

31st Annual
**ELDER LAW
FORUM**

MAY 14, 2026
8:00AM - 4:00PM



**MEETING THE CHALLENGE:
PROVIDING CARE TO NEW YORK'S
AGING AND DISABLED POPULATIONS**

Ageing well is the goal, but illness or disability can quickly change the picture. As demand rises and resources remain limited, how will we respond, and what does that mean for those who need care most? At the Forum, be part of these crucial conversations.

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WELCOME

WELCOME TO THE 31st ANNUAL ELDER LAW FORUM

New Yorkers are aging. Costs are rising. Demand is accelerating, while the supply of needed care is dwindling. For the past 30 years, we have tracked the efforts of NY State and federal governments to keep pace through Medicare, Medicaid, private insurance and other programs, but the lack of cohesive policies and funding has taken a toll on the providers of care, and the families needing it.

This year's Forum brings you straight to the source - delivering timely insights on how state and federal decisions are reshaping health care, long-term care, and financial security for older adults and individuals with disabilities across New York.

Today you will hear directly from legislative leaders, the heads of DOH and NYSOFA, and industry experts on the state-of-play in long-term care. Get critical updates on Community Medicaid. Cut through the noise about insurance options. Walk away with practical, real-world guidance for managing care transitions when home care is no longer viable.

And for the first time, we take on a growing and urgent threat: elder financial exploitation, unpacking how it happens, who is at risk, and what professionals can do to prevent it.

Each year the stakes get higher, but the search for solutions takes us down dead-end paths. The question is what can we do about it?

Thank you for being part of this important conversation.

-Louis Pierro, Aaron Connor, Frank Hemming



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AGENDA

TIME	SESSION	SPEAKERS
8:00-8:30AM	Registration	Visit Exhibit Tables
8:30-8:40AM	Welcome	Louis Pierro: Conference Host and Founding Partner, Pierro, Connor & Strauss
8:40-9:30AM	State Legislative Update	Benita Zahn: Moderator, Certified Health and Wellness Coach, Be Your Best with Coach Benita Jacob Ashby: NYS Senator, 43rd District Cordell Cleare: NYS Senator, 30th District, Chair, Committee on Aging Gustavo Rivera: NYS Senator, 33rd District, Chair, Committee on Health (invited)
9:30-10:00AM	Update from the Executive Branch	Dr. James McDonald: Commissioner, New York State Department of Health
10:00-10:30AM	Update from the Executive Branch	Greg Olsen: Director, New York State Office for the Aging
10:30-11:00AM	Coffee and Networking Break	Visit Exhibit Tables
11:00-11:40AM	Medicaid Home Care Update	Valerie Bogart: Of Counsel, Evelyn Frank Legal Resources Program at New York Legal Assistance Group
11:40AM -12:30PM	<u>PANEL</u> Elder Financial Abuse: Red Flags and Remedies	Aaron Connor: Moderator, Managing Partner, Pierro, Connor & Strauss Lee Kindlon: Albany County District Attorney Beth Finkel: State Director, AARP New York Andre Lingham: CEO, Safe Aging Strategies
12:30- 1:20PM	Lunch: Koi Pond	Visit Exhibit Tables
1:20-1:50PM	Insuring Long-Term Care: Private Options	Shawn Britt: Director, LTC Initiatives, Nationwide Bob Vandy: President, Advisors Insurance Brokers
1:50-2:50PM	<u>PANEL</u> Home Care: Can We Keep the Promise?	Louis Pierro: Moderator, Founding Partner, Pierro, Connor & Strauss Al Cardillo: President and CEO, HCANYS Becky Preve: Executive Director, Association on Aging in NY Joseph Twardy: President, Health Plans CAO, Nascentia Health Anne Sansevero: Co-founder, Holistic Home Care Associates
2:50-3:40PM	<u>PANEL</u> Transitioning to Assisted Living or Nursing Care: Making the Right Move	Frank Hemming: Moderator, Partner, Pierro, Connor & Strauss Josh Brody: Counsel, NYSARC Trust Services Steven Laufer: CEO, Promenade Senior Living Sandra Sullivan-Smith: Regional Vice President, Residential Services, The Eddy/SPHP and Executive Director, Our Lady of Mercy Diane Mickle Gotebiowski: Vice President, EverHome Care Advisors
3:40-4:00PM	Q&A and Oura Ring Raffle Drawing	Louis Pierro: Conference Host and Founding Partner, Pierro, Connor & Strauss



LOUIS PIERRO, ESQ.

