

SPEAKER BIOGRAPHIES

In Order of Appearance

Dr. Mary Ann Spanos, Director of the Chautauqua County Office for the Aging, was elected as USAging Board President in July 2021 and is honored to be the first President of USAging. She joined the USAging Board of Directors in 2010 as an Alternate and became the delegate for Region II in 2016. Dr. Spanos credits her involvement with USAging as critical to her professional development and the evolution of her agency over the last 14 years, saying, "USAging has given me the skills to manage my agency and modernize my programs to meet the emerging needs of older adults."

Dr. Spanos has spent her lifetime working with older adults. She was fortunate to grow up surrounded by family, especially grandparents, who encouraged and influenced her professional choices. She practiced physical therapy, specializing in geriatric rehabilitation, from 1986 until 2007, when she was appointed as Chautauqua County's AAA Director. Dr. Spanos sees the goals of physical therapy as aligned with those of AAAs, in that both focus on helping older adults and people with disabilities attain the highest level of autonomy and independence.

Dr. Spanos received a Bachelor of Science in Physical Therapy from the State University of New York at Buffalo in 1986 and received her doctorate from Boston University in 2005. She lives in Bemus Point, NY, with her husband, George, and is the proud mother of two sons and grandmother of one.

Sandy Markwood is a national advocate for aging issues and a champion for ensuring that older adults have the best supports to age well at home and in their communities. As the CEO of USAging since 2002, she is committed to ensuring that our society values and supports people across the lifespan. This commitment has taken many forms, including advocacy with multiple administrations and on Capitol Hill for the passage of legislation aimed at supporting older adults, including access to critical information, in-home services and caregiver support.

A passionate advocate, Sandy has led numerous USAging campaigns to support the needs of older adults as they age, including those focused on combating social isolation among older adults, encouraging healthy aging, supporting caregivers, promoting livable communities, and access to

transportation and housing options. Sandy has focused on the development of community planning practices that include the creation of dementia friendly communities and maximize the benefits of volunteering and engagement for people of all ages while preventing elder abuse and neglect. Sandy's goal and the goal of USAging is to ensure that older adults have the ability to age with maximum independence and quality of life. According to Sandy, aging isn't just about adding years to our lives, it's about adding life to those years.

Sandy has more than 30 years' experience in the development and delivery of aging, health, human services, housing and transportation programs in counties and cities across the nation. Prior to joining USAging, Sandy served as the Deputy Director of County Services at the National Association of Counties where she took a lead role in research, training, conference planning, program development, technical assistance and grants management.

Sandy holds bachelor's and master's degrees from the University of Virginia.

Amy Gotwals joined USAging in September 2005 and currently serves as Chief, Public Policy and External Affairs, a position created in 2014. Amy previously served as Director, Public Policy and Legislative Affairs. In her role, Amy leads USAging's public policy, advocacy, communications, external relations and membership relations activities. Representing local aging agencies, Amy serves as the lead in outreach to Congress and the Administration to ensure that needed resources and support services are available to older Americans and their caregivers.

Amy has 28 years of public policy, lobbying and grassroots organizing experience. She has represented diverse groups including the Older Women's League, the Center for Science in the Public Interest, the Alliance of Nonprofit Mailers and the National Network for Youth. Amy has a Bachelor of Arts in American Studies from Mount Holyoke College and earned a Master of Legislative Affairs from the George Washington University.

Monica Billger joined USAging as Director, Public Policy and Advocacy, in February 2021. In her role, Monica directs the association's legislative affairs and advocacy efforts to advance federal policies that address the needs of an aging America.

Prior to joining USAging, Monica worked for AlexRenew and oversaw local community engagement initiatives and supported regional outreach campaigns with the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments. She brings over 15 years of nonprofit experience advocating for health and

environmental policy at Audubon Naturalist Society, American Physical Therapy Association, Parkinson's Action Network and the National Kidney Foundation. Monica also possesses 10 years of clinical practice as a registered nurse.

Monica holds a bachelor's degree in Nursing from the University of Michigan and a Master of Public Policy from Georgetown University.

Ellen Nissenbaum is the Senior Vice President for Government Affairs for the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities. Since 1984, she has directed the Center's work with federal policymakers and other national organizations to promote equitable and responsible fiscal policies. These efforts encompass a broad range of policy issues, such as federal budget and tax issues, refundable tax credits for low-income working families, Medicaid and health care, and nutrition programs. Her work with policymakers of both parties and their staffs has contributed to major policy improvements that reduce poverty and inequality and promote fiscal responsibility.

