


# A Teacher's Guide to The Careers That Love You Back



**Careers that you back**

## Activities Department

An Activities Director leads the residents in their pursuit of fun. This includes games, arts and crafts, and music therapy. Sometimes, the Activities Director brings in animals for the residents to enjoy.

**Employment outlook**  
**HOT!**

**Are you a person who:**

- Likes to play games?
- Does arts and crafts?
- Enjoys people older than your parents?
- Is patient and helpful?

**What is the salary?**  
\$25,000 – \$40,000

**How can you prepare to become an Activities Director?**

- Study geriatrics.
- Learn fun games for groups.
- Spend time with grandparents or older neighbors.
- Understand safety methods.


**How much schooling is needed?**  
Associate's or Bachelor's Degree

**What are similar careers?**

- Teacher
- Recreation Therapist
- Sales

**Career steps**

- Director
- Supervisor
- Coordinator
- Assistant



**Making the residents happy makes me happy. They are like family to me. It's like I'm planning a birthday party every single day.\***

LeadingAge Ohio

## **A Guide for Teachers**

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## Introduction

In this section, context is provided for this project. While understanding the challenges, we present *Careers That Love You Back* as a beginning to providing solutions.

### Background

The nation's population is undergoing a seismic shift, with 10,000 baby boomers turning 65 every day. In the United States, already more than 13 percent of the population is older than 65 years of age, and, by 2030, that number will increase to at least 20 percent (Ortman, Velkoff, & Hogan, 2014). The United States Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) estimates that nearly 70 percent of people who reach the age of 65 will ultimately need some form of long-term care; many will have limited-incomes (Joint Center for Housing Studies of Harvard University, 2014), but the long-term care sector is currently ill equipped to meet their needs because of a severe workforce shortage. According to the LeadingAge Ohio, Ohio Assisted Living Association, Ohio Health Care Association, Ohio Association of Senior Centers, and the Ohio Council for Home Care & Hospice Report of 2016, 20 percent of long-term services and supports providers report having jobs for which they have *zero* [emphasis added] applications; some providers even report that they are considering limiting services because of workforce shortages (p. 2).

Ageism—the prejudicial attitudes, discriminatory practices and policies/practices that perpetuate age-related stereotypes—is one barrier to developing a skilled long-term care workforce. Recent studies confirm that ageism negatively impacts all ages and deprives communities of the skills and talents of both young and old (Robbins, 2015). Age segregation, or the practice of separating people on the basis of their age, is cited as both a cause and consequence of ageism (Hagestad & Uhlenberg, 2005; Vanderbeck, 2007).

### A Solution? Careers That Love You Back!

The *Careers That Love You Back* posters identify 21 career choices in the field of aging services. This project supplements existing intergenerational programs by fostering early awareness and interest in the field of aging services in K-6 grades, laying the foundation for later career readiness and training. This project extends the career pipeline, creating positive associations with aging in young children. The careers are varied. As you think of children who seem poised to work in a helping profession and who exhibit other talents that would be applicable to other settings, think of the numerous opportunities and careers that are possible in the Aging Services job section. From the obvious, nursing, to Security and Transportation, Culinary Arts, Business and Office Management, and Human Resources, there are, perhaps, more careers than even you could have imagined. We hope you will agree that there is

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something for everyone in these careers; most importantly, we believe that these are careers that could love your students back!

Thank you for your time and consideration. We hope this leads to better futures for us all.

Respectfully,

Kathryn Brod, LeadingAge of Ohio Chief Executive Office

Susan Hildebrandt, Leading Age Vice President of Workforce Initiatives

Richele O'Connor, Professor Emerita, Wright State University

Elizabeth Wolfe-Eberly, Director of Dayton Regional Stem Center

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## Explanation of Posters

First, we decided that one of the best ways to persuade children that the field of Aging Services is one they should consider in their future is to convince them that it is a career that would “love you back.” Who doesn’t want to be loved? Choosing to follow a career path that offers such a payback is priceless, we would contend.

Secondly, the 21 posters have been created with illustrations that portray animals doing the work. As in the time-honored tradition of using animals to teach lessons, i.e. Aesop’s Fables, animals are depicted in these posters to demonstrate those at work and play in *Careers That Love You Back*.

