speaking individuals living with dementia and their care partners through culturally adaptive, dignity-centered care. Our mission is to preserve identity, abilities, joy, and meaningful human connection. We value compassion, inclusion, cultural understanding, innovation, and active participation. Our vision is to build dementia-friendly communities where families feel supported, empowered, and connected, and where people living with dementia continue to contribute, belong, and be valued.

Memory Garden is a culturally adaptive dementia support program serving Chinese-speaking people living with dementia and their caregivers. Since launching, it has grown into a weekly initiative. Key activities include dementia-friendly engagement, caregiver support, music and arts, therapeutic crafts, education workshops, and community lectures. It also uses culturally familiar cognitive activities, including Chinese poetry, idioms, seasonal traditions, and visual memory games, to stimulate long-term memory and strengthen identity.

Chinese-speaking families affected by dementia often face major barriers to care, including language limitations, cultural stigma, isolation, and limited access to culturally responsive services. Many programs are English-based and do not address the emotional, cultural, and family-centered needs of older adult immigrant Chinese and caregivers. As a result, many families delay seeking support and experience stress alone. Memory Garden addresses this gap through a culturally adaptive, dignity-centered model. Rather than focusing primarily

on loss and decline, it emphasizes retained abilities, identity, contribution, and meaningful engagement. Chinese poetry, idioms, music, food traditions, seasonal themes, and shared cultural experiences help activate long-term memory, reduce anxiety, encourage participation, and strengthen connection. The program also supports caregivers through education, emotional support, and a dementia caregiver support app with AI-assisted tools.

Memory Garden improves quality of life by restoring social connection, confidence, purpose, and belonging for Chinese-speaking people living with dementia and caregivers. Participants who were withdrawn or isolated now take part in music, crafts, cultural activities, performances, meal preparation, and social engagement. A defining impact is that participants are not treated only as care recipients, but as active contributors. Through "Lunch With Love" and "Taste of Home," they use retained abilities to help prepare meals, share traditions, create handmade gifts, and contribute to group activities. These experiences reinforce dignity, identity, and self-worth. Care partners benefit from emotional support, dementia education, connection, and access to an AI-assisted caregiver support app.





Memory Garden, Touchstone Alliance – Bellevue, WA
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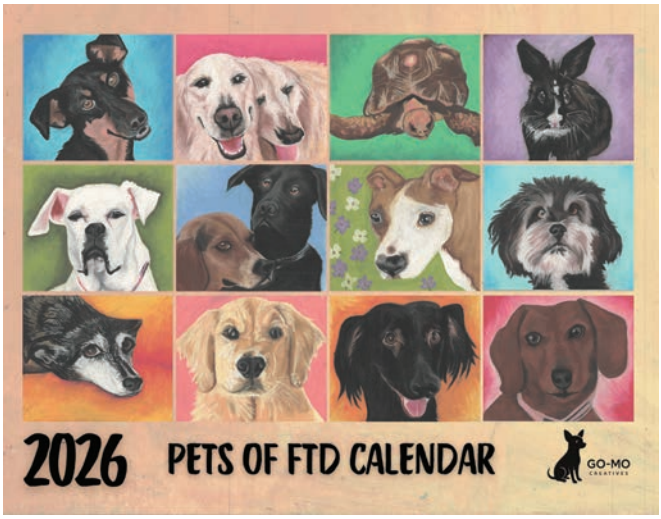
Making Connections

MAUDE'S AWARD RECIPIENT

One participant spent years navigating confusing symptoms and advocating with doctors before being diagnosed with FTD at age 34. The Pets of FTD Calendar became a turning point—offering hope and a way to reconnect with meaning through her pet, who helped remind her that "life is worth living" beyond a diagnosis. She first participated with her dogs as a way to share her story in a gentler, more accessible way. Now, she is submitting again with her new pup, using the calendar as a tool to connect with family, friends, and most importantly, the doctors who once misinterpreted or dismissed her symptoms. At such a young age, talking about dementia can feel overwhelming and isolating. But with her loyal dog by her side, she has found a way to communicate her experience, build understanding, and advocate for herself through story, connection, and love.

Individual: **Diana and Sandra Gonzalez-Morett** – *Bloomfield, NJ*

Program: **Go-Mo Creatives**



We are sisters Diana and Sandra Gonzalez-Morett, care partners and daughters in a genetic Frontotemporal Degeneration (FTD) family. We founded Go-Mo Creatives after years of caregiving and the shared need to build the world we may one day need. Our work is inspired by both the challenges and moments of connection in dementia—especially how creativity, storytelling, and even pets can offer dignity, communication, and hope during brain change. We are motivated by the lack of support, visibility, and understanding for families like ours. Go-Mo Creatives exists to uplift caregiver voices, support working artists, engage with the Spanish speaking community, and reduce dementia stigma through the arts, creating spaces of recognition, healing, and belonging where the whole person is seen beyond diagnosis.

Pets of FTD Calendar—now in its second year—uses storytelling, art, and community engagement to challenge the myth that dementia only impacts the elderly. One participant, diagnosed with FTD at 34, used the calendar and her dog's story to educate doctors after years of misdiagnosis. This is stigma reduction in action. In 2025, 26 families submitted; 12 were selected as cover models and gifted

custom pet portraits. We sold 177 calendars distributed to families, clinicians, and communities, and partnered with the AFTD to include monthly FTD resources.

It is often easier to talk about pets than about brain change. Pets of FTD uses that entry point to help families share dementia stories, creating a more accessible way into difficult conversations. By speaking through their pets, families experience increased understanding, connection, and support. Families share that this is often the first time friends or extended family engage with their story—sometimes through voting—and that it opens conversations with doctors and care teams. This highlights an existing need: meaningful ways to engage communities in dialogue about dementia and reduce stigma through everyday connection. FTD is frequently misunderstood, misdiagnosed, and often affects people in the prime of life. Caregiver-artists are also largely unsupported financially and creatively.



Go-Mo Creatives – Bloomfield, NJ
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Supporting Care Partners

MAUDE'S AWARD RECIPIENT



GREAT LAKES INTER-TRIBAL EPIDEMIOLOGY CENTER

A program of Great Lakes Inter-Tribal Council, Inc.

Organization: **Great Lakes Inter-Tribal Council** – *Lac du Flambeau, WI*

Program: **Together Strong: Tribal Dementia Program**

Great Lakes Inter-Tribal Council's (GLITC) Mission is "To enhance the quality of life for all Native People" which we accomplish by living values of Culture, Respect, Diversity, Collaboration, Teamwork, and Stewardship. GLITC's Vision is to "be a diligent advocate for the advancement and promotion of Tribal Nations and Communities by honoring the Seventh-Generation perspective."

Together Strong: Tribal Dementia Program. This program is a culturally tailored initiative designed to improve dementia care and awareness in Tribal communities across Wisconsin. It was established in 2020 through a Tribal Alzheimer Disease program grant. The program focuses on creating a sustainable model for dementia awareness and education, with a particular emphasis on cultural relevance. It includes training programs for caregivers and people with dementia, as well as evidence-based dementia programming. The program's objectives include enhancing staff knowledge, reducing caregiver burden, and improving the quality of life for people with dementia. It also aims to develop a sustainable and culturally relevant dementia program for Tribal communities.

The program addresses the high prevalence of dementia in Tribal populations – CDC data shows that one in five Tribal members aged 45+ report subjective cognitive decline, with many living with Alzheimer's disease or related dementias. GLITC's Together Strong Program aims to: Increase Dementia Capability; Deliver Culturally Competent Services; Expand Supportive Services; Enhance Education and Training; Improve Awareness and Diagnosis; Support Caregivers; and Foster Partnerships.

GLITC's Together Strong program currently serves Native Americans across Wisconsin and in the Upper Peninsula of Michigan. Census and Economic data demonstrate that most Tribal Communities are in rural areas and are chronically underserved. Due to persistent historical disparities, Native Americans have faced significant economic challenges, with approximately 26.3% of the population living at or below the federal poverty line. Since its inception, GLITC's Dementia program has served 12 Tribal Nations and their members, and we are looking to expand services to the other states and Urban Indian Organizations across the Bemidji Area.

The Wisconsin Dementia Care Specialist (DCS) training has been adapted by GLITC staff to be culturally relevant for Tribal communities, with a focus on integrating local values, traditions, and health beliefs into dementia care. Amber Hoon, Director of Together Strong, has a vision to train someone in each Tribal Community to continue the training of others. Her goals are to: Develop and provide training to increase awareness and knowledge of Alzheimer's and Related Dementias (ADRD); Improve quality of life for people living with dementia; Reduce caregiver burden; Build capacity among tribes to foster dementia-capable tribal communities; Promote brain health strategies across the lifespan.





Great Lakes Inter-Tribal Council - Lac du Flambeau, WI
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Ahoon@glitc.org/ 715-588-1058

Supporting Care Partners

MAUDE'S AWARD RECIPIENT

A documentary (https://youtu.be/9rMnOHMPVL0?si=cA89I3mfoTFNupeD) shares Madeline's experience as a caregiver for her husband, Bill, showing how isolating and overwhelming caregiving felt. "I went in as full of fear, pure fear, I don't know what to do ... and Valerie put her arms around me and said, 'We will be with you throughout this entire journey.'" The program not only gave her support and time away, but also provided her husband with meaningful social interaction and a sense of joy. "It's the people in Encore and the respite program that give him a social life," she said. "He looks forward to going every time we drive over there, and he gets back in the car talking about, 'Those are the happiest, nicest people I've ever been around."

Organization: Respite for All Foundation – *Montgomery, AL*



The Respite for All Foundation (RFA) is a national leader in replicating a proven model of sustainable, non-medical, volunteer-staffed, four-hour respite—transforming the experience of dementia for individuals and caregivers through community-driven support. Founded in 2019, the Respite for All team, to date, has helped 72 local teams in 19 states establish respite programs, with more in progress. The expansion of Respite for All's social model of care is evolving from a powerful grassroots movement into a nationally scaled, systems-driven model where each local program retains its own heart and energy.

The Respite for All model is a volunteer-supported program that churches or senior organizations can launch within six months, giving care partners a break while loved ones living with dementia enjoy engagement, purpose, and relationship. Built on a proven 14-year model and founded nationally in 2019, Respite for All coaches local teams on the vision, business model, and best practices for four-hour programs that meet one to four days a week. Sustainability is aided by churches providing free space to operate, and with upfront training, quality programs develop into community assets. RFA offers an initial vision meeting for free followed by $650 purchase of six-module video training series and manual. They can join the RFA network at no additional cost, receiving free monthly coaching, guidance on fundraising and activities, etc. plus peer support. Programs set their own daily tuition ($40 range)



while donations and grants support scholarships so that no one is turned away for inability to pay.

Drawing on the success of a respite program in Montgomery, AL, Respite for All is responding to an unmet need in dementia care: affordable, accessible support for family caregivers and meaningful social engagement for people living with dementia in early to mid-stages. In-home sitting services and medical model respite are often out of reach due to high costs, leaving many families isolated and overwhelmed. RFA fills this gap with a low-cost, volunteer-supported social model that can be sustained by faith communities and senior organizations using donated space and one part-time director. Care partners gain a reliable four-hour break, reducing stress and delaying unnecessary institutional care, while participants experience purpose, dignity, and connection. By de-medicalizing dementia support, RFA places caregiving within community life.

RFA supports local sustainability through vision meetings, online training and manual, one-on-one director training, online resource library, business planning and enrollment templates, marketing strategies, volunteer recruitment tools, volunteer training, annual trainings, peer coaching, guidance from successful programs nationwide and shared best practices across the network.



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daphne@respiteforall.org/ 334-440-9911

Supporting Care Partners

Spiritual Eldercare

MAUDE'S AWARD RECIPIENT

"Finding your church services has truly been life changing for my mom, my father (primary caregiver) and myself. As Mom's dementia has progressed, she has become less engaged. However, once we turn on one of your services, she is back to singing at the top of her voice, just like when she was singing in the church choir. You have filled our days and evenings with a newfound joy in our family journey with dementia. You have our deepest gratitude."



