Aging in Vermont
Exploring Solutions for Social Isolation
2019 Conference

September 27, 2019
Killington
Grand Hotel Resort & Conference Center

Third Annual Conference

Welcoming Remarks
Future of Aging in Vermont
David Yacovone
State Representative

Keynote Address
National Perspectives on Social Isolation
Emily Allen
Senior Vice President
Programs for AARP Foundation
Tentative Agenda & Breakout Session Details

Times of sessions may vary; locations to be determined

8:00
Registration

8:45 **Oscar Wilde**
Opening
Janet Hunt, Executive Director of V4A

9:00 **Oscar Wilde**
Welcome ~ The Future of Aging in Vermont
David Yacovone, VT State Representative

9:20 **Oscar Wilde**
Keynote ~ National Perspectives on Social Isolation
Emily Allen, Senior Vice President AARP Foundation

10:00 Break
 Combined Session: Bridging the Gap & Tackling the Challenge of Social Isolation
Part 1 ~ Bridging the Gap, Chris Moldovan
Since many older New Americans and refugees and asylees are often socially isolated and unable to access technology without help from family members, this program designed with their specific needs in mind helps to bridge that gap and help them connect.

In partnership with T4T, Winooski Schools, City of Winooski, Age Well has developed an engaging technology experience to bridge the language barrier!

Age Well with the Winooski Senior Center and the Champlain Senior Center offer culturally appropriate meals tailored to the New American, Bhutanese Refugee/Asylee population and Tai Chi. Exciting, technological opportunity has begun!

Part 2~ Tackling the Challenge of Social Isolation, Becky Arbella, Amy Rogers
Social Isolation leads to a number of health issues. Thinking outside of the box can help. Many of the things we will discuss are free and can be duplicated anywhere. We will discuss some triggers/causes of isolation. We will work together to help each other find ways to get people out of their homes and interacting with others in a social setting.

 Combined Session: Follow the Theories Using Research to Find Community Solutions & Using Deliberative Dialogue to Address Social Isolation
Part 1 ~ Follow the Theories, Mary Lou Ciolfi & Patricia Oh
Social isolation and loneliness theories have a fascinating history in sociology, psychology, and epidemiology. This research describes the conditions that often cause loneliness and isolation - or result from them - and the different ways in which people experience feelings of social disconnection. Understanding this extensive
research and knowing the conceptual differences between isolation and loneliness will help health and social service agencies and community groups provide targeted social programs and activities that meet unique social needs. The presentation will review the definitions of social isolation, loneliness, and social support and explain the use of measures and scales that reveal the existence and extent of an individual’s social disconnectedness.

Part 2 ~ Using Deliberative Dialogue to Address Social Isolation, Rudolph Fedrizzi, MD
Finding solutions to social isolation and other determinants of health will require the ideas and involvement of community members, especially those with lived experience. Deliberative Dialogue is an approach for promoting respectful small group conversations and harnessing ideas and interest for possible actions. A customizable issue brief and facilitation guide on social isolation and loneliness were created and tested in dialogues in NH and could be replicated in VT.

- Combined Session: Respite Volunteer Programs & Social Connectedness for Individuals with Alzheimer’s and Related Dementias & their Caregivers
  Part 1 ~ Respite Volunteer Programs, Lead Presenter Erica Marks
  One of the greatest needs of family caregivers is reliable respite. We will share how we created and trained a squad of respite volunteers to give caregivers a break. We will share 3-session training that we created to equip respite volunteers with the information and skills needed to provide respite to family caregivers. Topics included are: Caregiver Support; Body Mechanics; Communication; Family; Grief & Boundaries.

  Part 2 ~ Statewide Social Engagement Initiatives, Lead Presenter Tiffany Smith
  Discussion will include opportunities that exist statewide to encourage social engagement for individuals with Alzheimer's disease and related dementias and their caregivers. We will share new
opportunities and programs being piloted and emerging in communities across the state.

