

Speakers and Bios



DAN ADCOCK, Director of Government Relations and Policy for the National Committee to Preserve Social Security and Medicare.

Prior to joining the National Committee, Dan was Legislative Director at the National Active and Retired Federal Employees Association (NARFE). During his 18-year tenure at NARFE, there were no legislated reductions in federal civilian retirement and health benefits. Dan helped to write, promote and enact N.A.R.F.E led-legislation in September 2000 to create the Federal Long-Term Care Insurance Program. He also served as executive assistant to Assistant Secretary

for Aging Jeanette C. Takamura. Dan was a professional staff member with the House Committee on Education and Labor where he helped write the 1992 reauthorization of the Older Americans Act & served as Senior Legislative Assistant to Representative Matthew G. Martinez (D-CA-31). Before Capitol Hill, Dan held budget analyst positions with the U.S. Departments of Agriculture and Energy.

He holds a B.A. in Political Science from Western State College in Gunnison, Colorado and an M.A. in Political Science from American University in Washington, DC. Dan lives in Silver Spring, Maryland with his wife Pamela Wasserman and son Sammy.



GARY S. BROWN, Statewide Elder Abuse Coordinator for New York Attorney General Letitia James Office

Gary is also the Assistant Attorney General-in-Charge of the AG's Westchester Regional Office. Previously, Mr. Brown served as Director of Communications & Policy Research at the NYS Consumer Protection Board; Director of the Westchester County Dept. of Consumer Protection; Executive Director of the Fund for Modern Courts; and as an attorney in private practice. Mr. Brown is co-chair of the Westchester Elder Abuse Coalition, serves on the county's Multidisciplinary Team on Elder Abuse, and is a member of the Elder Financial Exploitation

Advisory Board of the National Adult Protective Services Association.



MICHAEL BURGESS

For 46 years, Michael has worked in the field of aging and human services and played a role in the development of key legislation and programs to enhance the quality of life for older New Yorkers. Michael is currently a consultant with Community Caregivers in Albany which helps older persons remain living independently in the community; Michael also was Executive Director of StateWide Senior Action Council for 14 years, (1982-1987, 1995-2004), Executive of the New York State Alliance for Retired Americans (2004-2007) and Director of the NYS Office for the Aging (2007-2010).

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STEFANIA BUTA, CNY Community Outreach & Organizer

Stefania is a proud resident of Central New York and attended college at SUNY Cortland. She later received her Masters in Public Health from Columbia University. She comes to NY StateWide with a background in research methodologies and experience with domestic and international community resilience initiatives. In her free time, Stefania is a part of her town's Climate Smart Communities Task Force and enjoys spending time outdoors with her family & rescue dog, Toby.



AMANDA DUNKER

Amanda is the Health Policy Director at the Community Service Society of New York, where she advocates for greater affordability and access to health care. Previously, she worked as a Senior Health Policy Analyst at the National Governors Association Center for Best Practices. She received a B.A. in Media Studies from the University of Buffalo and a Master's in Public Policy at the University of Chicago.



ERIC HAUSMAN

Eric is an Independent Consultant specializing in Medicare Education and Training. He has conducted hundreds of Medicare presentations since 1998 on all aspects of Medicare and related insurance, both to groups of people with Medicare and to professionals. Over the last 15+ years, he has served as the Lead Trainer for the HIICAP program in NYS, providing training and technical assistance to Medicare counselors throughout the state. He previously worked in the Medicare operations of Empire Blue Cross Blue Shield. Eric holds both his BBA and MBA degrees from Baruch College in Manhattan. He loves to talk to people about Medicare.



LARA KASSEL

Lara is the Coordinator of Medicaid Matters New York, a statewide coalition of over 140 organizations representing the interests of New Yorkers served by the Medicaid program. In this role, Lara organizes all of the activities of this diverse coalition, which works to ensure that Medicaid consumer interests are included, understood and met in any and all discussions on Medicaid in New York. She was a member of the original Medicaid Redesign Team, as well as the DSRIP Project Approval and Oversight Panel.