Regarded as one of the leading government affairs directors among non-profit organizations in Washington, Ellen helps a broad array of both national and state organizations and coalitions strengthen their impact on federal policies by providing information on key policy developments in Congress and the Executive Branch, strategic guidance, and communications planning.

Ellen is frequently sought out for analysis and commentary by journalists at prominent news outlets covering legislative and budget developments.

Robert Espinoza is the Vice President of Policy at PHI, where he oversees its national advocacy, research, and public education division on the direct care workforce. He is a nationally recognized expert and frequent speaker on aging, long-term care, workforce, and equity issues. In 2020, he was selected for the first-ever CARE 100 list of the most innovative people working to re-imagine how we care in America today and as one of Next Avenue's 2020 Influencers in Aging. He also serves on the board of directors for the American Society on Aging, the National Academy of Social Insurance, and the FrameWorks Institute.

Dr. Stuart Butler is a senior fellow in Economic Studies at The Brookings Institution. Prior to joining Brookings, Butler spent 35 years at The Heritage Foundation as director of the Center for Policy Innovation and earlier as Vice President for Domestic and Economic Policy Studies. He is also a visiting fellow at the Convergence Center for Policy Resolution.

Butler is a member of the editorial board of Health Affairs and the board of Mary's Center, a group of Washington, DC-area community health centers. He also serves on several advisory councils, including for the Peterson Center on Healthcare, the National Coalition for Cancer Survivorship, and the March of Dimes.

He served as a member of the Advisory Group for the Culture of Health Program and as member of the Board on Health Care Services of the National Academy of Medicine. He also served on the panel of health advisers for the Congressional Budget Office. For over 10 years he was an adjunct professor at Georgetown University's McCourt School of Public Policy and in 2002 he was an Institute of Politics Fellow at Harvard University.

Butler has played a prominent role in the debate over health care equity and reform, focusing on social determinants of health and the use of market approaches and state innovation. He has also researched and written on a wide range of other issues, including budget process reform, the future of higher education, economic mobility, and federal entitlement reform.

Stuart Butler was born in Shrewsbury, England, and emigrated to the United States in 1975, becoming a U.S. citizen in 1995. He was educated at St. Andrews University in Scotland, where he received a Bachelor of Science degree in physics and mathematics in 1968, a Master of Arts degree in economics and history in 1971, and a Ph.D. in American economic history in 1978.

Butler has received payment for consulting from the Peterson Center on Healthcare and UnitedHealthcare.

Stacy Sanders is the Staff Director of the U.S. Senate Special Committee on Aging for Chairman Bob Casey (D-PA). As Staff Director, Sanders oversees the Committee's team and advances a broad-based policy agenda to enhance health and economic security for older Americans and people with disabilities.

Before joining the Committee as Deputy Staff Director, Sanders was the Federal Policy Director for the Medicare Rights Center, a non-profit organization dedicated to advancing access to affordable health care. In this role, Sanders led the organization's federal policy analysis, regulatory and legislative advocacy and coalition building efforts.

Prior to that, Sanders oversaw a national advocacy campaign to build economic security for older adults at Wider Opportunities for Women where

she participated in federal initiatives to protect Social Security and strengthen the Older Americans Act.

Susan Reinhard, RN, PhD, FAAN, SVP at AARP, directs its Public Policy Institute, the focal point for state, federal and international policy research. Susan oversees PPI teams working on health security, financial security, and family, home, and community issues, and from that vantage point serves as editor-in-chief of Policy Plus Action: The AARP Public Policy Institute Newsletter. She also serves as Chief Strategist for the Center to Champion Nursing in America. She is a nationally recognized expert in health and long-term care, with extensive experience in conducting, directing and translating research to promote policy change. Previously, she served as Co-Director of Rutgers Center for State Health Policy, directing national initiatives to help people with disabilities live at home. She served three governors as Deputy Commissioner of the NJ Department of Health and Senior Services. Her research and policy expertise includes health care workforce, caregiving, consumer choice, community care options, and quality. A former faculty member at Rutgers College of Nursing, she is an American Academy of Nursing fellow. She holds a master's degree from the University of Cincinnati and a PhD from Rutgers University.