Lunch and Exhibits

12:45 – 1:45 Breakout Session Options

- **Innovations for Inclusion: Local Governments Take Action to Support Older Vermon ters, Lead Presenter Angela Smith-Dieng**
  With Vermont’s changing demographics, we all have a role to play in building inclusive communities for people of all ages. What is the role for local government? We’ll hear from the Vermont League of Cities and Towns, AARP and the Department of Health around supporting towns and municipalities to think, plan and create thriving communities that engage older Vermon ters. Participants will leave with a deeper understanding of the role of local government and the opportunities to engage them in creative efforts.

- **Memory Café Fishbowl, Lead Presenter Barb Asen**
  Memory cafes are a powerful and delightful way to socially engage and support people with memory loss and dementias, and their care partners. Come hear folks exchange learnings from memory cafes around the state in a “fishbowl” conversation and join in with your own questions and ideas. The focus of our time will be on practical tools, steps and tips for starting, growing and sustaining a local memory café program. We will have resource information available on existing memory cafes, the regional Memory Café Percolator, and the Memory Café Toolkit for starting a memory café.

- **Suicide Among Older Vermon ters: Cultural Considerations and Prevention, Lead Presenter JoEllen Tarallo**
  Panelists will review cultural considerations, strategies and resources related to suicide in older adults drawn from research and experience, e.g., social isolation, protective factors, and strategies to identify risk and increase social connectedness.
The Village Model in Vermont, Lead Presenter Jeanne Hutchins
The Village model (a.k.a. Beacon Hill model) allows for older adults to stay connected and engaged with their community. We are launching the first Village in Vermont in April 2019. We would like to share our experience and inform other towns how they too can start a Village in their community.

1:45 Break

2:00 – 3:00 Breakout Session Options

Person Centered Thinking Skills Contribute to Success of Adult Family Care Placements, Lead Presenter Brenda Donley
In this informative and interactive workshop, participants will learn about the Adult Family Care living option that offers an alternative to nursing home placement for our older Vermonter. Brenda is a credentialed Person-Centered Thinking Trainer and will provide information about person centered thinking skills that contribute to a successful Adult Family Care Placement and give our older population positive choice and control about how and where they choose to live. Adult Family Care (AFC) homes offer an alternative to nursing care facilities.

Safety Connection: Combating Social Isolation One Night at a Time, Lead Presenter Kevin Hutt
Innovative solutions are needed to meet the needs of older individuals who wish to retain their independence by aging in place. Safety Connection: Combating Social Isolation One Night at a Time presents an overview of this unique person-centered overnight monitoring service which pairs easy to use technology with professionally trained operators and responders who know the story of each participant. For 15 years, Safety Connection has helped people of all ages feel safe and supported in their homes by providing easy to use tools needed to connect and engage with trusted, caring professionals.
• **The Story of Vermont’s Quiet Digital Revolution ~ Front Porch Forum, Lead Presenter Lynn Espey**
This documentary on Front Porch Forum shows the impact that connecting with our neighbors has on Vermonters as well as our communities. Available in every VT town, FPF helps to reduce social isolation. One of the segments also features an older Vermonter.

A short, independent documentary on Front Porch Forum (made by Canadian filmmakers) which follows the stories of FPF members from different walks of life. How does participation on their local forums transform them and their communities? Q&A to follow.

• **Workforce Development Projects-Reducing Isolation and Promoting Social Engagement in Older Adults, Lead Presenter Rick Bugbee**
The interactive presentation will incorporate activities to engage the audience while demonstrating the myriad of benefits experienced by older adults who are able to utilize employment, training, or volunteering opportunities.

Low income older adults are uniquely vulnerable to social isolation. This presentation will explore workforce development projects such as the Senior Community Service Employment Program and the Vermont Returnship Program; projects which have proven to reduce participants’ feelings of isolation and loneliness, while also restoring the financial independence, pride, and dignity that go along with performing meaningful work. Associates for Training and Development (A4TD) has operated projects of this kind since 1983 and has replicated best practices in the occupational skills training of older adults in 5 states across the northeast.