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## The Fortitude Factor: GSA 2024 Sets Records in Seattle

### Inside this Issue

02

#### From the CEO

Insight on GSA's Strategic Plan

GSA welcomed more than 4,500 registrants from November 13 to 16 for the recent Annual Scientific Meeting in Seattle, Washington – a new high record for attendance – with attendees from more than 40 countries.

This spring, the GSA saw a 23 percent increase in abstract submissions compared to 2023 – including

record levels set for both student and symposium submissions. Similarly, a record number of late-breaking paper and poster abstracts came in this year.

The [meeting program](#) will remain online until December 31. See pages 8 and 9 for more facts and photos from the four-day event.

Continued on page 08

04

#### Policy News

Post-election analysis

## Meaningful Lives as We Age: Board Approves Three-Year Strategic Plan

GSA has adopted a new strategic plan, to be implemented in 2025, that establishes the goals and actions identified to achieve desired outcomes for the Society, and to support of our vision of “meaningful lives as we age.”

The plan also continues to support GSA's mission to “foster excellence, innovation, and collaboration to advance aging research, education, practice, and policy.” It was developed by the 27-member GSA Strategic Planning Committee and was approved by the Board of Directors at its September 25 meeting.

There are five strategic goals: foster evidence-based research on aging; expand opportunities for member engagement and professional enrichment; advance understanding of aging with meaning and end ageism; uphold GSA's embedded commitment to diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility; and elevate interest in the field of aging and foster support for aging-related education. GSA will also adhere to the Society's values of integrity, interdisciplinarity, and agility.

Continued on page 06

10

#### New Awardees

Recognition from the Annual Scientific Meeting

### Join a GSA Interest Group

Did you know GSA has more than 60 interest groups covering a range of topics? Each has its own GSA Connect Community to share information and resources.

### Stay Connected



# From the CEO

## Now Is the Time to Remain Steadfast in Advancing Our Bold Agenda



By James Appleby, BSPHarm, MPH  
[jappleby@geron.org](mailto:jappleby@geron.org)

After the recent national elections in the U.S., many will be looking for stability on the national stage. As I interacted with members at the recent Annual Scientific Meeting in Seattle, many conveyed a sense of uncertainty about how aging-related programs and research funding will fare under a new presidential administration.

While many things are in flux, you can be certain that your work, and championing it, is more important than ever. GSA will continue to be the advocate you need, and with the implementation of our new strategic plan – as featured on page 1 of this issue – we plan to be bold in our pursuit of that goal.

The Society's new strategic plan reinforces GSA's commitment to advancing aging research, education, practice, and policy. Our five goals are listed on the infographic on page 6.

GSA's work will extend beyond the gerontology community, too. As part of our goal to advance the understanding of aging with meaning and to end ageism, the Society will foster the leadership role of the National Center to Reframe Aging, based at GSA. We aim to empower GSA members to be authoritative and respected voices on aging issues while applying the principles of reframing aging.

As other organizations pull back from diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility

(DEIA) efforts, GSA will remain steadfast in its unwavering commitment to these principles. It is our intention to support members in advancing their research programs, across the broad continuum of topics relevant to the complex process of aging.

And we will not back down from ensuring that the rich diversity of the GSA membership, staff, board, and leadership is maintained and strengthened, nor from challenging all manifestations of structural racism. Further, we aim to expand awareness of *aging* as a frequently overlooked and marginalized element of DEIA.

I thank the 27 GSA members who boldly engaged with the Strategic Planning Committee responsible for drafting the new plan which will be our guiding document for the next three years. In the first year of this cycle, we are emboldened by the theme of the 2025 Annual Scientific Meeting, "Innovative Horizons in Gerontology." This will be explored in next month's issue of *Gerontology News*, which will feature a message from incoming president Dr. Marilyn Gugliucci.

Until then, please have a restful holiday season before we boldly move into 2025. From all of us on the GSA staff, it's been a pleasure working on your behalf this year.