Finally, each poster includes nine major parts:

- Name of career and/or department
- Summary paragraph
- Career quote
- How you can you prepare?
- Are you a person who . . .
- Employment Outlook
- Salary range
- Schooling required
- Similar careers
- Levels

While the first five are self-explanatory, it is important to note that the *Employment Outlook* and *Salary Range* have been determined primarily by consulting the Bureau of Labor Statistics (bls.gov) as well as other sources such as job outlook sites, blogs, and local knowledge. Sometimes, careers in Aging Services do not always correspond in salaries to other similar careers; thus, other sources were consulted. The careers

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fall into one of three categories as related to employment outlook: average growth; above average growth; and hot, stressing that this career is projected to experience the hottest growth. Flames symbolize the level of growth.

The *Schooling Required* section may show different requirements as this is dependent upon the level achieved, as pertaining to that particular career. For example, nursing as a career can begin as an aide, which requires special training, whereas becoming a registered nurse most often requires a bachelor's degree.

In the event that children may have already considered other careers, the section on *Similar Careers* might prove fruitful in urging them to contemplate a career in Aging Services. Children who are nurturing and have demonstrated an interest in caring for pets, for instance, might see that their skills would be applicable to the healthcare setting. Similarly a child whose parent is perhaps an exercise trainer or instructor might start to think about becoming a Rehabilitation Therapist.

By emphasizing that different *Levels* of careers exist with different rungs on a career ladder and therefore command different salaries and educational expectations, children might learn valuable lessons about career exploration. One, they should see that education equals opportunity. Two, opportunities for advancement exist within most of these careers; this equates with increased compensation.

For an example of how to conduct a Think Aloud with a poster, one is included in the section *Possible Activities for Lower Elementary Grades*.

## Questions for Journaling and/or Reflecting

Consider using journals in a variety of ways: before presenting a poster; during investigation of a particular career; as homework; to spur research or independent work or at the conclusion of the unit. If you create your own questions, please share and we will add them to this guide! Send to [kbrod@leadingageohio.org](mailto:kbrod@leadingageohio.org)

You might also ask students to discuss certain questions with family and friends.

Conducting a Concept Pre-Assessment might help assess student readiness to begin the unit. For younger children, such self-assessment might be conducted using a different strategy.

<i>Vocabulary word/phrase</i>	+	=	?
Retirement Community			
Life Plan Community			
Senior Center			
Geriatrics			
Culinary			

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Associate's Degree			
Bachelor's Degree			
Master's Degree			
Rehabilitation			
Therapy			
Services			

Key: + (very familiar with word) = (heard before yet unsure) ? (haven't a clue!)

The following questions could be used across a variety of contexts.

Have you ever heard of or visited a hospital? Nursing home?

When you hear the words "Careers that Love You Back," what do you think of? Do you know what is meant by the term "a helping profession"?

What is the difference between a job that provides a product and a job that provides a service?

What are your experiences with people that are older than your parents?

List the names of any jobs or careers you can think of.

List the different ways in which you have had friendships with older adults.

What type of career have you thought about for yourself?

When you consider a career, what is most important to you? Money? Schooling needed? Do you think of yourself as a leader or a follower? Ease of finding a job?

What is the difference between physical health and mental health?

After the unit is completed ask students: Name your top three careers that you could see yourself doing.

## Vocabulary

While understanding some of the titles of each career is a major focus, there are additional vocabulary that may need to be taught whenever you deem appropriate. How you teach vocabulary is your choice; however, we have included some sources of vocabulary teaching strategies that you might wish to consider: Doing it differently: Tips for teaching Vocabulary (Alber, 2014) found at *edutopia.org* and *ReadWriteThink* at [readwritethink.org](http://readwritethink.org)

Words that may need to be explicitly taught are listed below with the poster title listed parenthetically and in alphabetical order.

