

Event Schedule

8:30-9:15 am: Doors Open, Registration & Light Breakfast/Visit Vendors - Agency Resource Tables

9:15-9:30 am: Welcome & Opening Remarks: Clare Luz, Ph.D., Founder & Director, MSU AgeAlive & IMPART Alliance

9:30-10:30 am: 2026 Research Gem Panelists (15 minutes including Q&A)

MSU Aging Research "GEMS" Panel features MSU researchers, their aging-related projects, and the potential for creative partnerships

- 9:30-9:45 am: "Sit Sense - A new approach to sitting - in the home, in the hospital, and supportive care for injuries/diseases," Tamara Reid Bush, Ph.D., Professor, Mechanical Engineering & Associate Dean for Inclusive Excellence, MSU

- 9:45-10:00 am: "Nature Walks and Healthy Aging: What Happens When We Step Outside?," Fatemeh Saeidi-Rizi, Ph.D., Assistant Professor, Landscape Architecture, MSU

-10:00-10:15 am: "Reimagining Ability: Using Residual Movement for Human-Machine Interface Design," Rajiv Ranganathan, Ph.D., Associate Professor, Department of Kinesiology, MSU

-10:15-10:30 am: "MSU Student Capstone Group," 2025 Mechanical Engineering Graduates, Brody Stack, Finn Jarvis, and Brandon Davies (Additional Project Participants Recognized: Damon McConnell and Miles Hayes)

10:30-10:45 am: Break/Visit Vendors - Agency Resource Tables

10:45-11:10 am: Keynote Address - "Aging in Motion: Making Movement the Expectation, Not the Exception," Shanta' Favors, Ms. Wheelchair Michigan 2024

11:10 am-12:00 pm: Mobility Initiatives Panel (15 Minutes including Q&A)

-11:10-11:25 am: "Let AARP Guide You as the Driving World You Once Knew Changes," Ann L. Lindsay, M.Ed., Admin, AARP Driver Safety (ADS) Michigan State Coordinator

-11:25-11:40 am: "Expanding Community Awareness of Access 2-1-1 for Fall Prevention," Sara Arena, P.T., M.S., D.Sc.P.T., Professor & Director of Physical Therapy, Oakland University

-11:40-11:55 am: "The Life Changing Impact of Mobility Wallets and Transportation Rx," Valerie Lefler, M.P.A., Executive Director & Founder, Catch a Ride Network

-12:00-12:45 pm: Lunch/Visit Vendors - Agency Resource Tables - Student Poster Presentation

-12:45-1:00 pm: Break/Visit Vendors - Agency Resource Tables

2026 AgeAlive Awards

1:00-1:30 pm: Awards Ceremony:

Moderator Clare Luz, Ph.D., Founder & Director, MSU AgeAlive & IMPART Alliance

Research in Aging Award

Tamara Reid Bush, Ph.D., Professor, Mechanical Engineering & Associate Dean for Inclusive Excellence

Research in Aging Award

Peter Berg, Ph.D., Professor, School of Human Resources and Labor Relations, College of Social Science

Intergenerational Award

Allison Stawara, MSU Alum & Community Farm Manager, Partridge Creek Farm

Legacy Award

Maureen McCabe-Power, Community Member

1:30-2:00 pm: Q&A/Discussion/Closing Remarks Mingle & Visit Vendors/Agency Resource Tables

1:30- 3:00 pm: Tours of Direct Care Worker Mobile Training Unit, MSUFCU Parking Lot

About AgeAlive

MSU AgeAlive is dedicated to building a cohesive university-wide aging unit, portfolio, and network, both on-campus and through community outreach and engagement. MSU is an Age-Friendly University (AFU) and follows the ten AFU principles endorsed by the World Health Organization and the Academy for Gerontology in Higher Education.

