



Conversations on Technology, Accessibility, and Affordability

Presented by:
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College of
**Nursing and
Health Professions**

Drexel University
Bossone Research Enterprise Center
3140 Market Street,
Philadelphia, PA 19104

Thursday, September 10, 2026





The Farnese Symposium, honoring the legacy of philanthropist, educator, and entrepreneur Andrew N. Farnese, is a forum where experts on aging and providers of services to the aged can focus on the issues of medicine, housing, community services, behavioral health challenges, health insurance and quality of life enrichment as they pertain to aging in Philadelphia.

This Symposium seeks to raise awareness about trends, challenges and opportunities that face the City's aging population. Using data, census projections and commentary from experts in the field, the Symposium will focus on the roles individuals, government and industry will play in addressing the future needs of the rapidly growing elderly population.

Welcome The Honorable Annette M. Rizzo (Ret.)
President, The Casa Farnese Board of Directors

Thank you for being here. You know first-hand the rewarding, yet challenging work of caring for older adults. You recognize the benefits and difficulties technology has brought to bear upon this unique segment of society – foreigners to technology who are grappling to survive in an unfamiliar and sometimes uncomfortable world. This Symposium exists because of your commitment to meeting the changing needs of this growing, often over-looked segment of society.

The Casa Farnese Board of Directors, Drexel University, our esteemed speakers and panelists and sponsors are committed to elevating the issues of aging, but also to providing professionals with a biennial forum where attendees have opportunities to forge connections, learn new information, and garner insight from aging experts to energize their research and work.

We can all agree that advances in technology have added to the quality of an older person's life provided it is accessible and affordable. Please visit the exhibitors in our new Farnese 2.0 Expo and then share your experience, insights and opinions about technology during the Design Sprint facilitated by Drexel students. Consider what you would like to have in your own tech toolkit and add to the Sprint as the Farnese Symposium and Drexel University contribute to building one for the future.

It is our hope that what you hear and see today will support you in your work, but also in your own life, for we will all be braving the journey of aging at some point.



Welcome Back and Thank You

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Program Agenda

- 8 am** **Continental Breakfast and Networking** (Bossone Lobby)
Farnese 2.0 Technology Expo
- 9 a.m.** **Welcome** (Mitchell Auditorium)

Joseph Jacovini, Chairman, Casa Farnese Board of Directors
Honorable Annette M. Rizzo (ret.), President, Casa Farnese Board of Directors
- 9:10 a.m.** **Keynote Address**

Rose Ann DiMaria-Ghalili, PhD, RN, FASPEN, FAAN, FGSA
Professor and Senior Associate Dean for Research and Interim Associate Provost for Research & Innovation
Drexel University College of Nursing and Health Professionals
- 9:30 a.m.** **Case Study and Panel Discussion**

Conversations on Technology, Accessibility, and Affordability:
The Technology Toolkit for Aging in Place
- 10:30 a.m.** **Coffee Break and Expo** (Bossone Lobby)
- 11:10 a.m.** **Design Sprint/ Breakout Session** (Mitchell Auditorium)
Small groups led by Drexel Graduate Design students, professors and experts
- Noon:** **Plenary Talk**

Samar Jha, Esq., Government Affairs Director
Livable Communities, Government Affairs
Community, State & National Affairs
AARP
- 12:20 p.m.** **Design Sprint Shareback**
- 12:50 p.m.** **Presentation and Farewell**
- 1 p.m.** **Symposium Concludes**



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Since 2006, Drexel University has worked in partnership with The Farnese Symposium by providing venues where we convene, as well as, support from its College administrators and talented academics and researchers. We are grateful for our relationships with:



- The College of Medicine
- The Thomas Kline School of Law
- The College of Nursing and Health Professions
- The Antoinette Westphal College of Media Arts & Design

Special thanks to Drexel University President Antonio Merlo, PhD for “holding space” for Farnese Symposium to return this year; to Mr. William Swoope for graciously connecting us to the Drexel Institutional Services, Catering and AV professionals who supported the Steering Committee in planning today’s event.

Thank
you!

