

2023 MSU AgeAlive Research Forum “Living a Purposeful Life with Dementia”

Thursday, April 27, 2022, 9 am - 1 pm
MSU Federal Credit Union
Community Room – Farm Lane Branch
4825 Mt. Hope Rd
East Lansing, Michigan

Sessions & Speakers

Keynote Address: Persons Living with Dementia

Transforming the World View of Neurocognitive Disorders

Brenda Roberts, M.A., Executive Director, National Council of Dementia Minds

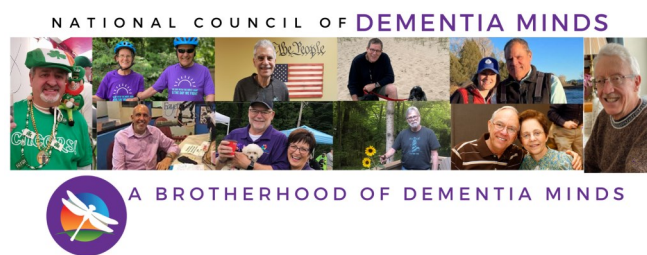


The National Council of Dementia Minds has quickly become a national force driving social reform related to dementia. Michigan is the home of this organization, which is the first nonprofit in the United States to be governed by persons living with dementia. Learn how people living with dementia are changing the worldview of Neurocognitive Disorders one small group at a time.

Presenter: Brenda Roberts, M.A., serves as the Executive Director of the National Council of Dementia Minds. Brenda’s husband, Mark, was diagnosed with young-onset dementia in 2014. Together they made the intentional decision to live their best lives possible and to surround themselves with like-minded people.

Video and Panel: Persons Living with Dementia Promoting Well-being Through Education and Advocacy

This session will provide an opportunity to learn firsthand about living with dementia from individuals who have a dementia diagnosis. A moving video presentation that they have created will be shown, followed by an opportunity to engage with the panelists in a candid Q&A session. They will discuss how participation in the education and advocacy activities of the National Council of Dementia Minds has positively impacted their wellbeing and quality of life.



MSU Aging Research “Gems” Panel featuring MSU researchers and their aging related projects and the potential for creative partnerships

Supporting Dementia Care via Technology:

Introduction of Trualta and PISTA

Fei Sun, Ph.D., Professor, MSU School of Social Work



Dr. Sun will introduce Trualta-based protocol as a means to provide information, education, support and linkage to services for dementia family caregivers, and PISTA as a tool to help address caregiver stress and anxiety.

Panelist: Fei Sun, Ph.D., M.S.W, is a professor and coordinates the Health and Aging Social Work Certificate program at the School of Social Work (SSW) at MSU. His research focuses on psychosocial approaches to address the impact of Alzheimer’s disease and related disorders in ethnic minority communities. He has published over 95 peer reviewed articles, and received research funding from National Institute of Justice, Michigan Health Endowment Fund, and John Hartford Foundation.

Spring into Dementia Risk Reduction

Scott E. Counts, Ph.D., Associate Professor, MSU Department of Translational Neuroscience, Department of Family Medicine, College of Human Medicine



Dr. Counts will provide a brief review of prevention strategies we can all use to lower our risk of dementia.

Panelist: Scott E. Counts, Ph.D., is Associate Professor, MSU Department of Translational Neuroscience, Department of Family Medicine, College of Human Medicine. He received his Ph.D. in Neuroscience from Emory University and fellowship training in Age-related Neurodegenerative Disorders at Rush University Medical Center. He was recruited to MSU in 2013. His current research focuses on molecular mechanisms of mild cognitive impairment and Alzheimer’s disease as well as vascular contributions to dementia.

Health Disparities in Alzheimer's Disease and Related Dementias

Irving E. Vega, Ph.D., Red Cedar Distinguished Professor, MSU College of Human Medicine and Associate Professor, Department of Translational Neuroscience

Health disparities in any disease is an issue of social justice and not related to an ethnic or race group. Contextual factors throughout our lifespan dictate our risk to develop dementia later in life. Thus, it is on our hands to reduce our individual risk of developing dementia and the causes that promote health disparities.



Panelist: Irving E. Vega, Ph.D., is a Red Cedar Distinguished Professor in the MSU College of Human Medicine and Associate Professor, Department of Translational Neuroscience. Here, his research focuses on molecular and biochemical mechanisms that modulate the accumulation of pathological tau proteins in Alzheimer’s disease and related dementias. Dr. Vega is also working on health disparities and the influence of ethnoracial factors on blood biomarkers in Alzheimer’s disease. Dr. Vega obtained his undergraduate degree in Biology from the University of Puerto Rico-Mayaguez Campus. He continued his research training in the Department of Cell Biology and Neuroscience at the Graduate School of New Brunswick, Rutgers University, earning his Ph.D. Dr. Vega completed a postdoctoral fellowship in the Neuroscience Department at Mayo Clinic Jacksonville, where he developed his research career focusing on the pathobiology of Alzheimer’s disease.