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ASSEMBLYMEMBER RICHARD N. GOTTFRIED

Assemblymember Gottfried represents the 75th Assembly District, covering Chelsea, Hell's Kitchen, Murray Hill, Midtown and part of the Lincoln Center area in Manhattan. He is chair of the Assembly Health Committee since 1987. He is a leading state health policy-maker not only in New York but also nationally. He was a major architect of New York's landmark managed care reforms, and is continuing to fight for stronger protections for consumers and health care providers, & public support for universal access to quality, affordable health care.

Highlights of his legislative work include the passage of: the Prenatal Care Assistance Program for low income women; the Child Health Plus Program, which allows low-and moderate-income parents to get free or low-cost health insurance for their children; the law that gives patients access to information about a doctor's background and malpractice record; Family Health Plus, which provides free health coverage for low-income adults; the Health Care Proxy Law, which allows people to designate someone to make health care decisions for them if they lose decision-making capacity and the Family Health Care Decision Act, which allows family members to make health care decisions when an incapacitated person has not filled out a health care proxy; simplification of enrollment in publicly-financed programs (such as Medicaid); the HIV Testing and Confidentiality Law; laws that promote stronger primary and preventive care and formation of accountable care organizations (ACOs); and the law to legalize medical marijuana.

In the Legislature, he has been the leading proponent of patient autonomy, especially in end-of-life care, and reproductive freedom. He also sponsors the N.Y. Health bill to create a universal publicly funded single-payer health coverage plan for New York State. Each year, he fights to protect and increase funding for Medicaid, school health clinics, HIV/AIDS services, and other health concerns.

Dick Gottfried is a member of the Assembly Majority Steering Committee and the committees on Rules and Higher Education, as well as Health. He is the head of the Manhattan Assembly Delegation. He previously served as Deputy Majority Leader; Assistant Majority Leader; chair of the Assembly committees on Codes (covering the criminal justice system), and Children and Families; and chair of the Assembly task forces on the Homeless, Campaign Finance Reform, and Crime Victims.

Mr. Gottfried was first elected to the Assembly in 1970, at the age of 23, while a student at Columbia Law School. He was born in New York City in 1947. He is a graduate of Stuyvesant High School, Cornell University (BA, 1968), and Columbia Law School (JD, 1973). He is a lawyer, but does not maintain a private practice. He works full time as a legislator. He is a fellow of the New York Academy of Medicine, and a member of the American Public Health Association, the New York Civil Liberties Union, the Association of the Bar of the City of New York, the Art Students League, and the China Institute.

He lives in Manhattan with his wife, Louise, a nursery school teacher. Their son Michael and his wife have a daughter.

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BLAIR HORNER

Blair Horner is the Executive Director of the New York Public Interest Research Group (NYPIRG), appointed in September of 2015. Horner joined the staff of NYPIRG in 1979, and was employed there almost exclusively since; for decades he served as NYPIRG's legislative director. In his over 30 years of work with NYPIRG, he has lobbied on a wide range of issues, including energy policy, political reform, government openness and accountability, tobacco control, health care and financial services. He has written scores of reports examining issues including redistricting, campaign finance, political ethics, bank fees, auto insurance, health care, tobacco use, lead poisoning and higher education funding.

From 2007 through early 2008, Horner was a Special Advisor on Policy and Public Integrity to the New York State Attorney General. Among his responsibilities was the creation of the "Project Sunlight" website, which allows New Yorkers to simultaneously search governmental databases – campaign contributions, lobbying, contracts, legislation, among others. From 2011 until late 2013, Horner was the Vice President for Advocacy for the American Cancer Society, where he oversaw the lobbying, community organizing and statewide issue campaigns in New Jersey and New York, as well as its federal advocacy efforts.

Horner's comments have been widely reported by the media. He has been interviewed on the Today Show, World News Tonight, Al Jazeera America, on A&E's Investigative Reports, and profiled in the New York Times. Horner's opinion pieces have been published in the Albany Times Union, Buffalo News, Rochester Democrat & Chronicle, New York Daily News, Newsday and other New York dailies. He is a regular commentator on WAMC public radio and its affiliates.