# MemberNews

## Honors/Appointments/Career Transitions

**Joe Verghese, MBBS, MD, MS**, has been named chair of the Department of Neurology at the Renaissance School of Medicine at Stony Brook University. Verghese previously served as

a professor of neurology and medicine and the inaugural chief of the Division of Cognitive & Motor Aging in the Department of Neurology at Albert Einstein College of Medicine.

### In Memoriam



**Victor Molinari, PhD, FGSA**, passed away on November 4. He was a professor emeritus in the School of Aging Studies at the University

of South Florida. Molinari was a major force in the successful effort to gain recognition for professional geropsychology as a professional specialty by the American Psychological Association. As a part of this

effort, he worked through the American Board of Professional Psychology, and became president of the American Board of Geropsychology, and president of the Professional Geropsychology Specialty Council.

### Member Referral Program

This month's \$25 Amazon gift certificate winner:

**Katherine "Katie" Kwong, PhD** (who referred new member **Monica Franzone, EdD**)

To learn how you can become eligible, visit: [www.geron.org/referral](http://www.geron.org/referral).

We welcome member submissions at [news@geron.org](mailto:news@geron.org)!



### Member Spotlight

GSA's website features monthly Q&A sessions with distinguished members. The current spotlight shines on: [Carmen Castañeda Sceppa, MD, PhD, FGSA](#)

### GSA Welcomes 2025 Policy Intern Applications

GSA is seeking three internship candidates to participate in an eight-week in-person summer experience in Washington, DC. Interns will be immersed in aging-related policy development and participate in this process at the national level.

**The application period is open until January 31. An informational webinar is scheduled for January 13.**

Learn more at [geron.org/policyinterns](http://geron.org/policyinterns)



2024 interns Samuel Van Vleet, Maizonne Fields, Jeein Jang inside the U.S. Capitol

## Recent Policy Actions



**Patricia M. "Trish" D'Antonio**  
BSP Pharm, MS, MBA, BCGP  
Vice President of Policy and Professional Affairs



**Thomas Jordan Miles III, BA**  
Director of Policy

Visit [www.geron.org/advocacy](http://www.geron.org/advocacy) to learn more about GSA's advocacy-related activities, including our weekly [Federal Policy Pulse](#) newsletter.

GSA responded to a [request for comment](#) from the Office of Disease Prevention and Health Promotion within the Department of Health and Human Services on its updated [Healthy People 2030 objectives](#). GSA expressed support for two immunization measures, including increasing the number of pregnant women who receive one dose of Tdap vaccine during pregnancy, and increasing the number of adults who receive recommended age-appropriate vaccines.

GSA virtually attended the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's [Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices](#) meeting, which voted to recommend decreasing the age from 65 to 50 for coverage of pneumococcal vaccinations. GSA advocated for this change [in a comment letter](#).

GSA's National Center to Reframe Aging issued a letter, co-signed by 398 organizations and individuals, [requesting the Merriam-Webster and Oxford English dictionaries](#) redefine ageism as "prejudice or discrimination against a particular age group, especially older people" rather than using the word "elderly."

[GSA's Public Policy and Advisory Panel](#) organized [a webinar](#) on artificial intelligence regarding its potential to revolutionize aging research and gerontological education. It featured Advisory Panel Chair Angie Perone, PhD, Walter Boot, PhD, FGSA, and Catherine Diaz-Asper, PhD, as panelists.

## Presidential Politics and the Fortitude Factor: Empowering Older Adults in Today's Political Landscape

**By Brian Lindberg, MMHS, FGSA**  
GSA Policy Advisor

The above headline was the title of the GSA Social Research, Policy, and Practice Presidential Symposium at the recent (and fantastic) Annual Scientific Meeting in Seattle last month. Below are my slightly modified remarks from that session.

During the Policy Series sessions this year, we heard from a pollster and many pundits and prognosticators. We heard what Capitol Hill staff and key Washington advocates think about aging and health care priorities and what they think may happen in the legislative and executive



branches the rest of this year and during the upcoming 119th Congress.

