SILCC Conference 2026 Agenda

From Isolation to Connection: A Call for Collective Action

Thursday, December 10, 2026 | Princeton, NJ
8:30 AM – 1:30 PM

Conference Outcome:

Participants will be empowered to take meaningful individual and collaborative action to reduce social isolation and loneliness, strengthen community connections, and foster a greater sense of belonging across diverse populations.

8:30 – 9:30 AM | Registration & Networking Breakfast

- Participant check-in and welcome materials
- Light breakfast and coffee service
- Informal networking and partner engagement

9:30 – 9:45 AM | Welcome & Opening Remarks

- Host welcome (**Samaritan-President & CEO, Mary Ann Boccolini | Director of Social Connections, Erika Thomas)**
- Overview of conference purpose and objectives
- Framing social isolation and loneliness as a public health and equity priority

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9:45 – 10:10 AM | Keynote Address Deputy Commissioner of NJ Department of Human Services, Kaylee McGuire

"Building Belonging: A Share Responsibility and Collective Opportunity"

- *Describe the trends and actions undertaken through the NJ Department of Human Services to promote connection and reduce isolation*
- *The growing recognition of loneliness and isolation as public health concerns*
- *The role of healthcare, social services, faith communities, housing providers, and community organizations*

- *Innovative state and local initiatives that foster connections and belonging*
- *A call to action for collective impact and collaboration*

10:10 – 11:15 AM | 1.5 CEUs "Story to Solution"

Moderator: Mira Berzofsky

Panel Discussion I: Understanding Isolation Through Lived Experience *Lived Experiences of Social Isolation, Loneliness and Belonging*

Panelists representing:

- Aging adult live experience: **Carol Mosley**
- Caregiver perspective: **Kyle Ruffin**
- Veterans: **Pending**

Panel Discussion II: Turning Insight into Action *Solutions and Innovations*

Panelists representing:

- Innovation disability services: **Karen Lindgren, Bancroft**
- Innovation in aging: **Emily Greenfield**
- Community-based Solutions: **Rev. Christine Davies, RWJ Hospital**

Learning Objectives:

1) *Describe how healthcare systems, community organizations, disability providers, and spiritual care leaders can collaborate to address social isolation and loneliness across diverse populations.*
2) *Identify innovative approaches across aging, disability, healthcare, and faith-based settings that reduce social isolation and foster meaningful connections.*
3) *Apply strategies and practices to strengthen social connections, promote well-being, and support individuals experiencing isolation.*

11:15– 11:35 AM | Networking & Refreshment Break

- Mid-day refreshments
- Informal networking
- Resource table engagement

11:35 AM – 12:45 PM | CEU-Eligible Interactive Breakout Sessions (70 Minutes)

Participants choose one topic area:

Option 1: Community-Based Models & Innovations

Presenters**: Perkins Center for the Arts-Kahra Buss- Executive Director, Project Refit-James Corbett, President & Founder, Samaritan-Christina Rubano, MSW, Dementia Care Program Coordinator, Palliative Medicine Social Work Supervisor**

Focus:

- Real-world approaches to reducing isolation
- A look at the behaviors of the socially isolated, the lonely
- Description of a socially connected future
- Overcoming barriers to collaboration or program implementation

Learning Objectives

1) *Identify key components of effective community-based interventions that address social isolation.*
2) *Analyze how cross-sector partnerships improve program reach and impact.*
3) *Apply a community-based strategy to support a population experiencing social isolation within their organization or community.*

Option 2: A Foundation for Connection: Emphasis on Environment

Presenters: **The Roosevelt 55+ Housing Community (Fairshare Housing)- Emily Kotarski, MSW, Outdoors on purpose-Tenisha Malcolm, Founder, Spectracare Foundation-Kathleen Van Stine, Grounds for Sculpture-Rodney Camarce, Manager of Wellness Programs**

Focus:

- Preventing isolation in affordable and supportive housing
- Providing opportunities and encouraging Black, Brown, and historically unrepresented communities to find respite, connection, and joy in nature
- Developing innovative arts and wellness programming using art as a tool for connection

Learning Objectives

1) *Describe environmental and social factors that influence social connection and belonging*.
2) *Identify opportunities for collaboration among housing, healthcare, arts, and community organizations*.
3) *Apply an environmental or community-based strategy to strengthen social connection and promote belonging*.

Option 3: Community Support Across Lifespan

Presenters: **Alzheimer's Association-Mary Beth Lewis, Mercer County Connection-Jennifer Sutphin, Director, Assistant James Colon, Associate Director of Programs, U.S Dept of Veteran's Affairs-Heather Church-Soto, Suicide Prevention Coordinator**

- Supporting individuals across the lifespan
- The impact of collaboration in efforts of making an impact in the community/population served
- The impact of social isolation on those with cognitive impairment, mental health and suicide rates

Learning Objectives

1) *Recognize the impact of social isolation on individuals across diverse populations.*
2) *Identify supportive interventions and resources for populations experiencing social isolation.*
3) *Apply appropriate resources and collaborative strategies to improve coordination and support for individuals experiencing social isolation.*

12:45 – 1:00 PM | Refresh, Reflect & Connect

- Open forum for sharing and reflection
- Continued networking to strengthen relationships and collaboration

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1:00 – 1: 30 PM | Call to Action & Closing Remarks (Dr. Monica Lallo)

- Next steps for continued engagement through SILCC
- Health Equity, vulnerable populations, call to action
- Closing remarks from Dr. Monica Lallo-Acenda Integrated Health, Senior Vice President Prevention, Youth and Education Services