Horner has received numerous awards, including awards from the AARP, Common Cause, the League of Women Voters, the New York Attorney General, and the New York City Asthma Partnership. In Fall of 1999, Empire State Reports magazine named me as one of the 25 most influential New Yorkers in the previous 25 years. In Spring of 2014, he was named one of The Albany Power 100 by City & State Magazine. In January of 2017, he received a "50 over 50" award by the same magazine.

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ASSEMBLYMEMBER RON KIM

Ron Kim, a longtime resident of Flushing, Queens, is in his fifth term representing the 40th Assembly District. He is the first Korean-American elected to the New York State Legislature.

He has a long record of public service in NYC and NYS government policy positions. Currently, he Chairs the NYS Assembly Aging Committee and has been a strong supporter of the rights of nursing home residents and their families.



MELISSA KINNEY, CNY Community Outreach & Organizer

Melissa Kinney comes to NY Statewide Senior Action Council with over a decade's experience working with seniors and community members with disabilities while working for the Department of Social Services. Most recently she worked with children with special needs. She graduated from SUNY Poly and Mohawk Valley Community College, in Utica, NY with degrees in Humanities and Social Sciences.



REBECCA KINNEY, Director for the Administration for Community Living's Office of Healthcare Information and Counseling (OHIC).

In this role Rebecca is responsible for the administration of the Medicare focused programs and activities managed by ACL including the State Health Insurance Assistance Program (SHIP), the Senior Medicare Patrol (SMP) program, the Medicare Improvements for Patients & Providers Act (MIPPA) program and the Duals Demonstration Ombudsman Technical Assistance Center. She provides oversight and direction to the ACL

project officers, the state grantees, various administrative contracts used to support the state grantee work, and the national technical assistance and resource centers established to support the ACL grantees.

Rebecca came to ACL in 2011 as the SMP Program Manager. Prior to that she worked with the Michigan SHIP, SMP, and MIPPA grantee as the statewide Trainer where she was responsible for the education and certification of the team members statewide and became known for her expertise on both Medicare and Michigan Medicaid.

Rebecca acquired her Master of Social Work with a focus in aging and management from the University of Michigan where she was also a Geriatric Fellow. She also holds a Bachelor of Fine Arts from Alma College.

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SARAH LUDWIG

Sarah is the Founder and Co-Director of the New Economy Project, an advocacy organization with a dual mission: working with community groups to fight for economic justice, and to create community-led vehicles that ensure self-determination over people's housing, work, money, land, energy, and communities at large. As a longtime leader in the movement for community financial justice and neighborhood equity, Sarah has testified frequently at public hearings, trained hundreds of community organizers and advocates, & built and led effective coalitions that address manifestations of structural racism and other systemic inequities in our economy. Sarah received the 2000 Rockefeller Foundation's Next Generation Leadership fellowship; the 2002 Union Square Award; The Ford Foundation's 2004 Leadership for a Changing World award; New York Lawyers for the Public Interest's 2008 Felix A. Fishman Award; and Chhaya CDC's 2011 Architect of Change award. She serves on the board of directors of the Center for Responsible Lending, and for six years served as co-chair of North Star Fund's Community Funding Committee. Sarah received a law degree from NYU School of Law, where she was an Arthur Garfield Hays Civil Liberties Fellow, and a master's degree in urban planning, also from NYU.



KEN LUFT, Senior Medicare Patrol Volunteer

Ken stays busy since he retired by volunteering and helping others. He says "Retirement should be a time to do more of what you want to do, but stay as active as possible."

Ken volunteers with the New York Aquarium, hospitals, SAT tutoring, lunches for holocaust survivors, helping immigrants pass citizenship tests, assistant coach for a football team, and enjoys making presentations on Medicare fraud with the Senior Medicare Patrol.



NINA LYNCH retired from Dutchess County Office for the Aging in 2011 after close to nineteen years as the Aging Information Services Specialist. Prior to Office for the Aging, Nina worked in the non profit sector & collaborated with others to create community-based organizations. She was a founding member of Meals on Wheels of Greater Hyde Park, Northern Dutchess Caregivers Coalition and Rhinebeck at Home. Nina volunteers for DC Office for Aging's Health Insurance Information Counseling and Assistance Program (HIICAP), Rhinebeck at Home, Bard Lifetime Learning Institute, Wilderstein and Rhinebeck Responds, a 'mutual aid' group that started up during the pandemic.

