

AGING FORWARD PAST

As trailblazers in the field, we are a trusted national alliance, and our dedication to deliberative growth is unwavering. As we mark our 50th Anniversary, we aim to expand our reach and deepen our impact, guided by an intentional strategy to fulfill our founder Elbert Cole's visionary goal of a nationwide movement for empowered aging.

We have had remarkable success over the years with more than 100 local Shepherd's Centers established, and new centers continue to open. Yet, over time the number of Shepherd's Centers has dwindled for various reasons. Some centers lacked sustained leadership and gradually faded away. Others shifted their focus to alternative community services, such as adult day programs, information hubs, or food pantries. Some merged with neighboring nonprofits to serve the region through a single organization. Some adapted the model by opening satellite locations or programs that are part of larger nonprofits. A few affiliates changed names due to local influences and subsequently left the network. The network has maintained a stable presence with 50-55 affiliates over the past decade, and we remain unique in impacting the lives of more older adults nationwide than ever before, touching an estimated 515,000 individuals annually.

We celebrate our role in redefining aging as a new chapter in life, not an ending. And we aspire to fully realize Dr. Cole's vision by nurturing thriving affiliates in every state and community—a vision as relevant today as it was in 1974.

Our ambitious goal is to unite with kindred groups—we already have a culture of no two affiliates being exactly alike. In cultivating collaboration, disseminating knowledge, and sharing expertise, our growing alliance can be a movement that changes lives and binds society together. Our name change is a symbolic shift that reflects our evolution while reinforcing our mission, vision, and values. Aging Forward emphasizes progress, highlighting an optimistic and positive approach to the physical, emotional, and spiritual growth and well-being of individuals 60 and older. We believe this deliberative step will help all affiliates attract more funding, bolster volunteer engagement, and elevate public awareness.

We are privileged to work collaboratively with you to make this vision a reality. Together, we are creating a lasting legacy.

Sarah Cheney

SHEPHERD'S CENTERS OF AMERICA NOW KNOWN AS AGING FORWARD FUTURE

Formerly known as Shepherd's Centers of America, we have rebranded to Aging Forward to honor our continued growth, shared mission, and the essence of what we've provided for 50 years – opportunities for older adults to live and age with vitality.

Aging Forward represents our commitment to fostering a society where aging is seen as a journey of empowerment, opportunity, and vitality. For five decades, we have been dedicated to creating and promoting opportunities for older adults to lead fulfilling lives. Our new name embodies this ongoing mission and reflects our vision for the future.

June 2024