Founding Partner, Pierro, Connor & Strauss, LLC

Louis Pierro is the Founder and Principal of a law firm with offices in the Capital Region, New York City and additional locations in Lake Placid, Hudson, Long Island and serving clients in Florida, New Jersey and Connecticut. His team of attorneys, paralegals and legal assistants serve clients in the areas of Estate and Trust Planning, Elder Law, Estate and Trust Administration, Estate and Trust Litigation, Business and Tax Planning, and Special Needs Planning. Lou is a frequent speaker across the country on legal issues relating to estate planning, elder law and business planning.

In addition to the law firm, Louis founded ApolloCare, LLC, a business that integrates healthcare advocacy and home care coordination (EverHome Care Advisors), with connected home health technology (VivaLynx) providing seniors, families, and caregivers unique opportunities to live independently in their own home.

Louis has been selected by his peers for inclusion in the 2026 edition of The Best Lawyers in America for Elder Law, Litigation – Trusts and Estates, and Trusts and Estates—his 18th year of recognition. In 2026, he was honored by Super Lawyers for the 20th year in the Capital Region and, for the third time, in the New York Metro region – a distinction awarded to no more than 5% of attorneys in the state. Louis has maintained an AV Preeminent rating from Martindale-Hubbell since 2001.

A graduate of Lehigh University and Albany Law School, Lou was admitted to the New York State Bar in 1984 and is licensed to practice in all New York State Courts, the US Supreme Court and the Second Circuit Court of Appeals.



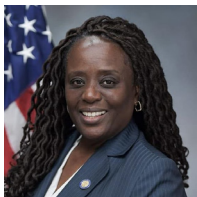
DR. BENITA ZAHN, NBC-HWC

Certified Health and Wellness Coach

Benita Zahn is a nationally certified Health and Wellness coach working with clients privately and through Capital Cardiology Associates. Benita spent more than 40 years as a health reporter and news anchor at WNYT Newschannel 13 in Albany, NY. She covered issues such as wellness, treatment breakthroughs, aging, nutrition and the latest health care trends. Benita's work has taken her around the world and across the USA. She covered the aftermath of Hurricane Sandy, Hurricane Katrina, the inauguration of President Obama and both republican and National Conventions.

Benita is a contributor to the weekly "Live Smart" page in the Times Union, the HMRRRC Pacesetter and the AAA Magazine. Benita also created and co-hosts the podcast EVERYTHING THEATER.

Benita earned her Masters and Doctorate in Bioethics at the Alden March Bioethics Institute at Albany Medical College. She is a member of Actors Equity Association and SAG-AFTRA (The Screen Actors Guild – American Federation of Television and Radio Artists). Benita has won numerous awards for her work including a NY EMMY, International Radio and Television Award, NYS Broadcasters Award and has been honored by numerous health organizations.



CORDELL CLEARE

New York State Senate, District 30

Chair, Committee on Aging

Member, Committees on Education; Social Services; Housing, Construction and Community Development

New York State Senator Cordell Cleare was raised in Harlem and her family has lived there for four generations. Cleare is a product of the New York City public schools, including Brooklyn Technical High School. Today, she is best known for her fight for Reparations, Truly Affordable Housing, Quality Schools & Equitable Education, Access to Healthy Foods as well as Economic, Environmental, Restorative and Racial Justice. She entered the New York State Senate on an express train from Upper Manhattan, bringing fresh ideas and legislative proposals to make New York, the state of the whole people.

Senator Cleare is currently serving in her second term from District 30, representing Central Harlem, East Harlem (El Barrio), West Harlem, Upper Westside, Morningside Heights, Manhattanville, Hamilton Heights and Washington Heights neighborhoods. Cleare is one of only two women to hold the seat.

As Chair of the Senate Aging Committee, Senator Cleare has championed legislation to help our Older New Yorkers freeze their rents (SCRIE); receive increased tax exemptions, expand prescription drug savings programs (like EPIC), bolster and support health programs, expand senior centers, and ensure safety and oversight over institutional providers. During the 2025 session, this committee met four times in session and passed thirty one bills. So far in 2026, the Senate Aging Committee has passed 29 Bills.



JACOB ASHBY

New York State Senate, District 43

Committees on Aging (Ranking), Veterans, Homeland Security and Military Affairs (Ranking), Disabilities, Health, Insurance

Jake Ashby was elected to the New York State Senate on November 8, 2022. The 43rd District includes all of Rensselaer County and parts of Washington and Albany Counties.

As the Ranking Member of the Senate Committee on Veterans, Homeland Security and Military Affairs, Senator Ashby has voted to expand counseling, job training and immigration services for veterans and their families. His proposals to spark housing development, crack down on retail crime, regulate AI and address our healthcare workforce shortage have garnered bipartisan support in both houses of the Legislature. He's delivered record state aid for local infrastructure, including road and bridge repair and clean water funding.