Individual: **Elisa Bosley** – *Boulder, CO*

Program: **Spiritual Eldercare**

I'm a nondenominational chaplain who specializes in serving people living with dementia (PLWD). I've served for 10 years at memory-care homes and have a worldwide online presence at SpiritualEldercare.com and YouTube. I'm inspired by the beautiful, vibrant souls of PLWD. I believe every human possesses a "deeper breath" that seeks connection beyond physical realities. Each time I'm with PLWD, they amaze and delight me with their responses to treasured spiritual rituals, especially music. It's well known that music is one of the most effective avenues for imparting joy and meaning to PLWD; in my experience, hymns are particularly powerful because they combine melodic beauty with truth-filled lyrics of comfort, hope, and peace. I've gotten thousands of notes from activity directors, care partners, volunteers, and family members in the U.S. and abroad who are thrilled to discover my free tools, including hymns arranged for PLWD, to support spiritual health for loved ones with dementia.

I launched SpiritualEldercare.com in 2017 to provide guidance and resources to meet the spiritual needs of PLWD. I've created more than a year's worth of dementia-friendly, full-length, nondenominational church service agendas and scripture studies for care partners to facilitate meaningful, interactive, and engaging sessions with PLWD. In 2018-19, I gathered a group of musicians to professionally record 100+ dementia-friendly classic hymns, all arranged as sing-alongs for PLWD (slower, shorter, lower key, simple accompaniment). Nothing like this previously existed in a downloadable form, and they are my most accessed resources. I partnered with African American worship leaders to produce the 20 gospel songs in my hymn collection so those would sound the way Black elders would have heard them in their churches. These classics (e.g., When the Saints Go

Marching In, Swing Low Sweet Chariot) are particularly popular with elders of any or no faith background. All of my resources are free.

When I started this work, I was stunned to discover that there were virtually no dementia-friendly spiritual health resources available anywhere. A lot of research exists on the importance of spiritual care as key to person-centered care for PLWD – but there was almost nothing on exactly how to do it. I have decades of experience as a worship and Bible study leader, and I'm a professional writer/editor, so I created the resources myself and posted them for free to enable anyone to provide this much-needed care. My materials primarily serve people within the Christian faith, but my agendas and guides always contain inclusive character limit touchstones, such as poetry, philosophical quotes, and funny stories and jokes, to foster meaning and connection for everyone. All resources are available to anyone with internet access, all over the world.

As a nondenominational chaplain, I'd like to build a network of other faith leaders to explore how they could serve their demographics by modifying my approach. Even as I continue to provide online services to PLWD and their care partners, my goal is to train others to do their own in-person spiritual care with confidence, heart, and skill.



Spiritual Eldercare – Boulder, CO
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Making Connections

LINCOLN PARK ZOO
FOR WILDLIFE. FOR ALL.

MAUDE'S AWARD HONORABLE MENTION

Organization: **Lincoln Park Zoo** – *Chicago, IL*

Program: **Memory Enrichment**

Lincoln Park Zoo connects people with nature by providing free wildlife experiences that are accessible to all people. We are the only free, privately-managed, accredited zoo in the United States, ensuring we meet our promise to be For Wildlife. For All. The zoo is celebrated for its innovative programs that welcome and engage people with chronic illness, disability, dementia, and other support needs. In 2024, we received the Kennedy Center LEAD Award for accessibility programming, and we are also certified sensory-inclusive and Dementia-Friendly.

Launched in 2023, Memory Enrichment is a first-of-its-kind, free program that uses nature and wildlife to create connections between those living with dementia and their care partners. Each monthly program aims to:

- Connect attendees to nature to improve disposition, reduce stress, and provide mental and physical activity
- Lessen the stigma surrounding dementia
- Provide a welcoming space for people with similar lived experiences to build community
- Create opportunities for people living with dementia and care partners to socialize and step out of their routines

Every program opens with time for socializing, building a sense of community and comfort. Zoo staff then lead an activity about wildlife through multi-sensory experiences or guided exploration of zoo exhibits and gardens. Low-impact physical activity, such as chair exercises, are included and tied into nature-based content. Each meeting also uses traditional programming found in Memory Cafes, including music and crafts.

Adults living with dementia and their caretakers frequently experience social isolation. Time spent in nature can reduce loneliness and stress, but an unguided visit to a crowded zoo can be a daunting experience for care partners. Memory Enrichment was designed to help people with dementia access the benefits of nature and wildlife in a guided and supported way. Memory Enrichment activities encourage social connection, reminiscence, and connection to nature–all proven to reduce social isolation and stress and improve cognitive ability and quality of life in older adults. The social nature of Memory Enrichment helps participants break routines and connect to a community of support.

Memory Enrichment is the only program of its kind at a zoo and provides a model for how zoos, botanic gardens, and other natural spaces can better serve people with dementia and care partners. We have discussed Memory Enrichment with several other zoos, and hope that it can be replicated nationally.





Lincoln Park Zoo – Chicago, IL
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Cultivating Health

The Arc Jacksonville

MAUDE'S AWARD HONORABLE MENTION

Organization: The Arc Jacksonville
– Jacksonville, FL

Program: Specialized Aging Support (SAS)

The Arc Jacksonville serves and advocates for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities, empowering them to achieve their full potential and participate fully in community life. Like all people, those we serve want the opportunity to live meaningful, independent lives with a place to call home, access to education, meaningful employment, and a supportive community that fosters connection, recreation, and personal growth.

Individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD) face a significantly increased risk of developing Alzheimer's disease and related dementias (ADRD), making early intervention and specialized support essential. In response, The Arc Jacksonville launched the Specialized Aging Support (SAS) program in 2023 to address the unique needs of aging adults with IDD who are at risk for or living with ADRD. The program promotes cognitive health, independence, and quality of life through individualized support, including physical exercise, brain-stimulating activities, social engagement, and education on healthy routines. All services are adapted to meet varying abilities and needs while helping reduce isolation and support emotional well-being.

Few specialized programs exist for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD) living with Alzheimer's disease and related dementias (ADRD), despite their unique cognitive, behavioral, and social needs. In Northeast Florida, families often face limited resources and aging services not designed to support individuals with IDD, leaving many without appropriate care and support as they age.

The Arc Jacksonville created the Specialized Aging Support (SAS) program to fill this critical gap. The program provides individualized support focused on cognitive wellness, physical health, social engagement, and daily living skills in an environment tailored specifically for adults with IDD. SAS also offers caregiver education nights that provide families with resources, education, and strategies to support loved ones experiencing cognitive decline while helping individuals maintain independence and quality of life.







The Arc Jacksonville – Jacksonville, FL
https://arcjacksonville.org/the-village-old/
Contact: Dakota Laporte, Director of Therapeutic Services
Dlaporte@arcjacksonville.org / 904-779-3135

Making Connections

Connecting people with dementia to the world and people around them

ORGANIZATIONS

HEARTS & MINDS ACTIVITY CENTER

Organization: Hearts & Minds Activity Center – *San Jose, CA*

Hearts & Minds Activity Center operates two collaborative programs: a dementia-specific Adult Day Care (ADC) and a Childcare Center (CC). This co-location has allowed for daily, intergenerational activities since 1992. In 2024, we received funding to build an Intergenerational Vegetable Garden, which started our Plant to Plate (P2P) program. P2P involves nutrition, gardening, cooking, and health promotion activities with children, older adults, and student volunteers, in line with the CC's curriculum. The children and students benefit from the opportunity to learn from older adults and experience greater social and emotional growth. The older adults benefit from reduced feelings of loneliness and increased sense of purpose from providing guidance to kids. P2P is provided at no additional cost for our participants.

Since inception, Hearts & Minds has served more than 6,500 people with dementia at all stages of memory loss and 11,000 family caregivers. A pillar in the community since 1984, we maintain partnerships for referral and/or collaborative services such as with PACE programs, the VA, the local AAA, Alzheimer's Association, Family Caregiver Alliance, and Kaiser Permanente. We continuously adapt activities to match the diverse cultures within Santa Clara County and strive to be in parity with community demographics. From 2024-2025, 13% of those we served were Asian, 4% were Black, 14% were Hispanic, and 47% were low to extremely low income. The Adult Activity Center has been very successful in enhancing the quality of life of our participants and their caregivers.

heartsandmindsactivitycenter.org
Contact: Nicole Leon, Program Coordinator
nicole@hearts-minds.org / 408-279-7515 Ext. 1121

Organization: Dementia Friendly America, USAging

The Dementia Friendly America (DFA) provides a suite of community education and opportunities designed to help communities become more welcoming and supportive of people living with dementia and their care partners. Key programs include the Memory Cafe Alliance (directory and curriculum), the Giving Voice Network of dementia friendly choirs, Dementia Friends in person and online session(s) and sector-specific resources and trainings for businesses, faith communities, healthcare, libraries, transportation, and other community organizations. These programs increase social connection, reduce stigma, expand access to meaningful engagement opportunities and equip communities with tools to better support people living with dementia. DFA has been operating nationally for more than a decade through partnerships with local communities and organizations. Resources are offered at no cost through our website and collaboration platforms making them easily accessible and scalable for communities.

People living with dementia and their care partners often experience social isolation, stigma and limited opportunities for meaningful community participation. While support services may exist, many communities lack coordinated, accessible ways to help people remain connected and engaged after a dementia diagnosis. DFA addressed this need by creating practical, community-based tools and networks that make inclusion actionable. The Memory Café directory and curriculum help communities find or establish welcoming social spaces. The Giving Voice Network directory connects individuals to dementia friendly choirs that foster joy, creativity, and belonging. Dementia Friends and sector resources educate community members and organizations on how to recognize, support and include people living with dementia. Together, these innovations shift communities from awareness to action, helping create environments where people with dementia can continue to participate fully in community life.

dfamerica.org
Contact: Mary Ek, Director, Dementia Friendly America
mek@usaging.org / 651-492-9639

Organization: National Alzheimer's Buddies
– North Andover, MA

The National Alzheimer's Buddies (NAB), founded in 2015, is an intergenerational volunteer program that connects college students with individuals living with Alzheimer's disease and other forms of dementia in senior living communities. Through weekly one-on-one visits, students build meaningful friendships with residents while engaging in conversation, games, music, crafts, and memory-sharing activities designed to reduce loneliness and improve emotional well-being. Key outcomes include increased social connection, emotional engagement, cognitive stimulation, and improved quality of life for residents while creating educational opportunities for students, particularly those pursuing healthcare careers, to develop empathy and understand person-centered healthcare. Through facility partnerships and a volunteer-driven structure, NAB remains low-cost and sustainable, with funding supporting volunteer training, educational materials, in-person programs on campuses, and engagement resources.

NAB's intergenerational model improves quality of life for persons with dementia by replacing isolation with meaningful connections. Students focus on the person behind the disease, fostering engagement, familiarity, and joy. NAB serves 1,500+ memory care residents across 50+ chapters, delivering more than 10,000 hours of engagement, with significant potential to scale nationally through new chapters and facility partnerships. NAB intentionally reaches underserved communities, including chapters serving diverse and historically marginalized populations at institutions such as the University of Texas Rio Grande Valley, Wayne State University, and the University of Hawaii at Mānoa, as well as rural campuses like Carleton College and Kansas State University. NAB serves individuals across all stages of dementia, including those with advanced cognitive decline, while also supporting care partners by improving emotional well-being and connection.

https://www.alzbuddies.org/
Contact: Charmi Patel, Chief Financial Officer
charmi@alzbuddies.org / 779-216-0398

SENIOR SERVICES
Elizabeth and Tab Williams Adult Day Center

Organization: Senior Services, Inc. – *Winston-Salem, NC*

Since 1975, Senior Services has provided adult day and health services in Forsyth County, NC. In 2023, the Williams Center relocated into the Intergenerational Center for Arts and Wellness (Generations Center), expanding relationships with an additional 25 community partners for a dementia-inclusive model that brings older adults, care partners, children, artists, healthcare providers, volunteers, and community organizations into shared spaces and connections. Participants engage in 250-300 activities monthly designed for differing interests, communication styles, and comfort levels to bolster cognitive, social, physical, and nutritional health. Programming is supported annually by volunteers—more than 100 individuals and 50 groups.

In 2025, caregivers reported improved participant quality of life (92%), increased ability to keep loved ones at home (88%), and improved caregiver well-being (89%). From July 2025 through April 2026, the Williams Center served 248 unduplicated participants, with daily attendance averaging 60-70 participants. Demand for services has increased 20% over the past two fiscal years, reflecting growing community needs for dementia-informed daytime support. The Williams Center is licensed to serve up to 138 people daily. The program serves individuals across a wide range of cognitive and physical abilities, including people living with later-stage dementia, when families often face the fewest care options and greatest caregiving demands. Nearly 40% of participants live at or below 150% of the federal poverty level, and 46% receive financial assistance through Senior Services.