Rita Choula As the Director of Caregiving with the AARP Public Policy Institute, Rita Choula leads and provides content expertise on family caregiving initiatives throughout AARP and externally. Bridging policy and research to practice, much of her work focuses on identifying and supporting the needs of racially, ethnically and culturally diverse family caregivers through a multi-disciplinary approach that elevates the unique nature of each caregiving experience. She currently leads a strategic initiative that seeks to address disparities and build equity in long-term care for Black, Latino and Asian American Pacific Islander older adults and their family caregivers.

In collaboration with clinical experts and key stakeholders, Rita develops programs and tools that enable health care professionals to better recognize and support family caregivers across settings. Through the Home Alone Alliance, she leads the development and production of easily-accessible "How-To" videos that provide family caregivers with the technical information and guidance necessary to perform complex medical/nursing tasks. Most recently, Rita also managed a grant-funded initiative focused on elevating the recognition and support of family caregivers providing complex care by health care providers, particularly those in hospitals and larger health systems, through the identification of promising practices within these settings.

Rita holds a master's degree in the Management of Aging Services from the University of Maryland Baltimore County. She is currently a member of the Board of Directors for the Association of Frontotemporal Dementia.

Mike Wittke joined the National Alliance for Caregiving in 2016. He serves as the Vice President for Research & Advocacy and is a senior member of NAC's Executive Leadership team. He supported the organization's growth during a leadership transition and has expanded capacity within NAC's Research and Advocacy departments—focusing on bridging gaps between data and policy to address challenges facing family caregivers of older adults, people with disabilities, and those with serious or chronic conditions across the lifespan.

Mike earned a bachelor's degree in Social Work, with honors, from the University of Utah and a master's degree in Public Administration, with a concentration in non-profit management, from American University. Mike has previously served as Chair of the National Association of Social Workers (NASW) Political Action for Candidate Election Committee and as a member of the NASW Metro Chapter Board of Directors. He is currently on the Board of Directors for the Friends of Theodore Roosevelt Island.

Anne Montgomery directs Altarum's portfolio of Complex Care, LTSS and Nursing Home Quality Improvement, overseeing research and analysis aimed at coordination and integration of medical care and supportive services for a fast-growing population of older adults. Montgomery has three decades of policy experience working on Medicare, Medicaid and related programs, including those within the jurisdiction of the Older Americans Act and HRSA. Prior to Altarum, Montgomery served as a Senior Advisor for the U.S. Senate Special Committee on Aging, where she designed and developed hearings and numerous bills enacted as part of the Affordable Care Act, focusing on: upgrading quality and tightening accountability in the nursing home sector; expanding options for states to offer home and community-based services in their Medicaid programs; improving geriatric competence across the workforce, including direct care workers; modernizing state background check systems for individuals working in long-term care settings; and improvement of Medicaid infrastructure. Montgomery has served as an analyst for the House Ways & Means Committee, the Government Accountability Office and the Alliance for Health Policy in Washington, DC. Montgomery also has international experience, serving as an Atlantic Fellow in Public Policy in 2001-2002 in London, where she conducted a comparative analysis of the role played by family caregivers in the development in public policy in the UK and the U.S.

Montgomery started her analytic career as a health and science journalist covering the National Institutes of Health and Congress. She is a member of the National Academy of Social Insurance, Academy Health and the American Society on Aging, has an M.S. from Columbia University and a B.A. from the University of Virginia, and has taken gerontology coursework at Johns Hopkins University.

Jennifer Baker is a Senior Policy Aide with Chairman Senator Bob Casey on the United States Senate Special Committee on Aging and leads the Senator's aging services portfolio. She is committed to advancing quality of life and health outcomes among community-dwelling older adults. Baker has nearly a decade of experience leading collaborative community-based programs designed to support older adult independence and has served as the principal investigator for both federal and state-funded grants. Baker holds a master's degree in Public Health and certificates in Public Health Advocacy and Health Communications from the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health. As part of her practicum experience for the program, Baker worked with then ranking member Senator Bob Casey on the United States Senate Special Committee on Aging. She also received the Walker-Odyssey fellowship from her alma mater Hendrix College to explore cultures of dementia care and support internationally.