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SENATOR RACHEL MAY

Senator May was elected to the New York State Senate in November 2018. She chairs the Senate Committee on Aging and the Legislative Commission on Rural Resources and sits on several other committees, including agriculture; elections; environmental conservation; higher education; and Cultural Affairs, Tourism, Parks and Recreation.

Prior to her election, Senator May spent 15 years working in environmental sustainability at Syracuse University and SUNY-ESF, including serving as director of sustainability education. Before that, she was a professor of Russian language and literature, first at SUNY-Stony Brook and then at

Macalester College in St. Paul, Minnesota.

Senator May earned a master's degree from Oxford University on a Marshall Scholarship and a Ph.D. in Russian language and literature from Stanford University. She also earned a master's degree from SUNY-ESF. She lives in Syracuse with her husband, Tom, a professor at Le Moyne College; their daughter, Sophie, is a senior at Cornell University.



BARB MCBURNIE

Barb is a member of StateWide's Board of Directors and also serves as President of the North Country Chapter. She spent twenty years working at the St. Lawrence County Office for the Aging in several capacities including Director and HIICAP coordinator. During that time she was involved with StateWide and attended several conventions. A highlight was having the opportunity to meet Rose Kryzak at one of them. Upon retiring, Barb joined StateWide and due to her lengthy aging background was interested in the Public Policy committee and the Senior Medicare Patrol and is now volunteering for both.



BETH NELSON, Director, NYS Senior Medicare Patrol (SMP)

Beth joined StateWide in July 2018 as an Outreach Counselor and was promoted to the Director of the Senior Medicare Patrol Program in October 2019. Beth Has numerous years of experience in working with the Senior Population, specifically as a Service Coordinator in HUD subsidized housing. Beth also worked for Erie County Department of Senior Services in their cluster offices in South Buffalo and Amherst. Beth serves as a mentor for the WNY Service Coordinator Association, and is a member of the Council of Elder Abuse in both Niagara County and Erie County.

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RANDY MCCULLOUGH, CAE

Randy McCullough is Deputy Executive Director of the New York State Funeral Directors Association, Inc. (NYSFDA), representing over 900-member firms and 2300 licensed funeral directors in New York State. McCullough has been NYSFDA's deputy executive director for 15 years, having previously served as the Association's director of government affairs. Prior to working at NYSFDA, he was senior staff member/committee director for former New York State Assemblyman Paul D. Tonko, who now represents the entire Capital Region as a Member of Congress (NY-20). McCullough graduated from Hartwick College (Oneonta, NY) with a B.A. in Political Science, and is a graduate of the Public Affairs Council's *Public Affairs Institute*. The Council, based in Washington, DC, is the leading international association for public affairs professionals. McCullough has also been a member of the board of directors of the Public Affairs Council since 2009.

McCullough served on the Board of the Empire State Society of Association Executives, Inc. (ESSAE) for several years, rising to the position of Chairman of the Board (2013 – 2014, has served as a member of the board of directors for several other organizations, including the American Red Cross (Northeastern New York Chapter), and was a member of the governing board (Session) of the United Presbyterian Church of Amsterdam.



SARINA NICOLA, RN, MS

Sarina Nicola is a retired registered nurse and former Director of nursing, having worked most of her career in home care. She has been a family caregiver for her mother who resides in a North Country nursing home. She has served as President of the facility's family council because she is passionate about residents' rights and the need for quality, dignified care. Quality concerns and limitations on family visits during the pandemic raised her interest in advocacy not just for her mother, but on a broader level. She is currently a member of NY StateWide Senior Action Council's VIRTUAL RESIDENT FAMILY ACTION COUNCIL.