Seniorservicesinc.org
Contact: Kristen Perry, Chief Executive Officer
kperry@seniorservicesinc.org, 336-721-6959

Conversations to REMEMBER

Organization: Conversations to Remember – *Pine Brook, NJ*

Program: Virtual Visit Program

Conversations to Remember's mission is to combat social isolation in older adults, particularly those living with mild to advanced dementia. We believe that for individuals who can't retain the memories of their visitors, each moment of connection is that much more precious. Our program utilizes innovative training and oversight to facilitate weekly intergenerational video visits between young adults in college and older adults, to build trust and then friendships. Our goal is to reinforce the importance that individuals feel when they know that people value their presence.

Virtual Visit Program (since 2020). Cost: free.

Key activities:

- Proprietary Training & Simulation: Volunteers must complete our proprietary training and quizzes to be eligible for visits. Live simulations with trainers role-playing as PLWD (mild to advanced) are our final screening. This ensures our team is consistently prepared for non-verbal cues and challenging behaviors.
- Curated Intergenerational Visits: We match 2-3 college students with a PLWD for weekly video visits. To reduce anxiety, students use name labels and follow a "giving of self" model to build trust and authentic friendship.
- Data-Driven Oversight: We don't rely on chance. Every call is monitored for attendance, duration, and engagement. A dedicated student chat room allows for pre-call prep, mandatory submission of prepared topics, and emergency issue escalation during calls.

Outcomes:
2025 data showed a 93% reduction in loneliness. We've also built infrastructure for replication. Volunteers are trained to fill roles at every level, including assistants to the executive director, allowing them to take ownership and potentially replicate the program independently.

https://conversationstoremember.org
Contact: Robert Lefkowitz, Director
robert@conversationstoremember.org / 862-243-5331

Organization: University of Indianapolis Center for Aging & Community (CAC)
– Indianapolis, IN

Program: Age Friendly University

As a cornerstone of our Age Friendly University initiative, CAC bridges the gap between student education and community support. For the past eight years, we have provided these programs at no cost to students or participants.

The Student Connection: The journey begins with Dementia Friends training for students in fields such as Social Work, Occupational, Physical, Art, and Music Therapies. These students then collaborate with CAC to design and lead programming for two primary initiatives:

- Memory Cafés: Hosted on-campus, these social gatherings offer engaging activities for individuals with dementia and their care partners.
- Caregiver Resource Group (CRG): This virtual monthly group connects caregivers with vital community resources.

This innovation has significantly boosted the quality of life for those living with dementia and their care partners while students gain hands-on experience in the aging network, finding welcoming spaces where they can explore music or art, for example, enriching their worlds. They also benefit from intergenerational interaction with the students who have diligently worked to provide those welcoming and enriching spaces. CAC has served approximately 350 students with dementia education, 900 people with Memory Cafes and CRG. CAC is a founding member of the Dementia Friendly Indianapolis Action Team and has access to hundreds of care partners and their loved ones through that organization's social media network sharing campaigns. Providing the activities at no cost makes them accessible to all income levels.

https://www.uindy.edu/cac/
Contact: Emily Tisdale, Executive Director
tisdalee@uindy.edu / 317-791-5930



Organization: National Comedy Center – *Jamestown, NY*

Program: One Laugh at a Time

The National Comedy Center "One Laugh at a Time" Memory Café is a free, monthly program for individuals living with dementia and their care partners, launched in February 2025. Participants experience personalized comedy content tailored to their individual Sense of Humor Profiles, including classic television, radio, stand-up, film, sketch, improv and more.

Sessions take place within our museum's immersive environment with interactive exhibits designed for accessibility, comfort, and emotional engagement. By personalizing content to each visitor's sense of humor, the museum creates immediate moments of recognition, nostalgia, laughter, and connection. Familiar comedic voices and shared memories often spark conversation and engagement between participants and their loved ones.

Our Memory Café has improved quality of life by increasing social engagement, emotional connection, and moments of recognition for individuals living with dementia and their care partners. Participants frequently demonstrate laughter, conversation, reminiscence, and renewed interaction during sessions, while care partners describe the experience as restorative, emotionally grounding, and deeply meaningful. Attendance has more than doubled since early sessions, growing to more than 50 participants monthly, with many families returning month after month – an indicator of trust, relevance, and sustained value. The program serves a largely rural, lower income region in Western New York, where specialized programming and support resources can be limited, and is offered free of charge. It welcomes individuals across all stages of memory loss and dementia.

https://comedycenter.org/
Contact: Gary Hahn, Vice President, Marketing and Communications
Ghahn@comedycenter.org / 202-285-1356

Organization: **Love for Our Elders** – *Pepper Pike, OH*

Program: **Global Student-Led Pathways: A Decentralized Model for Overcoming Dementia Isolation**

This program has operated since 2021 at zero cost to participants or memory care facilities. Our infrastructure mobilizes a global army of 130 student-led campus chapters. Key activities bridge the generational divide through two core pillars: we fund our chapters' transportation and materials for executing intergenerational activities such as dementia-friendly sing-alongs, swing dancing, adapted fine arts targeted around seasonal events, and social events. Also, we host letter-writing campaigns that have collected more than one million letters to elders facing cognitive decline and isolation. Key outcomes include qualitative reports of reduced loneliness, heightened community empathy among thousands of youth volunteers, and the continuous delivery of thousands of tangible cognitive stimuli directly into memory care units to promote joy, neurological orientation, and enduring comfort.

Our program elevates quality of life for thousands of individuals with dementia and alleviating caregiver burnout. The profound emotional impact is captured directly in care partner feedback: as one family shared, the support "could not have come at a better time" and "filled her with amazement" for a loved one with advanced Alzheimer's, while another noted an outpouring of 800 letters brought "life and love back into the space" during isolation. They've also supported caregivers for people with dementia, helping them feel as though their efforts and those they care for are seen. Globally—from rural America to Hong Kong—we serve tens of thousands of seniors annually, with an infrastructure primed to scale indefinitely. We explicitly target underserved communities, including underfunded and rural care deserts, through our grassroots network. Our model accommodates late-stage dementia; our tactile letters and sensory events support lucidity, comfort, and calm.

loveforourelders.org
Contact: Jacob Cramer, Founder & Executive Director
jacob@loveforourelders.org / 216-839-9180

Organization: **Giving Voice Foundation** – *Cincinnati, OH*

Program: **Creative Connections**

Creative Connections is a weekly, relationship centered program supporting individuals living with dementia and their care partners through shared music, movement, and community. Each session includes a 90-minute professionally facilitated engagement group that uses music, fine and gross motor movement, cross lateral exercises, and dual tasking to support neuroplasticity, and a concurrent 90-minute caregiver support group that creates dual impact for the whole community circle. Operating since 2021, the program consistently delivers a 15% lift in participant mood and 90% caregiver-reported stress reduction. Attrition averages about 10% due to disease progression, yet many caregivers continue attending for ongoing support and community. We have recently expanded to six fully enrolled sites serving families across the Tri State, many with waitlists due to demand.

Creative Connections is offered at no cost, with an optional $10 donation per couple per 10-week series, ensuring that finances never limit participation. The program strengthens emotional well-being, social connection, and daily stability for individuals living with dementia and their care partners. Participants show increased engagement, recognition, and self-expression, while caregivers report renewed confidence, and a deeper sense of connection with their loved one. We serve families from low-income neighborhoods, rural communities, and households navigating late-stage dementia. Our growth is intentional, pairing expanded locations with continued innovation in how we support families, so the experience remains as meaningful as the caregiver who shared, "This group gave us our joy back."

givingvoicefdn.org
Contact: Krista Powers, Executive Director
krista@givingvoicefdn.org / 513-513-0483

Organization: **AgingIN** – *Linthicum, MD*

Program: **Elevate Eldercare podcast**

More than 30 years ago, The Green House Project transformed aging services by designing person-directed living environments that older adults and families could choose for themselves. By merging the Pioneer Network and the Green House Project to form AgingIN, we can now expand this mission beyond the sometimes cost-prohibitive Green House model. AgingIN stands for INclusive and INnovative. Through consulting, workforce education, webinars, and research translation, AgingIN trains staff in person-directed living, environmental redesign, caregiver support (Best Life Dementia Care), and dementia-capable practices often overlooked in traditional care models. To spark innovation and amplify impact, AgingIN launched the Elevate Eldercare podcast, bringing evidence-based practices, dementia education, caregiving strategies, and culture-change models to families, advocates, and the broader public.

With more than 400 small homes worldwide, research shows that these settings improve quality of life for persons living with dementia by fostering greater emotional well-being and stronger caregiver relationships compared with traditional institutional models. These benefits are especially important for persons living with dementia, who comprise a large proportion of residents in many Green House communities. The Thome Rivertown Neighborhood in Detroit, for example, illustrates how the model serves underserved populations, where most residents are people of color, approximately 85% live with late-stage dementia or cognitive decline, and nearly half rely on Medicaid. The free Elevate Eldercare podcast delivers evidence-based dementia education and caregiving strategies to caregivers, providers, clinicians, and families worldwide. Because the podcast is open access and not limited by geography or cost, it can reach underserved rural, low-income, and marginalized communities.

https://aginginnovation.org/
Contact: Susan Ryan, Chief Executive Officer
sryan@aginginnovation.org / 410-246-3806

Organization: **Artisan Mind** – *Placerville, AL*

Program: **Creative Presence Sessions**

Creative Presence Sessions provide individualized, art-centered engagement for individuals living with all forms of dementia, especially those unable to access meaningful enrichment due to financial limitations. Through scholarships and community support, participants receive one-on-one sessions tailored to their history, interests, abilities, and stage of cognitive change. Activities may include art appreciation, expressive painting, sensory engagement, music, storytelling, and personalized creative kits that foster connection and reminiscence. Creative Presence Session facilitator observations consistently report increased engagement, positive emotional expression, reminiscence, and meaningful participation during sessions. Participants are given opportunities to share memories, make independent creative decisions, express preferences, and reconnect with personal identity, purpose, and moments of joy. Families and care partners frequently report improved mood, increased engagement, and deeper emotional connection following visits.

Artisan Mind is committed to serving underserved populations, particularly low-income seniors. In 2025, Artisan Mind provided 291 private sessions and 364 group art sessions, totaling 2,922 touchpoints. Overall, 48% of participants received scholarship support. The model is highly replicable because it is relationship-based rather than resource-intensive. Artisan Mind shares its approach through workshops, educational resources, and social media, helping providers adopt strengths-based, person-centered practices that honor the dignity and individuality of people living with dementia.

artisanmind.org
Contact: Tiffany Ramirez, Founder, Executive Director
tiffany@artisanmind.org / 916-792-3281

Organization: DanceStream Projects – *Rego Park, NY*

Program: Stories in The Moment

Our stories direct our perspectives. Too often, the stories of people living with dementia are ones of loss told by others. Stories in the Moment (SITM), brings artists, people living with dementia and care partners together through movement-based improvisation, narrative, and gesture-based choreography to tell their OWN stories through dance. Developed by our founder, dancer, researcher and Atlantic Fellow for Equity in Brain Health, Magda Kaczmarska, SITM has steadily grown from our first program delivered online in 2021 with seven individuals, to 200 programs in 2025 (projecting serving 300 individuals annually through our sequential in-person and online programs). Because we primarily serve low-income communities, we subsidize the programs so that it is no cost to community partners/participants ensuring everyone has access to this transformative dance program.

