

Family Caregiver Alliance
of Rhode Island



presents

Caring for Family Caregivers



Fourth Annual Caregiver Conference

Caregiving and Mental Health

Thursday, November 17, 2022

9 a.m. - 2 p.m.

Webinar on ZOOM



United Way of
Rhode Island



This conference is supported by funding through the R.I. Office of Healthy Aging, and from grant number 90LRUI0017-03 from the U.S. Administration for Community Living, Department of Health and Human Services, Washington, D.C. 20201.

Family Caregiver Alliance of Rhode Island



Conference Schedule

- 9:10 a.m. Welcome, Maria Cimini, Director, Office of Healthy Aging
 - 9:15 a.m. Keynote Address, Elizabeth Miller
 - 10 a.m. Q&A and Morning Break
 - 10:15 a.m. Workshop A: Supporting Loved Ones Living with Mental Illness
 - 11:00 a.m. Workshop B: Powerful Tools for Caregivers Overview
 - 11:45 a.m. Lunch Break
 - 12:15 p.m. Workshop C: Supporting Caregiving Youth in Rhode Island: Children and Adolescents Who Provide Ongoing Care for a Family Member at Home
 - 1:00 p.m. Workshop D: Gentle Chair Yoga
 - 1:45 p.m. Caregiver of the Year Recognition and Closing Remarks, Maryam Attarpour
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Workshop A: Supporting Loved Ones Living with Mental Health Conditions

Mike O'Rourke will present on the programs available through NAMI Rhode Island for individuals living with mental health conditions, and for their family members and friends. This presentation will also discuss some ways to identify when a loved one needs help, how to take steps to get help, local resources for the individual and the family, as well as self-care.

Workshop B: Powerful Tools for Caregivers Overview

Powerful Tools for Caregivers is an evidence-based education program offering a unique combination of elements designed to help reduce the burden of stress caregivers experience while providing tools and strategies that can be immediately put to use. This workshop will provide an overview of the program, as well as other programs through Catholic Social Services, that support family caregivers in Rhode Island.

Workshop C: Supporting Caregiving Youth in Rhode Island: Children and Adolescents Who Provide Ongoing Care for a Family Member at Home

In this presentation, we introduce the population "caregiving youth." These are children below age 18 who are involved in caregiving for a family member at home (e.g., sibling, parent or grandparent) who is chronically ill, disabled, or experiencing aging-related decline. The presenters are the Rhode Island Department of Education, the American Association of Caregiving Youth, and Researchers at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. They have partnered to advance research about caregiving youth in Rhode Island, and better understand how we as a community can support caregiving youth. First, we will highlight how children often take on caregiving responsibilities in homes where there is a family member who needs care -even when an adult caregiver is also present. Children's provision of care is often not recognized formally by educational or social systems. Next, we will describe research about how caregiving impacts children's development and academic and emotional wellbeing. Finally, we will discuss how Rhode Island as a community can support caregiving youth and better understand their needs.

Workshop D: Gentle Chair Yoga

Join Ellen MacKay for this stress relieving, gentle movement class. She will include calming breathing techniques and a meditation practice that you can use anytime you are feeling overwhelmed or just needing a little break.

Keynote Speaker



Elizabeth Miller is a family caregiver advocate, speaker, author, and Certified Caregiving Consultant. Elizabeth's personal experiences caring for aging parents with chronic and terminal illnesses and for a sibling with developmental disabilities inspired her to create Happy Healthy Caregiver in 2015. Through her coaching services, speaking, award-winning podcast, book, and online community, Elizabeth helps family caregivers infuse caregiving and self-care with their busy lives. She is the host of the Happy Healthy Caregiver podcast on the Whole Care Network, author of *Just for You: a Daily Self-Care Journal*, and facilitates an Atlanta support group for family caregivers called the Atlanta Daughterhood Circle. Elizabeth is also an ambassador and retreat leader for the No Barriers USA Caregivers Program.

She obtained a B.A. in Journalism from Penn State University and has worked in corporate IT and strategy roles for over 20 years.

Elizabeth has been a presenter at the 2016-2019 National Caregiving Conferences. Her story was featured in [Woman's Day](#) and [Health](#) magazines.

As a full-time entrepreneur, Elizabeth works with employers interested in supporting their working family caregivers and with companies interested in amplifying their brands and services. Her interactive presentations offer practical solutions for caregiving and self-care. Topics range from preparing for a caregiving crisis, sharing the care with family members, self-care strategies, and balancing work and family.

happyhealthycaregiver.com



Welcome Address



Maria Cimini is a social worker whose professional and personal work focus on policy and advocacy. She is the Director of the Office of Healthy Aging where she works to amplify the voices of older adults, identify gaps in services and create opportunities for older adults and their caregivers, and leads a team responsible for investigating elder abuse and self-neglect, connecting seniors to home care services, and building community partnerships to support the nutrition, caregiver, health promotion, and connection of older adults throughout Rhode Island. Prior to being confirmed as the director of the Office of Healthy Aging, Maria served as the associate director of Policy at the R.I. Department of Human Services, and in the non-profit sector she spent 15 years working to create systems to move people experiencing homelessness to housing, expand SNAP access, and provide direct services to low-income families. She's long taught policy analysis at the Rhode Island College School of Social Work. Maria was elected to the R.I. House of Representatives in 2010 and served two terms there. She has BA in Political Science and a Masters in Social Work from Rhode Island College, and lives in Cranston with her family.