We heard lots of opinions, reactions, and predictions. However, what has been most important to me are your voices. I heard from many of you at the end of sessions, in the hallways, on street corners, at receptions, bars and restaurants, even the men's room. You want to know why and how and what we are going to do next. Despite the angst, it was comforting and therapeutic to be there in Seattle with all of you.

You have valid concerns that funding will dry up, programs may end, that your colleagues in the federal government will lose their jobs, that the National Institutes of Health and National Institute on Aging will be collapsed and dismantled. GSA staff and I have attempted to address these concerns with reassurances and by offering our long-term perspectives on working with both parties and independents in Congress and in federal agencies.

There are plenty of factors that led to the outcomes of the most recent national elections, but it was not about aging and health care. So, it's not our fault that we face the potential for a chaotic period where what we study, teach, and practice and have worked to improve may be under attack or may be neglected.

Yes, we need to deal with our disappointments, like losing this decade's version of renowned Washington advocates for aging Claude Pepper or John Heinz: the distinguished Senator Bob Casey from Pennsylvania, who has served as the chair of the Senate Special Committee on Aging. But then we must, for the sake of all we care about, muster the fortitude to move forward.

**Our values and the facts and evidence we gather and the policies we develop and the positions we take are not molded by political change one way or the other.**

Even as we have seen some members of Congress compromise their viewpoints for political expediency, we are different. We are motivated by our principles and our goals – not the next election.

We believe strongly in strengthening the social safety net – for better healthcare, income security, social connectiveness, housing, and services and supports for a just society. And for protections against abuse, neglect and exploitation, to name just a few of the areas where we work to improve the lives of older adults and their caregivers and fight ageism.

So, as we look to you for continued engagement in research, education, training, practice development, and advocacy, please look to GSA for continued representation on critically important coalitions and advisory panels, and in meetings with congressional offices and the executive branch.

Follow our work and what is going on in Washington, DC with GSA's new weekly [Federal Policy Pulse newsletter](#). Follow our monthly policy newsletter column and the [Public Policy & Aging Report](#). And watch for specific action alerts from GSA where you will have opportunities to weigh in on aging and health care policies.

Let us know when you come to Washington, DC, so we can be supportive of your visit to congressional offices or federal agencies and assist with your testimony before House or Senate committees. Please let us know if you see opportunities where we can use your work in policy discussions and advocacy.

Finally, with the fortitude developed over my 40 bipartisan years in the nation's capital, I encourage you to remember that we are familiar with changing political tides. There are plenty of Republicans and Democrats and independents to work with us. Our work is evidence-based and non-partisan. Justice for older adults and all generations remains dependent on our research, education, practice, policy, and advocacy work. So, together we move forward.