Annually, 75% of our participants identify as immigrant, low-income and/or BIPOC. What we have found in these collaborations is that through sustained engagement in co-creative dance and storytelling, individuals living with dementia and care partners alike begin to thrive, experiencing deeply personal and impactful shifts in mood, anxiety and wellbeing, which carry beyond the time shared in the program into their daily lives. As one care partner to their parent living with dementia shared: "The biggest impact was emotional. It opened us up. It can get heavy, you know. And this was the opposite. It's joyful and that carries. We've taken it with us. It lasts throughout the week." Participants feel socially more confident both within and outside of the program, express better attention and focus and a sense of belonging. As one person living with dementia sums up: "The oneness that was created made it very special."

https://dancestreamprojects.org/
Contact: Magda Kaczmarska, Executive Director
magda@dancestreamprojects.com / 520-331-5726

Organization: Reading2Connect LLC – *Niantic, CT*

Since 2019 Reading2Connect (R2C) has been providing books and employee training to day centers, memory cafes, libraries, hospitals, and senior living. R2C's books are designed with adaptations (ex: syntax, lineation, layout, images, high contrast, low-glare, stiff pages, spiral binding) that enable older adults to enjoy books on their own. Our books come in print (on washable, tear-resistant paper), eBooks, and Video Books. Our 60+ books embrace popular topics (ex: pets, travel, sports) as well as culturally relevant topics (ex: Korean War, Civil Rights, Judaism). Our Montessori-based training focuses on minimizing dependency on staff. Trainees learn to create a supportive setting (ex: lighting, table proximity, postural support, book stands) and then fade away assistance to enable self-directed book experiences. Most older adults comfortably explore the books in their own way, at their own pace, often with their peers.

R2C is in 174 communities and 31 states. Families/employees report increased attention, social interaction, and confidence among participants. Beryl Institute measured increased engagement, communication, and positive emotions among LTC residents during and after R2C sessions. CMS (Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services) has funded five R2C CMP projects in five states, including rural/low-income regions. Sites with our program retain lifetime access to R2C recorded training. Low-income grant recipients value R2C's one-time fee. Our books reflect diverse groups/interests and come in many languages.

People living with:

- low vision may enjoy our eBooks on a large screen, listening to our Video Books or being read to by peers.
- hearing loss find the R2C groups easy-to-follow as all members are reading/commenting on the same text.
- limited language enjoy holding the books, turning pages, seeing images and focusing on group members' voices and facial expressions.

www.Reading2Connect.com
Contact: Susan Ostrowski, Co-Creator/CEO
Susan@Reading2Connect.com / 860-235-4348

Organization: **ONEGeneration** – *Van Nuys, CA*

Program: **Adult Daycare and Intergenerational Shared Site Program**

ONEgeneration's Adult Daycare and Intergenerational Shared Site Program provides adult day services for older adults and adults with Alzheimer's disease and related dementias while fostering meaningful intergenerational connections with children ages zero to six in our onsite childcare program. Operating since 1993, the program offers nursing care, therapies, social work, nutritious meals, supervision, cognitive and social enrichment activities, and structured intergenerational engagement. As part of ONEgeneration's broader continuum of services established in 1978, we also provide access to transportation, caregiver support, care management, nutrition services, and benefits assistance.

ONEgeneration's Adult Daycare and Intergenerational Shared Site Program significantly improves the quality of life for individuals living with dementia, and their care partners by providing structured, person-centered care, meaningful social engagement, and reliable respite.

Participants experience increased socialization, improved mood, reduced isolation and behavioral symptoms, and enhanced cognitive stimulation through therapeutic and intergenerational activities with children onsite. The program currently serves approximately 79 enrolled participants, with average daily attendance of 35–40 individuals and a waiting list of approximately 20 families. Our program serves a highly diverse and underserved population, including low-income older adults, Medi-Cal recipients (more than 50%), Veterans, Spanish-speaking families, and individuals of color with moderate to advanced dementia who often have limited access to specialized dementia care and respite services.

https://www.onegeneration.org/
Contact: Jenna Hauss, President & CEO
Jhauss@onegeneration.org / 818-708-6610

Organization: **Respite Care Atlanta** – *Atlanta, GA*

Program: **Club RCA**

Club RCA, launched in 2018, is an innovative, community-based adult day program designed to enhance the quality of life for individuals living with dementia and provide meaningful respite for care partners. Supported by nine religiously diverse congregations across metro Atlanta, the program delivers a specially designed daily schedule that blends social, cognitive, physical, and spiritually enriching activities. A defining innovation is the use of trained older adult volunteers—often peers in age—who build authentic relationships that foster dignity, belonging, and emotional safety. This peer-based model reduces stigma and increases engagement.

Club RCA has demonstrated meaningful impact on the quality of life for both individuals living with dementia and their care partners. Participants show increased engagement, improved mood, and reduced isolation through consistent social connection and peer interaction. The program's emphasis on dignity restores a sense of identity and belonging. Care partners report decreased stress, improved mental health, and the ability to sustain employment and personal responsibilities. Since 2018, Club RCA has served more than 150 families across metro Atlanta and continues to expand. The community-based model, including diverse congregations and extensive community partnerships, extends the reach into underserved populations, including communities of lower-income families. Scholarship support ensures access regardless of financial means. This model not only improves individual outcomes but also strengthens community networks of care.

http://respitecareatlanta.org
Contact: Hannah Hatcher, Development and Admin Manager
hhatcher@spdl.org / 404-591-4365

Organization: **CaringKind** – *New York, NY*

Program: **Dementia Act 2**

Dementia Act 2 began in 2024 and is designed to change attitudes and behaviors of healthcare, research, and industry professionals/students towards people living with dementia (PLWD). A group of three to five PLWD meet over four to six facilitated sessions to identify common themes related to their healthcare experiences and co-write a script with a program scribe to be performed in a theater style one-hour training. Themes have included "help me with my diagnosis," "I can handle hard things," "connect me with my peers," "focus on what I can do," and "get my family the help and support they need." An audience of professionals and students were asked to describe dementia before and after the training. Words like "frustrated," "sad," and "confused," changed to "hope," "resilient," "creative," and "strong." Audience survey responses indicated that moving forward they'd be more likely to consider peer support and engagement for the PLWD and more support for families.

Dementia Act 2 has renewed a sense of purpose for people living with dementia after they receive a diagnosis. Those involved in creating and performing Dementia Act 2 are energized and empowered after a performance, evident during a Q&A portion when they realize the impact of their words on healthcare professionals. The "performers" often complete the program and ask, "what else can I do?" The quality of life of families affected by dementia is further improved via the effects of Dementia Act 2 on professionals. Our program evaluation surveys demonstrate an improvement in how professionals intend to view and support families affected by dementia in the future. To date Dementia Act 2 has had five performances with 575 audience members..

www.wearecaringkind.org
Contact: Edward Cisek, Chief Grants and Evaluation Officer
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Julia Becke, MD

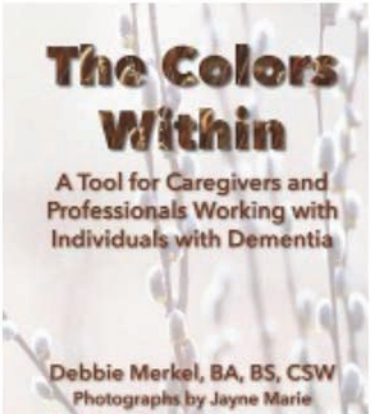
Individual: **Julia Becke, MD** – *Seattle, WA*

Program: **Dancing Together**

In my practice as an internal medicine physician, I care for people with dementia every day. In my life outside of work, I am a dancer. These two worlds intersect in my involvement with the dance medicine community, where researchers are exploring the effects on health from dance. Initially inspired by the burgeoning evidence of benefits from dance for people living with dementia (PLWD), I began Dancing Together in 2024 to share the joy, community, and creativity of dance with PLWD and their care partners, through all stages of the condition. A series of 8-12 weekly, hour-long seated dance classes for PLWD and their care partners, Dance Together uses a variety of dance forms to spark positive reminiscence and connectedness. With careful curation of music and the use of storytelling through movement, dancer participants are invited to engage as their full selves, to the best of their abilities.

Now two years into this work, I am inspired by graceful care partners who sit side by side with their loved ones to explore new ways of moving to music. I am inspired by dedicated community partners throughout Seattle who serve PLWD and who have invited Dancing Together into their organizations. Most importantly, I am continually inspired by my intrepid dancers who show what is possible when their creative endeavors are invited and honored.

Contact: julia.becke@gmail.com / 206-499-1862



Individual: **Debbie Merkel** – *Merrill, WI*

Program: **The Colors Within**

I am a hospice social worker and educator who has spent years supporting individuals living with Alzheimer's disease and other dementias, along with their families and caregivers. Through my work, I witnessed the heartbreak families experience when verbal communication and recognition begin to fade. I also saw how many individuals with late-stage dementia were unintentionally isolated because others no longer knew how to connect with them. What inspires my work is the belief that connection is possible, even in advanced dementia. Every person deserves dignity, comfort, purpose, and meaningful human interaction regardless of cognitive decline. My experience inspired me to create a tool to foster emotional connection, reduce fear, and help families see the person beyond the disease.

The name of my product is *The Colors Within - A Tool for Caregivers and Professionals Working with Individuals with Dementia*. It is an interactive book designed specifically for individuals living with moderate to late-stage dementia. Published by Hog Press Publishing and endorsed by Teepa Snow, this book offers an opportunity for connection, as well as comfort, encouragement, and a renewed perspective for families, caregivers and anyone seeking light in the midst of uncertainty. Through poetry, prose, and scripture rooted in wisdom, *The Colors Within* reminds readers that even in the hardest seasons, there are still moments of beauty and color. *The Colors Within* improves quality of life by helping individuals living with dementia feel seen, valued, and emotionally connected. It supports caregivers by reducing feelings of helplessness, and providing a simple, meaningful way to engage with their loved one. The book is available through Amazon.

Contact: merkeldm@aol.com / 715-551-4604

Cultivating Health

Providing exceptional care or education that supports the long-term physical health of persons living with dementia

ORGANIZATIONS

Northeast Tri County Health District

Organization: NE-Tri County Health District – *Colville, WA*

Program: Healthy Aging & Brain Health: Risk Prevention Education & Engagement

Healthy Aging & Brain Health: Risk Prevention Education & Engagement provides free, community-based opportunities for older adults in Ferry, Stevens, and Pend Oreille counties, including rural and tribal communities, to learn, connect, and adopt healthy lifestyle practices. Key activities include evidence-based education on brain health and dementia risk reduction, fall prevention classes, physical activity promotion, and social engagement opportunities that reduce isolation. Outcomes include increased knowledge of modifiable dementia risk factors, improved physical activity and balance, reduced fall risk, and strengthened social connectedness.

The program prioritizes underserved populations, including rural residents and Tribal communities, partnering with the Confederated Tribes of the Colville Reservation, Spokane Tribe, and Kalispel Tribe to deliver culturally relevant services. In 2025–2026, activities included exercise, arts, brain health, and book distribution (39 Ferry, 65 Stevens, 182 Pend Oreille), reducing access barriers and supporting populations at higher risk for Alzheimer's. This model is replicable through workforce development and training. As a Healthy Brain Initiative Road Map Strategist and certified facilitator (SAIL, Matter of Balance), we will apply evidence-based practices and mentor other health districts

www.netchd.org
Contact: Molly Corvino, Community Health Director
mcorvino@netchd.org / 509-684-2262

Organization: **Café Y Recuerdos** – *Allentown, PA*

Cafe Y Recuerdos centers on intergenerational storytelling and oral history preservation, where seniors participate in guided "platicas" (conversations) to share their life experiences and traditions. These sessions are often grounded in sensory and cognitive engagement, utilizing the aroma of traditional coffee and familiar music to stimulate memory and foster a sense of "belonging." Beyond socialization, the program incorporates cultural arts or traditional craft-making, alongside resource navigation workshops. These workshops invite guest speakers to provide vital information on healthcare and social services in a linguistically accessible, Spanish-first environment, effectively bridging the gap between the Hispanic senior population and local community resources. The intended outcomes of these activities focus on measurable improvements in the quality of life for aging Latino populations.

The innovation will significantly improve the quality of life for persons with dementia by replacing clinical environments with "therapeutic hospitality" utilizing reminiscence therapy through cultural anchors - such as traditional music, the aroma of coffee and Spanish-language engagement. For caregivers, the program provides a critical respite and peer-support network. The program is positioned to scale to hundreds of participants annually through partnerships with community health organizations. The model is designed to be mobile and replicable, allowing to move beyond a single physical location to meet seniors where they already gather. The program is specifically engineered to serve underserved communities, low income, and those living with dementia. These populations often face a "double burden" and are at a higher statistical risk for Alzheimer's and related dementias, coupled with a lack of linguistically appropriate diagnostic and support services.

cafeyrecuerdos.com
Contact: Dalila Saez, Founder
https://cafeyrecuerdos.com// 610-704-4808

Organization: **Via Cognitive Health** – *Augusta, GA*

Program: **Life-Enhancing Neurocognitive School Program**

The Life-Enhancing Neurocognitive School (LENS) Program at Via Cognitive Health reimagines dementia care through a school-inspired model for individuals living with Alzheimer's disease and related dementias. Developed through more than four decades of experience serving older adults, LENS evolved from traditional adult day services into a neurocognitive school model that recognizes people living with dementia as learners, contributors, and active participants in their communities. Members engage in educational experiences, cognitive enrichment, exercise, creative arts, and purposeful daily activities. LENS incorporates brain health practices including movement, lifelong learning, and nutrition guided by principles of the MIND diet. Outcomes include increased engagement, stronger social connections, improved wellbeing, and support for continued independence.

