



The State of Aging

*Benefiting Aging Solutions
Foundation*

Presented by Central Ohio Area Agency on Aging



An event to highlight COAAA's community impact and
celebrate sixteen remarkable older adults.

The Grand Event Center
May 21, 2026



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The Central Ohio Area Agency on Aging (COAAA) is thrilled to welcome you to The State of Aging. This evening's event will briefly highlight COAAA's work in its eight-county service area — Delaware, Fairfield, Fayette, Franklin, Licking, Madison, Pickaway, and Union counties — and our impact in helping older adults and individuals with disabilities live with dignity and independence. We're excited to share our work with you and touch on future trends in aging and disability services in central Ohio.

Accompanying COAAA in this evening's spotlight is the celebration of the "16 over 60" honorees. This is an award celebrating the contributions of our region's older adults. We invite you to learn more about each honoree by reading their biographies provided in this program.

COAAA also extends a special thank you to our sponsors. Each sponsor made The State of Aging possible. Funds raised from sponsorships, along with the support of this evening's guests, will benefit the Aging Solutions Foundation, which helps COAAA consumers with housing and utility emergencies that may not be covered by insurance or other funding sources.

COAAA is immensely grateful for your support and we hope you enjoy this evening's program and celebration.

**COAAA thanks the following sponsors for making
The State of Aging possible!**

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Congratulations to the 2026 16 Over 60 Honorees!

Janet Bickle, Licking County
Mike Comber, Franklin County
David Dhume, Madison County
Rosie N. Doughty, PhD., Franklin County
Alice Frazier, Delaware County
Shirley Good, Pickaway County
Karen Heiser, Franklin County
Darlene Newsome, Franklin County
Bob Roehm, Franklin County
Callie Rucker, Licking County
Allen Simmons, Franklin County
Jacqueline Stevens, Franklin County
Wanda Stevens, Fayette County
Pat Wallace, Fairfield County
Gayle Wanamaker, Franklin County
Becki Williams, Delaware County

Janet Bickle

Licking County



Janet Bickle, 70, from Newark, is recognized for her exceptional leadership, resilience, and hands-on service across Licking County. Through Newark Kiwanis, including serving as president (2023–2024), she led impactful initiatives such as organizing an “iSee” event that provided free eyeglasses to 60 students and chairing the 2025 Newark Strawberry Festival, raising \$30,000 for Camp O’Bannon.

After her church lost its sanctuary, Janet helped pivot efforts toward expanded community outreach, launching programs that support individuals experiencing homelessness and fostering partnerships with local organizations. She mentors youth and adults through K-Kids, Key Club, and Aktion Club, modeling lifelong civic engagement. Her leadership has strengthened community networks, increased access to essential services, and inspired others to serve.

Even in retirement, she remains highly active, demonstrating that service can grow with age. Janet’s lasting impact is seen in improved opportunities for youth, stronger collaborations, and a more connected, compassionate community.

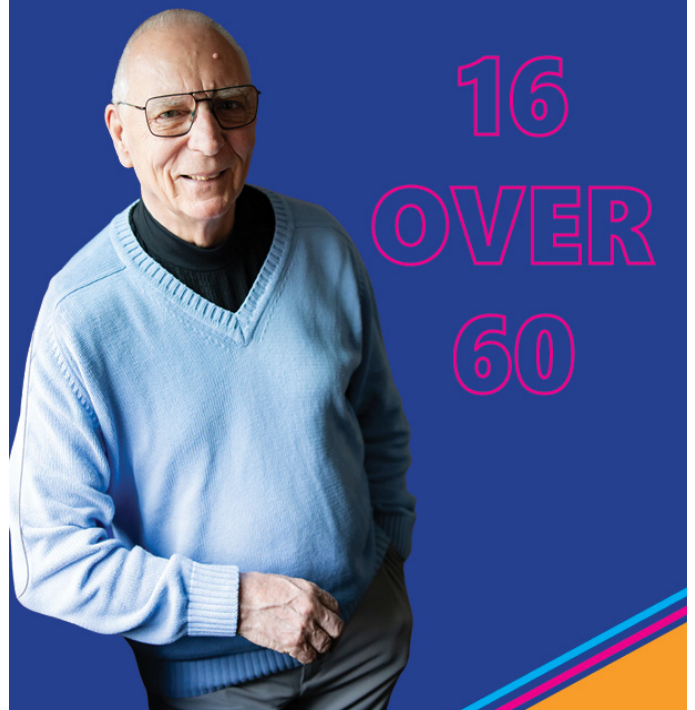
Michael Comber, 81, from Westerville, is a lifelong volunteer whose unwavering commitment to service has shaped his family and community. Even while working full time, he dedicated himself to giving back—supporting his church, schools, and local elections. In retirement, his service has only expanded, volunteering several days each week in meaningful, hands-on roles.