Senator Ashby served in the State Assembly from 2018-2022. His statewide forums and coalition building in the legislature were instrumental in elevating the Division of Veterans' Services to a full-fledged, cabinet level state agency. He helped pass legislation to make occupational and speech therapy more accessible. After he authored a bill protecting New Yorkers from carcinogenic contaminants in drinking water, state officials adopted his more stringent safety standards.

A former Army Reserves Captain, Senator Ashby completed combat tours in Afghanistan and Iraq and deployed in support of a humanitarian mission in Africa. Jake worked as an occupational therapist for twenty years. He was a rehabilitation director and operated his own community-based practice. Additionally, he taught healthcare at Maria College.

Jake previously served as a Rensselaer County legislator. He earned his MBA in Healthcare Management from Union Graduate College in Schenectady, NY, a Bachelor of Science in Occupational Therapy from Keuka College, and an Associate in Arts from Hudson Valley Community College.



PATRICIA FAHY

New York State Senate, District 46

Chair, Committee on Disabilities

Member, Higher Education, Local Governments, Racing & Wagering, Cities II, Agriculture, and Environmental Conservation Committees

Senator Patricia Fahy, elected to the New York State Senate in 2024 after serving 12 years in the Assembly, represents the 46th District covering most of Albany County, part of Schenectady County, and all of Montgomery County. A leading advocate for job creation, education, and environmental conservation, she has sponsored more than 300 bills, more than 110 of which have been signed into law, including the nation's first Gun Industry Liability Law, Right to Repair legislation, and measures expanding tuition assistance and clean energy.

She currently chairs the Senate Disabilities Committee and serves on several others, including Higher Education and Environmental Conservation. Recognized with numerous awards for her leadership on education, reproductive rights, climate, libraries, and disability advocacy, she has also been featured in media outlets such as *The New York Times*, *Wired*, *The Intercept*, *NBC*, *The Rachel Maddow Show*, *FOX News*, *The Boston Globe*, *New York Daily News*, and *Politico*.

Prior to elected office, Pat held senior roles in the Clinton Administration and in workforce development in Chicago. She holds a Master's in Public Administration from the University of Illinois at Chicago, a Bachelor's in Political Science from Northern Illinois University, and lives in Albany with her husband, Wayne, a professor at RPI, and together they have two children, Brendan and Eileen.



DR. JAMES V. MCDONALD, MD, MPH

Commissioner, New York State Department of Health

James V. McDonald M.D., M.P.H., was appointed Acting Commissioner of Health January 1, 2023 and confirmed by the Senate June 9th, 2023. Prior to joining the New York State Department of Health in July of 2022, Dr. McDonald served at the Rhode Island Department of Health since 2012.

At the Rhode Island Department of Health, he served in multiple roles including, Interim Director of Health, Chief Administrative Officer of the Board of Medical Licensure and Discipline, Medical Director for the COVID unit, as well as the Medical Director for Division of Health care quality and safety and the Drug Overdose prevention program. He was also a member of the Governor's task force on Preventing Overdose deaths. Dr. McDonald has faculty appointment at the UAlbany School of Public Health as well as Brown School of Public Health.

Dr. McDonald earned his M.D. from Loyola Stritch School of Medicine in Chicago, his pediatric residency in the US Navy, and his preventive medicine residency from the State University of New York. He earned his MPH from the University of North Carolina in Chapel Hill. He earned his B.S. in Biology from Siena College. Dr. McDonald is board certified in pediatrics as well as preventive medicine.

His diverse career includes officership in the U.S. Navy, as well as private practice in rural areas where health care shortages existed. Dr. McDonald also served in the Indian Health Service in the Navajo Nation, serving as Medical Director of Outpatient Medicine in Chinle, Arizona.

Dr. McDonald was awarded the degree Doctor of Humane Letters from Siena College in May of 2024 for exemplary achievement, leadership and commitment to humanitarian ideals.



GREG OLSEN

Director, New York State Office for the Aging (NYSOFA)

Greg Olsen is the Director of the New York State Office for the Aging (NYSOFA), where he oversees the agency's day-to-day operations and the administration of federal and state-funded programs designed to assist the more than 4.6 million older adult residents in the state, as well as programs that assist family members and others involved with helping older adults needing greater levels of assistance. NYSOFA assists older New Yorkers to be as independent as possible, for as long as possible, through advocacy and the development and delivery of programs and services that support and empower older New Yorkers and their families, in partnership with the network of public and private organizations that serve them. Greg has served in a variety of executive management positions within the agency.