LENS currently serves 55 enrolled members from the Central Savannah River Area of Georgia and South Carolina. Members attend between two and five days each week based on individual needs and family schedules. Since relocating to Via's expanded Cognitive Campus in 2024, enrollment has steadily increased, demonstrating growing demand for specialized dementia support. The campus has capacity to serve up to 100 members as the program continues to grow. Families report greater confidence knowing their loved ones are spending their days in a structured environment designed specifically for cognitive change. The program serves rural communities and households facing financial barriers, helping expand access to specialized dementia services across the region. Members describe LENS as a place where they are accepted, understood, and surrounded by peers facing similar challenges.

www.viacognitivehealth.org
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Sharon Lukert

Individual: **Sharon Lukert** – *LaCrosse, WI*

Program: **Until My Memory Fails Me: Mindfulness Practices for Cultivating Resilience and Self-Compassion in the Face of Cognitive Decline**

I was diagnosed with Mild Cognitive Impairment (MCI) in 2021. Through participating in research and the new blood test, it is now confirmed that my MCI is due to Alzheimer's Disease. I was inspired to write my book, Until My Memory Fails Me: Mindfulness Practices for Cultivating Resilience and Self-Compassion in the Face of Cognitive Decline, when I could not find a first-person narrative about MCI and the early stages of dementia. I was also interested in exploring how a person living with early disease could increase the potential for a positive quality of life by focusing on emotional and spiritual resilience. On-the-spot meditations have been a great resource for me and are easily accessible for others, so I wanted to share this gift with those facing this disease process with me. With a background as a nurse, home health aide, interfaith chaplain and a Buddhist meditation instructor I bring a unique perspective and experiences in writing this book.

The book is intended to be an affirming guide to enhance a positive approach toward the emotional and spiritual aspects of facing a neurodegenerative disease. It includes stories of those I worked with professionally and personally with dementia. I call them my dementia ancestors. Each chapter covers a topic pertinent to the process of coping with cognitive impairment including: diagnosis, stigma and bias, grief, and future planning. Each chapter includes a simple, yet effective on-the-spot meditation which can be incorporated into one's daily life to support resilience, coping skills, self-compassion, and humor.

SharonLukert.com
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Supporting Care Partners

Providing education, training or support for care partners of persons living with dementia

ORGANIZATIONS

FOR THEIR THOUGHTS® FOUNDATION

Organization: For Their Thoughts Foundation (FTTF) – *Boise, ID*

Program: Dementia Worlds

Dementia Worlds is an immersive dementia education and public awareness initiative created by FTTF to transform how communities understand and support people living with dementia. Since 2022, FTTF has delivered experiential workshops that help participants better understand the sensory, emotional, and cognitive challenges dementia can create. Building on the strong emotional and educational impact of these trainings, FTTF expanded the concept into the first interactive pop-up exhibition housed within the theatrical production UnRavelled, a play focused on Frontotemporal Dementia (FTD). Launched in 2025 through theater and conference partnerships, Dementia Worlds brings dementia education into cultural and community spaces through sensory simulations, caregiver storytelling, brain health education, care navigation, and interactive exhibits that reduce stigma and inspire action.

Dementia Worlds has improved quality of life for caregivers and families by reducing isolation, increasing empathy, and helping people feel more prepared, supported, and connected before crisis occurs. Through immersive workshops and interactive exhibits, participants gain practical tools, confidence navigating dementia conversations, and a deeper understanding of cognitive decline and caregiving challenges. Since launch, the program has reached more than 2,800 participants nationwide through conferences, healthcare trainings, schools, caregiver events, theatrical partnerships, first responder education, and public activations. Early impact data showed 94% of workshop participants and 84% of exhibit attendees reported increased empathy and understanding after participation. The initiative intentionally reaches audiences traditional dementia education often misses, including students, frontline workers, rural communities, underserved populations, and the broader public.

www.fortheirthoughts.org
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Organization: Leeza's Care Connection – *Columbia, SC*

For more than 20 years, Leeza's Care Connection has provided free support for individuals living with dementia and the care partners walking alongside them. Over time, we saw that caregivers needed more than information and resources. They needed restoration, connection, and places where they could feel human again before losing themselves completely in the weight of caregiving. Through our Restore, Equip, Connect approach, we provide respite, wellness programs, support groups, education, consultations, and community gatherings across South Carolina, California, Texas, and virtual support reaching caregivers nationwide.

In 2025, Leeza's Care Connection provided more than 9,000 touch points for dementia care partners and families through respite, education, wellness programming, consultations, and community connection. Programs are offered free of charge across South Carolina, California, Texas, and virtually nationwide, expanding access for families who may otherwise go without support. Our programs intentionally serve underserved communities, including low-income families, rural caregivers, communities of color, and families navigating advanced stages of dementia. 94% of participants reported feeling less alone, 91% felt less stressed, and 92% reported increased confidence in making care decisions after participating in our programs. The Restore, Equip, Connect approach is intentionally relationship-based and adaptable, allowing programs to grow within different communities and care settings. Through HUGS (Helping U Grow Strong) training, individuals can become part of Leeza's Care Crew and bring compassionate caregiver support into their own communities through volunteer engagement, connection, and practical support.

www.leezascareconnection.org
Contact: Mel Price, Chief Operating Officer
mel@leezascareconnection.org / 803-888-7525

Down Syndrome Connection of the Bay Area
Empower - Inspire - Support

Organization: Down Syndrome Connection of the Bay Area (DSCBA) – *Danville, CA*

Program: Aging Support Program

DSCBA hosts a monthly Parents & Caregivers of People with Symptoms of Dementia Connection Group as part of our Aging Support Program. Caregivers of people with both Down syndrome and dementia have a unique set of challenges and concerns. Our Director of Aging Support hosts a monthly Connection Group meeting, which provides no-cost connection, community, conversations about available resources, referrals, and most of all, camaraderie for caregivers. Participants often schedule follow-up phone or in-person consultations. The Aging Support Program, including the Connection Group, has been operating since 2019.

It's estimated that 75% of adults with Down syndrome will develop dementia by age 60, many of them beginning as early as age 40. This is a new problem, as people with Down syndrome tended not to survive into old age until recently. Family and caregivers need specialized support in caring for their loved ones with Down syndrome and dementia. Their medical and mental health providers often don't have expertise in working with people with Down syndrome, and therefore often don't have appropriate advice. Burnout is a very real concern. Caregivers commonly have questions and need help navigating their loved one's changing mental health landscape, placement needs, behavior issues, where to find services, and what to expect. Since we started this connection group, it has been consistently well attended, and attendees regularly express how grateful they are to have somewhere to get help with their unique situation. To feel less alone is priceless.

www.dscba.org
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Organization: Daughterhood Inc. –
Washington D.C.

Daughterhood, which marked its 10-year anniversary in 2025, operates four free, integrated content pillars, with deep focus on dementia caregiving — the experience of the majority of our community. Circles: 22 peer-led virtual Circles monthly, including dedicated dementia Circles and an After Caregiving Circle for those grieving a loss that include 10-25 registrants each. The Podcast: a top 10 caregiver podcast globally (top 3%), with 80+ episodes and 5,000 downloads/month, 200,000+ lifetime. Top episodes: The Problem with Alzheimer's; Challenging Behaviors in Dementia; How to Live Fully in Dementia Caregiving; Boundaries in Caregiving; The Grieving Brain. The Blog: 50+ practical articles on dementia behaviors, Medicare/Medicaid, caregiver burnout, and more. Weekly Newsletter: a steady reminder of upcoming Circles, new blogs, Circle leaders, and our latest podcast drop.

Daughterhood has built a national community of 10,000+ family caregivers and growing — the majority are caring for a loved one with dementia.

60% of our community cares for someone with dementia;

98% are women, primarily caring for aging parents;

78% provide social and emotional support to their care partner;

77% help navigate the healthcare system;

39% of our community reports being unemployed;

28% of our community reports an income under $60,000 and 14% under $30,000.

We run Circles specific to underserved communities to relate on shared experiences – for example, our Caregivers of Color Circle runs every month.

https://daughterhood.org
Contact: Rebecca Dittrich, Managing Director
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Organization: Piedmont Foundation –
Atlanta, GA

Program: Sixty Plus Dementia Caregiver Support Program

Sixty Plus Services provides comprehensive support to care partners of adults and family consultations, patient assessments, counseling, monthly support groups, and navigation of medical, legal, and financial resources. Clinical social workers collaborate with healthcare providers and families to develop individualized, multidisciplinary care plans tailored to each patient and caregiver. To ensure high-quality, consistent care, the team participates in ongoing dementia training, including Alzheimer's Disease and Dementia Care through Trinity Dementia Training. This equips staff with advanced skills in effective communication, behavioral approaches, person-centered care, and caregiver support. For nearly 40 years, the program has strengthened Piedmont's commitment to senior health and caregiver wellbeing. All services are provided at no cost, removing financial barriers and ensuring access for all families.

The Sixty Plus Dementia Caregiver Support Program improves quality of life for care partners by reducing stress, building confidence, and increasing access to coordinated care and resources. While services focus on caregivers, benefits extend directly to individuals living with dementia through improved care and greater stability at home. Each year, Sixty Plus serves hundreds of caregivers and older adults through workshops, consultations, and support groups, with growing reach through training and community education. Services prioritize underserved populations, including low-income families, people of color, rural communities, and those supporting individuals in later stages of dementia. In 2025, the program reached more than 5,000 patients across Georgia, a 12% increase from the prior year, and engaged nearly 1,000 community members through support groups, AARP chapters, and caregiver-focused events.

piedmont.org/foundation
Contact: Robin Harpak, Development Officer, Corporate and Foundations
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Organization: Providence St. Jude Medical Center – *Fullerton, CA*

Program: Caregiver Resource Center Orange County

Caregiver Resource Center Orange County (CRC OC), a community services program of St. Jude Medical Center, has supported Orange County family caregivers for nearly 40 years. CRC OC serves caregivers of adults 18+ with adult-onset cognitive impairment and adults 60+ who need help with daily care. Services are multilingual and free, with no insurance or income requirements. Key activities include support groups, caregiver education and training, counseling, case management, legal and estate planning, long-term care planning, and respite assistance such as in-home care, day programs, short-term overnight care, cleaning services, assistive technology, medical equipment, and supplies.

CRC OC met a critical, previously under-addressed need: mental health support for caregivers, especially those caring for people with Alzheimer's disease/related dementias. These caregivers often face stress, anxiety, depression, isolation, and burnout as care needs intensify. CRC OC addresses this need through counseling, respite, support groups, caregiver education, and evidence-based Powerful Tools for Caregivers (PTC) classes. PTC is a six-week, evidence-based class, focused on common caregiver issues such as effective communication, importance of self-care and health, family dynamics, and navigating care. CRC OC has specialized support groups: Sandwich Generation, Spouses Group, Men's Group, Art Group, TBI Group. Eight staff (two Master level trainers) are certified PTC leaders, expanding access to high-quality support. As a result, many caregivers felt more connected and valued after participation, while gaining coping skills, practical tools, and time to restore their own well-being. Our outcomes speak for themselves, in 2024–2025, CRC OC delivered 381 support groups, 270+ classes, 3,673 counseling hours, 12,755 case management hours, and 26,484 respite hours.

https://www.caregiveroc.org/
Contact: Karen Villota, Manager Community Services
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Organization: The Frankie Mae Foundation – *Huntersville, NC*

Our flagship program is our Monthly Meetup, a free wraparound support program designed to reduce stress and isolation for caregivers. Since launching in January 2022, the program has grown from serving an average of 10 caregivers to more than 90 per month. Key activities include monthly gatherings that provide lunch, wellness and educational workshops, games, peer support, and access to community resources. We also operate a free Caregiver Store that distributes incontinence supplies, household essentials, and durable medical equipment. To remove barriers to participation, we provide paid in-home respite care so caregivers can attend the Meetups. Through community partnerships, caregivers also gain access to services such as mental health support and grocery delivery assistance. All services are provided at no cost to the caregivers.