Workshop A Presenter



Mike O'Rourke and his wife have three adult children and two young grandkids. They have been actively involved with National Alliance on Mental Illness Rhode Island (NAMI RI) for over ten years, and continue to facilitate Family Support Groups and teach the Family-to-Family course. Mike served on the Board of Directors of NAMI RI and currently works for the organization as a consultant for Family Programs. Before his retirement, Mike was a public school teacher and administrator for many years.

Workshop B Presenter



Hector Munoz is an employee of Catholic Social Services in Rhode Island for over 23 years and a well-known representative of the state's caregiving community. He is often the first voice a caregiver hears when seeking ways to provide for an ill loved one.

Hector is a native of Colombia where he was educated and employed as a high school teacher for several years. As a young man he emigrated to Rhode Island to join family. He married a few years later and has one daughter who attends college locally. He worked in the area while learning a new language and soon became an employee of the Diocese of Providence. He was initially involved with the Homemaking Program and later transitioned into the Respite Care Program, which is now called CareBreaks.

Under Hector's coordination, the program has expanded into the primary source of subsidized respite services in the state. In addition, Hector oversees new and innovative programs which are also available through CareBreaks, including the Lifespan Respite Program and Powerful Tools for Caregivers. Last year Hector also became a certified trainer for the Powerful Tools support and self-care series and has conducted sessions for Spanish speaking caregivers.

Workshop C Presenters



Connie Siskowski is the founder and president at American Association of Caregiving Youth (AACY) – a nonprofit that serves children and adolescents who provide significant or substantial assistance, often on a regular basis, to relatives or household members needing help because of a physical or mental illness, disability, or frailty. It is the only organization in the U.S. dedicated solely to addressing caregiving youth issues. Dr. Siskowski's dream is for all family caregivers to be honored and respected but especially youth for their contributions to family and to society; no child in the U.S. should have to drop out of school because he or she has to care for a family member.



Olivia Smith is executive associate (State Strategy and Student Opportunity) at Rhode Island Department of Education, Office of the Commissioner. She has a passion for equity-based, student-centered education policy reform with experience in both qualitative and quantitative research analysis and evaluation methods.



Steve Osborn is the state strategy and student opportunity officer at Rhode Island Department of Education. Steve leads efforts to make sure that every child has the opportunity to choose the school and course experiences that help them reach their full potential.



Elizabeth A. Olson is a professor of geography and global studies at University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. She also currently serves as department chair. Her research and advocacy work focuses on understanding historical and contemporary caregiving by young people in the U.S. and the future of care.



Emma Armstrong-Carter is a developmental psychologist and a postdoctoral researcher at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. She researches children's and adolescents' experiences helping and caregiving for family – and how these experiences relate to their school success and wellbeing.

Workshop D Presenter



Ellen MacKay is an experienced registered yoga teacher (500 hr.) with a degree in social work. She is co-director of Yoga4Caregivers and helps cultivate and grow the community while supporting the broader efforts of the nonprofit. She understands the caregiving journey from personal experience having served as caregiver to her mother during her battle with lung cancer and her father in the final stages of COPD. Ellen is passionate about empowering others to find healing by turning inward to connect with the body, mind, and spirit.

Caregiver of the Year Recognition and Closing Remarks



Maryam Attarpour has been a Rhode Islander for most of her life. Originally from Iran, Maryam moved to Rhode Island at the age of three with her family. A graduate of Classical High School and the University of Rhode Island, she has always been passionate about staying local and helping individuals in our State. Maryam took on her current role as program manager of the Family Caregiver Alliance at United Way in November of 2017, and coordinates and oversees every aspect of the Alliance, which also includes a partnership with the Office of Healthy Aging on the LifeSpan Respite and ADPI grants.

Before her position with FCARI, she worked extensively with other nonprofit and service providing organizations throughout the State, such as Meals on Wheels of Rhode Island, the SNAP Outreach Project, the Center for Nonviolence and Peace Studies, and the Gender and Women’s Studies Department at the University of Rhode Island.

As the older sister to two Autistic siblings, Maryam has seen how caregiving affects, and also forms familial supports and bonds. Maryam is a foodie, dog-lover, intersectional feminist, and an advocate of social justice and equity. She describes herself as a leader, thinker, and problem-solver, and brings these skills to her work with the Alliance.

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