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KATHLEEN OTTE

Kathleen Otte is the Regional Administrator for the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS), within the Office of Program Operations and Local Engagement (OPOLE). In this capacity, Kathleen is responsible for outreach, stakeholder engagement and environmental scanning related to all of CMS' programs. Stakeholder engagement informs CMS of 'on the ground' impact of its policies, programs and initiatives. Prior to joining CMS, Kathleen served as the Regional Administrator for the Administration for Community Living and as the New Hampshire State Director for the Bureau of Elderly and Adult Services, NH Department of Health and Human Services. Kathleen and the New Hampshire team, received the Malcom Baldrige Award for Innovation from the American Healthcare Association for the implementation of a Single Dose Administration Program and two innovation awards from the Council of State Governments for implementing a Consumer Directed Caregiving Program and Adult Protection Protocols, statewide. In 2015, Kathleen received the Jane Adam award from 'Be the Evidence International' for her work in Social Justice. Kathleen holds a Masters Degree in Organizational Development and a Bachelors Degree in Social Work (gerontology) from the University of Oklahoma.



MARY PRITCHARD

Mary was born and raised in Seneca Falls, the home of Women's Rights. She earned a B.S. from the State University of New York at Cortland and is a retired public school teacher. She has served on StateWide's Board and is a member of the Public Policy Committee, representing the Capital Region. She has experience as an advocate, having served as Director of the Teen Pregnancy Network (Schenectady) and Assistant Director of the NYS Day Care Center (Albany.) She has been a board member of many organizations in Schenectady, including the United Way, American Association of University Women, Cornell Cooperative Extension, NYS United Teachers Retiree Council, the League of Women Voters, and the County Democratic Committee. She served as a Long Term Care Ombudsman for over 14 years. She is a Church Elder of Union Presbyterian Church and a member of the Alliance for Retired Americans of the Capital District. She volunteers in many organizations, and is an Usher for The Egg, Troy Music Hall, The Capital Repertory Theater, and Proctors Theater. Mary has received many honors for her community advocacy, including StateWide's Rose Kryzak Award, the YMCA's Woman of Vision, the Council of Community Service Katherine Rozendaal Award, the League of Women Voters' Susan B. Anthony Award, the Lifetime Achievement Award from Marquis Who's Who, Senior Citizen of the Year – Schenectady County and the Schenectady City Democrats' Harry S. Truman Award.

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SENATOR GUSTAVO RIVERA

Senator Rivera has represented the 33rd Senate District in the Bronx since November of 2010. The 33rd Senate District includes the neighborhoods of Kingsbridge Heights, East Tremont, Crotona Park, Fordham, Mount Hope, Belmont, Van Nest, Claremont, and Morris Park.

Since taking office, Senator Rivera has focused his efforts on addressing issues of health inequity both legislatively and on the ground. In 2011, Senator Rivera launched the Bronx CAN (Changing Attitudes Now) Health Initiative. The goal of this community oriented health initiative is not only to encourage Bronx residents to develop healthy behaviors, but to shape

policies that will help tear down some of the institutional barriers that stand in the way of Bronxites having a healthier lifestyle.

In 2018, his passion to improve the health of New Yorkers lead Majority Leader Andrea Stewart-Cousins to appoint Senator Rivera as the Chair of the New York State Senate's Health Committee. As the Chair, Senator Rivera's goal is to collaborate with his colleagues, stakeholders, & constituents to improve health outcomes, increase access to coverage, and ensure a financially viable system for the 20 million New Yorkers he proudly serves.

Prior to his appointment to Chair, Senator Rivera served as the ranking member of the Senate Health Committee for six years. As a sitting member of the committee, Senator Rivera passed three laws to ban smoking around schools, afterschools, and libraries, and has been a champion of public health and harm reduction policies. In March 2017, he became the main sponsor of the "New York Health Act," an innovative bill to create a single payer health system in New York State.

Senator Rivera has also championed and empowered Latino communities across New York State and the United States. In 2018, the National Association of Latino Elected and Appointed Officials (NALEO) elected Senator Rivera to serve an initial three-year term on the nonpartisan organization's 35-member Board of Directors. NALEO'S mission looks to foster civic engagement in Latino communities, increase the effectiveness of Latino policymakers, and promote policies that advance Latino political engagement. For over a decade, Senator Rivera has also served as a mentor for the annual Model State Senate program, "Somos El Futuro", sponsored by CUNY, SUNY, the NY State Assembly, and the Puerto Rican Hispanic Task Force.