Geriatrics (Activities)  
Therapist (Activities & Rehabilitation Therapy)  
Life Plan Community (Administration)  
Dietician (Culinary Services & Nutrition)  
Groundskeeper (Environmental Services)  
Services (Fundraising and Development)  
Communicator (Fundraising and Development)  
Nonprofit (Fundraising and Development)  
Medications (Home Care Worker)  
Social Service (Home Care Worker, Service Coordinator & Social Services)  
Clergy (Hospice)  
Bereavement (Hospice)  
Benefits (Human Resources)  
Grant Writer (Fundraising and Development)  
Analyst or Systems Engineer (Information Technology)  
Data Base (Information Technology)  
Graphic Designer (Marketing)  
Market Trend (Marketing)  
Clinical (Nursing Administration)  
Chaplain (Pastoral)  
Spiritual (Pastoral)  
Chiropractor (Rehabilitation Therapy)  
Occupational Therapy (Rehabilitation Therapy)  
Care Plan (Social Services)  
Probation Officer (Social Services)  
Environment (Transportation and Security)

## A Sample Lesson Plan for Upper Elementary Students

Lessons might be sandwiched between an introductory and culminating activity. For example, a visit to a local Life Plan Community and/or guest speakers are just a couple ideas for ways to open or close a teaching unit. The following lesson plan is intended to provide teachers with ideas for ways to help students comprehend the material.

*This example would be used with the poster "Fundraising and Development."*

- Objectives:
- 1) Students will be able to define the main purpose of a fundraiser.
  - 2) Students will be able to explain how a fundraiser helps improve a community.
  - 3) Students will be able to name two reasons why they would enjoy working as a Fundraiser at an Aging Services Community.

Procedure:

1. (Attention Grabber) *"Let's look at what is going on in the picture. What are they doing?"* [Make sure they see thermometer in the picture, the focus is on raising money, and that the group is discussing improvements for the swimming pool].
2. *"This career focuses on Fundraising and Development. Where in the poster does it explain that to us? What are they trying to develop?"* [Student should point to the summary paragraph, which teacher should then read aloud to the students].
3. *"Let's read the Career Quote to ourselves."* [Wait] *"Who would like to read it aloud, with expression, pretending you actually work at this job?"* [If available, provide props: file folder, money bag, your reading glasses for fun, etc.]
4. *"Listen as I read the part, 'Are you a person who . . .' As I read this, see if you can name a person or two in this class who fits this description. Be ready to explain why."* [Read and call on students, expecting them to support their choices]. Follow up with the question, *"Why is it important that this person "Works well with others and stays in touch with friends?"* [ Answer: The more friends you have, the more who can help with donations].
5. **Small Group Work** "Now that we know what a fundraiser or development officer does, we're going to dig a little deeper. Your task for your small group is to complete the following:

a. *You will either be assigned a teacher, a salesperson or a nonprofit worker to interview. If you have trouble finding a person, I will help you.*

b. *At the very least, you must ask the person:*

i. *What is your highest level of education?*

ii. *What do you like most about your job?*

iii. *We've been studying about Careers within the Aging Services field and we're learning that buildings, grounds, and services are often improved when money is raised. Can you give me an example in your job where raising money has been important in helping others?*

iv. *What ways do you think your careers are similar?*

6. **Concluding Activity:**

[Select a male teacher/principal and a female teacher/principal to help]. *"Let's look at the levels listed on the poster. These show where you might start and where you might advance or be promoted to. Note that salary would relate to the levels. In looking at Ms. \_\_\_\_\_ and Mr. \_\_\_\_\_, would we start them out as an associate or start at the top, as a director? [Lead them to the middle, noting that we're sure they'd advance quickly, lol].*

*Let's pretend they came to us, asking our advice for how to become a fundraiser/development officer. How do we advise them? Where on the poster does it help us know how to prepare for this career? [How can you prepare?]*

*Turn to your neighbor and decide what advice you are going to give Miss \_\_\_\_ and Mr. \_\_\_\_\_. Wow, you've given such great advice, perhaps you should pursue a career in Human Resources! But that's another poster!*

7. **Assessment:** [

[Students can write responses in journals or be assessed with a quiz based on the aforementioned objectives].

Can the students name the purpose of a fundraisers' role?

Do the students list acceptable responses when asked how a community could be improved? [buildings, grounds or services]

Are the students able to list two relevant reasons which answer why they would enjoy working as a fundraiser?