# Strategic Plan 2025

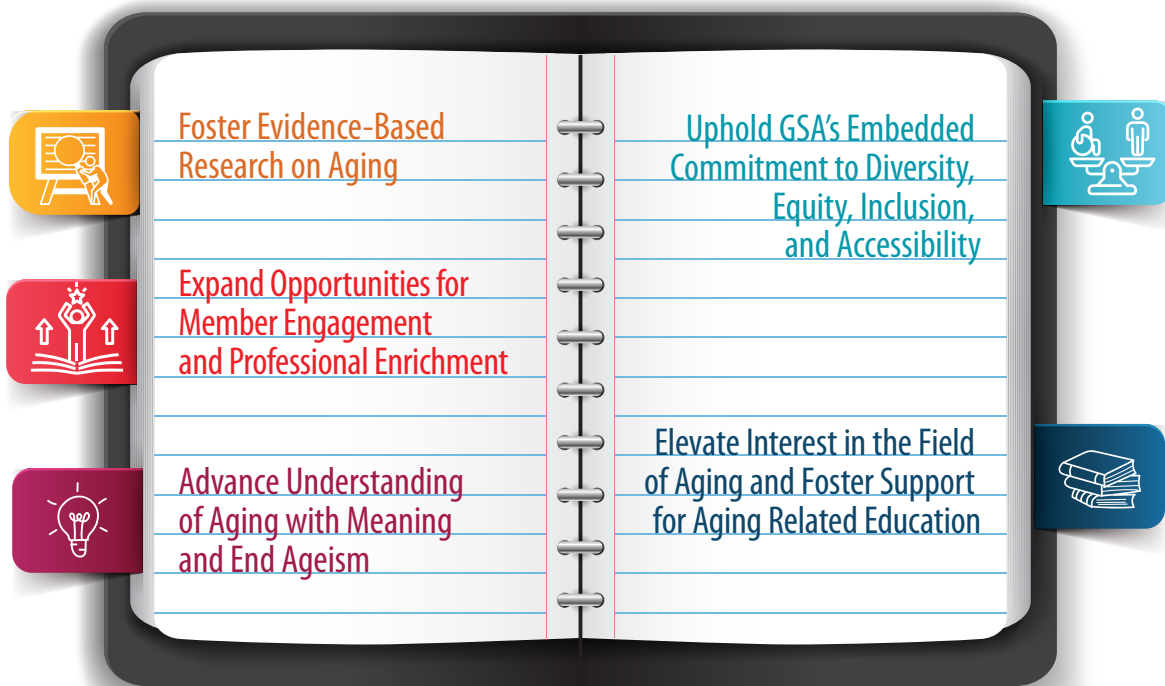
## Our Vision

Meaningful Lives As We Age

## Our Mission

Foster Excellence, Innovation, and Collaboration to Advance Aging Research, Education, Practice, and Policy

## Our Goals



## Our Values



### Integrity

We uphold the highest standards of integrity and ethical behavior in all our actions and interactions. We are committed to being transparent, honest, and accountable and we strive to earn the trust and respect of our members, communities of interest, and the wider public through our adherence to ethical principles.



### Interdisciplinarity

We embrace and promote disciplinary and interdisciplinary collaboration. We believe that diverse perspectives, expertise, and insights lead to innovation, creativity, and a more comprehensive understanding of complex issues. Through fostering collaboration across and within disciplines and sectors, we strive to create a supportive and inclusive environment where members can learn from one another, share knowledge, and collectively work toward common goals for the betterment of our profession and society as a whole.



### Agility

We are agile and embrace change, seizing opportunities for growth and innovation, and we are continuously improving to better serve our members, the field of gerontology, and all of us as we age.

## ESPO Adds 'Talks with a Trailblazer' Podcast Alongside New Webinar Programming



Claire Grant, MA

As this year comes to an end and we look forward to the next, it's time to reflect upon ESPO's achievements in 2024 and make plans for an even better 2025!

### ESPO 2024 Highlights

ESPO has been busy this year bringing strong programming and networking opportunities to members.

The [ESPO community on GSA Connect](#) is a wonderful way to stay up to date and connected with undergraduate, graduate, and transitional GSA members. In 2024, more than 3,300 ESPO members in the ESPO Connect community contributed to over 100 threads. Posts included announcements and discussions about ESPO programs such as our Pre-Proposal and Dissertation Writing Groups, monthly peer-led writing group (Write-In), webinars, abstract review program, and careers in aging events.

Since January, ESPO has held over 65 virtual and peer led Write-In Sessions. ESPO Dissertation and Pre-Proposal Writing Groups have also provided students with the opportunity to network and co-work with others at the same point in their writing processes. To further connect, our International Task Force has launched a peer mentorship program to further GSA's membership's reach across the world.

In April, the ESPO Webinar Task Force hosted a webinar "[Beyond the Resume: Crafting Your Path with Powerful Statements, Interview Mastery, and More](#)" and in October, "[Corporate Gerontology: Exploring Gerontologist's Impact in Business](#)."

