

A Life Time of Service

After more than 39 years of dedicated service, Margi Valleroy has retired from Aging Ahead, leaving behind a remarkable legacy of compassion, leadership, and commitment to older adults and their families.

Margi began her career with the Agency as an Information and Resource Counselor, where she quickly became known for her knowledge, patience, and deep commitment to connecting people with the support they needed. Early in her career she became the first professional in the state to earn certification as an Information and Resource Specialist and later served on the board of the Alliance for Information and Referral Systems (AIRS; now Inform USA).

Over the years, Margi helped shape many important initiatives across the Agency and the broader aging network. She served as a liaison on statewide projects, supported improvements to data collection systems, helped implement professional certification standards, and contributed to the transformation of Information and Assistance services. Margi spearheaded the Direct Adult Protective Services program, which earned national recognition from US Aging for innovation and meaningful impact in 2024.

Margi served in multiple roles during her time with the Agency, and in each role, she demonstrated steady leadership, thoughtful collaboration, and her passion for serving older adults.

For Margi, this work was never just a job. It was a calling rooted in compassion, advocacy, and the belief that every person deserves access to information, support, and dignity as they age. Her knowledge, dedication, and passion for the work have made a lasting impact on the Agency, her colleagues, and the countless individuals and families she served along the way.

Please join us in congratulating Margi on an extraordinary career and wishing her the best in what comes next.



Congratulations!

Staff Spotlight: Celebrations & Milestones

Tim Kilgore:

Celebrated 10 years with Aging Ahead as Accounting & Compliance Manager

Molly Bergamini:

Promoted to Community Options & Services Manager

Laurie Black:

Promoted to Community Outreach Manager

Lynn Columbus:

Promoted to Executive Coordinator



Farmers Market

The Seniors' Farmers Market Nutrition Program runs through October 31 and is offered in partnership with MU Extension. Eligible seniors can receive \$50 in annual benefits to purchase fresh, locally grown produce.

Trips to the farmers market have been approved as eligible nutrition trips and may be used by clients to redeem their Seniors' Farmers Market Nutrition Program vouchers.

Seniors can register in person at their local senior center.



Meet our Home Delivered Meal Coordinators (HDMC)

The team behind every delivery, every check-in, and every connection is our Home Delivered Meal Coordinators. Through careful collaboration and organization, they are responsible for more than 7,700 meals being delivered weekly. HDMC's deliver more than meals; they deliver dignity, independence, peace of mind, and a reminder that our participants are never alone.



Making Salads Exciting

Getting in enough fruits and vegetables can be a challenge. With summer in full swing, an easy way to get in fruits and vegetables in a cool, refreshing way is to add them to salads. Below are tips and tricks to turn boring salads into exciting meals.

Components, What It Adds, and Examples

The **base** layer of your salad! Should be the main layer and should compliment upper layers. If your vegetables or fruit are very juicy, you want a firmer lettuce to hold up the salad.

Ex: Romaine, iceberg, butter lettuce, spinach, spring mix, noodles, rice, shredded broccoli, or cabbage

The **meat and cheese** adds protein to help keep muscles and bones strong. Add a savory component to salads.

Ex: Chicken, beef, pulled pork, tuna, feta cheese, shredded cheddar, salmon, or eggs

The **vegetable and fruit** toppings add vitamins and minerals, fiber, and flavor.

Ex: Cucumbers, tomatoes, onions, olives, berries, dried fruit, peppers, or pickled veggies

The **crunchy element** improves texture and flavor of the salad. Add fiber, depending on what is added.

Ex: Croutons, tortilla strips, nuts, sunflower seeds, fried onions, crispy noodles, or rice

The **seasonings** add flavor to all elements of the salad. Adding seasonings to salad can take them to the next level.

Ex: Basil, oregano, lemon juice, lemon pepper, garlic powder, or blends

The **homemade dressings** are easier than you think. Acid (lemon juice, vinegar, buttermilk) + fat (plant-based oils, cheese) + a pinch of sugar can make an incredible dressing.

Ex: vinaigrettes, or mustards

Salads don't have to be complicated or expensive, either! See below for salads that use the same base ingredients but create three completely different salads to reuse ingredients and simplify preparation.