**Materials:** poster, journals, quizzes, props (optional)

## Possible Activities for Lower Elementary Grades

We encourage all to try to use some of the ideas listed for the upper grades; with scaffolding and perhaps the use of older peer mentors and/or parent volunteers, we hope you explore these possibilities. However, in an attempt to be developmentally appropriate, we have created this section in an attempt to engage these younger learners. In looking at the vocabulary section of this guide, you may have determined that you need to spend some time developing key concepts and words such as: careers, residents, housing, services, therapy, levels of educational degrees, etc.

We would all agree, I'm sure, that the best way for children to learn to read is to read *to them, read with them, and provide time for them to read by themselves*. With this in mind, the following extensions are offered as you help these young learners grow in their ability to comprehend and to hone their word recognition and word attack skills.

### Think Aloud

You, the teacher, will think aloud as you read one of the posters. For example, you might do this with the poster, *Rehabilitation Therapy*, saying something similar to the following:

*When I look at the pictures, I see one person helping another, the other is probably a resident at a Life Plan Community. The title of this career is Rehabilitation Therapy. Rehabilitation is a big word! I know the prefix re- means again or to make new, and we know that therapy means to treat or heal, so I think that in these pictures, one of the workers is helping one of the residents heal or get back to feeling better and stronger. I see a resident having therapy in the pool, getting help with walking, using a walker to get into a car and I see a resident sitting on a bed, maybe being shown how to exercise his or her shoulder.*

*Now I'm going to read the rest of the poster. The first part tells me what a Rehabilitation Therapist does. [Read the description aloud to students, pointing to words as you read]. So some residents might have an injury, maybe because they fell or tripped, while some may need help with their speech. I know someone who once needed help with her speech, and after a few months, they were speaking quite well.*

*The next section asks me questions. Are you a person who wants to do something in the medical field? Well, I'm a teacher so no, but I have heard that it is easy to get jobs in the medical field, so I'm going to encourage my students who like health class and science class to consider this career.*

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*Are you a person who knows a lot about health and wellness? I do, as I go to the gym a lot, and for some of my students, Gym Class is their favorite class! Maybe I should tell some of them to become a rehabilitation therapist!*

*Are you a person who enjoys helping others heal and feel better? Yes I do, which is maybe why I'm a teacher! This also makes me think of some of my students who have been very helpful when one of our classmates came back to school on crutches.*

*I see in the next section that if I work in the field of Rehabilitation Therapy, there are different requirements for different jobs. If I want to be an assistant, I would get an associate's degree, which is usually two years of school. If I want to be a Physical Therapist, I have to get a doctorate, which in total takes at least seven years in most cases. That's four years for a bachelor's degree and three more years on top of that. I also see that there are other types of therapists: OT and SLP. SLP is a speech therapist, which means I'd help people get back their ability to speak clearly. That could be fun, and that requires a master's degree, which might take probably six years. So if I want to be a therapist of any kind, I'm going to have to decide what kind of healing I want to work with and how long do I want to go to school? Finally, there's OT, or Occupational Therapy. That's a big word, and it requires a master's degree or six years of school, and if I did this type of therapy, I would be helping the residents do basic every day things like getting dressed, loading the dishwasher and so on.*

*When I look at the section of similar careers, I see that Nursing, Exercise Instructor, and Chiropractor are along the same lines. I've been to the Chiropractor to have him help me with my back pain, so I can see where they would be like each other. I wonder how many therapists are people that, as young adults, always enjoyed exercising and going to the gym?*

*When I look at the salary and I look at the flames, or how easy it is to get a job, I see that it is HOT and the salary is quite good, above what the average person earns. Average is currently around \$45,000, and \$55,000 is well above that. One hundred thousand is over twice that!*

*The next section tells me how I can prepare to become one. [Read aloud the three suggestions]. This is what I will tell my students whom I think might want to consider this. Also, I can think right now of a couple of my students who like to exercise, help others, and are good in Health Class!*

*Career Steps show a lot of different jobs. I think being an assistant would be fun and a good fit for those who can only afford two years of college, as college is expensive!*

*Finally, I get to see what an actual therapist has to say about his or her job. {Read quote aloud}. As a teacher, I am happy when my students show me they have*

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*learned or do well on a test. I know how a therapist must feel when a resident heals or can do something that they had trouble with before!*

*Now if you guys don't start settling down after lunch every day, I might just have to leave you to go become a Rehabilitation Therapists! Just kidding! You know I'd never leave you.*

## Visual Literacy Activity

Teaching Visual Literacy can be fun to teach because all it takes is a careful eye. As Yogi Berra once said, "You can observe a lot by just watching."