Outcomes include reduced caregiver stress and isolation, increased social connection, improved access to resources, and stronger caregiver well-being. We have created a dependable support system for family caregivers who often feel overwhelmed, exhausted, and alone while caring for loved ones living with dementia. Our approach strengthens both the caregiver and the person receiving care by helping families remain stable, connected, and supported. Caregivers gain access to peer connection, trusted resources, educational workshops, wellness activities, meals, respite assistance, and basic necessities that ease daily pressures and improve emotional well-being. Last year, we served 403 caregivers across Charlotte and surrounding communities. The majority of those served are from underserved populations, including African American caregivers and families caring for loved ones with advanced dementia. Many participants face barriers such as limited finances and a lack of access to affordable support services.

www.frankiemaefoundation.com
Contact: Venitra White-Dean, Founder & Executive Director
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Organization: **Hilarity for Charity HFC** – *Los Angeles, CA*

Program: **Caregiver Roadtrip**

HFC's Caregiver Roadtrip is an interactive digital guide designed for family care partners under age 50 supporting a loved one living with Alzheimer's disease or a related dementia. Built in HFC's accessible, relatable voice, it offers a comprehensive, step-by-step roadmap addressing both expected milestones and all of the important need-to-knows and "what you don't know to ask." Launched in 2024, the guide features eight sections covering topics including understanding dementia, navigating behaviors, building support networks, legal and financial planning, hospice and palliative care, grief, and more. Users can enter at any point and progress at their own pace. The guide is free and publicly available.

HFC's Caregiver Roadtrip improves quality of life by increasing preparedness, reducing uncertainty, and helping caregivers feel less isolated. It offers clear, practical guidance while normalizing the emotional realities of caregiving, supporting more confident decisions and better care for people living with dementia. To date, the guide has reached 20 thousand users, with 16 thousand views and seven thousand active users in 2025. Engagement is strongest in Section 2, "Must-Haves for Any Caregiver Journey." We expect continued growth through HFC's national reach, strategic partnerships, and its free, mobile-friendly, self-paced design. The guide serves a diverse audience, including rural caregivers, those with limited financial resources, and individuals without access to formal support. Its inclusive, relatable approach resonates across communities and caregiving stages, including late-stage dementia, expanding access to high-quality knowledge for underserved populations.

www.wearehfc.org
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Organization: **Jack's Caregiver Coalition** – *Minneapolis, MN*

Jack's offers no-cost support programs for adults caring for a loved one with Alzheimer's, dementia, or another serious illness. Since 2014, our two core programs have been a steady source of social support for caregivers. 1) Jack-to-Jack delivers one on one coaching via phone or virtual support from trained team members with lived caregiving experience, offering practical guidance, reassurance, and a sense of solidarity. 2) Caregiver Klatch (for active or remission-stage caregivers) and Sequel Maker Klatch (for those grieving) - provide monthly in-person and virtual support communities, facilitated by experienced leaders. Klatches create space to decompress, connect, and share wisdom across generations and cultures. They strengthen resilience and trust while reducing the stress and loneliness that so often intensify the experience of Alzheimer's and dementia care partners. Together, these programs offer a sense of belonging, confidence-building from peers, and a space for self-care.

Through Jack-to-Jack coaching and our Klatch Programs, care partners learn to validate, redirect, and engage rather than correct or confront. These skills reduce stress, ease daily interactions, and create more moments of calm and joy—improving quality of life for people living with Alzheimer's or dementia and their loved ones. Jack's partners with health-related nonprofits serving low-income communities, diverse populations, and dementia and Alzheimer's patients to ensure care partners can access our programs. Today, Jack's serves 300–400 caregivers annually, with the potential to reach thousands as we grow across the U.S. and Canada. Survey results show strong impact: programs earn a 4.77/5 satisfaction rating and are growing four times faster than last year; 97% of men report an 80% improvement in feeling equipped for caregiving; and 93% are likely to refer Jack's to another caregiver.

https://www.jackscaregiverco.org
Contact: Kyle Woody, Executive Director
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Organization: **The Memory Care Alliance** – *Santa Fe, NM*

The Memory Care Alliance was established in 2017. The strength of work lies not in any single program, but in the combined effect of our three key principals:

COMMUNITIES OF CARE - weekly care partner meetings based on our experience that the most valuable resource care partners have is each other. Supportive spaces to share experiences and sometimes say out loud the things don't feel able to say elsewhere.

EDUCATION EMPOWERS - Caregiver days, Prepare to Care courses, topical workshops and presentations, all provide caregivers the knowledge and practical skills they need to succeed.

SOCIALIZATION, NOT ISOLATION - Memory Cafes and our Out and About field trips keep both care partners and the ones they care for, socially engaged and active, together.

We improve quality of life through mental and emotional support, teaching care skills and self-care, and by creating community and bringing joy back into people's lives. To date we have served more than 600 unpaid care partners, in Santa Fe and increasingly across the State of New Mexico from Taos to Las Cruces, Gallup to Las Vegas. In response to care partners need we offer groups and courses in Spanish, on pueblos and to the Navajo Nation (we now have a designated Native American program director). We offer additional groups for men and women (all of whom come to the open groups, but benefit from single-sex spaces) and an LGBTQ+ group. As a predominantly rural state, and one of the poorest, we are continually working to reach marginalized and underserved groups, including offering groups and courses online.

https://www.thememorycarealliance.org/
Contact: David Davis, Executive Director
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Organization: **James M. Dixon Foundation for Alzheimer's Research and Support** – *Atlanta, GA*

Program: **Daddy's Closet**

Daddy's Closet is a dignity-centered material support initiative providing essential personal care, hygiene, nutritional, and household supplies free of charge to individuals living with dementia, seniors, and their caregivers. Key items include incontinence products, Ensure, Boost, Glucerna, toiletries, cleaning supplies, blankets, and more. Born during COVID-19 in 2020 after senior facilities urgently requested basic supplies, Daddy's Closet has grown to four active sites: Asbury Harris Epworth Towers, Reminiscent (Valdosta), Mount Vernon Baptist Church (Atlanta), and the St. Vincent and the Grenadines Alzheimer's Association — serving 500+ individuals and families. In 2026, Daddy's Closet expands to Gastonia, North Carolina and a veterans home for persons with cognitive decline in Milledgeville, Georgia. There is no cost to recipients.

Caregivers of persons living with dementia face an invisible crisis: while managing medications, appointments, safety, and emotional support, many struggle to afford essentials that keep loved ones clean, nourished, and comfortable — a burden rarely addressed through direct material support. Daddy's Closet was created to close that gap. When COVID-19 struck, isolated facilities urgently requested Lysol, snacks, water, fruit, and supplies families could no longer deliver — revealing how vulnerable these communities were. Few programs existed to reliably provide dignity-centered supplies to caregivers in need. Daddy's Closet fills that void — delivering essential items to senior communities, churches, organizations, and home-based caregivers at no cost. It reaches underserved populations across Georgia, in St. Vincent and the Grenadines, and soon North Carolina — meeting people where they are with practical help, compassion, and connection to dementia resources.

https://thejamesmdixonfoundationinc.com
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Organization: Lifespan of Greater Rochester, Inc. – *Rochester, NY*

In 2016, Lifespan and Alzheimer's Association Rochester Finger Lakes Region established the Finger Lakes Caregiver Institute to support people living with memory loss and their caregivers through care management, education, wellness, support groups, memory cafés, and respite. Our respite continuum integrates individualized and group-based supports to reduce caregiver burden and enhance engagement. Partners in Caring matches trained volunteers with families for in-home respite tailored to personal preferences, cultural needs, and flexible schedules. ROC Respite drop-ins provide structured, group-based respite with engaging, person-centered activities. Memory Cafés offer welcoming environments that foster connection and meaningful engagement.

This innovation directly addresses significant unmet needs for flexible, culturally responsive respite and meaningful engagement across diverse caregiver populations. Many caregivers face barriers to traditional services, including transportation, stigma, language access, and lack of culturally relevant options. Lifespan expanded beyond a single model to a continuum—including in-home volunteer respite, structured drop-in programs, and Memory Cafés—allowing families to choose supports that fit their needs. Enhancements in 2025 further strengthened this approach by introducing transportation, Deaf-accessible respite, integrating music therapy into both group and in-home settings, and using VR-based engagement to reach individuals who benefit from sensory and immersive experiences. Together, these innovations increased access, reduced isolation, and deepened engagement for both caregivers and care partners while filling critical gaps in inclusive, person-centered respite. Key outcomes include reduced caregiver stress, increased socialization and well-being, improved access for underserved communities, and stronger connections to ongoing supports.

https://www.lifespan-roch.org/
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Organization: Elder Voice Advocates (EVA) – *Shorewood, MN*

Program: ElderCare IQ

ElderCare IQ (ECIQ) is a publicly accessible data tool launched in Minnesota in 2022 and expanded to South Dakota in 2025. To date, more than 26,000 people have used this first-of-its-kind tool that centralizes state and federal health department data on abuse and neglect reports, facility surveys, fines, federal quality care indicators, investigation reports, and regulatory violations, with specific insights about dementia care outcomes. It features an interactive map that provides easy access to data and history for nursing homes, assisted living, memory care, home care, and other providers. ECIQ includes services and staffing levels, which are critical in selecting dementia care. The vulnerability of dementia residents makes this information essential to assuring quality care. EVA also offers a resource library, one-on-one support, and training.

Dementia increases the risk of abuse in Long Term Care communities, making transparency especially important. ECIQ drives systemic reform through transparency and public pressure. Last year, EVA partnered with AARP-D and Alzheimer's Association-SD to advance a home care licensure bill. Current activities include outreach to increase ECIQ usage and work to strengthen home care regulation. EVA has used ECIQ to support five Minnesota bills and produce "The State of MN Long-Term Care in 2025," with key findings on memory care facilities. EVA's Executive Director recently spoke about the systemic problems it revealed on the Alzheimer's Speaks podcast and testified in several legislative committees about the detrimental impacts of poor regulatory oversight. EVA is expanding ECIQ's impact by integrating additional memory care information and conducting research on the drivers of poor dementia care to support policy change.

www.eldervoicefamilyadvocates.org/
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Organization: Delia's Respite for Caregivers – *San Juan, Puerto Rico*

Program: Delia's Respite Program

Delia's Respite for Caregivers offers the Delia's Respite Program, a support and relief initiative designed for caregivers of people living with Alzheimer's and other dementias in Puerto Rico. Its key activities include educational workshops, emotional support sessions, community resource navigation, and respite-oriented wellness activities that help reduce caregiver stress and improve quality of life. Outcomes typically include increased caregiver knowledge, reduced burden, and improved emotional well-being. The program has been in operation for several years, growing steadily through community partnerships. Services are offered at no cost to caregivers, ensuring accessibility regardless of financial status.

Delia's Respite for Caregivers directly addresses a previously unmet need in Puerto Rico: structured, accessible support for caregivers of people living with Alzheimer's and related dementias. Before this program, caregivers often faced overwhelming emotional strain, limited training, and scarce respite options. The need was significant, given the island's aging population and the high prevalence of dementia. The program met this need by offering education, emotional support, and wellness-focused respite activities at no cost, creating a safe, culturally responsive space where caregivers could gain skills, reduce stress, and improve their well-being. Delia's Respite for Caregivers has significantly improved the quality of life of both caregivers and people living with dementia by reducing caregiver stress, increasing confidence through education, and creating supportive spaces that strengthen emotional well-being. By offering free, culturally responsive services, it fills critical gaps in access and equity for those most affected by caregiving burdens.

https://cuidadoralzheimer.org
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Organization: Old Friends Club – *Redmond, WA*

Founded in 2015 after the closure of the Sno-Valley Adult Day Health program in rural Carnation, WA, Old Friends Club (OFC) created an innovative, community-based dementia respite model to address the growing lack of affordable support for families impacted by dementia. Through OFC's scalable Affiliate model, local organizations are equipped to operate relationship-centered social day programs that foster dignity, belonging, friendship, purpose, and joy for people living with dementia while providing restorative respite for care partners. OFC now supports nine Affiliate sites across Washington, including rural and underserved communities. Programs combine meaningful social engagement, cognitive stimulation, movement, music, meals, and community connection in an inclusive environment where participants are empowered to thrive. Each site can provide up to 6,000 respite hours annually at a fraction of traditional care costs.