Prior to becoming an elected representative, Gustavo worked as a community organizer for several local and state candidates including Jose Marcos Serrano and Andrea Stewart-Cousins' campaigns for State Senate, as well as Fernando Ferrer's 2001 campaign for Mayor of New York City. In early 2008, SEIU hired Gustavo to manage their activities on behalf of then-presidential candidate Barack Obama in several crucial primary states. Gustavo traveled to Indiana, Pennsylvania, Virginia, Texas, and his home of Puerto Rico on behalf of Senator Obama. Gustavo was then tapped by Senator Obama to serve as his Constituency Director in the crucial swing state of Florida. After the election, Gustavo returned home to New York State to serve as the Director of Outreach for U.S. Senator Kirsten Gillibrand. Additionally, Gustavo has also served as an adjunct professor at Pace University and Hunter College, where he has taught courses in political science.

Gustavo was born in Santurce, Puerto Rico. In 1998, Gustavo graduated from the University of Puerto Rico and moved to New York to begin a doctoral program in political science at the Graduate Center of the City University of New York. He has lived in Kingsbridge Heights for almost 20 years.

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MICHELE ROGERS

Michele is a HIICAP Counselor volunteering through the Westchester Library System for over 11 years. She was trained by the Medicare Rights Center & numerous programs offered to counselors, by the library. When the COVID-19 shut down everything last year, joining the Senior Medicare Patrol seemed like the perfect opportunity to join, take the required test and start following all of the extremely informative monthly meetings and Teach Ins. Michele makes sure to speak with clients about their 2021 Drug Plans but also takes this opportunity to speak and send printed information on the scams & safe practices Seniors must follow during this time.



CYNTHIA RUDDER, PhD

Cynthia has been a longtime advocate for nursing home residents in New York State. Dr. Rudder was a Founder and Director of LTCCC (fka) Nursing Home Community Coalition of New York State from 1982 to 2012, and is continuing her advocacy work with a number of organizations fighting for a good quality of life and care for our most vulnerable citizens. Dr. Rudder has received a number of awards for her research and advocacy, including a Lifetime Achievement

Award from CMS in April, 2013 and the Director's Distinguished Achievement in Aging Award for Advocacy and Protecting the Rights of the Elderly from the NYS Office for the Aging in 2010. She has been or is a member of many state and federal advisory groups and with grants from numerous foundations and governments, she has published a number of reports and articles on nursing home and assisted living.



RHONDA SCHWARTZ

Rhonda has served as a Regional Administrator for the Administration for Community Living (ACL), U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), since 2019 and currently acts as Bi-Regional Administrator for Regions II (NY, NJ, PR, and USVI) and III (DC, DE, MD, PA, VA, and WV). Rhonda joined ACL in July 2016 as an Aging Services Program Specialist in ACL's Region I office located in Boston, MA. In that capacity, she worked with federal, state, and tribal organizations, with particular attention to oversight of the Older Americans Act state and tribal grant programs. Prior

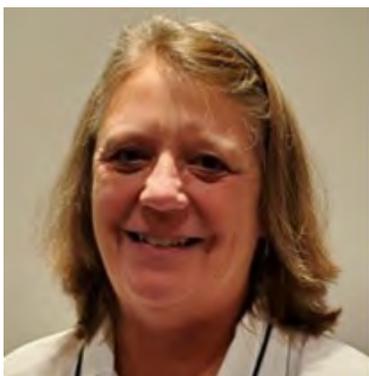
to joining ACL, she spent several years managing OAA and other ACL programs at the Rhode Island Division of Elderly Affairs (DEA). Rhonda earned a B.S. in Business Administration from Georgetown University in 1985 and a J.D. from Columbia University in the City of New York in 1988. Following award of her J.D., she joined a leading commercial real estate practice in Manhattan, NY, where she developed an expertise in office and retail leasing. Rhonda left her law practice in 2004 to pursue a Master of Social Work degree, which she received from Rhode Island College in 2006.

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BOB SINACORE

Bob is a resident of Albany. He's had a longtime interest in services for seniors both in his career in State government & as a retiree. Bob worked with seniors as an outreach worker with Jewish Family Services and serves on the advisory committee for the Albany County Office for Aging. He is a member of StateWide's Board of Directors and currently serves as Treasurer. Bob also served as the Vice President of the Albany Chapter of StateWide when it was first formed and has held the office of Chapter President since 2017. In addition, he's been involved with advocacy for seniors at the State Capitol and is a member of StateWide's Public Policy Committee.