*First, look at the poster and see the picture at the top as three different sections: left, middle, and right. Discuss each part with the students by answering the following questions:*

- *What do you see?*
- *What does it remind you of?*
- *What is the artist trying to teach us?*

For example, you would tell them to look at the top of the Activities poster. In the left they should notice the art supplies, the art work on the wall, and the residents are busy painting or drawing. In the middle, they should see that an Activities Staff member, who is wearing a lanyard and carrying a box of supplies, is with a resident who is either signing up for the Art Room Activity or Chair Yoga. They might also notice part of a clock. On the right, they should take note of the barbells, weighted medicine balls, and that residents are stretching as part of the Chair Yoga Activity.

For the second and third questions, any response within reason would be acceptable. However, we would hope that the students would see that the older adults are not different from other adults and the staff members are doing important work that keeps the activities flowing.

## Word Recognition

This activity is similar to the previous one, yet the goal is to chart what students are seeing and therefore enhance students' ability to recognize more words. You might first model how to do one with the whole class and after that, students could complete work in small groups as they look at another poster.

The following is an example that might have been completed with the Social Services Poster. You would complete the chart as students contributed their observations. After chart is done, you read back with students, pointing to words.

**What Do I See?**

<i>Animals</i>	<i>Things</i>	<i>Actions</i>
<p><b>Bears wearing ties</b>  <b>Bears wearing glasses</b></p>	<p><b>Sign about Health Fair</b>  <b>Sign about planning</b>  <b>Glass door</b>  <b>Sign for Eye Exam</b>  <b>Sign for Free Hearing Exam</b>  <b>Desk</b>  <b>Chairs</b>  <b>Tables</b>  <b>Care Plan on Computer</b>  <b>Keyboard</b>  <b>Plant</b>  <b>Window</b></p>	<p><b>Shaking hands</b>  <b>Showing a book</b>  <b>Standing and listening</b>  <b>Sitting and listening</b>  <b>Walking around in the Health Fair</b></p>

The chart could be left hanging in the room as students could copy words or practice reading them during center time or independent reading and writing time. You might even play a game with students using prompts such as, “I spy a word that begins like Gregory’s name. Who can find it?”

**Drawing Activity**

One way to develop comprehension of the posters is to allow the students to draw about what they are learning. After they have learned about one career or maybe even after they have learned about several, drawing can serve as both an assessment and a literacy activity. To use as a literacy activity, you would ask them to tell you about their picture, write what they said, and read together enough times until student can read the caption independently.

**Classification and Counting**

Have students classify and count the number of careers that are hot, above average or average growth. This would be the perfect opportunity to explain the importance of making a career choice that is sensible. Many students will want to be movie stars or professional athletes, so explaining the need for a back-up plan is wise.

Students might also enjoy classifying and counting:

- the animals portrayed in the pictures
- schooling that is needed
- the number of careers steps in each poster
- the number of animals pictured in each poster

### **Self-Questioning Activity**

“Are you a person who . . . ” is a question asked three times with each poster. Thus, have each student maintain a personal response journal that lists a personal response to each question. Prepare a simple worksheet with all 21 careers and have students circle their response. Perhaps Activities is the first poster taught and Transportation and Security is the last, if presenting in alphabetical order. Once all 21 posters have been reviewed, try to help each student draw conclusions based on their yes and no answers. For example, which careers seemed to garner the most yes answers? What do the no responses indicate about that student? What might this mean in terms of pursuing a future working at a Life Plan Community?

<i>Activities</i> .....	<i>Transportation &amp; Security</i>
1. <b>yes or no</b>	1. <b>yes or no</b>
2. <b>yes or no</b>	2. <b>yes or no</b>
3. <b>yes or no</b>	3. <b>yes or no</b>

### **Interdisciplinary Approach**

While each poster suggests ways a student could prepare to enter a particular career, we have included those ideas and more to demonstrate how these posters could be used in a team teaching or interdisciplinary way. For this reason, we have categorized the posters and the various activities as they correspond to a particular discipline. Of course, there will be cross over, but we wanted to help you envision the many ways to use these posters. Lastly, for those that seem too difficult, we encourage you to scaffold student learning with the help of a volunteer and/or other adult. If your school uses volunteers from older grades, this would present a great opportunity for these students to learn, too, about these careers.