Dementia is one of the fastest-growing public health challenges in the U.S., yet affordable, community-based respite remains inaccessible for many families, particularly in rural and underserved communities. In Washington State alone, 125,000 people live with dementia, supported by 247,000 unpaid caregivers providing nearly 390 million hours of care annually. Traditional models are often costly, clinical, or unavailable. Old Friends Club addressed this gap by creating an innovative Affiliate Network that equips local organizations to launch sustainable, relationship-centered dementia respite programs in their own communities. Through OFC's Toolkit©, training, seed funding, and ongoing coaching, Affiliates provide affordable social respite that fosters joy, dignity, belonging, and meaningful connection while reducing caregiver isolation and burnout. Rather than institutionalizing care, OFC strengthens communities to become dementia-capable from within.

www.oldfriendsclub.org
Contact: Bob Delf, Executive Director
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Organization: Bluegrass Care Navigators (BCN) – *Lexington, KY*

Program: Dementia Care

BCN's Dementia Care is a home-based intervention that stabilizes caregivers and enables individuals living with dementia to remain safely at home. Launched in 2019 as a grant-funded pilot, it operated through 2023 and is now fully integrated into Bluegrass Care Navigators' daily operations, with expanded services through the GUIDE model beginning in 2025. Trained Transitions Coaches provide in-home visits, caregiver coaching, and ongoing support. Using standardized assessments, coaches identify risks and connect families to immediate services such as respite, personal care, and community resources, often at the moment caregivers need them most. The program has served more than 700 individuals, with a 76% enrollment rate.

Families caring for individuals with dementia in BCN's service area faced significant unmet need. In 2017, more than 87,000 Medicare beneficiaries in this region were living with Alzheimer's or related dementias, with an estimated 28–34% living alone, placing them at high risk of isolation, safety concerns, and institutionalization. For others, caregivers reported high stress and limited access to respite, in-home care, and navigation, especially in rural areas. As one caregiver described the anxiety of leaving her loved one, even briefly. BCN has served more than 700 individuals, directly addressing these gaps. Through BCN Dementia Care, caregivers received coaching, respite, and real-time connection to services. Post-enrollment, caregivers reported reduced burden and increased support. One caregiver described the program as "a breath of fresh air," enabling individuals to remain safely at home and avoid unnecessary placement.

www.bgcarenav.org
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Organization: Silver Care Dementia Center, Inc. – *Norfolk, VA*

Program: Lashley Village

Lashley Village was created to address a major gap in dementia care services within the Hampton Roads region: the lack of evening and nighttime respite care for caregivers of individuals living with dementia. Most adult day and respite programs operate only during traditional daytime hours, leaving working caregivers, overnight workers, and families with little to no support during evenings when stress, caregiver fatigue, and social isolation are often highest. Silver Care Dementia Center addressed this unmet need by creating a structured, therapeutic evening respite program that offers safe supervision, engaging activities, meals, and dementia-centered care in a homelike setting. The program gives caregivers time to rest, work, attend appointments, or focus on self-care, knowing their loved one is safe and supported.

Lashley Village has improved the quality of life for both individuals living with dementia and their caregivers by reducing caregiver stress, decreasing social isolation, and providing meaningful therapeutic engagement in a safe and supportive environment. Participants benefit from social interaction, cognitive stimulation, music, art, mobility activities, meals, and structured routines that support emotional well-being and dignity. Caregivers report increased peace of mind, emotional relief, and improved ability to maintain employment, rest, and personal wellness.

Silver Care Dementia Center currently serves families throughout the Hampton Roads region and has the capacity to expand services to many more households as funding and partnerships grow. Lashley Village intentionally serves underserved communities, including low-income families, African American communities, veterans, and caregivers with limited access to affordable respite services.

www.scdcva.org
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Organization: Long Term Care Community Coalition (LTCCC) – *New York, NY*

Program: Dementia Care Advocacy Toolkit

Care partners of people living with dementia often lack accessible, practical guidance—especially outside institutional settings. Existing resources are frequently clinical, fragmented, or difficult to apply in real-world situations. Through years of working with families and family councils, LTCCC identified a critical gap: the need for clear, advocacy-oriented tools that translate best practices into everyday use. The Dementia Care in the Community Toolkit meets this need by providing user-friendly, actionable information grounded in lived experience. It expands beyond facility-based care to address the growing number of individuals supported at home or in community settings, offering guidance that is both practical and empowering. This represents an evolution of LTCCC's longstanding work into a scalable, community-focused model.

The toolkit improves quality of life by helping care partners better understand dementia, respond compassionately to behavioral changes, and advocate effectively for appropriate support and services. Since launch, the Dementia Care in the Community Toolkit webpage has received more than 3,000 visitors, demonstrating strong demand for accessible, practical dementia care guidance. To expand impact, LTCCC is conducting a series of train-the-trainer programs designed to reach diverse and underserved communities through trusted local networks, including human resource offices, faith-based organizations, legislative community offices, and community-based agencies. The toolkit is free and publicly available online, increasing accessibility for low-income families and others who may have limited access to dementia care resources. Its scalable, community-centered model has the potential to benefit thousands more individuals living with dementia and their care partners nationwide.

www.nursinghome411.org
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Organization: A.T. Still University of Health Sciences (ATSU) – *Mesa, AZ*

Program: CarePLaCe

Recognizing that many find themselves ill-prepared for the challenges of caregiving, CarePLaCe provides empowerment by transforming the caregiving experience into a clinical partnership through a personalized multi-step approach. The evaluation phase combines expert clinician assessment of the caregiving dyad with a quality of life and stress survey to identify specific pressures on the caregiver, while the care recipient completes a functional cognitive assessment. A home-safety evaluation identifies environmental limits, hazards or barriers and is used to create a roadmap for prolonged safety and aging in place. The clinician creates an individualized CarePlan, including targeted education and technical skills family members may lack, thus removing caregiver fear by providing a safety net for caregivers. The presence of CarePLaCe in local senior centers with Memory Cafés, provides access to important care in a setting the caregiver is familiar with while having support for their loved one.

CarePLaCe's primary innovation is shifting professional occupational therapy (OT) services from clinical settings to community-embedded Memory Cafés. A published pilot study confirmed significant improvements in caregiver quality of life across six of eight subscales, including ability to care and carer satisfaction. Qualitative data showed the program improved self-efficacy, validated care strategies, and reduced fear. By embedding this service in public senior centers, CarePLaCe offers access to underserved, low-income populations and those who may not know where to turn. The collaboration with the City of Phoenix served 52 dyads and provided professional expertise to 259 individuals. The program supports those caring for individuals with various chronic conditions and dementia, including late-stage cases where behavioral management and home safety are critical. This model removes financial and logistical barriers, providing a high-quality professional intervention to all carers.

https://www.atsu.edu/about-atsu
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Organization: LifeCare Memory Partners (LCMP) / Lower Cape Fear LifeCare – *Wilmington, NC*

Launched in 2019, LCMP serves PLWD and their care partners across southeastern North Carolina and northeastern South Carolina. We provide education, clinical assessment, respite, and engagement opportunities that help both caregivers and PLWD remain informed, connected, and supported throughout the dementia journey. Services are delivered through a team of nurses, social workers, and non-clinical care navigators who build trusted relationships with families over time. To reduce transportation barriers, we integrate in-home, virtual, and phone-based support into our model, including six fully virtual Savvy Caregiver® series and monthly virtual support groups that now reach caregivers as far away as Texas. We also offer expressive arts and Together Groups that create safe, judgment-free spaces where PLWD and caregivers can participate in shared experiences. All services are provided at no direct cost to families.

We have demonstrated impact on caregiver well-being, confidence, and quality of life through evidence-informed interventions designed to adapt alongside the progression of dementia. Currently, 67% of families are supporting a person living with moderate cognitive decline, while 17% support individuals with advanced decline. Early-stage families often begin through group-based respite and education, including Savvy Caregiver®, where caregivers participate in evidence-based education while PLWD engage in expressive arts programming. We also offer Together Groups that create supportive spaces where caregivers and PLWD participate in activities together, reducing stigma and social isolation. As needs change, families may transition to volunteer in-home respite and flexible respite voucher support. We use validated tools such as the Zarit Burden Interview and PROMIS-10 quality of life survey. LCMP maintains an active census of 589 PLWD and has served more than 2,500 families since 2019.

https://lifecarememorypartners.org/
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Organization: Rendever – *Boston, MA*

Program: Dementia & Empathy Training

Rendever Dementia & Empathy Training (DET) is an immersive virtual reality training designed to help caregivers, families, and healthcare professionals better understand the lived experience of dementia. Through guided first-person simulations, such as brushing teeth or managing medications, users encounter perceptual, sensory, and cognitive changes that can make everyday tasks overwhelming. The training also includes a symptom library and neuroscience-informed education to deepen understanding. Key outcomes include increased empathy, improved communication, reduced caregiver frustration, and more compassionate care approaches. Organizations use DET for staff onboarding, family education, dementia training, and community outreach. Launched in 2025, the program continues to expand across senior living, healthcare, hospice, and home care settings nationwide.

Rendever's Dementia & Empathy Training improves quality of life by changing the way care is delivered. When caregivers better understand the lived experience of dementia, communication becomes gentler, frustration decreases, and care becomes more patient, compassionate, and person-centered. The program has already reached hundreds of staff, family caregivers, and community members across senior living, healthcare, and home care, with the potential to scale to millions. DET also serves as a broader community resource, extending beyond staff to families and the public, helping expand access to dementia education where it is often hardest to find. Because the training is on-demand and technology-enabled, it can reach underserved communities, including rural providers with limited dementia education resources, lower-resourced organizations, diverse and low-income populations, and family caregivers often navigating dementia without formal support.

https://www.rendever.com/
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Organization: **Lions Club of Taos** – *Taos, NM*

Program: **Taos Elder Benevolent Services**

Taos Elder Benevolent Services (TEBS) is a program initiative which grew from the counseling program which began in 2020. The Respite Caregiver commenced March 2025 and has grown to a network of 17 adult and four student Respite Caregivers. TEBS consists of three parts. First, to provide counseling to enable elders and their families to evaluate options of care for their needs along with helping them to access governmental benefits, Second, the program recruits, trains and vets a Respite Caregiver Network of independent contractors that provides home care paid for by the families, Third, Lions Club members alert community (hospitals, clinics, hospices, physicians etc.) of the existence of the service and assist families in matching Respite Caregivers with elders' needs. 7586 hours of Respite Care has been delivered between March 2025 and March 2026.

Census data supports that the targeted people served are low income, of color, and live in underserved, rural communities. The elders needing dementia care are equal to or exceed national statistics. Support provided in the familiar surroundings at home by the Respite Caregivers versus institutions creates provided relief for care partners and comfort and quality of life for the elder. Currently, from 28 to 33 families receive from 1252 to 1676 hours of home care per month through TEBS. We expect this rate to increase at an average of 10% per month. The Lions CHATE program (Community Health And Technical Education) program financially supports the student health care career pathway (beginning in middle school through UNM-TAOS state certification) for a trained local workforce for facilities and TEBS delivery of care in the home.

Lionscluboftaos.org
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575-758-0404

Organization: **OU Health** – *Oklahoma City, OK*

Program: **Memory Care Clinic**

The OU Health Memory Care Clinic (MCC) provides comprehensive, coordinated dementia care management for persons with Alzheimer's disease and other dementias and their caregivers. Opened in 2023 and serving more than 1300 patients, MCC is the only CMS GUIDE clinic in Oklahoma. MCC is dedicated to serving all Oklahomans, including underserved rural communities, and addresses a critical regional gap in dementia services. MCC is part of OU Health, the state's flagship academic health system. Core activities include care coordination, medication management, caregiver education/counseling, and community respite referrals, including in-home respite and adult day services. Our respite care services improve quality of life for people with dementia by reducing behavioral symptoms, and delaying or avoiding admission into long-term care. As well, caregivers benefit by reducing stress and burnout, increasing time for self-care and employment.