KIM ANDERSON SWIRE, LMSW, C-ASWCM

Kim obtained her Bachelor's Degree in Sociology/Social Work from Muhlenberg College in Allentown, Pennsylvania, followed directly by graduate work at the University at Albany School of Social Welfare which led to her MSW degree. She enjoyed a 37 year career as a social worker working in a variety of settings including community agencies serving the blind and visually impaired, nursing homes, an adult home, hospitals, home care and primary care. She ended her career working as an aging life care professional (i.e. geriatric care manager) for thirteen years

providing consultation and care management to older adults and their family members throughout the Capital District for the CHOICES program of St. Peter's Health Partners. She has enjoyed mentoring social work interns over the course of her career in an effort to help train others to enter the rewarding field of aging services. Kim has been a member of StateWide Senior Action Council for several years and is currently the President of the Saratoga Chapter. Although retired since 2015, Kim continues to remain involved in her local community, and currently serves as the Vice President of the Village, Shenendehowa Neighbors Connecting. She lives in Clifton Park, and enjoys Aqua Zumba, spending time in Florida, and socializing with friends.

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LOIS UTTLEY, MPP

Lois Uttley is the Director of the Women’s Health Program for Community Catalyst, a national consumer health advocacy organization. In that role, she is building on more than 25 years of research, policy analysis and advocacy to advance access to timely, affordable and culturally-competent health care for women, LGBTQ people and families.

Ms. Uttley, who is based in Manhattan, is active in New York consumer health advocacy, serving on the steering committee of the statewide Health Care for All NY coalition. She founded & is coordinator of a statewide consumer alliance, Community Voices for Health System Accountability (CVHSA), that is raising consumer voices as health systems propose mergers, acquisitions, new construction, downsizing and closings of hospitals. In August of 2020, she testified before a joint hearing of the NYS Assembly & Senate Health Committees, proposing the use of Health Equity Assessments to evaluate Certificate of Need applications to determine whether CONs will improve or worsen access to health services for underserved communities.

Ms. Uttley was founder and Director of the MergerWatch Project & previously served as Vice President of Family Planning Advocates of NYS, Director of Public Affairs for the NYS Department of Health and as a journalist covering New York State government for the Albany Times Union. She has served as President of the Public Health Association of NYC and Chair of the national Action Board and Joint Policy Committee of the American Public Health Association. In New York, she has served on numerous city and state health policy advisory boards and councils. Most recently, she was a member of the NYS DOH Hospital Quality Rating Stakeholder Workgroup and the NYS DOH Workgroup on Freestanding Emergency Departments.

Ms. Uttley has deep knowledge of health systems transformation and the ways in which consumers can be affected when their local delivery systems consolidate, downsize or close. Her most recent publication, “Giving New Yorkers a Voice in Oversight of Hospital Consolidation,” appeared in the Spring 2019 issue of the New York State Bar Association’s Health Law Journal. She was lead author of “Empowering New York Consumers in an Era of Hospital Consolidation” (May 2018), which reported findings from a year-long study of New York’s Certificate of Need (CON) program, funded by the New York State Health Foundation. The report recommended that state oversight of hospital consolidation should be more transparent and engaging of affected consumers and require hospitals to predict the impact of proposed mergers on the price of health care. A 2016 national study she co-authored, “When Hospitals Merge: Updating State Oversight to Protect Access to Care, identified best practices from among the 36 CON programs still in operation.

She has been active in national women’s health advocacy as co-founder of Raising Women’s Voices for the Health Care We Need, which has regional coordinators in 27 states. She earned a Master’s in Public Affairs and Policy from the Nelson A. Rockefeller College of Public Affairs and Policy at the University at Albany and teaches in the Master’s in Health Advocacy Program at Sarah Lawrence College. She was honored by the Ms. Foundation for Women with its Gloria Award, and has received awards for her women’s health advocacy leadership from APHA’s Maternal Health section and its Sexual and Reproductive Health section.