For over a decade, Michael has delivered nearly 500 Meals-on-Wheels routes through LifeCare Alliance, providing nourishment and companionship to homebound seniors. He also serves as a Blood Transportation Specialist with the American Red Cross, ensuring hospitals across Central Ohio have critical blood supplies. As a leader of the “Sound the Alarm” campaign, he coordinates volunteers to install smoke detectors and improve home safety.

Michael leads with humility, heart, and purpose—quietly meeting needs others might overlook. His servant leadership, generosity, and dedication continue to inspire those around him and strengthen the community he so selflessly serves.

Mike Comber

Franklin County, Columbus



David Dhume

Madison County



16
OVER
60

David Dhume, 72, from London, is recognized for a lifetime of dedicated public service and servant leadership. With more than three decades of involvement, including 21 years as a Madison County Commissioner, he has consistently worked to strengthen communities through collaboration, integrity, and hands-on leadership. David has led and contributed to numerous regional efforts, including jail oversight, multi-county solid waste management, and workforce development initiatives impacting 43 counties across Ohio.

A strong advocate for families and vulnerable populations, he has supported organizations such as the Madison County Family Council, Community Action Organization (where he served as President), and Rocking Horse Community Health Center, helping expand access to essential services.

His leadership has driven improvements in infrastructure, community partnerships, and regional coordination. A lifelong resident of Madison County, David's enduring commitment has created lasting benefits for his community

and serves as a powerful example of service and civic responsibility.

Rosie N. Doughty, PhD 81, from Blacklick, is a distinguished educator and community leader whose lifetime of service has made a lasting impact. A graduate of The Ohio State University, she made history as the first African American woman permanently appointed as District Superintendent in East Cleveland and later served as Assistant Director of Urban Education, advancing equity and opportunity in schools.

In retirement, Dr. Doughty founded Aunt Rosie Cares (ARC), continuing her dedication to mentorship, caregiving support, and intergenerational connection. She actively supports college students, caregivers, and seniors, ensuring individuals remain engaged, supported, and empowered.

Known for her compassion, integrity, and faith, Dr. Doughty leads with purpose and inspires others through both her achievements and everyday acts of kindness. Her legacy reflects transformative leadership, resilience, and a deep commitment to community.

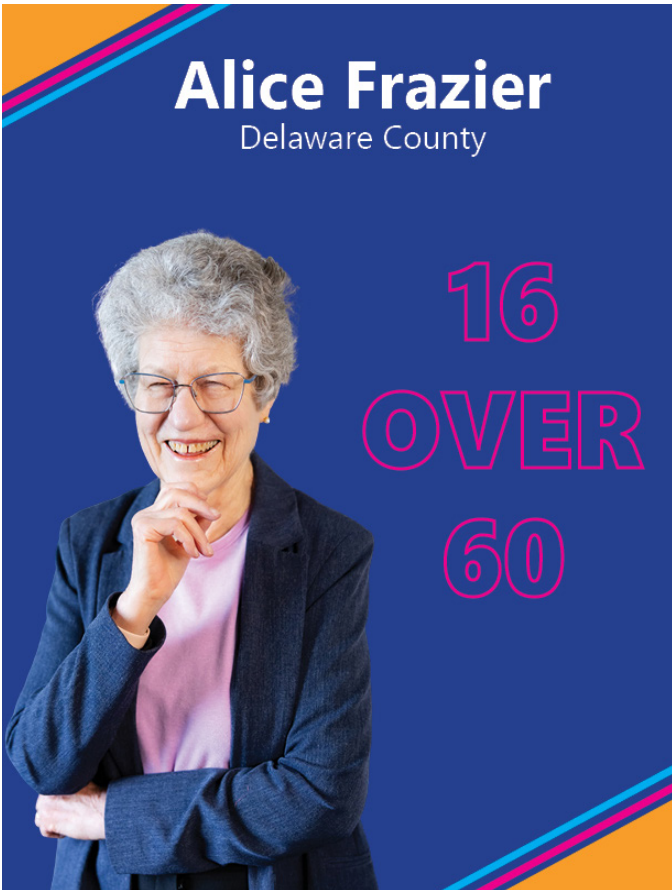
Through her ongoing service, she continues to uplift others and demonstrate that leadership and impact only grow stronger with time.