Easy Salads 3 Ways (Each serves 4) All salads use:

- 4 cups spring mix, spinach, 50/50 blend, or romaine lettuce
- 12 oz cooked chicken (can be boiled and shredded, grilled and diced, shredded skinless rotisserie chicken, or sauteed diced chicken)
- 6-8 oz crumbled feta cheese or shredded cheese of your choice

Mediterranean Salad:

- 4 oz pickled banana pepper rings
- 2-4 oz pitted kalamata olives
- 1 small peeled, diced cucumber
- ¼ diced red onion
- 2 tsp Greek seasoning
- Dressing: 2 Tbsp olive oil, 2 tsp pickling liquid from olives and banana peppers, 2 tsp sugar, ½ tsp salt

BBQ Chicken Salad:

- ½ diced red onion
- 2-4 oz chopped dill pickles
- 4 oz shredded carrot
- 4 oz croutons or 2 oz sunflower seeds
- Optional: 2-4 oz crumbled bacon or turkey bacon
- 4 oz BBQ sauce or BBQ Ranch (BBQ Sauce and Ranch 1:1 mixed together)

Honey Strawberry Salad:

- 1 cup sliced strawberries
- 4 oz chopped pecans
- ¼ diced red onion
- ½ diced red pepper
- ½ tsp dried mustard
- Dressing: 2 Tbsp olive oil, 1 Tbsp balsamic vinegar, 1 Tbsp honey or brown sugar, ½ tsp salt, 1 tsp smoked flavoring (liquid smoke)

Medicare announces The New Medicare GLP-1 Bridge Program

The GLP-1 Bridge Program is a time-limited program that will provide eligible Medicare beneficiaries with access to certain GLP-1 drugs outside of the Part D benefit for weight loss. This program started July 1, 2026 and will run through December 31, 2027.

By law, Medicare cannot cover medications for weight loss. It would require a change to the law for weight loss medications to be covered under the Part D benefit. This demonstration program allows Medicare to gather evidence/information to determine whether to pursue a change in the law.

Only certain GLP-1 medications will be part of the program. Medications covered:

- Wegovy (both injections and tablets)
- Zepbound (KwikPen)
- Founday

Eligibility for the program will require that beneficiaries:

- Be 18 or older
- Need the GLP-1 medication for weight loss and keeping weight off, meaning a person must meet one of these weight and health criteria to be eligible:
 - BMI of 35 or higher
 - BMI of 30 or higher and have certain health conditions, such as: Heart failure, Uncontrolled hypertension, Chronic kidney disease
 - BMI of 27 or higher and have other health risks, such as: Pre-diabetes, Heart attack, Peripheral, Peripheral Artery Disease
- Have Medicare with prescription drug coverage either through a standalone Part D plan or a Medicare Advantage plan that includes drug coverage
- Have prior authorization/approval from the Bridge Program

The cost of each medication will be a fixed \$50 monthly copay. This \$50 does NOT count toward the deductible or the maximum out of pocket (TrOOP) limit. The Extra Help program cannot be used to lower the copayment.

More information will be coming out as the launch of this program gets closer. A list of questions/answers can be found at:

<https://www.cms.gov/medicare/coverage/prescription-drug-coverage/medicare-glp-1-bridge/information-medicare-beneficiaries>

If this creates more questions for you, please reach out to Missouri SHIP to talk it through with a counselor. You can easily reach a SHIP counselor by calling Missouri SHIP at 1-800-390-3330.

Advocacy Corner—Silver Haired Legislature Update

Preparations are underway for the upcoming Missouri Silver Haired Legislature (SHL) Annual Session this October. In July, the SHL Board of Directors and the Proposed Bills Committee met in Jefferson City to review and discuss proposals submitted by delegations from across Missouri.

These proposed bills address issues that matter most to older adults and will be debated during the October Annual Session. Following those discussions, delegates will vote to determine the Top Five Legislative Priorities that SHL will champion during the 2027 Missouri legislative session.

Aging Ahead is proud to remain actively involved in the Missouri Silver Haired Legislature and to advocate for policies that strengthen the lives of older adults throughout our region and across the state. We look forward to participating in October's session and continuing to ensure older adults have a strong voice in shaping Missouri's future.



Adopt-A-Route | Support-A-Center | Support Family Caregivers

Aging Ahead Champions Deliver A Difference!



Aging Ahead Champion Spotlight



Assistance Home Care

For Allen and Sally Serfas, supporting Aging Ahead's Mission is deeply personal. As Sally's mother battled Alzheimer's disease, Meals on Wheels volunteers provided nourishment, comfort & meaningful connection for her parents when they needed it most.

Today, Assistance Home Care, a locally owned in-home senior care provider serving the Greater St. Louis & St. Charles areas, is proud to be a Champion of Supporting Family Caregivers! Allen & Sally encourage you to learn how your business or organization can Deliver A Difference by becoming an Aging Ahead Champion!