Prior to joining NYSOFA, he served as chief of staff and legislative and policy director for Assemblyman Steve Englebright, former chair of the Assembly Standing Committee on Aging.

Greg was executive director of the New York State Alliance for Retired Americans, a union supported organization representing hundreds of thousands of union retirees. He also served as executive director of the New York State Coalition for the Aging, a nonprofit membership organization representing over 200 community-based organizations providing non-medical long-term care to the state's older adult population.

He received his master's degree in social work with a specialty in gerontology from Syracuse University's Maxwell School.



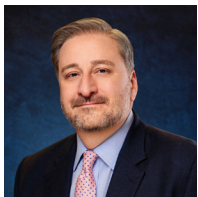
VALERIE BOGART

Of Counsel, New York Legal Assistance Group

Valerie Bogart is widely recognized as one of New York's leading voices on Medicaid, Medicare, and access to home care for older adults and people with disabilities. She served as Director of the Evelyn Frank Legal Resources Program (EFLRP) since 2002 and now continues her work in an Of Counsel role at the New York Legal Assistance Group (NYLAG), a nonprofit that provides free civil legal services to New Yorkers who cannot afford private counsel. Under her leadership, EFLRP transitioned to NYLAG from Selfhelp Community Services in 2013 and has become a trusted resource for both consumers and professionals through direct representation, policy advocacy, legal education, and its widely used website, NYHealthAccess.org.

Valerie is a tireless consumer advocate, known for her deep expertise in helping individuals access the home care services they need to remain safely in their communities rather than enter nursing homes. Earlier in her career, she worked with the Legal Aid Society's Brooklyn Office for the Aging, Legal Services for the Elderly in Manhattan, and served as a Reginald Heber Smith Fellow with the Legal Aid Society in Minneapolis.

A graduate of NYU School of Law, Valerie lectures extensively for bar associations and social service organizations, has taught as an adjunct professor at CUNY and Fordham Law School, and has received numerous professional honors. She serves on the Executive Committee of the New York State Bar Association's Elder Law & Special Needs Section and is frequently sought out nationwide for her insight on long-term care policy—making her a go-to resource for attorneys, advocates, and families alike.



AARON CONNOR, ESQ.

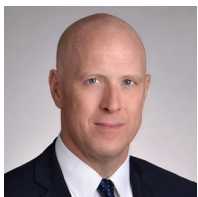
Managing Partner, Pierro, Connor & Strauss LLC

Aaron Connor is a seasoned litigator, currently concentrating in the areas of guardianship, will/ trust contests and other estate related litigation. He is also head of the firm's Long-Term Care Planning Department where he advises clients on how best to preserve assets for themselves and their families.

Aaron regularly handles complex trust and estate litigation matters and assists clients in obtaining their fair share through discovery, litigation, and negotiation. Additionally, he utilizes sophisticated estate planning techniques in the establishment of estate tax avoidance vehicles and completing charitable giving in the most tax-efficient manner. Aaron is admitted to practice in the State of New York and the United States District Court for the Northern District of New York. He is a member of the New York State Bar Association, the Albany County Bar Association and is currently an Editor for the Elder and Special Needs Law Journal.

Aaron has been selected for inclusion in the 2026 and 2025 edition of The Best Lawyers in America in the practice areas of Elder Law, and Litigation – Trusts and Estates. Recognition in Best Lawyers® is widely regarded by both clients and legal professionals as a significant honor, conferred on a lawyer by his or her peers. In 2026, he was recognized by Super Lawyers in the Capital Region, an honor awarded to no more than 5 percent of attorneys statewide.

Aaron received his Bachelor of Arts Degree from the University at Albany and his Juris Doctorate from Albany Law School. He was named a Partner in the firm in 2015.



LEE KINDLON

Albany County District Attorney

Albany County District Attorney Lee C. Kindlon was elected in November 2024 on a platform of restoring integrity, leadership and accountability to the District Attorney's office.

An Albany native, Lee attended Williams College and graduated in 1998 with a degree in History. After graduation, Lee attended the University of Connecticut School of Law. He concentrated his studies in Constitutional and Criminal Law and received his law degree in 2002.

After receiving his commission in the Marine Corps during law school, Lee returned to active duty in January 2003 and was stationed at Camp Lejeune, North Carolina. During his three and a half years on active duty with the Marines, Lee worked as a Judge Advocate, first in Legal Assistance, and then as the prosecutor for Marine Corps Base Camp Lejeune. In September 2005, he deployed to Iraq as a Battalion Judge Advocate and was stationed in Fallujah until April 2006.

Now part of the Marine Corps Reserve, he is a Colonel and serves as Reserve Chief Defense Counsel.