Rosie N. Doughty, PhD.

Franklin County



16
OVER
60



Alice Frazier
Delaware County

Alice Frazier, 78, from Delaware, is a retired physician and dedicated community leader whose decades of service have strengthened public health, civic engagement, and local organizations. Known for her humility and thoughtful leadership, she served more than 10 years on SourcePoint’s board, including as President, guiding the organization through growth while keeping a strong focus on the needs of older adults and caregivers.

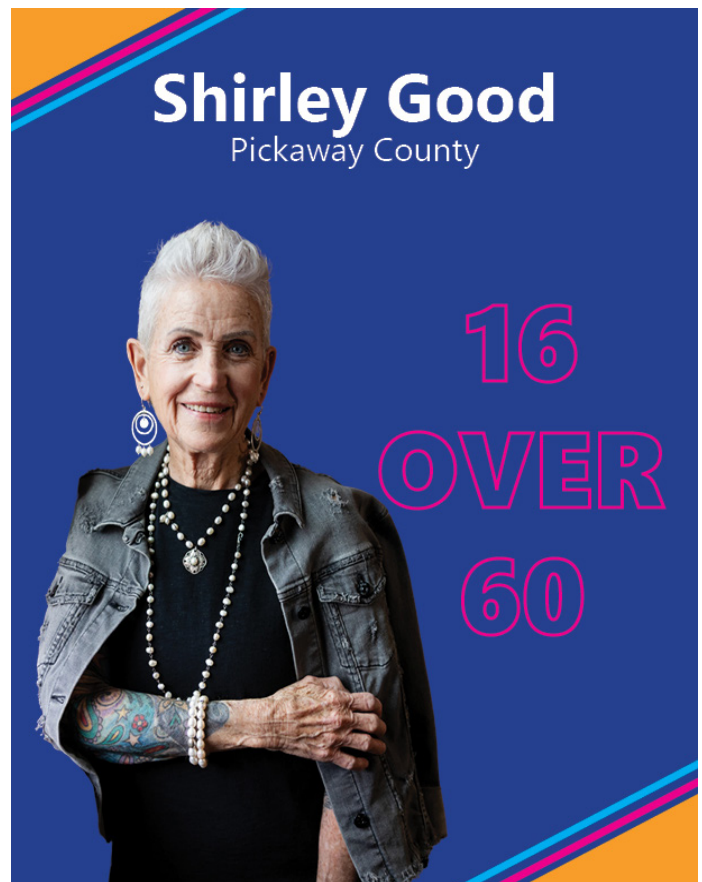
Alice has also played key leadership roles with the Delaware Historical Society, the League of Women Voters, and several countywide health initiatives, helping shape programs that promote wellness, equity, and community involvement. Her work in governance, fundraising, and strategic planning has supported sustainable, mission-driven impact across organizations.

Respected for her collaborative approach and willingness to serve wherever needed, Alice leads by example. Through mentorship, advocacy, and quiet dedication, she has inspired others and left a lasting legacy of service, leadership, and meaningful community change.

Shirley Good, 73, from Circleville, is a lifelong volunteer whose compassion and leadership have made a lasting impact on her community. A dedicated member of Circleville Sunrise Rotary, she actively supports programs like the Community Kitchen and the Emergency Clearing House, inspiring multiple generations of her family to serve alongside her.

Throughout her career, Shirley combined professional work with service, including over 2,000 volunteer hours with the Scioto Paint Valley Crisis Hotline and 25 years as a Drivers Intervention Specialist. Her expertise led to leadership roles on the 5-County Mental Health Board and the Ohio State Credentialing Board.

Today, she continues her service as a CASA/GAL child advocate, supporting vulnerable youth. A former educator and counselor, Shirley has always been committed to guiding others. Known for her warmth and generosity, she exemplifies “Service Above Self,” leaving a legacy of compassion, mentorship, and community impact.



