



Maine Volunteer Leadership Conference

2026

Speaker Bios

#MVLC



SESSION

How Collaboration Leads to Increased Volunteerism in Your Community



Eden Martin

Mid Coast Hunger Prevention Program

Eden Martin is the Community Outreach & Volunteer Manager at Mid Coast Hunger Prevention Program and works within their programs managing volunteers to ensure that all members of her local community have access to a nourishing and sustainable food source while collaborating with community partners to bring resources together for a more connected community.



Sarah Seames

McKeen Center for the Common Good

Sarah Seames is the director of the McKeen Center for the Common Good at Bowdoin College, which provides opportunities for students to explore their understanding of the common good through volunteerism, academic connections, and community engagement. She also serves on the board of directors for the United Way of Mid Coast Maine.



Emily Bollman

Tedford Housing

Emily Bollman is the Volunteer Coordinator at Tedford Housing, an organization that provides services and support for people who are or have previously been unhoused, along with homelessness prevention.



Doreen Fournier

United Way of Mid Coast Maine

Doreen Fournier is the Director of Impact at United Way of Mid Coast Maine, whose mission is to improve lives by mobilizing the caring power of communities. United Way of Mid Coast works with volunteers in all aspects of their work including on their board of directors, community investment processes, and campaigns.



Daniel Burson

Midcoast Literacy

Daniel Burson is the Executive Director of Midcoast Literacy, supporting the organization's program staff and volunteers who deliver free, one-on-one tutoring for adults and school-age children, workplace literacy group classes for English language learners, and other literacy building programs to the community.

SESSION

SESSION

Storytelling and Advocacy: Telling the Stories that Invite in the Community



Angela Stone

Maine Needs

Angela Stone is the Founder and Executive Director of Maine Needs, a community fueled donation center based out of Portland and serving all 16 counties. Her background and previous career in Chicago was Interior Design. During the Summer of 2018 her family was moving back home to Maine, at that same time, mothers were having their children indefinitely separated from them at the border for seeking legal asylum. This inspired Angela to pivot from interior design to focus on supporting other mothers and their children. Maine Needs began in 2019 as a Facebook group to help local asylum seeking families and quickly grew from there. Maine Needs now partners with over 125 organizations and welcomes in over 3000 volunteers a year to help meet the basic material needs of over 36,000 people. Today, Maine Needs still supports immigrant families, and has now expanded to serve local Maine families, unhoused and justice involved neighbors, and people leaving incarceration and domestic violence.

Engaging Corporate Partnerships Workshop: From One-Time Volunteers to Long-Term Partners

Preble Street

Elisa Fleig has worked at Preble Street for nearly five years, supporting the organization's mission to empower people facing homelessness, unaffordable housing, hunger, and poverty, and advocating for solutions to these problems. As Volunteer Program Manager, she leads volunteer engagement, corporate partnerships, and community outreach, connecting thousands of volunteers with meaningful service opportunities each year. Elisa enjoys sharing practical strategies for building sustainable partnerships and strengthening community engagement.



Elisa Fleig

Midcoast Literacy

Angie Viola is Manager of Administration at Colby Company Engineering, where she has led community engagement efforts for over eight years, through volunteer programs, special projects, and charitable giving campaigns. Her outreach, collaboration, and relationship development have significantly grown the engineering firm's corporate volunteer program from less than 100 hours utilized annually to 800 or more. In 2023 she designed, organized, and led a volunteer campaign resulting in over 1,740 hours of volunteer work for a staff of 65. Angie also serves on the board of directors for United 4 Child Care.



Angie Viola

Youth Engagement Workshop: The Youth Volunteer Advantage

Alfond Youth Community Center

With a Bachelor's degree in Psychology and Criminal Justice and a Master's degree in Criminal Justice with an emphasis in Juvenile Justice, Heidi Sumner brings extensive experience in youth development, volunteer engagement, and program management. She spent more than 15 years with Girl Scouts Overseas and Girl Scouts USA, serving as a Volunteer Manager and Community Engagement Specialist. For the past three years, Heidi has served as a Mentor and Volunteer Programs Manager, specializing in the development of volunteer opportunities for youth and adults. She has extensive experience recruiting, training, and engaging volunteers of all ages, with particular expertise in understanding the needs of youth volunteers and implementing best practices for creating meaningful and safe volunteer experiences that help young people to learn, grow, and serve their communities.