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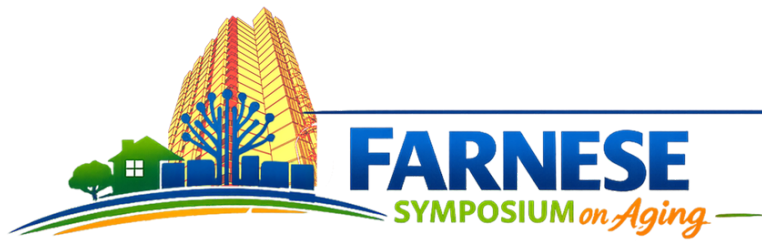
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Keynote Speaker

Rose Ann DiMaria-Ghalili, PhD, RN, FASPEN, FAAN, FGSA
Professor of Nursing and Senior Associate Dean for Research
Drexel University College of Nursing and Health Professions

Rose Ann DiMaria-Ghalili, PhD, RN, FASPEN, FAAN, FGSA, is a Professor of Nursing and Senior Associate Dean for Research in the College of Nursing and Health Professions at Drexel University. She is also the Interim Associate Vice Provost for Research and Innovation.

Dr. DiMaria-Ghalili is an internationally recognized nurse scientist, educator, inventor, and academic leader whose work has advanced the fields of aging, nutrition, chronic disease management, and health equity. Her research focuses on improving the health and quality of life of older adults through innovative, interdisciplinary approaches that bridge nursing, engineering, technology, and healthcare delivery.

A hallmark of her career has been fostering interdisciplinary collaborations that bring together nursing, engineering, medicine, and community partners in the development of technology-based solutions to support aging in place and self-management of chronic conditions. In collaboration with biomedical engineering colleagues, she has led clinical research on medical devices designed for use in the home and community, helping to advance patient-centered technologies that support independent living. She is also the lead inventor of a patented device developed with engineering partners to monitor fluid intake among older adults and other at-risk populations, a project supported through NIH and translational research funding.

Beyond technology innovation, Dr. DiMaria-Ghalili has contributed to important public policy and community-based research initiatives. Her work with AARP Pennsylvania examined healthcare access and disparities among older adults and underserved communities, helping to inform discussions around healthy aging and health equity. In addition to her scholarly achievements, Dr. DiMaria-Ghalili has been a dedicated mentor, leader of federally funded training programs, and champion for interdisciplinary research throughout her career. She is a Fellow of both the American Academy of Nursing and the Gerontological Society of America and is widely recognized for translating research into practical solutions that improve people's lives.



Plenary Speaker

Samar Jha, Esq.,

Government Affairs Director

Livable Communities, Government Affairs

Community, State & National Affairs

AARP

Samar Jha serves as a Government Affairs Director in AARP's national government affairs team. Samar leads AARP's local and state housing advocacy for their fifty-three (53) state offices, which includes the fifty (50) states, District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, and American Virgin Islands. Samar is part of AARP's housing core team and a tactic lead for AARP's housing enterprise strategy. Samar represents AARP before local and state governing bodies and manages relationships with elected and appointed officials with advocacy on housing and livability policies that support AARP members.

Prior to AARP, Samar served as the Director of Government and Public Affairs at the Greater Philadelphia Association of REALTORS®, where he represented the association's interest at the local and state level. Samar has a Master of Public Administration (MPA) from Fels Institute of Government, University of Pennsylvania and a Master of Laws (LLM) from the University of Pennsylvania Law School. Samar also has a Bachelor of Arts (BA) and Bachelor of Laws (LLB) from Nalsar University of Law, Hyderabad, India. Samar is a dual qualified attorney with a license to practice law in India (State of Delhi) and in the United States of America (New York State).

Case Study: Conversations on Technology, Accessibility, and Affordability: *The Technology Toolkit for Aging in Place*



Moderator:

D.S. Nicholas, PhD, NCIDQ, AIA, LEED GA, ASID,
Professor, Drexel University Antoinette Westphal
College of Media Arts & Design, Director, MS Design
Research, MDes, Drexel Design Research for Health Lab

D.S. Nicholas (Dee) established the Drexel Design Research for Health (DRDR4Health) lab, where she conducts interdisciplinary research and scholarship, in 2013. She is a tenured Professor and the Founding Director of the MS Design Program and longtime coordinator of the Sustainability in the Built Environment Minor at Drexel University in Philadelphia. Dee holds a BARCH from Carnegie Mellon, an MFA from The University of the Arts, and a Social Science Ph.D. from Antioch University. Her work as a researcher, teacher, and colleague is primarily concerned with health-supportive and climate preparedness possibilities within our environments through evidence-based design, creative co-design, and community engaged practice. For 15+ years, she has deeply collaborated across health, science, technology, engineering, and math disciplinary bounds, and often is the design and community voice on these interdisciplinary teams.