These events focus on topics specifically relevant to ESPO members, including preparing for employment searching, finding mentors, and career development. The task force hosts two webinars each year, so be on the lookout for more programming in 2025.

ESPO also stayed connected and busy during the 2024 Annual Scientific Meeting. ESPO held their annual breakfast networking event. The Informal Chat Series, the ESPO Presidential Symposium "Building Fortitude for the Job Market," Butler Williams Symposium, and more opportunities for ESPO members to network and connect with old and new colleagues from around the world.

### Talks with Trailblazer and More in 2025

Make sure to stay connected with ESPO in 2025! Join the [ESPO community on GSA Connect](#) and follow the GSA social media accounts to not miss any ESPO news or programs. Look out for the new ESPO-led podcast, Talks with a Trailblazer, as well.

Volunteering with ESPO is a great way to stay engaged all year long. Opportunities range in commitment from one day to multiple years. There is an [open call for volunteers](#) now through the end of December. While most positions are posted during this call, be sure to check the GSA portal often as additional opportunities are posted year-round.

We're excited to keep connecting in 2025! Please contact us at [espo@geron.org](mailto:espo@geron.org) with any questions, suggestions, and more.

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National Institute on Aging Director Richard Hodes (right) delivered the keynote address, later engaging in a Q&A session led by GSA CEO James Appleby (left). GSA also screened tribute videos honoring [GSA's three highest awardees](#).



The program included 4,064 presentations across 1,391 individual symposium presentations, 653 papers, 2,007 posters, and 13 award lectures.

Past GSA presidents gathered for a reception. Back row (L to R): Laurence Rubenstein, Terry Fulmer, Judith Howe, James Nelson, Theresa Harvath, Peter Lichtenberg. Front row (L to R): Harvey Jay Cohen, Michèle J. Saunders, Toni Antonucci, David Ekerdt.







The Exhibit Hall, which welcomed 68 exhibitors, included an emphasis on wellness – including therapy animals, a pickleball court, and a vaccine clinic.



During the GSA Business Meeting, outgoing president Judith Howe (R) handed over the reins to Vice President Marilyn Gugliucci (L), who will take office as president on January 1.

## Looking Ahead to 2025

The call for abstracts and reviewers for the 2025 Annual Scientific Meeting – taking place from November 12 to 15 in Boston, Massachusetts – will open on February 1.

# 2024 Awardees

The following additional 2024 awardees were honored at various events associated with the GSA 2024 Annual Scientific Meeting in Seattle, Washington. The Society salutes the outstanding researchers below for their contributions to gerontology and thanks the selection panels for their time and efforts in choosing the recipients. Previous 2024 awardees were announced in the [July edition](#) of Gerontology News.

## Academy for Gerontology in Higher Education



### Graduate Student Paper Award

**Andrew Alberth, MS, MPH**  
*University of Massachusetts  
Boston*



### Mildred M. Seltzer Distinguished Service Honors

**David C. Burdick, PhD, FGSA, FAGHE**  
*Stockton University*



### Mildred M. Seltzer Distinguished Service Honors

**Judith L. Howe, PhD, MPA, FGSA, FAGHE**  
*Icahn School of Medicine at  
Mount Sinai*



### Mildred M. Seltzer Distinguished Service Honors

**Joann M. Montepare, PhD, FGSA, FAGHE**  
*Lasell University*



### Part Time/Adjunct Faculty Honor

**Julie Bates-Livesay, PhD**  
*University of Southern California*

### David A. Peterson Award

**Recipient:** Sanders, K. A., Busby-Whitehead, J., Coppola, S., Dews, D., Downey, C. L., Giuliani, C., & Roberts, E. (2023). An interprofessional experience preparing a collaborative workforce to care for older adults. *Gerontology & Geriatrics Education*, 44(3), 339-353.

**Honorable Mention:** Cheung, K., et al. (2023). Barriers and motivators to specializing in geriatrics and strategies for recruitment: scoping review. *Gerontology & Geriatrics Education*, 44(3), 396-412.