Jack Arriaga is the Senior Legislative Assistant for U.S. Representative Suzanne Bonamici (OR-01). Originally from Oregon, he has served on the Congresswoman's staff in Washington, DC, for just over a decade. Jack's policy portfolio includes health care, reproductive rights, immigration, veterans, and other issues—but a primary focus of his work is advancing the Congresswoman's priorities as Chair of the Civil Rights and Human Services subcommittee of the House Committee on Education and Labor. Given that subcommittee's jurisdiction over the Older Americans Act (OAA), Congresswoman Bonamici has been a consistent leader in supporting OAA services, program staffs and volunteers, and the people they serve. These efforts include securing robust federal funding for OAA programs, the recent introduction of H.Res. 993 recognizing the 50th anniversary of OAA nutrition programs, and—most significantly—the passage into law of the Congresswoman's OAA reauthorization bill, H.R. 4334, the Supporting Older Americans Act of 2020. Jack attended Gonzaga University in Spokane, WA. He and his partner Liz also enjoy sailing, crossword puzzles, and doting on their two photogenic cats, Tibby and Max.

Kripa Sreepada currently serves as Health Policy Advisor to Sen. Tina Smith. She previously served as Health Care Legislative Assistant to Congressman Joseph Crowley, Chairman of the House Democratic Caucus.

She is a former David A. Winston Health Policy Fellow and completed her fellowship placement with the Senate Finance Committee under Ranking Member Ron Wyden. Before working for Congress, Sreepada worked as an Associate Administrator at a Continuing Care Retirement Community (CCRC) and became a Licensed Nursing Home Administrator (LNHA) for the state of Connecticut. Sreepada graduated summa cum laude from Cornell University with her Master of Health Administration (MHA), and she graduated cum laude from Saint Louis University with her Bachelor of Science in Public Health. A native of Missouri, Sreepada has a lifelong passion for older adults and the multidimensional challenges of aging well in American society.

Alison Barkoff is currently serving as ACL's Acting Administrator and as the Acting Assistant Secretary for Aging. A sibling of an adult brother with developmental disabilities and a civil rights attorney, Alison is a lifelong advocate for community living—both professionally and personally—and has been at the forefront of national efforts to expand the home and community-based services that make it possible.

As part of countless coalitions of people with disabilities, older adults, and advocates, she has fought to uphold the rights of people with disabilities and older adults and ensure their access to health care, housing, employment, education, and all other facets of American life. She has testified before Congress and the US Commission on Civil Rights on disability rights and community living.

She has served in a variety of leadership roles with disability rights organizations, including leading advocacy efforts at the Center for Public Representation and the Bazelon Center for Mental Health Law. She also is a veteran of the federal government. As Special Counsel for Olmstead Enforcement in the Civil Rights Division of the Department of Justice, she led efforts to enforce the rights of people with disabilities to live, work and fully participate in their communities. She also led interagency initiatives with the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services on Medicaid HCBS and with the Department of Labor on direct care workforce issues

She has brought that same focus on collaboration and coordination to her current role. Under her leadership, ACL is working with partners across HHS and the federal government on initiatives and interagency approaches to issues that affect people with disabilities and older adults, such as expanding access to HCBS and affordable, accessible housing; strengthening the direct care workforce; increasing competitive, integrated employment for people with disabilities; and advancing equity, to name just a few.

Edwin Walker As the Deputy Assistant Secretary for Aging, Edwin L. Walker leads the Administration on Aging in advocating on behalf of older Americans.

In this capacity, he guides and promotes the development of home and community-based long-term care programs, policies, and services designed to afford older people and their caregivers the ability to age with dignity and independence and to have a broad array of options available for an enhanced quality of life. This includes the promotion and implementation of evidence-based prevention interventions proven effective in avoiding or delaying the onset of chronic disease and illness.

Prior to joining HHS in 1992, Walker served as the Director of the Missouri Division of Aging, responsible for administering a comprehensive set of human service programs for older persons and adults with disabilities.

He received a Juris Doctor degree in law from the University of Missouri-Columbia School of Law and a Bachelor of Arts degree in Mass Media Arts from Hampton University.

Melissa Harris has been with the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) since the summer of 1995 and is currently a Deputy Director for the Disabled and Elderly Health Programs Group (DEHPG). Prior to this role, Melissa was a Senior Policy Advisor in DEHPG, developing and implementing a myriad of policies advancing home and community-based services as an alternative to institutional placement.

Before joining the Office of the Group Director, she was the Director of the Division of Benefits and Coverage from 2012 to 2015, in which she was responsible for overseeing implementation of most Medicaid benefits, including benefits provided to individuals in the Medicaid expansion population, and the establishment of national benefit policy.