Dr. Nicholas believes all environments are health environments, and her current work focuses on aging in place including an evidence based measure co-created with community, The Mantua Creative Standard for Aging in Place (MCSAP). A tool used to retrofit spaces to support aging-in-place. She believes that connecting people to care, mitigating climate impacts and long term use of existing buildings are intrinsically linked. Her work springs from her formative experiences as a first gen. third culture kid and MENA woman. She has developed a process entitled “Insightful Design Thinking” (Nicholas, 2023) built through 20+ years of evidence based community social impact work. Her lab takes a culture of care-centered socially responsive approach to the research they undertake, and recently she exhibited and presented research works in Switzerland, Australia, Europe, the Midwest, and the East Coast. Dee’s work has been both federally and foundation funded and is presented in National, and International, Journals.



Symposium Panelists



Sharon Cilione-Berger

Vice President of Emerging Technology
Comcast

Sharon Cilione-Berger is Vice President of Emerging Products at Comcast, where she leads new product discovery—identifying emerging trends and consumer needs to shape the company's next generation of products and business opportunities, with a growing focus on healthcare innovation. Over nearly 20 years, she has defined and delivered products scaled to millions of customers, spanning entertainment products, customer experiences, and AI-powered virtual assistants, consistently turning consumer insight into measurable business results. She is known for taking products from early concept to enterprise-scale execution, with a sharp instinct for what customers need next.



Norma B. Coe, PhD

Professor of Medical Ethics and Health Policy at the
Perelman School of Medicine, Director of Research at
Penn Leonard Davis Institute

Norma B. Coe, PhD is a Professor of Medical Ethics and Health Policy at the Perelman School of Medicine and the Director of Research at Penn Leonard Davis Institute. Her research interests are in health economics and public finance. Dr. Coe's work strives to identify causal effects of policies that directly and indirectly impact health, human behavior, health care access, and health care utilization. A major focus of her research has been long-term care access, costs, insurance, and delivery, with a particular emphasis on people living with Alzheimer's disease and related dementias (ADRD). Dr. Coe holds a PhD in Economics from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology



Ken Honeycutt

Samsung Director of Healthcare, Commercialization
Samsung Electronics America

Ken Honeycutt has decades of experience in healthcare technology, having held pivotal leadership roles at industry giants like Samsung Health, Cerner, McKesson, IBM, and UPMC's Smartroom initiative. With his expertise in harnessing digital health innovations, along with a track record of seamlessly integrating technology and healthcare. His strategic insights and passion for collaboration are instrumental in advancing healthcare innovation.



Karen Lindgren PhD

Licensed Psychologist
Chief Clinical Officer, Bancroft

Karen Lindgren, Ph.D., is the Executive Vice President and Chief Clinical Officer at Bancroft. She oversees Healthcare and Nursing Services, the Applied Behavior Analysis Center of Excellence, and quality assurance across the organization. A licensed psychologist, Dr. Lindgren has more than 25 years of experience in neuropsychological assessment and treatment of brain injury and neurological impairment.

She joined Bancroft in 1997 as a senior neuropsychologist at Bancroft NeuroRehab and most recently served as the program's senior director, supervising rehabilitation therapies in Central and Southern New Jersey, managing clinical staff, and maintaining several university partnerships. In her role as CCO, Dr. Lindgren has focused on expanding partnerships with universities, healthcare systems, and innovative technology partners. She participates actively in research and presentations. Dr. Lindgren received her Ph.D. and M.A. in Clinical/Community Psychology from the University of Maryland and her B.A. from Loyola University.



Jeff Rose

Director of Special Initiatives
Older Adults Technology Services (OATS) from AARP

Jeff has been working in the field of aging for more than 15 years. His expertise spans a range of settings, including life-plan communities, community-based organizations, and an age-tech startup.

Jeff received his B.S. in Hospitality Management from the Ohio State University and an M.B.A. from Roosevelt University in Chicago. His dedication to working with technology and older adults, which is rooted in his upbringing, has continued as he draws upon his hospitality background and passion for technology and healthy living in his leadership.

Based in Chicago, Jeff is active in a variety of local aging and community organizations and enjoys sharing his knowledge about how technology can impact and benefit older adults.