Shirley Good
Pickaway County

Karen Heiser

Franklin County



Karen Heiser, 74, from Upper Arlington, is a visionary leader whose lifelong commitment to community, collaboration, and service has transformed how older adults are supported. She co-led the creation of Chai 614, a faith-based “village” initiative rooted in Jewish values that connects older adults, reduces isolation, and promotes aging with dignity. Through her leadership, she has mobilized volunteers, built partnerships, and advanced innovative, community-driven solutions.

Throughout her career and retirement, Karen has championed education, health, and inclusion—developing national medical training programs, leading initiatives at Nationwide Children’s Hospital, and supporting diverse community organizations. She also has established endowments and programs that expand engagement, social connection, and leadership opportunities for older adults.

Karen inspires others through her deep belief in inclusive communities, collaboration, and lifelong purpose. Her lasting impact is seen in stronger networks, empowered

individuals, and a forward-looking vision that is reshaping how communities support aging populations.

Darlene Newsome, 70, from Columbus, is a vital presence at Central Community House, where she serves as the welcoming face and heart of the organization. More than a receptionist, she ensures every person who enters is treated with dignity and leaves with a sense of hope. Passionate about senior issues, she has led community conversations on housing instability and rising costs, while helping seniors access technology training and devices to stay connected.

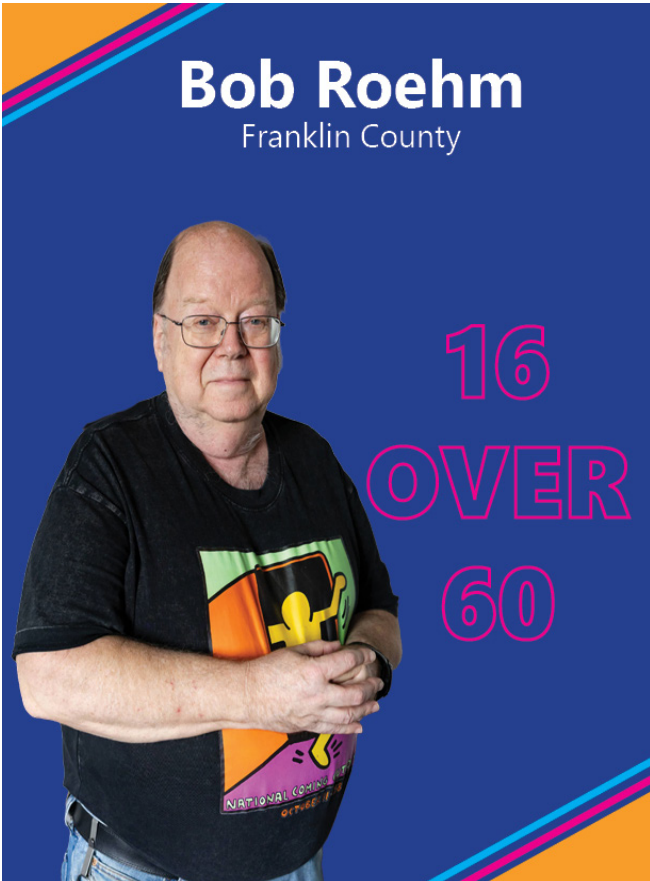
Darlene inspires others through her selflessness and belief that everyone deserves care and respect. She has helped shift the organization’s culture—encouraging staff to view those they serve as “neighbors” and to always offer hope, even in difficult moments.

Her impact is deeply personal and lasting. Known as a tireless advocate, she provides encouragement, connection, and compassion to all. Guided by her life experiences and belief that “people matter most,” Darlene continues to uplift and strengthen her community every day.

Darlene Newsome

Franklin County





Bob Roehm, 72, from Upper Arlington, is recognized for his decades-long commitment to disability advocacy and inclusive community development. After sustaining a traumatic brain injury, he transformed his lived experience into meaningful action, advocating for safer, more accessible transportation and public spaces. Known for his calm, thoughtful demeanor, Bob fosters collaboration and encourages inclusive dialogue.

Appointed in 2025 to the Columbus Advisory Commission on Disability Issues by Mayor Andrew J. Ginther, he advises on policies impacting people with disabilities. He has also served with the Mid-Ohio Board for an Independent Living Environment and COTA's Accessible Transportation Advisory Committee.