2026 MSU AGEALIVE EDUCATION & RESEARCH FORUM & AWARDS CEREMONY *Advancing Mobility Across Settings As We Age*

Thursday, March 26, 2026

9 am - 2 pm

In Person & Virtual

Ishpeming Multi-Purpose
Senior Center
121 Greenwood St.
Ishpeming, Michigan 49855



AgeAlive

— FOR LIFELONG WELL-BEING —
MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY

**MICHIGAN STATE
UNIVERSITY**

College of Osteopathic Medicine

MSU “Gems” of Aging Research Panel

“Sit Sense - A new approach to sitting - in the home, in the hospital, and supportive care for injuries/diseases,” Tamara Reid Bush, Ph.D. - Movement has been shown to be a key component to



blood flow, oxygen transport, and muscle engagement. However, many individuals sit for long periods of time with limited body movement. In particular, those with reduced mobility, such as those in the hospital, assisted living or aging in their home, are prone to developing a pressure injury. These injuries are deep wounds that arise from constant load on a given body region due to a lack of motion. In this talk, I will showcase a new recliner technology created at MSU designed to slowly and gently move individuals while gathering pressure distribution and timing data of these movements. Not only does this system support the user, but also individuals in a caregiving role who must make sure the user is re-positioned on a regular basis to prevent these injuries.

“Nature Walks and Healthy Aging: What Happens When We Step Outside?,” Fatemeh Saeidi-Rizi, Ph.D. - Across the U.S. and Taiwan, this study shows that a simple walk in parks or farmland can powerfully boost older adults’ mood and physical well-being, far more than city streets.



Culture, gender, memories, and even traffic shape these benefits, revealing how deeply personal and transformative nearby nature can be for healthy aging.

“Reimagining Ability: Using Residual Movement for Human-Machine Interface Design,” Rajiv Ranganathan, Ph.D. - Disability often alters movement, reducing strength and range of motion – yet meaningful residual capacity frequently remains. This talk explores how such residual movements can serve as control signals for human-machine interfaces. Dr. Ranganathan will present examples of how this framework enables individuals with reduced mobility to control assistive technologies.



Welcome & Closing Remarks

“Welcome from MSU AgeAlive & Closing Reflections,” Clare Luz, Ph.D., Founder & Director, MSU AgeAlive & IMPART Alliance



Keynote Presenter

“Aging in Motion: Making Movement the Expectation, Not the Exception,” Shanta' Favors, Ms. Wheelchair Michigan 2024 -



Aging is inevitable. Immobility is not. Rooted in lived experience, this keynote exposes how our systems steal movement and how we can build a future where mobility is protected, expected, and possible at every age, in every setting.

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Please consider connecting with and supporting AgeAlive! We welcome time, expertise, and resource donations. Scan the QR code to learn more and make an online tax-deductible donation. You can also contribute by following the instructions below:

Mail check to University Development, Spartan Way, 535 Chestnut Road, Room 300, East Lansing, MI 48824.



Make check payable to "Michigan State University" and include AgeAlive on the memo line.

Call (800) 232-4MSU or (517) 884-1000 and mention AgeAlive as the fund to support.

For more information, please visit our website at agealive.org or email us at agealive@msu.edu.

Mobility Initiatives Panel

“Let AARP Guide You as the Driving World You Once Knew Changes,” Ann L. Lindsay, M.Ed., Admin - The presentation consists of brief descriptions of the various aspects within the AARP Driver Safety (ADS) program designed to help Senior Drivers stay safe on the road. The Instructional Class provides individuals with comprehensive training on all aspects of driving. The Car-Fit program educates participants on the importance of proper position and fit within their vehicle. The Smart Driver TEK program explains how new vehicle safety technologies have changed the way we drive. Night Driving, along with Knowing When to Hang up the Keys, are two other important aspects of ADS.



“Expanding Community Awareness of Access 2-1-1 for Fall Prevention,” Sara Arena, P.T., M.S., D.Sc.P.T. - This presentation highlights Michigan’s statewide effort to reduce fall risk by increasing awareness of community-based prevention resources. Attendees will learn how the Michigan Falls Prevention Coalition partnered with Michigan 2-1-1 to create a centralized, free resource hub for older adults, caregivers, and healthcare providers.



“The Life Changing Impact of Mobility Wallets and Transportation Rx,” Valerie Lefler, M.P.A. - This session explores how Mobility Wallets and Transportation Rx models, implemented through the Catch a Ride Network, improve healthcare access, reduce missed appointments, and strengthen independence for older adults. Grounded in emerging research and real-world results, it highlights measurable health, equity, and cost outcomes.



Programming has been made possible, in part, through a grant awarded to IMPART Alliance by the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services.

For full speaker and event information, visit agealive.org.