In private practice as one of the founding partners of the Kindlon Law Firm, Lee has represented clients in some of the area's most high-profile criminal cases. From 18 years of hard-fought courtroom battles and 75 trial verdicts, he used his experience to benefit clients across the legal spectrum.

"My promise from Day 1 is that we will work together to build a DA's office that is responsive and responsible. Letting our experience and judgement guide the way, we will employ a pragmatic approach to solving Albany County's most complex problems, making our communities safer and more prosperous, and building trust in the work we do. We will make sure the worst offenders pay for their crimes, give a second chance to those deserving, and provide justice for victims."



BETH FINKEL
State Director, AARP New York

As State Director of AARP New York, Beth R. Finkel leads the most visible and successful organization in the state advocating for New York's 50-plus population.

Beth's guidance of AARP's powerful lobbying efforts on behalf of its over 2.2 million New York members and their families have led to historic NYS reforms including passage of the Secure Choice Savings, CARE Act, Assisted Living Protections, Anti-Predatory Lending, Paid Family Leave, Affordable Housing and Right to Counsel legislation, Master Plan for Aging, bills on Kincare and groundbreaking state legislation to improve nursing home conditions, ban utility shutoffs, and allow for universal absentee voting.

She has published white papers and research reports including: Hunger Among NY State Older Adults; The State of the 50+ in NY State; Kinship Care in NY: Keeping Families Together; High Anxiety: Gen X and Boomers Struggle With Stress, Savings and Security; Countdown: New York's Vanishing Middle Class; Caregivers in Crisis: Why New York Must Act; and Disrupting Racial and Ethnic Disparities: Solutions for New Yorkers Age 50+ and Disrupt Disparities LGBTQ with SAGE, and Addressing the Crisis for Rural New Yorkers 50+.

Beth holds a MSW in Community Organizing from Yeshiva University and an B.S. from the Kogod School of Business at American University.



ANDRE LINGHAM
CEO, Safe Aging Strategies

Andre began his career in Law Enforcement in the US Army in 1982. In 1986 he received an honorable discharge from the Army and shortly thereafter began his career with the Howard County Sheriff's Office. In January 1996, Andre transferred from the Howard County Sheriff's Office to the Howard County Police Department, Maryland. While with the Howard County Police Department, Andre worked as a patrol officer, Warrant Fugitive Detective, and a School Resource Officer. In October 2013, found his true passion and calling when he was selected as the Senior Citizen Liaison. While serving as the Senior Citizen Liaison, Andre coordinated and conducted elder abuse awareness and education training to the general public, senior citizen population, government agencies, police departments, and private institutions. He got the idea to establish the organization, Safe Aging Strategies, and on November 1, 2019, Andre decided to retire from the Howard County Police Department and focus full-time on elder abuse awareness and education.

Safe Aging Strategies is dedicated to empowering individuals at every stage of life to embrace aging safely and gracefully. Its primary focus is on assisting older adults in navigating the complexities of aging with dignity and security. Andre believes that the journey of aging begins at birth, and we strive to promote a holistic understanding of aging that encompasses proactive health, wellness, and lifestyle strategies for all ages. By fostering a supportive community and providing valuable resources, we aim to enhance the quality of life for individuals as they age, championing respect, independence, and well-being throughout the aging process.



SHAWN BRITT

Director, LTC Initiatives, Advanced Consulting Group, Nationwide Financial

Shawn Britt, CLU®, CLTC®, has been engaged in the life insurance and LTC industry since 1995 and joined Nationwide in 2000. She was a member of Nationwide's Advanced Consulting Group for 21 years and now devotes her time exclusively to help develop Nationwide's LTC products and advanced LTC planning concepts for individuals, couples, business owners, and the high net worth markets.

Shawn is the author of many white papers and articles on long-term care and has been widely published and interviewed by numerous trade publications and national media that include the CLTC Quarterly Digest, The National Underwriter, Financial Advisor, Center for Long-Term Care Reform, The Wall Street Journal, CBS New Money Watch, Market Watch Radio and LifeHealthPro.

Shawn is a frequent presenter and key-note speaker at industry events including LIMRA, Finseca and ILTCI. She has served on the Board of Advisors for CLTC and is currently a CLTC contributor. Shawn also serves on industry committees and lobbying groups in regard to state and federal LTC legislation. Shawn served for several years as an adjunct professor at The Ohio State University teaching long-term care in risk management studies. Shawn is a graduate of Bowling Green State University, and has been recognized as an alumnus of the month by the American College, and received the Lifetime Achievement Award from CLTC in 2025 for her dedication and contributions to the long-term care industry.