One caregiver said MCC was transformative for her family. As her loved one became homebound, travel to in-person visits grew difficult. Through telehealth, they continued receiving expert memory care via video visits, which she described as "a blessing" that removed a major barrier and ensured continuity of care. Another family said MCC helped their mother access community resources she urgently needed, including respite care, describing our team as "thorough and compassionate." MCC has also improved caregiver self-efficacy: in a 2026 survey of 30 caregivers enrolled for more than 6 months, 97% agreed their loved one's dementia care was as good as it could be; 97% felt supported; 73% felt more confident handling dementia-related problems; and 93% knew where to turn for answers about dementia.

https://www.ouhealth.com/
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Organization: **Benjamin Rose** – *Cleveland, OH*

Program: **WeCare**

WeCare... Because You Do SM (WeCare) is a person-centered, evidence-based care navigation program that empowers care partners to manage caregiving demands, support their loved ones and prioritize their own wellbeing. Delivered by phone and email, WeCare connects care partners with a dedicated Community Care Navigator who helps identify solutions, answer difficult questions and connect families to needed services and resources. Support may include assistance with long-term care planning, financial and legal concerns, housing options, respite resources, family communication strategies, and care partner emotional wellness. WeCare is Benjamin Rose's implementation of our evidence-based BRI Care Consultation™ program, which was developed by our research institute in 1995 to support people living with dementia and their family and friend care partners. The program is available at no cost to eligible participants and reimbursable through Older Americans Act Titles III-D and III-E funding.

Benjamin Rose distributes client experience surveys to WeCare clients when they reach three months of service to gather feedback and identify areas for improvement. With an overall satisfaction score of 9.6, survey results exemplify how the WeCare program has improved the quality of life for care partners and persons with dementia:

- 100% reported feeling more confident in caring for their family member or friend
- 85% felt less alone
- 100% felt they knew more about services that could help them
- 92% felt better able to care for themselves
- 100% reported they better understood the different care options available to them
- 83% improved in their levels of caregiving stress

www.benrose.org
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Organization: **Services Now for Adult Persons (SNAP)** – *Queens Village, NY*

Program: **The Caregiver Program of SNAP**

The Caregiver Program of SNAP provides comprehensive, community-based support for individuals caring for older adults (60+) across Queens. Key activities include individual counseling, support groups, respite care, case assistance, educational programs, wellness workshops, and supplemental services to reduce financial strain. The program also offers community-based programming, including joint-enrichment opportunities and creative wellness experiences, to reduce isolation and strengthen caregiver–care recipient relationships.

The program has been in operation 23 years. Approximately $262,412 is funded through NYC Aging and private donations, allowing services to be provided at no cost to participants.

SNAP's Caregiver Program has meaningfully improved quality of life for both caregivers and the individuals they care for by reducing isolation, alleviating stress, and strengthening connection. Caregivers report feeling more confident, supported, and emotionally equipped, while also experiencing renewed moments of joy and engagement with their loved ones. The program serves a diverse population across Queens Community Districts 8–14, including low-income families, communities of color, and individuals at all stages of dementia, including late-stage. With multilingual staff and culturally responsive services, SNAP removes barriers to care and ensures support is accessible to all. Through continued outreach and partnerships, this program has reached hundreds of caregivers annually and continues to expand, ensuring that even the most underserved families are not navigating their caregiving journey alone.

https://snapqueens.org/programs/caregiver
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STOCKTON UNIVERSITY
STOCKTON CENTER ON SUCCESSFUL AGING

Organization: Stockton Center on Successful Aging (SCOSA) – *Galloway, NJ*

Program: Caregiver Support Group

SCOSA's Caregiver Support Group is hosted twice weekly in-person and online, and is run by two psychologists. We have an educational portion on various topics including Young Caregivers, Intimacy and Agency, Caregiving with Siblings, etc, and time for discussion and support. In addition, we've hosted three days in the art gallery with a private tour and docent, bereavement support groups, and encouragement and invitations to our programs. We welcome caregivers to intergenerational programs including Lives Well Lived Project and Funny Farm Book Club (with a trip to the farm). Many have formed friendships and support each other outside of the group. Participants often express thanks for support by caring individuals. Our group has been running for four years with funding from the Older Americans Act (which covers only participants whose care partner lives in Atlantic County, NJ and is older than 60). We invite all caregivers, with no geographical nor demographic constraints.

With feedback from our participants, the great majority have stated that they have learned new aspects of caregiving and dementia, feel comfortable sharing with others in the group, and enjoy the special programming we offer. The act of being in the group allows caregivers to share or listen, and helps them realize they are not alone in the journey. Some stay in the group after their loved one has passed, for more support and to support others. From September 2022 through April 2026, we've served 2,463 caregivers. Many caregivers have been with the group for a couple of years, and they care for partners with late-stage dementia.

www.stockton.edu/aging
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Dayna Steele

Organization: Blue Squirrel Productions LLC – *Houston, TX*

Program: The Woman in the Mirror

The Woman in the Mirror is an award-winning play based on rock radio Hall of Famer Dayna Steele's bestselling book, *Surviving Alzheimer's with Friends, Facebook, and a Really Big Glass of Wine*. This raw, witty, and uplifting play follows a mother and daughter through Alzheimer's caregiving. Blending sharp humor with heartfelt truth, it resonates for its honesty, laughter, insight, and connection for anyone who has cared for a loved one with Alzheimer's disease.

No one was talking about it when I started being SO public on Facebook. And, most caregivers still don't know where to start and feel so alone. My play truly is a love letter to caregivers because I have been there. It's okay to laugh and cry and say f#@k - a lot. There really is no right or wrong way to do this. You just do the best you can. Caregivers need this. I spend at least an hour after every show, not signing autographs, but basically running a mini therapy session. Everyone wants to tell me their story and to tell me they felt so alone until they saw the show. It makes caregivers realize they are doing the best they can and they are not alone. It relieves a bit of the guilt we all feel when it's all over. And, it makes so many realize they need to be prepared. And clean out their damn closets. :-)

Audience comments:

"Didn't know what to expect and was thoroughly entertained, enlightened and informed."

"The play is filled with honesty and laughter."

"This production is a gift to anyone who had, has, or will have a loved one with this disease. I urge you to see it!"

www.thewomaninthemirrorplay.com
Contact: Dayna Steele, Managing Director/Playwright/ Author/Star
info@daynasteele.com / 832-331-6075



Individual: **Susan Ryan** – *Naples, FL*

Program: **Dementia Caregiving Roadmap**

My first dementia family caregiving journey was in my mid-twenties. Since then, I've cared for multiple loved ones including my grandmother, father, and husband. In the beginning, it was brutal. I was working full-time with little practical guidance for dementia family caregivers. No clear starting point, no sense of what mattered first, no roadmap for what came next. I felt lost, overwhelmed, and frightened. In August 2024, Nancy Treaster and I co-founded The Caregiver's Journey, a nonprofit that empowers dementia family caregivers with knowledge and practical resources to navigate dementia caregiving challenges. The heart of our resources is the Navigating Dementia Caregiving Roadmap: 20-steps sequenced across three caregiving stages (In the Beginning, The Messy Middle, and Later On).

When families leave a neurologist's office after a dementia diagnosis, patients receive a care plan. Caregivers receive almost nothing. The Roadmap is built to change this: A guide for caregivers on what to do and when. It points them to the right resources for help along the way, in a simple way, replacing paralysis with a clear path forward, pointing caregivers toward the right resources at the right time. When caregivers have a clear roadmap, everyone benefits. They experience more confidence and less overwhelm. Their loved ones experience more dignity and less frustration. Equipping one caregiver well, changes two lives. The Roadmap is already reaching caregivers through physicians' offices and community support groups, getting into their hands at the moment of diagnosis, when guidance is most needed and least available. It covers the entire dementia caregiving journey, including late-stage challenges, so no one is left without a path forward.

https://thecaregiversjourney.org/
Contact: sue@thecaregiversjourney.org / 239-537-5828



Individual: **Elizabeth Miller** *– Marietta, GA*

Program: **Happy Healthy Caregiver (HHC)**

Caregiving found me in 2014 when my father died unexpectedly, and overnight, I became a sandwich-generation caregiver for my mother and my brother Tom, who has autism and developmental disabilities. My connection to dementia runs deep. My mother experienced dementia-like episodes from chronic UTIs in her final years. I also supported my cousin — an only child — remotely as she cared for my Aunt Kris, who had frontotemporal dementia and Progressive Supranuclear Palsy. I was present when my aunt took her last breath. It was unlike any loss I'd experienced. That pain became purpose.

In 2015, I founded Happy Healthy Caregiver to give caregivers the community, tools, and self-care strategies I desperately needed but couldn't find. A caregiver education and community ecosystem. HHC is rooted in the belief that family caregivers deserve to live happy and healthy lives while caring for others. Key activities include a top-rated podcast (200+ episodes), weekly newsletter reaching 3,100+ subscribers, professional speaking, one-on-one coaching, and a self-care journal. HHC sponsors dementia-focused initiatives including the documentary Wine, Women & Dementia and maintains a dedicated dementia caregiver resource page. Outcomes include reduced caregiver isolation, increased self-care adoption, and more sustainable caregiving. HHC has served hundreds of thousands of caregivers since 2015. The podcast generated 547 thousand downloads in 2025, with nearly 25% of episodes featuring dementia caregiver guests. The newsletter reaches 3,100+ subscribers and the website averages 14 thousand monthly visits. Because HHC resources are free and digitally accessible, they reach caregivers regardless of income or geography — including rural caregivers who lack local support.

https://happyhealthycaregiver.com/
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Treating by Design

Significantly improving the living spaces and/or mobility of persons living with dementia.

ORGANIZATIONS

MEMORY LANE TV

Organization: Memory Lane Foundation – *South Portland, ME*

Program: Memory Lane TV Public Access - Free for All

The Memory Lane Foundation's mission is to make evidence-based, multisensory therapeutic media universally accessible to every person living with dementia and their care partners, regardless of income or geography. Memory Lane TV is the first evidence-based multisensory streaming platform designed specifically for people living with dementia. It includes two 24/7 linear channels aligned with the rhythm of the day, 1,500+ therapeutic films across 14 collections, and a dedicated Care Partner Channel with 250+ films for family and professional caregivers. Through this initiative, the Foundation is nationally distributing 50,000 free annual subscriptions — valued at $7.99/month — to individuals living with dementia and their care partners, via partnerships with state-level Alzheimer's and aging advocacy organizations. The platform has been in development since 2010 and commercially active since 2022. Cost to end users: zero.

Participants include people in all stages of dementia, their family caregivers, and professional care staff. The program specifically prioritizes underserved populations: low-income families who cannot afford subscription services, rural communities with limited access to day programs or clinical support, communities of color who are disproportionately affected by Alzheimer's disease and historically underserved by dementia care resources, and individuals in late-stage dementia for whom passive, non-verbal therapeutic content remains one of the few meaningful engagement tools available. Cultural and linguistic diversity is embedded in the catalog, including Spanish-language, African American, Jewish, and Asian American content collections. The model is already being replicated: first in New York with Massachusetts, California, New Hampshire, and Washington D.C. in active development. Guidance for advocacy partners includes onboarding materials, caregiver orientation resources, and platform support. The Foundation's public data room and research white paper provide full transparency for funders and replication partners.

https://memorylanefoundation-ybvnt3d.gamma.site/forgetdementia
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Organization: **Prairie Elder Care** – *Overland Park, KS*

Program: **Prairie Elder Care Brain Lab and Training Center**

Prairie Elder Care (PEC) Brain Lab and Training Center is a first of its kind program that has been wildly successful with the enrolled high school seniors, our residents, and their families. The program is built on reciprocal intergenerational relationships and learning that promote lifelong brain health knowledge and healthy strategies for the students through the PEC Brain Health Curriculum. It provides certified nurse assistant certification in the state of KS by the end of the program, and fosters meaningful care and connections for our residents.

The impact of this program is significant. It helps address the need for well-trained healthcare workers who possess not only clinical knowledge, but empathy and the ability to meaningfully connect with their patients. At the same time, it educated students about practicing healthy brain habits that are enjoyable and sustainable throughout their lives. Equally important, the program restores connection and purpose for our residents living with dementia. They are able to participate in something meaningful and know they are contributing to an effort that will have a lasting impact on others. To date, the program has served more than 300 high school seniors. Each student has earned their CNA certification, and many have gone on to have careers in healthcare and working with people living with dementia.

www.prairieeldercare.com
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www.maudesawards.org