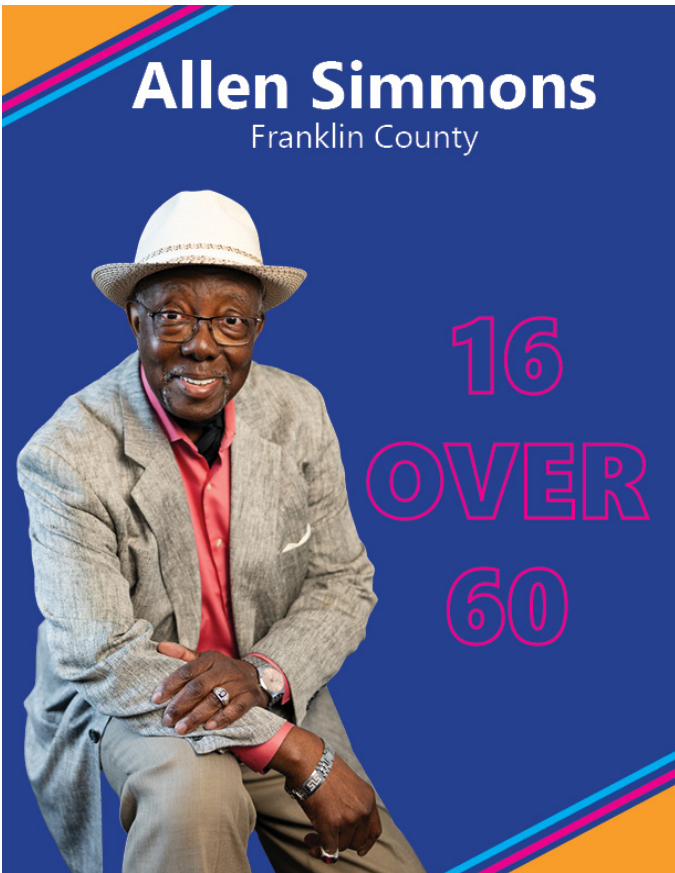
Bob's advocacy has led to practical improvements, such as clearer transit stop announcements and safer infrastructure through reporting hazards. Beyond disability work, he supports LGBTQ and interfaith communities and homelessness initiatives. His lifelong dedication continues to create a more accessible, inclusive community for all.

Callie Rucker, 80, from Newark, is a dedicated volunteer whose more than 20 years of service have made a lasting impact on students and the broader community. At Newark High School, she mentors and uplifts youth, encouraging confidence, resilience, and self-worth with her signature message to "treat yourself as a diamond." Her ability to connect with students helps them feel seen, supported, and valued during challenging times.

Beyond the school, Callie serves with The Salvation Army, Newark Homeless Outreach, and the Holy Trinity Church Warming Center, supporting vulnerable individuals and families. A former home care aide, she brings compassion, faith, and wisdom to all she does.

Callie's life reflects strength, perseverance, and a deep belief in giving back. Her encouragement continues to inspire generations, fostering hope, dignity, and positive choices. She is a powerful example that service, leadership, and impact have no age limit.





Allen Simmons, 79, from Columbus, is a dedicated Foster Grandparent who has spent nearly a decade mentoring and tutoring students in Columbus City Schools. Known for his compassion, enthusiasm, and belief in every child's potential, Allen builds meaningful connections by sharing life experiences that inspire learning, perseverance, and kindness. His presence brings stability and warmth to classrooms, where he is greeted daily with excitement from students.