Martha Roherty is the Executive Director of ADvancing States (formerly NASUAD). ADvancing States was founded in 1964 under the name National Association of State Units on Aging (NASUA). In 2019, the association changed its name to ADvancing States. Today, ADvancing States represents the nation's 56 state and territorial agencies on aging and disabilities and long-term services and supports directors. ADvancing States supports visionary leadership, the advancement of systems innovation and the articulation of national policies that support long term services and supports for older adults and people with disabilities. The primary purposes of ADvancing States are to serve as a focal point of communication between

the states and the federal government and to provide an information network among the states on long-term services and supports.

Nicole Jorwic is the Chief of Advocacy and Campaigns at Caring Across Generations. Before joining Caring Across, Nicole was Senior Director of Public Policy and Senior Executive Officer of State Advocacy at The Arc of the United States. Before coming to DC to work on federal advocacy, Nicole served as Senior Policy Advisor and Manager of the Employment First Initiative in Illinois. Prior to that appointment, Nicole was the CEO/President of the Institute on Public Policy for People with Disabilities. Nicole is also an accomplished special education attorney and an advocate for students with disabilities and their families. Nicole is most importantly a sibling: her brother Chris is 32 and has autism.

Bob Blancato is the Executive Director of the National Association of Nutrition and Aging Services Programs. He is also President of Matz, Blancato and Associates, the National Coordinator of the bipartisan 3000-member Elder Justice Coalition, and the National Coordinator of the Defeat Malnutrition Today coalition.

Bob has long been recognized as a national advocate with policy expertise on behalf of older adults. In 2019, he was invited by both the Senate Finance Committee and House Ways and Means Committee to testify on a range of issues. Bob's prior work history includes 17 years as a staffer in Congress and an appointment by President Clinton to be the Executive Director of the 1995 White House Conference on Aging, one of four he has participated in. He is a member of the Senior Executive Service.

As a volunteer, he currently serves on the National Board of AARP and the board of the National Hispanic Council on Aging. In 2019, Bob began a four-year term on the National Advisory Committee on Rural Health and Human Services, appointed by HHS Secretary Azar.

Bob holds a BA from Georgetown University and an MPA from American University. Bob has won numerous awards for advocacy, most recently the American Society for Aging's ASA Hall of Fame Award awarded in April 2021.

David Lipschutz joined the Center for Medicare Advocacy in June 2010. Based in the Center's Washington, DC, office, Lipschutz engages in public policy issues surrounding Medicare and related coverage as they impact Medicare beneficiaries. This work includes federal administrative and legislative advocacy, collaboration with other consumer advocates to address systemic issues, and monitoring, analyzing and commenting on current

Medicare-related policy developments. He is also a contributing author to the Center's Medicare Handbook. Lipschutz came to the Center after 5 years as a staff attorney at California Health Advocates (CHA), a nonprofit organization that provides advocacy and education for California Medicare beneficiaries. Before joining CHA, Lipschutz worked as a staff attorney at the Center for Health Care Rights, a non-profit agency that provides direct services to Medicare beneficiaries in Los Angeles County. From 2003 to 2010, Lipschutz co-authored a chapter on Medicare in California's Continuing Education of the Bar (CEB) publication California Elder Law, Resources, Benefits, and Planning.

Lipschutz is an attorney licensed in California and Connecticut, and earned his B.A. degree from University of California, Santa Cruz in 1993 and his J.D. degree from University of California, Davis in 1999. His law practice is limited to federal Medicare law; he is admitted in California and Connecticut only.

Linda Couch is the Vice President, Housing Policy, for LeadingAge, an organization of more than 5,300 nonprofits representing the entire field of aging services. Linda oversees LeadingAge's affordable housing policy work, which is focused on expanding and preserving affordable housing options for very low-income seniors, connecting senior housing to health services, and ensuring affordable senior housing communities have the resources and tools necessary to respond to COVID-19. After 12 years with the National Low Income Housing Coalition, Linda rejoined LeadingAge in 2016 to identify and advocate for solutions to the unprecedented affordable housing challenges faced by older adults. Linda has a special interest in the federal budget and appropriations processes and has testified before House and Senate committees. Linda received her undergraduate degree in philosophy from The George Washington University and a master's degree in Public Affairs from the University of Connecticut.