This list is, by no means, exhaustive nor the only way to integrate across the curriculum. We present them as examples that we hope will spark your own creative approach to teaching this content.

### **Math**

- Create a personal or household budget, with the help of your parents (Business and Office Management)
- Find a budget of a major organization and put costs into categories (Administration)
- Create a budget for an entire menu and analyze the costs (Culinary Services)
- Review records of family pet and chart important dates and appointments. (Business and Office Management)
- Compare salaries by looking at ranges and averages (All)
- Some of the activities included for lower elementary include counting and classifying. Develop these to include math instruction determining means, medians and modes (All)

### **Social Studies**

- Research and list different techniques of persuasion that might be helpful in fundraising (Fundraising and Development)
- Make a list of all the similar careers included on posters. Interview several friends, ranking their interest in these “similar careers.” As a result of this data collection, make recommendations as to which of the 21 careers they are most suited. (Human Resources)
- Obtain a list of all the Life Plan Communities in your area or state. Determine how many are sponsored or affiliated with a particular religion (Pastoral Care)
- Study how different cultures and religions care for their elders (Pastoral Care)
- Design a Life Plan Community, showing how to make the place attractive and inclusive of all services offered (Environmental Services)
- Research the types of services the local, state and federal government provide to their citizens (Service Coordinator)
- Research the benefits and challenges of providing Children’s Daycares at a Life Plan Community (Educator)

### **Language Arts**

- Maintain reflective journals throughout the unit (All)
- Produce an advertisement about one career or “Careers That Love You Back.” (All)
- Look for examples of Ageism in any type of media (Marketing)

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- Create a classroom newspaper that includes articles resulting from interviewing employees at a local Life Plan Community (All)
- Ask librarian to assist with creating a booklist about relationships with older adults (Home Care Worker).
- Study the letters to the editor for a period of time. How many letters include the words elderly, senior services, again or any problems or issues related to community services? (Social Services)
- Set up a mock job fair. With students answering all of the yes or no questions to “Are You a Person Who . . . ” on poster, role play how a Human Resource Counselor would guide the job seeker toward the perfect job (Human Resources)

### **Health and Science**

- Plan a meal and include cost, calories, and list of ingredients (Culinary)
- Learn about safety methods that are of concern at Life Plan Communities (Activities)
- Review the medical records of a family pet (Business and Office Mgt.)
- Study the pros and cons of the latest diet fads (Nutrition)
- Visit and/or interview a Maintenance Worker at a local Life Plan Community. Create a list of the types of machines that are used. (Maintenance)
- Research ways that cities are improving public transportation and ways they are adjusting for older citizens, such as longer time for crossing street (Transportation & Security)
- Study diseases that are most common among older adults (Nursing)

### **Music**

- Create a playlist that residents would enjoy (Activities)
- Compose a song to advertise one or all “Careers That Love You Back”

### **Computer Science**

- Create a spreadsheet that lists each career and the following information: employment outlook, both lowest and highest salaries, and schooling needed (All)

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- Find apps and other technologies that help people monitor their own health (IT)

### **Physical Education**

- Learn fun games that are enjoyed by older adults (Activities)
- Join an older friend or relative as they follow a prescribed and safe cardio and weight training program (Activities)
- Interview a chiropractor, athletic trainer or exercise instructor to learn more about their training and to ask what types of physical activity they think are best for older adults (Rehabilitation Therapy)

## **Conclusion**

**This body of work -- the posters and the guide -- has evolved due to the dedication of many people working together, people who are committed to fighting ageism and to growing a work force to serve the aging population. We thank those who have provided feedback and support along the way. Most importantly, we continue to be inspired both by those who serve with hearts and minds embracing our elders and by the elders whose lives enrich those they touch, each and every day.**

**Finally, we welcome any commentary, concerns or suggestions as you partake in this journey. If so, please contact Jennifer Taylor, Director of Communications and Membership at LeadingAge: [jtaylor@leadingageohio.org](mailto:jtaylor@leadingageohio.org)**