

East Central Illinois Area Agency on Aging Advisory Council Member Directory



Table of Contents

Champaign County

[Patrick Harness](#)

[Julie Bobitt](#)

[Nicole Dowling](#)

Clark County

[Harley Bennet – CB Liaison](#)

[Jennifer Kibler](#)

Coles County

[Sheila Gruel](#)

Cumberland County

[Sandy Bowman](#)

DeWitt County

[Judith Knoth](#)

[Sherry Gordon-Harris](#)

Douglas County

Edgar County

[King Sutton](#)

Ford County

[Lucille Symmonds](#)

[Judith Ondercho](#)

Iroquois County

Livingston County

[Patty Haberkorn](#)

Macon County

[Julie Walker](#)

McLean County

Rick Lewis

Moultrie County

[Deborah Matthew](#)

Piatt County

[Eileen Brewer](#)

[Emily Dobson](#)

Shelby County

Cheri Burcham

Vermilion County

Amy Brown



Patrick Harness

Patrick is Co-founder/President of the Champaign County Senior Task Force. He has also been involved with the Illinois Coalition on Mental Health and Aging, the Senior Care Network of Peoria County, and the Human Services Transportation Plan for Region 8 representing Champaign County.

Patrick would like to share that he is physically unable to parallel park and his favorite color is orange. He is passionate about home modification, believing that even with all the services available to seniors, if their home is not accessible then the services are ultimately of little use.

Patrick is a strong supporter of the Area Agencies and wants to contribute his expertise to their efforts and show his support by participating. He would have lunch with all four of his grandparents because he still misses them. In Patrick's "free" time he enjoys oil painting and cooking.

Patrick has represented Champaign County on the ECIAAA Advisory Council since 2007. He is President of the Advisory Council since 2016.



Julie Bobitt

Julie lives in Forsyth, has children, and works at the University of Illinois in Urbana, Champaign. Julie loves aging policy and believes we all need to be advocates for older adults.

Julie has been working in the field of aging/gerontology for over 20 years and hopes she can contribute what she knows, and do, for the greater good of ECIAAA. She would like to expand her knowledge about what is happening throughout communities in east central Illinois.

While policy is a great thing, Julie adds that it happens at a higher level and trickles down from national to state to local levels.

Being on the ECIAAA Advisory Council keeps her connected to what is happening on the ground – which is where policy plays out. She stresses that programs happening at the ground level should be informing policy as equally as policy directs programming.

Julie would have lunch with her mother because she has so many questions about life on which she would love to have her perspective. In her limited spare time, Julie enjoys reading, exercising (particularly walking and biking), and spending time watching her children play sports in high school and on traveling teams.

Julie has represented Champaign County on the ECIAAA Advisory Council since 2009.

Nicole Dowling



Nicole is the Coordinator for Faith in Action at OSF Healthcare Heart of Mary Medical Center in Champaign. She previously worked with CRIS Healthy-Aging Centers in Danville and Champaign. She was involved with the Case Coordination Unit and the Bridge Transition Program with CRIS, Faith in Action for Vermilion County, Vermilion Area Partnership for UNMET Needs, and the Halo Project.

Nicole is a caregiver for her grandmother whom still lives independently in her own home.

Nicole is passionate about Dementia and Alzheimer's. Her uncle was diagnosed with Alzheimer's and she's seen the impact it's had on her aunt and cousins. She'd like to be a voice for seniors in Vermilion County and enjoys meeting and working with others who are passionate about seniors and those in need.

Nicole would have lunch with Faith Hill because she loves her music and seems like a strong, genuine woman who balances raising a family along with a successful career. In her spare time Nicole watches her kids' sports activities. She also spends time fishing, swimming and camping near Kickapoo.

Nicole has represented Vermilion County on the ECIAAA Advisory Council since 2015-2019. She has represented Champaign County on the ECIAAA Advisory Council since September 2019.

Jennifer Kibler

Jennifer is the Marketing and Education Coordinator at Willowbrook Memory Support Residence in Clark County and is a member of the Ann Cooker St. Clair Daughters of the American Revolution. She also serves as a Power of Attorney for her grandmother who lives in a nursing home.

She is passionate in assisting seniors looking for long-term care and ensuring their wishes are fulfilled as well as advocating which is why she chose to serve on ECIAAA Advisory Council.

Jennifer would have lunch with her deceased grandmother, Elaine. She misses her guidance.

Jennifer lives in Clark County with her husband and twin girls. Much of her free time is spent caregiving for them and enjoys watching them participate in their various traveling sports!

Jennifer has represented Clark County on the ECIAAA Advisory Council since May 2019.