The Farnese Symposium on Aging remains a free event for professionals who “touch the hands of seniors” due to the generous financial support of our corporate sponsors.

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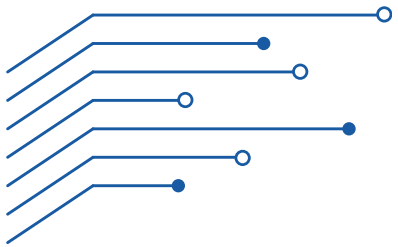


Laura Weinbaum, MBA, MGA
Chief Operating Officer
Philadelphia Corporation for Aging

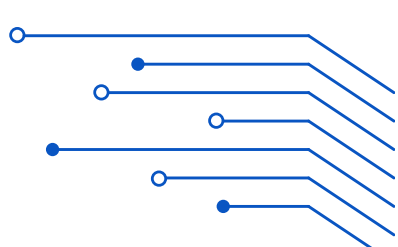
Laura Weinbaum serves as Chief Operating Officer of Philadelphia Corporation for Aging (PCA), Philadelphia County's Area Agency on Aging. She leads PCA's client-facing program operations, including long-term care, helpline services, senior centers, meals, home modifications, and other community-based supports for older adults, caregivers, and people with disabilities. Laura brings extensive experience in nonprofit operations, organizational development, quality improvement, advocacy, strategic planning, and systems change.

Prior to joining PCA, Laura spent many years at Project HOME, where her work deepened her commitment to housing stability, community-based services, and systems-level solutions for people experiencing poverty, homelessness, and other complex barriers. Her first love was technology, as she was one of the founding staff of LibertyNet, Philadelphia's first community network, and then the Rockefeller Technology Project. In her role at PCA, she helps lead cross-organizational efforts to modernize service delivery, strengthen accountability, improve consumer access, and build the operational capacity needed to meet the needs of older adults and people with disabilities in Philadelphia.

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Farnese Symposium



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The Legacy of

Andrew N. Farnese, Esq.

Philanthropist, Educator and Entrepreneur

Andrew N. Farnese, Esquire personifies all that is noble, virtuous and heroic in twentieth century American life. His career is a testament to his commitment to professional and business excellence, public service and, most importantly, his faith, his family and his heritage. He has set the standard for achievement.

Mr. Farnese's distinguished career commenced with his degrees from Temple University (1927) and Temple University Law School (1940) following his graduation from Southern High School. He soon established himself as an outstanding attorney and counselor. Although his lawyer skills were in great demand from major clients, he always found time to serve the needs of the most humble client, including many Italian immigrants. His successful law practice soon attracted the attention of the corporate community. This led to the founding of Lincoln National Bank with Richardson Dilworth, to the presidency of the Pfeiffer Foundation and General Compost Corp., to a directorship with Colonial Penn Life Insurance Company and to the founding of William Penn Bank.

Throughout his career, he never ignored his call of public service, first, the call to military service as an Army Ordinance Officer in World War II. Later, he served as Special Deputy Attorney General for the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, followed by a term as Chairman of the Philadelphia Gas Works. He was again called to duty to serve as a member and Vice President of the Board of Education of the City of Philadelphia. Notwithstanding the tremendous demands of his professional and public business career and public service, Andrew Farnese gave generously of his time and resources to worthy charitable and civic causes. He pioneered the creation of housing for the elderly with the founding of Casa Fermi, on Lombard Street in Philadelphia, in 1964, the first ever HUD sponsored housing in the city. He was an outspoken advocate on behalf of the city's senior citizens whom he called "the true aristocracy of our country." In 2003, Casa Fermi was renamed Casa Farnese in his honor.

His interests also included the advancement of education, Italian language and culture and the arts. For his efforts in these endeavors, he received numerous awards, decorations and honors, including the Papal Decoration of the Lateran Cross-First Class, the decoration of the Grande Ufficiale, Republic of Italy and the Purple Aster Award, Order Sons of Italy in America.

Andrew Farnese enriched the community. His vision, dedication, and passion for life distinguished him as “the First Man” in Philadelphia. The Farnese Symposium on Aging honors his vision and innovative thinking on behalf of the aged and provides a forum to address the challenges of aging in our community.

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*Indebted to Nora Dowd Eisenhower, Esq. of AARP for her
friendship, wisdom, guidance and decades-long support of
The Farnese Symposium and its Steering Committees.*