Heidi Sumner

SESSION



SESSION

Tech-Enabled Service: Optimizing Volunteer Management and Satisfaction through Innovation



Jennifer Crittenden

University of Maine

Dr. Jennifer Crittenden is an associate professor of social work at the University of Maine and Associate Director for Research at the UMaine Center on Aging. With over 20 years of experience, her work focuses on older adult health, caregiving, and volunteerism. Her current research, funded by AmeriCorps, explores virtual volunteering and older adult workforce development. Dr. Crittenden specializes in translating academic findings into impactful public education programs, community events, and professional resources.

University of Maine

Dr. Jennifer Jain, PhD, CTRS, is the Director of the Senior Companion Program (SCP) at the University of Maine Center on Aging, an AmeriCorps Seniors program that pairs older adult volunteers with socially isolated older adults across Maine's 11 counties. She holds a master's degree in Outdoor Therapy and a doctorate with a concentration in Gerontology and Recreation. With over 30 years of experience in recreation and therapeutic settings, Dr. Jain has led the integration of technology into SCP operations, including an implementation research study training volunteers to set up Echo Dots, smart plugs, and smart light bulbs in clients' homes.



Jennifer Jain



Rachel Coleman

Center on Aging

Dr. Rachel Coleman is a Project Manager serving the Virtual Volunteerism project and the AmeriCorps Workforce Development project at the Center on Aging. Her background includes social sciences, policy, data analysis, and climate change trends and community resilience. Among varied research topics, she is interested in collaborative and community-centered research and translating research into practice toward equitable outcomes and community resilience. Dr. Coleman has a Master of Public Policy and a Master of Sociology from the University of New Hampshire and a Ph.D. in Ecology and Environmental Sciences from the University of Maine.

University of Maine

Cynthia Cushing is a doctoral candidate at the University of Maine pursuing her PhD with concentrations in social work, gerontology, and technology. With extensive experience in case management for adults with developmental disabilities and a freshly earned Master's in Social Work, she's dedicating her career to a population that knows isolation intimately: older adults in rural Maine.



Cynthia Cushing



Susan M. Scacchi

Maine Masonic Charitable Foundation

Susan M. Scacchi is currently the Executive Director for the Maine Masonic Charitable Foundation. She began her career in finance over 30 years ago, serving in many senior management roles across various industries. She transitioned to the nonprofit sector over two decades ago and has been instrumental in increasing the impact of the foundations she supports. Under her leadership, the Maine Masonic Charitable Foundation (in partnership with the 170 local Masonic Lodges) now provides over \$1.5 million annually in support to local organizations and nonprofits across Maine. Susan's nonprofit work centers on organizations committed to strengthening children's lives across Maine through reliable food access, improved decision making skills and better educational opportunities. Susan also volunteers her time helping the Dyslexia Center in Portland with their fundraising efforts as a member of their fundraising committee.

University of New England

Trisha Mason, M.A., is the Director of Service Learning at the University of New England (UNE). She has dedicated over a decade to building impactful community partnerships and fostering civic engagement among health professions students. Trisha oversees experiential learning initiatives that connect academic study with critical societal needs. Under her leadership, UNE's service learning program prepares future healthcare providers to understand the real-world public health challenges facing vulnerable populations. A signature program success is her founding of the "Meals for Maine" program that mobilizes hundreds of student and community volunteers to package and distribute hundreds of thousands of nutritious meals across all 16 Maine counties. She has successfully expanded the program's reach beyond university walls, forging vital community alliances with organizations like the Maine Masonic Charitable Foundation and regional healthcare groups.



