

# Advance Long and Productive Lives

*A Grand Challenge for Social Work*



The Grand Challenge to **Advance Long and Productive Lives** seeks to harness the skills, talents, and experience of the growing number of older adults to respond to the demands of an increasingly polarized and inequitable country. Adopting a life-course approach, the Grand Challenge seeks to advance science to inform the development of equitable policies and programs in employment, volunteering, caregiving, and education to maximize health, ensure economic security, and provide more opportunities for purposeful living for those of all ages. This Grand Challenge aims to dismantle systemic ageism, racism, sexism and other forms of oppression as they limit such opportunities.

During the past five years, output from members of the network and their colleagues has been prolific, including 120+ publications, 100+ presentations, 40+ media interviews and 17+ grants. Looking ahead, having established a solid conceptual foundation for their Grand Challenge, its members seek to translate their research into evidence-based interventions and expand their network among educators, practitioners, advocates, and students of social work at the undergraduate, masters, and doctoral levels.

## LONGEVITY DESIGN CHALLENGE

*NYU Silver School of Social Work Associate Professor Ernest Gonzales, co-lead of the Grand Challenge to **Advance Long and Productive Lives**, led a team that was one of eight finalists in the Stanford Center on Longevity's 2018–2019 [Longevity Design Challenge](#). The team's *i<sup>2</sup> Housing* intergenerational interdependence initiative builds on traditional home sharing to address the national challenges of rising student debt, social isolation, declining health, and affordable housing among college students and older adults.*

## i<sup>2</sup> Housing



# Celebrating 5 Years of Progress on the Grand Challenges!

## Network Leadership

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#### Linda Harootyan, Co-principal,

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Bob Harootyan, Manager of Research,  
Senior Service America

## LOOKING BACK

During the past five years, members of the **Advance Long and Productive Lives** network and their colleagues have:

- **Published** two concept papers on increasing productive engagement in [early](#) and [later](#) life
- **Presented** at dozens of conferences and events, including the [Gerontological Society of America](#), [National Academy of Medicine](#), [Actuarial Society of America](#), [Drexel University](#), and [Age Strong @ Work](#)
- **Delivered** webinars on [Engagement and Entrepreneurship Research](#) and [COVID-19 and Age: Risks and Opportunities](#)
- **Commented** widely in the national media, including [Reuters](#), [Next Avenue](#), [The New York Times](#), [The Boston Globe](#), [Curbed](#), [The Huffington Post](#), and [The Associated Press](#)
- **Contributed** a regular column to the AGE-SW newsletter, "[Spotlight on Advancing Long and Productive Lives](#)"
- **Authored** more than 120 articles, books, chapters, reports, and briefs on topics related to the Grand Challenge, including a [special issue of the Clinical Social Work Journal](#) and the book, [Current and Emerging Trends in Aging & Work](#)
- **Secured** more than a dozen grants, including from the National Institute on Aging, U.S. Social Security Administration, AARP Foundation, RRF Foundation for Aging, and Sloan Foundation, to examine work and retirement trajectories, workforce training, and health
- **Directed** studies on [best practices for intergenerational programs](#) and the effects of tutoring on older adults' well-being
- **By invitation, joined** the Committee on Understanding the Aging Workforce and Employment at Older Ages sponsored by the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine
- **Testified** before a [committee](#) of the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine on developing a behavioral and social sciences research agenda for the next decade on Alzheimer's disease and related dementias, and civic engagement in later life
- **Advanced** to the finals of the Stanford Center on Longevity's 2018–2019 [Longevity Design Challenge](#)
- **Advocated** for enacting universal paid family and medical leave in the U.S. and strengthening the Social Security 2100 Act
- **Developed** a letter in support of paid family leave legislation in the U.S. signed by over 100 academics from all over the U.S.
- **Led economic analysis** efforts that contributed to the passage of paid family and medical leave and paid sick days in Colorado
- **Investigated** age discrimination in the workplace and studied the implications of tying Medicaid eligibility to work

## LOOKING AHEAD

Network members have articulated the following objectives for the Grand Challenge to **Advance Long and Productive Lives** over the next five years:

- **Continue** to advocate for their [policy recommendations](#):
  1. **Create** flexible and transitional employment arrangements
  2. **Provide** financial support to caregivers
  3. **Expand** the Corporation for National and Community Service's support for engaging older adults
- **Elevate** intersectionality and inequality in productive aging discourse
- **Continue** to produce the AGE-SW [Productive Aging Spotlight](#)
- **Publish** empirical articles on intersectionality as well as reconceptualize productive aging
- **Present** at the Gerontological Society of America on ageism, age-inclusive universities, and older workers amidst COVID-19
- **Involve** more policy makers, practitioners, advocates, educators and students
- **Secure** scholarship funding to recruit more racial and ethnically diverse undergraduates and master's students into the field
- **Translate** research into evidence-based practice interventions

## Join Us

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