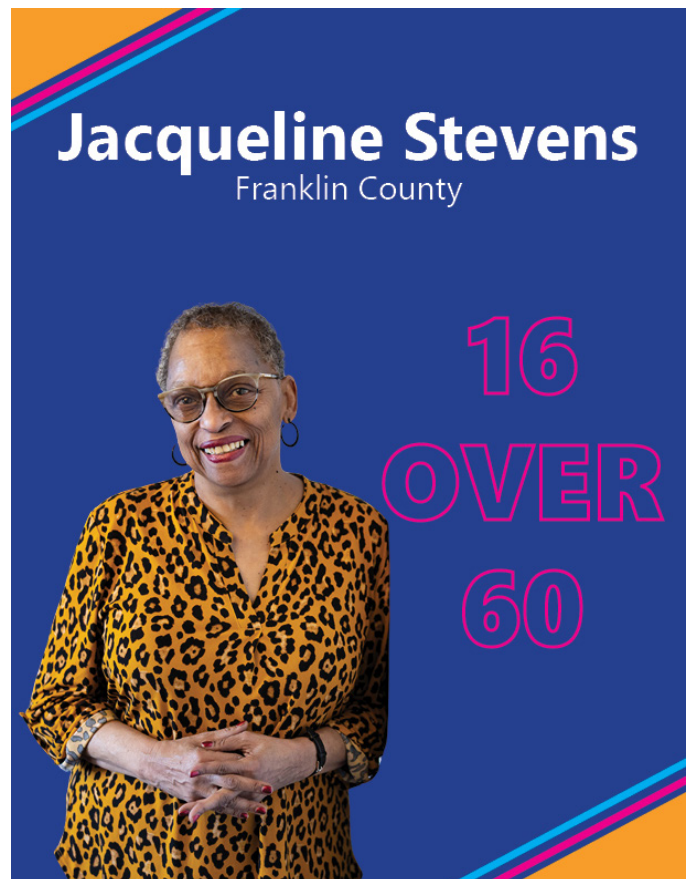
Beyond his work with children, Allen serves as a mentor and encourager to fellow Foster Grandparents, especially those new to the program. He shares insights, offers reassurance, and helps others feel confident in their roles. A strong advocate for intergenerational service, he actively promotes the program within his community.

Allen's lasting impact is seen in the students he uplifts, the peers he supports, and the community he inspires through his leadership, generosity, and lifelong commitment to service.

Jackie Stevens, 70, from Columbus, has dedicated more than 20 years to volunteering at The Salvation Army on E. Main Street, becoming an indispensable part of the organization. Known for her compassion and tireless work ethic, she supports a wide range of services, including the food pantry serving over 600 families monthly, utility and rental assistance, senior food programs, and holiday initiatives. She also helps manage hundreds of daily calls, ensuring individuals receive timely support and resources.

A mentor to staff and volunteers alike, Jackie has trained numerous case managers and shares her deep knowledge of programs to strengthen service delivery. Despite retiring from a full-time government career, she continues to serve daily—driven purely by her desire to help others.

Jackie's lasting impact is seen in the trust and comfort she provides to those in need. She creates a welcoming, judgment-free environment, making her a beloved and legendary figure in her community.





Wanda Stevens, 78, from Washington Court House, is recognized for a decade of outstanding service as a Senior Companion, marked by compassion, reliability, and genuine care. Initially hesitant to join the program, she stepped outside her comfort zone and became a trusted presence for her clients. Wanda goes beyond basic tasks, building meaningful relationships that reduce loneliness and foster dignity and independence. She supports clients with errands and appointments while creating joyful experiences through activities and social connection.

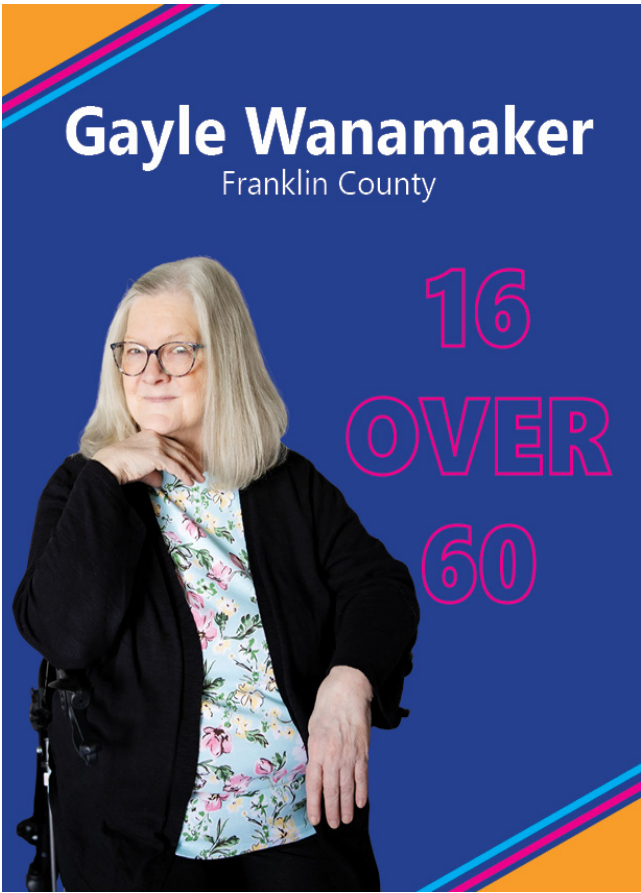
As an Advisory Council member, she contributes insights that strengthen and expand the program. Wanda also promotes volunteerism through community outreach, inspiring others to serve despite challenges. Her empathy, persistence, and belief in the power of human connection have created a lasting ripple effect in her community. Through both direct service and advocacy, Wanda has improved quality of life for older adults and helped grow a culture of compassion and engagement.