Sheila Greuel



Sheila has worked with older adults for over 30 years. Her experience with a variety of community-based services has helped her to learn ways to better serve older adults and their caregivers through person-centered care.

She is passionate about older adults in our communities receiving person-centered care that encourages purposefulness in their lives which is why she chose to serve on ECIAAA Advisory Council. Sheila wants to be a voice for the older adults in Coles County and ensure their needs are being met and they are aware of services available to them to help them age in

place. She wants to promote and make possible, state of the art programming such as Aging Mastery and fall prevention programs for the older adults in our service area.

Sheila would have lunch with her Grandpa Welsh, she wants to know what he thinks about the way things are now, and what he believes she can do about it. Also, because he died and she did not get to say “see you later” to him.

Sheila grew up in Moultrie County and is pleased to see the Moultrie County Senior Center thriving as it was her first project in Aging Services. She enjoys camping, entertaining people in her home, and simply visiting with friends over coffee. Any prayer time with her Franciscan Associates brings her pure joy.

Sheila has represented Coles County on the ECIAAA Advisory Council since 2018.



Sandy Bowman

Sandy serves on the Board of Directors for the Life Center of Cumberland County. She has been involved with the American Society of Training and Development and volunteered at the Sarah Bush Lincoln Health Center Guild.

Sandy enjoys having the time and energy to pursue activities where she can make a positive difference for others. She is thankful for the freedom she has and the beauty of the Earth. Sandy is passionate about helping seniors remain independent and vigorous.

She believes this can be achieved primarily through being needed by others and having an important purpose. Sandy is interested in finding ways for her community to keep seniors involved and contributing. She believes seniors should not be underestimated, they are ready to serve and have a lot to offer but need to be asked.

Sandy would have lunch with her parents. Since they have gone, she has so many questions unanswered and still needs their guidance and wisdom. Sandy lives in the country and enjoys outdoor work such as taking care of her horses, chickens, and other animals; solving problems; mending fence; riding; and enjoying coffee on her deck while watching the sunrise. She loves spending time with her daughters and their families, including grandchildren.

Sandy has represented Cumberland County on the ECIAAA Advisory Council since 2016.

Judith Knoth

Judith has represented DeWitt County on the ECIAAA Advisory Council since

Sherry Gordon-Harris

Sherry has represented DeWitt County on the ECIAAA Advisory Council since March 2020.

King Sutton



King was formerly owner and director of Sutton and Son Funeral Home in Paris, IL where he dedicated more than 40 years of service. He remains highly involved in serving the community by offering his time and experience to several different organizations and associations.

King has a passion to understand and support the financial and grief needs of seniors through professional grief therapy. He was involved in forming the first Widow to Widow program in his area and is invested in the Chester P. Sutton Senior Center started by his family.

King has served and continues to serve in leadership roles of numerous local, state, and national organizations and associations including the Paris Community Nurse Association, Edgar Co. Heart Association, National Funeral Directors Association, East Central Illinois Mass Transit Association, and Paris Economic Development Corporation, to name a few.

King has represented Edgar County on the ECIAAA Advisory Council since 2016.

Lucille Symmonds



Lucille is retired from the Ford County Mental Health Community Resource Counseling Center. She has been involved with the Women of the ELCA Church and served on the ECIAAA Corporate Board for six years.

As a kid, Lucille was taught to be honest, responsible, and care for others. She believes that the elderly need plenty of TLC and respect. She is interested in learning what is available for seniors so she can share the knowledge and resources with others.

Lucille would have lunch with her grandmother who was an immigrant from Denmark. She passed when Lucille was young, but she remembers the love and concern she had for Lucille and her family. For fun Lucille loves to go to musicals. She spends her time at church, bridge club, doing puzzles and being with her grand and great grandchildren.

Lucille has represented Ford County on the ECIAAA Advisory Council since 2006.

Judith Ondercho



Judith is a retired nursing home administrator from Paxton, Illinois. She has been involved with the Alzheimer's Association, the Paxton Women's Club, and the American Cancer Society.

Judith is the 4th of four sisters which she shares has been the best of relationships and something she would never give up.

She has a passion for making a person's last years a living experience. After a lifetime of fairly close dealings with people Judith

remains interested in people care and feels a need to collect ideas and push that idea where its best/most needed.

Judith would have lunch with her dear friend Mary Thompson, the columnist Tim Russert and Charlie Rose. In her spare time, she enjoys being with family, friends and God. She loves music, theatre, movies, reading, and corresponding via pen and paper.

Judith has represented Ford County on the ECIAAA Advisory Council since 2012.