ROBERT VANDY

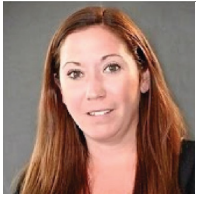
President, Advisors Insurance Brokers

Robert Vandy, CLU, ChFC, LUTCF, CLTC is President of Advisors Insurance Brokers (AIB – a/k/a New York Long Term Care Brokers – an Integrity Company), a nationally recognized insurance and annuity Brokerage General Agency located in Clifton Park, NY.

Bob has over 36 years of experience in insurance & financial services. He has been a personal producer and has served in field and home office sales & marketing support and management capacities supporting agents and advisors throughout the U.S. He has been responsible for the overall day to day operations of AIB since January 2018 and continues to be responsible for business development via individual producers, and through strategic partnerships in the independent broker-dealer, RIA, insurance agency, financial planning firm, benefit broker and other channels.

Bob has earned his LUTCF (Life Underwriter Training Council Fellow) designation, as well as his CLU (Chartered Life Underwriter), ChFC (Chartered Financial Consultant) and his CLTC (Certified in Long Term Care) designations. Each of these designations signifies the completion of advanced coursework, successful exam completion and a commitment to ethics and professionalism in the areas of life, long-term care and income protection insurance and annuity distribution, as well as the broader areas of retirement, business, pension, estate, and long-term care planning.

Bob is a member and past President of the Eastern New York Chapter of the Society of Financial Service Professionals (FSP, now part of NAIFA) and a member and past director of the National Association of Insurance & Financial Advisors (NAIFA) – Capital Region/NYS. Bob serves on the NAIFA National Long-Term Care Working group, as well as the Legislative Committee for NAIFA-NYS.



BECKY PREVE

Executive Director, Association on Aging in New York

Becky Preve is a seasoned executive leader with extensive knowledge and skill in management of program and fiscal operations. Skills include fiscal management, policy analysis, governmental relations, advocacy, and grassroots organization. As Executive Director for the Association on Aging in New York, a member organization representing the 59 area agencies on aging in NY, she has led the mission of the Association to support and enhance the capacity of New York's local area agencies on aging and to work in collaboration with the aging network to promote independence, preserve dignity, and advocate on the behalf of aging New Yorkers and their families.

Prior to joining the Association, Becky was Director for Franklin County Office for the Aging, where she was responsible for program operations of all aging services and supports, and management of \$3.2 million in funding, and managed the day-to-day operations of county government department, including reporting to local legislature and New York State Office for the Aging. Becky was also a key member of the Governor's task force regrading the Office of Community Living. In another role, she was an acute care social worker at Alice Hyde Medical Center in Malone, NY.

Becky earned her Bachelor of Science degree from Clarkson University in 2002 and has also received certification from the Institute for HealthCare Improvement, and Boston University of Social Work. Becky is a Board member for Adirondack Health Institute, Hospice of the North Country, Cornell Cooperative Extension, Cerebral Palsy of the North Country, and the Joint Commission for Economic Opportunity.



AL CARDILLO

President & CEO, Home Care Association of New York State

Al Cardillo has worked in the health field for over 35 years, with positions in both the public and private sectors, including roles in health services development, administration, legislation, budget, provider association and other. He leads the Home Care Association of New York State (HCA), a statewide health association comprised of over 300 organizations comprised of home care agencies, hospices, managed long term care plans, waiver service programs, allied organizations and individuals providing home and community based-care.

As President, Al oversees and leads the organization's program, policy and administrative functions, in conjunction with the HCA Board of Directors, and professional team. Engages federal and state government officials; collaborates with health leaders across sectors; and works with Board, membership and health professionals to advance the organization's mission of promoting accessible, quality health care and support at home and community.

In prior roles, Al served as Executive Director for Health for the New York State Senate Health Committee, Executive Director for Health for the State Council on Health Care Financing, and as program development staff for the State Division of Medical Assistance, among other public health positions. Al also currently serves on numerous professional and governmental committees in health care, and as adjunct faculty to the University at Albany School of Social Work, and as a presenter with Duke University faculty in New York sessions of the Duke Population Care Coordinator Program.

He holds a Master of Social Work Degree in Direct Practice from the University at Albany, and is a New York State Licensed Master Social Worker.



JOSEPH TWARDY

President, Nascentia Health Plans

Joseph Twardy is a healthcare executive with more than 20 years of experience leading organizations that serve older adults and individuals with complex, long-term care needs. As President of Nascentia Health Plans, he oversees operations across 48 counties in New York, including one of the state's largest Managed Long-Term Care programs and Medicare Advantage Special Needs Plans.