**Honorable Mention:** Matsumoto, H., Maeda, A., et al. (2023). Dementia education and training for the general public: a scoping review. *Gerontology & Geriatrics Education*, 44(2), 154-184.

**Honorable Mention:** Venables, H., et al. (2023). Factors associated with nursing students' attitudes toward older people: A scoping review. *Gerontology & geriatrics education*, 44(1), 131-150.



**James McKenney Student  
Travel Award**

**Runcie C.W. Chidebe, MSc**  
*Miami University, Ohio*



**James McKenney Student  
Travel Award**

**Charlotte Clapham, BA**  
*Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School  
of Public Health*



**James McKenney Student  
Travel Award**

**Cristina de Rosa, PhD, RN**  
*University of Pittsburgh*



**James McKenney Student  
Travel Award**

**Regina A. George, MS**  
*University of Alabama*



**James McKenney Student  
Travel Award**

**Abbey M. Hamlin, MA**  
*University of Texas at Austin*



**James McKenney Student  
Travel Award**

**Soeun Jang, MSW**  
*The University of Texas at Arlington*



**James McKenney Student  
Travel Award**

**Julie S Rekant, DPT, PhD**  
*Baltimore VA Medical Center*



**James McKenney Student  
Travel Award**

**Aziza Siddiqui, MPH**  
*University of Nebraska Omaha*



**James McKenney Student  
Travel Award**

**Tai-Te Su, PhD, PT**  
*University of Toronto*



**James McKenney Student Travel Award**

**Assaf Suberry, PhD**  
*Bar-Ilan University*

# Emerging Scholar and Professional Organization



## **Douglas Holmes Award**

**Boah Kim, MPH**

*Simon Fraser University*



## **Interdisciplinary Paper Award**

**Julia E. Tucker, MS**

*The University of Texas at Austin*



## **Minority Issues in Gerontology Committee Student Poster Award**

**Roshani Dahal, MPH**

*University of Minnesota School of Public Health*



## **Poster Award**

**Zeynep Abul**

*Northeastern University*



## **Poster Award**

**Natalia Babenko, MPH**

*University of South Florida*



## **Poster Award**

**Nhan D. Nguyen, MS**

*The University of Texas at San Antonio*



## **Poster Award**

**Oonjee Oh, MSN, RN**

*University of Pennsylvania*



## **Poster Award**

**Zeyu Liu, MS**

*Cornell University*

## Health Sciences Section



### Joseph T. Freeman Award

**Ali Ahmed, MD, FGSA**  
*Washington DC VA Medical  
Center*



### Person-In-Training Award

**Seeun Park, PhD, RN**  
*University of Washington,  
School of Medicine*



### Research Award

**Ashley Kuzmik, DrPH, MPH**  
*The Pennsylvania State  
University*

## Behavioral and Social Sciences Section



### Student Research Award, Pre-Dissertation

**Julia E. Tucker, MS**  
*The University of Texas at Austin*



### Student Research Award, Dissertation

**Rita Xiaochen Hu, PhD, MSW**  
*University of Chicago*



### Boaz Kahana Student Poster Award

**Zexi Zhou, MA**  
*The University of Texas at Austin*

## Social Research, Policy, and Practice Section



### Outstanding Student Poster Award

**Harsha Amaravadi, MPH**  
*University of Washington*

Visit GSA's website for more information on [the Society's awards program](#).