William "Pat" Wallace, 71, from Pickerington, is being honored for his leadership and commitment to community service in retirement. After a 49-year engineering career, he dedicated himself to bringing people together to support children, families, and older adults.

Pat played a key role in launching the Faith-Based Initiative through the Pickerington Area Resource Coalition, uniting local churches to coordinate volunteers and meet community needs. He also revitalized struggling programs with the St. Vincent de Paul Society, introduced new initiatives like scrap metal recycling and monthly gatherings, and supported advocacy efforts through the Voice for the Poor program.

Known for his ability to build connections and inspire collaboration, Pat has created sustainable systems that continue to serve those in need. His leadership has strengthened community partnerships and ensured ongoing support for vulnerable populations, leaving a lasting and meaningful impact.





Gayle Wanamaker, 72 from Hilliard, is a resilient leader and advocate who has transformed personal hardship into meaningful community impact. After surviving two transit accidents that left her permanently disabled, she became a powerful voice for older adults, using art, education, and advocacy to reduce isolation and inspire connection. Through virtual classes, public presentations, and creative programming, she empowers individuals facing chronic illness and mobility challenges.

Gayle serves on COAAA's Advisory Council, COTA's Accessible Transportation Advisory Committee, and the Age-Friendly Innovation Center's Resident Council. She also leads a Sjogren's support group and facilitates online classes in art, gardening, and civic education. Her work ensures accessibility and inclusion, particularly for those unable to participate in person.

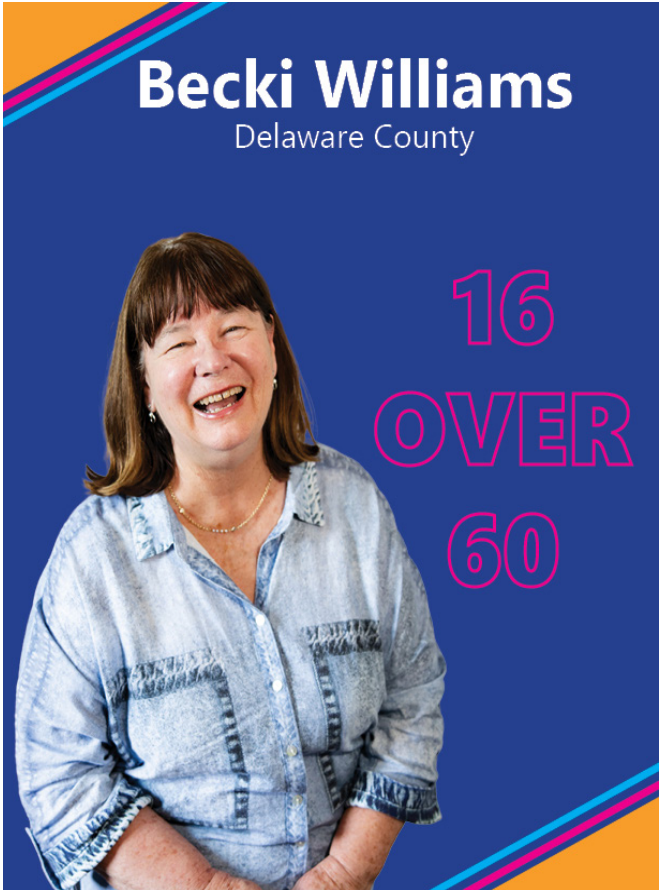
By sharing her story and amplifying the voices of others, Gayle has influenced systems, strengthened community engagement, and fostered belonging. Her dedication, creativity, and advocacy make her a powerful champion

for aging with dignity and purpose.

Becki Williams, 70, from Delaware, is honored for her extraordinary dedication to older adults through her volunteer work with SourcePoint. Since 2023, she has provided over 350 medical transportation trips, driving more than 17,000 miles and contributing approximately 600 hours—making her the program's top volunteer.