Joe's work is focused on improving care for vulnerable populations—aligning clinical services, social supports, and managed care strategies to help individuals age with dignity, independence, and stability. He leads efforts to advance innovative care models, strengthen provider partnerships, and improve outcomes for high-need members.

Prior to joining Nascentia, Joe held senior leadership roles at Fidelis Care of New York, where he helped shape and expand managed long-term care programs statewide. He also served as President and CEO of the Visiting Nurse Service of Northeastern New York and held executive leadership roles at Ellis Medicine, with a focus on post-acute and community-based care.

Joe holds a BS in Accounting from Liberty University and an MBA from the University at Albany.



ANNE SANSEVERO

Co-founder, Holistic HomeCare Associates

Anne Sansevero, RN, MA, GNP, CCM is Co-Founder of Holistic HomeCare Associates, a concierge home care staffing and Aging Life Care consulting practice dedicated to helping individuals age safely and comfortably at home. A geriatric nurse practitioner and certified care manager, Anne brings more than 40 years of nursing and care management experience, with specialized expertise in geriatric and neurological care.

Anne is widely recognized for her clinical insight and leadership in advancing high-quality home care. She is a Past President of the Aging Life Care Association® and a member of the American Academy of Nurse Practitioners. Throughout her career, she has been a strong advocate for person-centered care and for elevating standards across the caregiving profession.

Prior to co-founding Holistic HomeCare Associates, Anne held senior clinical roles at leading institutions including NYU Langone Medical Center and NewYork-Presbyterian Hospital, with a focus on acute neurology, cardiac care, and critical care nursing. She also founded HealthSense LLC, further expanding her impact in care management and consulting.

Anne earned her Master's degree in Advanced Practice Nursing, with a dual focus in Gerontology and Education, summa cum laude from New York University, and her Bachelor of Science in Nursing, summa cum laude, from Kean University. Through her work, Anne continues to help families navigate complex care decisions with expertise, compassion, and a deeply personal approach.



FRANK HEMMING, ESQ.
Partner, Pierro, Connor & Strauss LLC

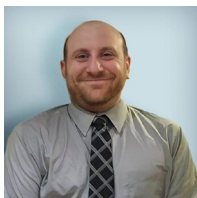
Frank Hemming joined Pierro, Connor & Strauss in 2016 as an Associate Attorney and was promoted to Senior Associate. Due to his achievements in the field of long-term care and Medicaid planning as well as his leadership and recognition among colleagues and clients, Mr. Hemming was named a Partner in 2024.

Frank concentrates his practice on guiding clients to prepare and file both community and chronic care Medicaid applications. In preparation for long-term care planning, he assists with estate planning and asset protection planning. In addition, Frank is highly experienced in all aspects of special needs planning by creating plans for individuals with disabilities to establish advance directives or guardianships, First or Third Party Supplemental Needs Trusts and to remain qualified for government benefits throughout lifetime.

As a frequent presenter in educational forums, Frank leads the Firm's monthly webinar series, Medicaid Monday. He is also a frequent host on Life Happens Radio, the Firm's weekly program airing on Saturdays at 9AM on the WGY iHeart station.

Frank has been selected by Super Lawyers as a New York Rising Star in 2021-2026. He was selected for recognition as Best Lawyers: Ones to Watch in 2024 for the second consecutive year.

He earned two Bachelor of Arts degrees in Psychology (*summa cum laude*) and Criminal Justice (*summa cum laude*) and his Master of Arts in Criminal Justice from the University at Albany. Mr. Hemming received his Juris Doctor (*magna cum laude*) from Albany Law School in 2013.



JOSH BRODY
Counsel, NYSARC Trust Services

Joshua Brody, Esq., serves as Trust Counsel at NYSARC Trust Services, a nonprofit organization dedicated to administering pooled and special needs trusts for individuals with disabilities across New York State. In this role, he helps individuals and families protect assets, maintain eligibility for vital public benefits such as Medicaid and Supplemental Security Income (SSI), and enhance quality of life through thoughtful trust administration.

Joshua brings over a decade of legal experience in estate planning and elder law, including the preparation of trusts, wills, powers of attorney, advance directives, guardianships, and Medicaid applications. He has represented clients in a wide range of forums, including New York Surrogate's Court, Supreme Court, Family Court, and administrative agencies such as the Social Security Administration.

Prior to his current role, Joshua handled real estate transactions throughout Albany County and the Capital Region, further broadening his practical understanding of asset protection strategies. He is also committed to community service, providing pro bono legal assistance to seniors through the New York State Bar Association and Albany Law School.