# JournalNews

## Calls for Papers

- [Dementia Policy and Practice in Public Policy & Aging Report](#)
- [Artificial Intelligence and Aging in The Gerontologist](#)

## Article Collections

- [Articles on caregiving across multiple GSA journals](#)
- [Articles on the GSA 2024 theme, "The Fortitude Factor," in Gerontology & Geriatrics Education](#)  
(Free to read through December 31)

## Call for Applications: Three Journal Editor-in-Chief Openings

The GSA Program, Publications, and Products Committee is conducting a search for positions of editor-in-chief for the following journals, effective January 1, 2026:

- [Medical Sciences section of The Journals of Gerontology Series A](#)
- [Social Sciences section of The Journals of Gerontology Series B](#)
- [Gerontology & Geriatrics Education](#)

## Gerontology & Geriatrics Education Welcomes New Managing Editor

At its annual Editorial Board meeting on October 18, *Gerontology & Geriatrics Education* named Darren Liu, DrPH, MS, FGSA, of West Virginia University as its new managing editor. The editorial board thanks outgoing Managing Editor Hallie Baker, PhD, LSW, of Muskingum University for her service.



## Online Anytime

The Society's online learning center for resources offers cutting-edge toolkits, engaging webinars, and thought-provoking podcasts. It's your passport to staying ahead in the ever-evolving field of aging studies.

**Log in to GSA Enrich today and make the most of these resources to enhance your knowledge and career growth!**

*Be sure to follow GSA Momentum Discussions and GSA on Aging on Podbean or wherever you get your podcasts.*

### New Webinar

- [Highlighting Emerging Professionals Who Build Bridges, Catalyze Research, and Empower All Ages](#)

### New Podcasts

- [Talks With a Trailblazer in Gerontology and Geriatrics: Dr. Jim Nelson](#)
- [Talks With a Trailblazer in Gerontology and Geriatrics: Dr. Tamara Baker](#)
- Considering the Interplay of Research and Policy (limited series)
  - [Using Research to Advance Policy: Part 1 of 3](#)
  - [Consideration of Policy Influences on Research: Part 2 of 3](#)
  - [Mentorship: Part 3 of 3](#)

## Gerontology Education in Rural and Under-served Areas: Moving to A Strengths Approach



**M. Aaron Guest, PhD,  
MPH, MSW**  
Arizona State University

According to the [U.S. Census Bureau](#), nearly one in five older adults live in rural communities. Many are concentrated in states where more than half of their older populations live in rural areas. While we know that older adults in rural regions often face significant barriers to accessing healthcare, social services, and other essential resources, these should not be the defining characteristics of these communities. As recent work by the [National Rural Health Association](#) has shown, we must recognize that rural aging is not forced on individuals. People are rural by choice.

Education programs are pivotal in preparing gerontologists to help support this shift while also working to address the needs that exist within these communities. Below are some examples of activities

### **Rural-Focused Curriculum Design**

Integrating rural-specific content into gerontology programs is one of the easiest things we can do. This aligns with our standards and competencies. The curriculum could include case studies highlighting the opportunities and challenges older adults face in these settings. Topics like telehealth, community-based solutions, innovative service delivery models, and respecting local values should be emphasized.

### **Experiential Learning Opportunities**

A core of gerontology education is real-world experience through practicum opportunities. Practicums in rural communities can provide students with a firsthand understanding of the

complexities of aging in these areas. Partnering with rural healthcare facilities and community organizations allows students to engage with older adults and professionals in these areas. Programs can develop virtual practicum opportunities and help them reach rural organizations.

### **Training in Telehealth**

Telehealth is increasingly recognized as a critical resource for providing care in remote areas. Gerontology programs should prepare students to use telehealth tools effectively and develop communication skills for virtual service delivery.

### **Supporting Rural Recruitment and Retention**

To address workforce shortages in rural areas, gerontology programs should focus on recruiting and retaining students from these regions. We must recognize that we cannot rely on urban-based programs to address rural workforce training needs. Gerontology programs should develop satellite locations or distant education opportunities for rural students.

Through our interdisciplinary approach to education, gerontology education programs can equip future professionals to drive meaningful change in rural communities. As educators, we have the opportunity—and responsibility—to ensure their graduates are ready to serve all communities. I encourage you to connect with GSA's [Rural Aging Interest Group](#). What other thoughts do you have? Continue the discussion on [GSA Connect](#).



Innovative Horizons in Gerontology

**SEE YOU IN BOSTON!**



## GerontologyNews

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