A retired social worker and former caregiver, Becki combines professional expertise with deep compassion, ensuring clients reliably access critical healthcare services. Her clear communication, punctuality, and calm demeanor build trust and reduce anxiety for those she serves. Beyond transportation, she monitors client well-being and supports early intervention when concerns arise.

Becki's life reflects resilience, having overcome personal challenges and dedicated her career to helping others. Her work ensures older adults maintain independence, health, and dignity while strengthening the broader care network. Through consistent, selfless service, she has made a lasting impact, creating a more accessible and compassionate community for those most in need.





Do you need help in the home? Are you caring for a loved one?

COAAA helps older adults and individuals with disabilities live independently and safely in their homes for as long as possible. If you need help in the home, or if you're caring for a loved one, we have the experience and knowledge to connect you to the resources and services you need. COAAA is your connection to care.



Your
Connection
to Care

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COAAA serves Delaware, Fairfield, Fayette, Franklin, Licking, Madison, Pickaway, and Union counties.



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Central Ohio Area Agency on Aging's Medicare Outreach team can provide information about financial assistance for income-eligible Medicare beneficiaries that helps pay for monthly premiums (Part B) and prescription drugs (Part D). To learn more, and to see if you qualify, call **800-589-7277** or email medicare@coaaa.org.

This project was supported in part by grant number 2101OHMIAA/MIDR-00 from the U.S. Administration for Community Living, Department of Health and Human Services, Washington D.C. 20201. Subrecipients undertaking a project with government sponsorship are encouraged to express freely their findings and conclusions. Points of view or opinions do not, therefore, necessarily represent official ACL policy.

**COAAA thanks the following sponsors for making
The State of Aging possible!**

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157

Individuals received financial support from Aging Solutions totaling \$37,814 in the following areas



Household goods and services totaling \$14,656



Utilities (electric, water, gas) totaling \$5,402



Housing assistance totaling \$15,118



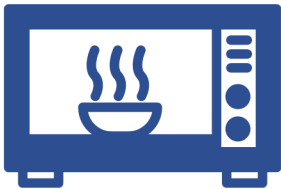
Medical goods and services totaling \$1,700



Miscellaneous items totaling \$938

104

Individuals were supported with inventory items in 2025 totaling \$7,110



30 microwaves



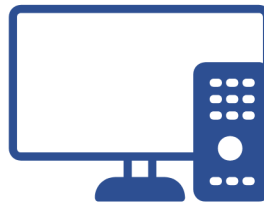
20 vacuum cleaners



18 grocery carts



9 tablets



7 televisions



31 space heaters

204

Individuals received household cleaning supplies or personal care items from the Aging Solutions Supply Closet

When you support Aging Solutions, you support vulnerable older adults and people with disabilities and help keep them living independently at home.

The average emergency or one-time financial assistance provided is around \$241 per person, which stabilizes living conditions and supports health and well-being. Your generosity will enable us to continue to assist individuals in the eight counties of the Central Ohio Area Agency on Aging service area (Delaware, Fairfield, Fayette, Franklin, Licking, Madison, Pickaway, and Union counties).

Please visit www.coaaa.org/about/aging-solutions-foundation/ for our online donation link and wish list links, or scan this QR code to visit the Aging Solutions Foundation webpage.



Aging Solutions Testimonials

“**Consumer MV** received utility assistance and has been able to maintain payments without disruption. Case Manager BW said, “Aging Solution was a tremendous help in assisting her and definitely allowed for her to maintain stable housing.”

Consumer TS received assistance with overdue electric bill due to a Social Security payment error. Case Manager AR shared, “Thank you so much! Consumer has been so stressed and so worried and this will give him a sense of peace.”

Consumer RT shared, “The new stove was delivered, installed and old one removed. Our consumer called me yesterday to let me know they cooked spaghetti and the burners all worked great.”

Case Manager AC shared the profound gratitude of a client. “I haven’t seen him that happy since I’ve started working with him (over a year ago). Thank you very much for helping him.”



Since 2002, Aging Solutions’ priority is to support the health and safety of vulnerable older adults and people with disabilities and help keep them living independently at home. Aging Solutions provides support to individuals receiving case management through the Regional Council of Governments for the Central Ohio Area Agency on Aging (COAAA) and provides emergency financial assistance for one-time rent, security deposits, and utilities; household items and repairs; medical items and safety repairs; microwaves, vacuums, fans, and space heaters; and other essential support.



Central Ohio Area Agency on Aging
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