Joshua earned his J.D. from the University of Iowa College of Law and holds a Master's degree from the University of Chicago in Russian Literature and Slavic Languages, and a B.A. from Grinnell College.

He is known for his clear, practical guidance and dedication to helping vulnerable populations navigate complex legal and financial systems.



PAUL BELITSIS

COO/CFO, Promenade Senior Living

Paul serves as Chief Operating Officer and Chief Financial Officer for Promenade Senior Living, a company founded on the premise that seniors, who are not in need of the skilled care of a nursing home, should continue to enjoy their lives in appropriate residential settings that ensures socialization and well-being. Promenade promotes its Livewell Programs, ensuring residents enjoy nutritious meals, maintain good health, and are fully engaged in the life enriching activities that help people find friendship, happiness and satisfaction. Its University Place location in Albany is a Medicaid-funded Assisted Living Program (ALP), unique in the Capital District. Promenade operates four additional assisted living facilities in Pearl River, Chestnut Ridge, Tuxedo and Middletown, and Independent Living in Tuxedo.

Paul has over 25 years of experience in strategic development and execution, financial and operational management, regulatory compliance, process improvement and budgeting and forecasting. Prior to his current position Paul was the CFO of a New York city based licensed home care services agency. Prior to coming to the healthcare industry, Paul was Vice President of Finance at an information technology solutions enterprise where he directed corporate finance and offshore development activities. He began his professional career in public accounting where he spent seven years at KPMG.

Paul is a certified public accountant and a member of the New York State Society of Certified Public Accountants and the American Institute of Certified Public Accountants. He earned a Bachelor of Science degree in Accounting from St. John's University in Queens, New York. He lives in Marlboro NJ.



SANDRA SULLIVAN-SMITH

Vice President, Residential Services, St. Peter's Health Partners

Sandra B. Sullivan Smith is a Licensed and Certified Nursing Home Administrator with more than 25 years of experience in post-acute, long-term, and residential healthcare operations. Licensed since 2000, she is a seasoned healthcare executive recognized for her leadership in regulatory compliance, risk management, resident rights, and interdisciplinary care delivery.

Sandra currently serves as Vice President of Residential Services for St. Peter's Health Partners, The Eddy, where she provides strategic oversight of residential operations and partners closely with legal, clinical, and operational teams to ensure high-quality care, regulatory integrity, and organizational excellence. She is the administrative leader of six nursing homes which include memory care specialty units, greenhouse model of care and post acute sub acute rehab units spanning Albany, Schenectady, Rensselaer, Saratoga and Warren counties. Notably, Eddy Village Green in Cohoes has won multiple awards for its unique greenhouse model, and was named among "American's Best Nursing Homes 2025" by Newsweek.

Sandra holds a Master of Social Work (LMSW) degree from the University at Albany (SUNY Albany), bringing a strong advocacy-based and person-centered perspective to complex clinical and legal issues affecting older adults and their families. She is dedicated to collaborative engagement with healthcare leaders to advance best practices, navigate emerging regulatory challenges, and improve outcomes for the aging population across the Capital Region.



DIANE MICKLE GOTEBIOWSKI Vice President, EverHome Care Advisors

Diane Mickle Gotebiowski, PT, DPT, is Vice President of EverHome Care Advisors, where she leads client services, outreach, education, and care strategy to help individuals and families navigate complex healthcare and social care decisions. A physical therapist by training, Diane earned her Doctorate in Physical Therapy from Rosalind Franklin University of Medicine and Science, building on her undergraduate work at Russell Sage College and Albany Medical College.

Her career spans acute, outpatient, long-term, and home care settings, giving her a comprehensive view of how patients move through, and sometimes fall through, the healthcare continuum. She founded one of the first private physical therapy practices in her home community, and has held numerous leadership roles overseeing rehabilitation and interdisciplinary care teams. Her tenure at Eddy Visiting Nurse and Rehab Association deepened her focus on chronic disease management and quality improvement in home-based care.

Diane has remained active in both community and professional education throughout her career. Her perspective is further shaped by her personal experience as a caregiver for multiple family members, a role that has reinforced her commitment to helping families access and coordinate care with clarity and confidence. Today, she brings decades of clinical expertise, leadership, and lived experience to the conversations that matter most.



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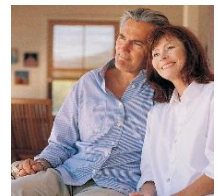
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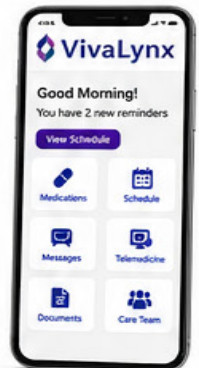
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