Trisha Mason

***Developing High-Impact Student Service Initiatives
Powered by Community Partnerships***

PANEL

Volunteering Across Lifespans



Commissioner
Betsy Sawyer-Martin
Seniors Plus

Elisa Fleig has worked at Preble Street for nearly five years, supporting the organization's mission to empower people experiencing problems with homelessness, housing, hunger, and poverty, and to advocate for solutions to these problems. As Volunteer Program Manager, she leads volunteer engagement, corporate partnerships, and community outreach, connecting thousands

of volunteers with meaningful service opportunities each year.

Elisa enjoys sharing practical strategies for building sustainable partnerships and strengthening community engagement.



Elisa Fleig
Preble Street

Noël Bonam is the Maine State Director for AARP and, in that role, serves as the primary liaison with Maine's Members of Congress, the Governor, and state legislators. He helps develop and steer the AARP Maine state plan for advocacy, outreach, and engagement. Noël formally served as President of The Global Institute and the Director of the Bureau for Multicultural Affairs for the State of Maine. He has a Master's in Public Personnel Management, and is a graduate of the Mid-Career Executive

Program in State and Local Government from the Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University.



Noël Bonam
AARP

Rick Wilson is currently the Extended Learning Opportunity (ELO) Specialist within the DOE's Workforce Development and Innovative Pathways office. Rick also works for Brunswick High School as their Extended Learning and Community Outreach Coordinator and manages their student volunteer program. Rick has taught in Maine for 38 years, is a graduate of the University of Maine at Farmington, and received his MA from Norwich

University. He co-founded the Maine group of ELO coordinators which works at bringing high-quality ELO experiences to students throughout Maine.



Rick Wilson
Maine Dept. of Education

Dr. Tom Meuser is a clinical psychologist, applied gerontologist, and social scientist based in Portland, Maine. He served three years as a Maine Commissioner of Community Service (2022-25). Dr. Meuser recently retired from his role as the Director of University of New England's Aging Center, a position he held for six years. Tom has engaged older volunteers throughout his three decade career. Through his work at UNE, he managed a group of 700 Legacy Scholars, older adults interested in supporting student learning about aging and contributing to research.



Tom Meuser
*Former Commissioner
and Clinical Psychologist*

PANEL

Service in Higher Education



**Commissioner
Luke Shorty**
Thomas College

Trisha Mason, M.A., is the Director of Service Learning at the University of New England (UNE). Mason oversees experiential learning initiatives that connect academic study with critical societal needs. Under her leadership, UNE's service learning program prepares future healthcare providers to understand the real-world public health challenges facing vulnerable populations. A signature program success is her founding of the "Meals for Maine" program that mobilizes hundreds of student and community volunteers to package and distribute hundreds of thousands of nutritious meals across all 16 Maine counties. Mason has successfully expanded the program's reach beyond university walls, forging vital community alliances with organizations like the Maine Masonic Charitable Foundation and regional healthcare groups.



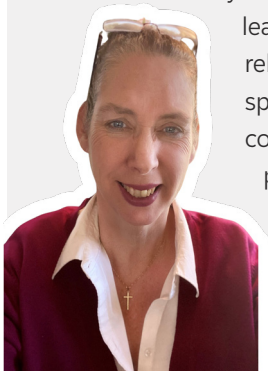
Trisha Mason
University of New England

David Gibson is the Director of Energy at College of the Atlantic. David has trained students as home energy auditors, and has led teams of students to implement efficiency improvements on more than a dozen college-owned buildings. His efforts have led to a 50 percent reduction in fossil fuel use since 2021, and all campus electricity is now sourced from local solar projects. He leads the COA Community Energy Center, which is focused on engaging students in community-based projects including home energy audits, presentations, and workshops. Over the last three years, the Community Energy Center has hosted two full- and five part-time AmeriCorps members.