**Assistance
Home Care**
Established 2011

Proud Aging Ahead Champion of Supporting Family Caregivers

www.AssistanceHomeCare.com Available 24-7-365! Call: 314-466-3227



Connecting Caregivers

We see you, we care about you, and we're here to help! The Aging Ahead Community Options and Services Department is pleased to highlight programs that are available to support you and those you support. We will be featuring programs and services that are truly impacting the lives of caregivers. If you know of a program that has made a profound difference for someone in your life, please reach out to one of our offices below and let us know about it. We may highlight it in a future edition.

Supporting Those Who Care: The Caregiver Club's Mission in Action

At The Caregiver Club®, everything we do centers around the idea that when caregivers are supported, everyone benefits. As a 100% caregiver-focused organization, we provide free programs that uplift the financial, emotional, and social well-being of those caring for individuals with Alzheimer's and other forms of dementia.

At the heart of this mission is our Caregiver Respite Initiative (CRI). The CRI is a nationwide program designed to recognize and support the daily dedication of dementia caregivers. Through CRI, caregivers across the country are nominated to receive appreciation packages, recognition certificates, and direct financial assistance. These funds are intended to provide something many caregivers rarely experience: true respite. By helping alleviate burnout and stress, the program allows caregivers to return to their role feeling restored and seen.

In addition to CRI, The Caregiver Club® offers programs that address isolation and build connections. Our local, St. Louis-based Caregiver-Companion Outings create meaningful experiences for caregivers and their loved ones as they socialize and enjoy fun activities with others going through similar experiences. Meanwhile, our Caregiver Cards provide a simple yet powerful tool that allows caregivers to discreetly communicate their loved one's condition in public spaces. The goal of these cards is to foster compassion wherever they go, without caregivers having to explain their situation verbally. These cards are available to caregivers nationwide.

We also work to create more inclusive communities through our local Dementia-Friendly Dining program. Here, we partner with restaurants in St. Louis to train staff in dementia awareness and best practices. These efforts ensure that everyday activities, like dining out, remain accessible and enjoyable for families navigating memory loss.

At its core, The Caregiver Club® is about restoring dignity, connection, and hope. By supporting caregivers with practical resources and heartfelt recognition, we are building a stronger, more compassionate community for those facing the daily challenges of dementia. Visit our site at thecaregiverclub.org and sign up for our newsletters to learn more about our programs and how you can get involved.

Aging Ahead continues to be a trusted resource for information. Our Community Options Specialists/Case Managers and Community Services Coordinators are here to help! Please contact us at the numbers below or by calling 1-800-243-6060

St. Louis County: 636-207-0847 Jefferson County 636-253-0558
St. Charles County: 636-579-0555 Franklin County 636-629-3143



CHOICE Programming

Aging Ahead and WashU continue our work together, bringing a new Virtual Program to qualified people who receive Home-delivered meals through Aging Ahead or enjoy meals at one of our community locations. If you received a letter or flyer regarding the Aging Ahead-Connect Virtual Senior Center and are interested in learning more about our online programming, please contact our CHOICE Team at 636-207-4218. Signups for this program ends August 31. We hope to connect with you soon!

Join Us Online

In today's busy world, finding time to connect in person can be a challenge, but that does not mean the learning has to stop! Join us on the last Friday of every month at 10:00am for an engaging online learning session featuring helpful tech tips and a variety of informative presentations. Register online and continue learning from wherever you are!

New Site

We are excited to announce the opening of a new CHOICE location in Maplewood. Beginning this September, we will meet on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 10:00am to 2:00pm at Artist First on Manchester Road in Maplewood. Look to our website, to sign up for a meal and learn more about the engaging activities we have in store. Stay tuned for details on our opening celebration to mark the start of a wonderful partnership. We cannot wait to see you there.

CHOICE Options

You can enjoy in person CHOICE programming in Sullivan, Arnold, House Springs, University City and at The Lewis and Clark St Louis County Library Branch, in addition to our newest CHOICE location in Maplewood. Check out our events page for upcoming programming and information on how to sign up.



Champion Spotlight

It takes a community to make aging well possible, and we're thrilled to welcome Nineveh Hospice as one of our newest Champions. By partnering with

Aging Ahead, they are helping strengthen programs and services that make a meaningful difference in the lives of older adults every day. Thank you, Nineveh Hospice, for believing in our mission and for championing the people we proudly serve.