Patty Haberkorn



Patty is the director of Futures Unlimited in Pontiac, serving adults with disabilities in Livingston County. Her background is in nursing, which is how she started at Futures.

Patty is passionate about Giving seniors the ability to age as gracefully as possible and to have choices about how they want to live out their lives. Having the option to remain in their homes for as long as possible is an important issue, as is the cost of care and meds.

She serves on Advisory Council because she was asked by Karen Donovan to take Karen's place on the council. Additionally, her mother and in-laws are both aging and have issues, so this is a topic that she is dealing with firsthand and realizes how important it is. She hopes to continue learning about senior issues and would like to have a role in improving the lives of seniors in our communities.

Patty would have lunch with her father who has passed not only because she misses him but also to ask him all the family history questions that she didn't think to ask when he was alive. Her mother suffers from dementia, so she is unable to ask her. She really misses the mealtime conversations her parents used to have with her and would love to have one more of those with both of them.

She and her husband reside in Livingston County on the family farm. They have children and grandchildren whom they love to spend time with. Spending time with the grandkids is number one on the priority list! She enjoys yard work, walks, and reading. Patty and her husband enjoy spending time with family and friends when we have a little extra time, also.

Patty has represented Livingston County on the ECIAAA Advisory Council since 2018.

Julie Walker

Julie has worked in the senior network and public health for 20+ years. She is currently Executive Director of Community Home Environmental Learning Project, Inc (CHELP).

An aging issue Julie is passionate about is self-determination and aging in place. She wants to have a positive effect on policy making for older adults, their families, and caregivers that has a focus on common sense and practical solutions.

She would have lunch with her father because he was her mentor and taught her compassion, empathy, and bravery. Julie appreciates hanging out with her family in her “free” time (especially her grandchildren). She enjoys walking and hiking or playing pool!

Julie has represented Macon County on the ECIAAA Advisory Council since May 2019.

Rick Lewis

Rick has represented McLean County on the ECIAAA Advisory Council since May 2020.



Deborah Matthew

Deborah is the Director of Cumberland Associates, and has also served as Director of Moultrie County Senior Center and Moultrie County Council on Aging.

Deborah has a passion for senior wellness and establishing evidence-based wellness programs to ensure seniors age strong and healthy. She is excited to help chart the course for aging programs for the future.

Deborah would have lunch with Julia Child. She loves the plot twists and intrigue of her life story and admires her unparalleled passion for food. Deborah is an avid hiker and backpacker and enjoys spending her free time traveling and cooking.

Deborah has represented Moultrie County on the ECIAAA Advisory Council since 2017.

Eileen Brewer



Eileen has a passion for Elder Abuse as she worked previously as an Adult Protective Services trainer at Illinois Department on Aging. She's been involved in volunteering for her local Peace Meal's home delivered meal, serves on Piatt County Services for Seniors Advisory Council, and is the American Red Cross Blood Drive chairman.

Eileen wants to help any way she can on ECIAAA's Advisory Council as well as staying educated on current trends and policies in the Aging Network.

She would have lunch with Arnold Palmer because not only was he a great golfer, but he was an impressive businessman while staying

humble and gracious. In her "free" time, Eileen enjoys antiquing, staying in touch with her friends from high school, and solving cryptquote puzzles.

Eileen has represented Piatt County on the ECIAAA Advisory Council since 2019.



Emily Dobson

Emily is a soccer, basketball, baseball, music, and drama Grandma. She has worked with people with disabilities of all ages for the past eighteen years. Emily is very involved in rural public transportation, both at local and regional levels.

Emily is passionate about health and wellness for all ages and allowing people to live as independently as possible. She would like to see the council advance the causes of ageing in place and senior fitness.

Emily would have lunch with her father. She really misses him and often could use his advice and counsel. She belongs to a performing singing group, enjoys traveling to the beach and mountains, and working to organize community events including 5K races.

Emily has represented Piatt County on the ECIAAA Advisory Council since 2016.

Cheri Burcham

Cheri has represented Shelby County on the ECIAAA Advisory Council since August 2020.



Harley Bennet – Corporate Board Liaison

Harley is a retired accountant that has represented Clark County on the East Central Illinois Area Agency on Aging Corporate Board since 2013. He is involved in rural public transportation and is a liaison for the ECIAAA Corporate Board.

Harley is passionate about health care and its costs. Harley would have lunch with U.S. unknown soldiers. He wants to know what branch of service they were in and who their family were.

Harley enjoys knife and coin collecting.

Harley has represented Clark County on the ECIAAA Advisory Council since 2001.