David Gibson
College of the Atlantic

Dr. Brenda M. Zollitsch is Founder and President of Resilient Roots LLC, a Maine-based microbusiness focused on guiding leaders in building community and organizational resilience. Dr. Zollitsch is also faculty lecturer at the Muskie School of Public Service, where she teaches public policy, analysis and resilience building courses to graduate students. She has more than twenty years of experience working to lead and build public service-related organizations. She specializes in strategic planning, collaboration building, training, policy implementation, and water resources.



Brenda Zollitsch
University of Southern Maine

Sarah Seames is the Director of the McKeen Center for the Common Good at Bowdoin College, which provides opportunities for students to explore their understanding of the common good through volunteerism, academic connections, and community engagement. She also serves on the board of directors for the United Way of Mid Coast Maine.



Sarah Seames
McKeen Center for
the Common Good

PANEL

New Mainers Volunteer Engagement

Moderator



Commissioner
Ruben Torres
Maine Immigrant Rights Center

Nathan Davis is the Executive Director of Gateway Community Services Maine. A Portland native, Nathan is committed to building healthier, more connected communities where all people can thrive. His work focuses on community wellness, youth leadership, civic engagement, and creating spaces of belonging for immigrant and BIPOC communities across Maine.

He has a background in international relations and spent several years working in the business sector in both Maine and China.



Nathan Davis

Gateway Community Services Maine

Sophia Doremus is the Community Engagement and Development Coordinator at Furniture Friends. With four years of experience in the non-profit field, she focuses on community development through volunteer engagement, with an emphasis on creating fun, meaningful experiences for the people who give their time.



Sophia Doremus

Furniture Friends

Amy Titcomb is the Volunteer Coordinator for Maine Association for New Americans (MANA), an immigrant-led organization that promotes the social and personal empowerment of immigrants. Amy has coordinated the Welcoming the Stranger program since 2019, which included ushering the program from being an unincorporated volunteer-run project into formally becoming a program of

MANA in 2022. Prior to that, Amy has been involved with several nonprofit and civic groups, holding the varied roles of volunteer, staff, and board member.



Amy Titcomb

Maine Association for New Americans

Prior to moving to Maine in 2003, Carol Kalajainen lived primarily in New Jersey, Malaysia, and France. She is now a retired English language teacher who has worked with children, university students, and business people. Carol's involvement with Maine's New Mainer community began in 2014 when she volunteered at Portland Adult Ed. She was among the founding members of the all-volunteer MidCoast New Mainers Group which serves the immigrant community in the Bath, Brunswick, and Topsham area.



Carol Kalajainen

MidCoast New Mainers Group

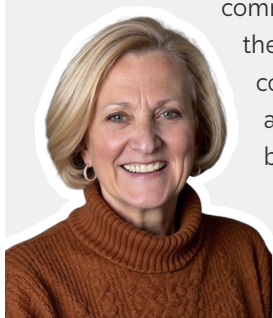
PLENARY

H.R.1. Update & Remote Volunteering



Maureen Kendzierski
Volunteer Maine Staff

Jennifer Thompson is the Executive Director of NAMI Maine, a role she has held for the past four years, leading advocacy, education, support, and awareness efforts for individuals and families affected by mental illness. She brings 28 years of nonprofit leadership experience spanning mental health, food insecurity, and healthcare, with a career-long focus on expanding access to care and services for underserved populations. Under her leadership, NAMI Maine has strengthened community partnerships across the state and continues to collaborate with policymakers and community leaders to better serve Mainers.



Jennifer Thompson
NAMI

Dr. Jennifer Crittenden is an associate professor of social work at the University of Maine and Associate Director for Research at the UMaine Center on Aging. With over 20 years of experience, her work focuses on older adult health, caregiving, and volunteerism. Her current research, funded by AmeriCorps, explores virtual volunteering and older adult workforce development. Dr. Crittenden specializes in translating academic findings into impactful public education programs, community events, and professional resources.



Jennifer Crittenden
UMaine Center
on Aging

Alan Smith started with the Red Cross four years ago working as an Engagement specialist within Volunteer Services covering Maine, New Hampshire and Vermont.



Alan Smith
Red Cross