To learn more, visit agingahead.org/get-involved/become-a-champion/



Join our Golden Giving Circle

When you become a Golden Giver, you're joining a community of compassionate supporters committed to helping older adults thrive. Monthly giving is one of the easiest and most impactful ways to support Aging Ahead, providing reliable funding that helps sustain our programs throughout the year.

Scan the QR code to visit our website and join the Golden Giving Circle today. Your monthly gift helps ensure older adults receive the meals, services, and support they rely on every day.

Together, we can ensure every older adult has the opportunity to age with dignity, independence, and connection.

Sign up today, agingahead.org/golden-giving-circle/



A Special Delivery from Stifel

A heartfelt thank you to Kristin Walters, Aging Ahead Board Member, and our friends at Stifel for helping spread a little extra joy to older adults in our community!

Stifel employees from across the region took the time to write thoughtful, hand-written greeting cards for Aging Ahead's home-delivered meal recipients. Kristin recently dropped off the collection, which will be shared with participants along our meal routes.

Small gestures can make a big impact, and these personal notes are a wonderful reminder to our participants that their



community is thinking of them. We're grateful to Kristin and the Stifel team for continuing to champion older adults and finding meaningful ways to brighten someone's day!

Better Together: Celebrating Our Second Year with Essence Healthcare

Aging Ahead is proud to continue our partnership with Essence Healthcare for a second year! Together, we are strengthening support for older adults throughout our community through home-delivered meals, public education, and outreach initiatives that help older adults live healthier, more connected lives.

Essence Healthcare's commitment to improving the well-being of the communities they serve continues to align seamlessly with Aging Ahead's mission of supporting individuals through the journey of aging. Their generous support allows us to expand our impact and reach more older adults with the resources and services they need. Thank you to Essence – we are grateful to be Aging Ahead with you!

**Proud supporter
of Aging Ahead and
their commitment
to serving our
community.**



Let's Medicare Together™

Founded by doctors in St. Louis, Essence Healthcare has served only the Medicare community for more than 20 years.

EssenceHealthcare.com



Your Vote Matters in 2026!

Aging Ahead encourages everyone to get out and vote. Here is a quick guide outlining ways and days that you can vote in the general election as well as some other useful information.

2026 Key Election Dates

- General Election: November 3

Acceptable Forms of Voter ID

- A nonexpired Missouri driver on non-driver license
- A nonexpired military ID, including a veterans ID card
- A nonexpired U.S. passport
- Another nonexpired photo ID issued by the U.S. or the state of Missouri

Your County Election Office is there to help with any voting questions or forms. Please contact them for more information.

St. Louis County
314-615-1800

St. Charles County
636-949-7550

Franklin County
636-583-6355

Jefferson County
636-797-5486

Make A Plan to Vote

- Verify and Update your Voter Registration
- Choose a Voting Method
- Find your Polling Place
- Cast your Vote
 - Confirm your voter registration info is current and accurate at sos.mo.gov/elections
 - Your polling place may have changed. Check with your local election office to confirm where you vote in-person, or check at sos.mo.gov/elections



Frequently Asked Question: No-Excuse In-Person Absentee Voting

No excuse in-person early voting begins two weeks prior to Election Day with an acceptable form of identification.



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Look for your Annual Notice of Change (ANOC) in the mail!

September brings the Fall Season, often a favorite of many. It also brings the Annual Notice of Change from your Medicare plan! Often abbreviated ANOC, this document is VERY important. It details what is changing for your plan. This means it will outline what costs are changing and what benefits are changing in 2027.

Key Details to Check:

Costs: Look for changes to monthly premiums, deductibles, copayments, and coinsurance.

Provider Networks: Verify whether your primary care doctors, specialists, and preferred hospitals remain in-network.

Drug Formularies: Check if your current prescription medications are still covered and see if they have moved to a different cost tier or might now require prior authorization.

Service Areas: Ensure your plan is still operating in your local geographic area for the next year.

What to do next:

Review your options: Plans will be available to review on October 1st through the Medicare planfinder tool at www.medicare.gov

Note the Annual Open Enrollment period: Between October 15 and December 7 you can review plans and make changes, if necessary, that will take effect January 1st.

If you are satisfied with your plan, no changes are needed. But, if you want to make a change, this is the time period to make that change.

Counselors from Missouri SHIP are available to help you. Watch the LCCOA newsletter for in-person counselor availability. Counselors are always available by phone by calling 1-800-390-3330.

Many people last year did not read their ANOC and were surprised by new premium increases. Some were disenrolled as a result which can have long lasting effects. Watch your mail and don't be caught unaware!

--Rebecca Pogorzelski, Certified Counselor, Missouri SHIP