



Brain Health and Dementia Care Symposium

December 5, 2025

Dr. Paul Alan Cox, Ph.D., is the Executive Director of Brain Chemistry Labs. He was named one of *TIME* magazine's eleven "Heroes of Medicine" for his search in remote island villages for new medicines. He was awarded the Goldman Environmental Prize for founding Seacology, a global island conservation charity headquartered in Berkeley. After serving as Dean at Brigham Young University, he became the King Carl XVI Gustav Professor in Sweden. His research at the Brain Chemistry Labs in Jackson Hole for new treatments for Alzheimer's disease was profiled by Dr. Sanjay Gupta in a short documentary for CNN. He received his Ph.D. at Harvard University, and was appointed as a Miller Fellow at the University of California, Berkeley.

Ms. Tessa Garcia McEwen, AM, LCSW, CDP, is a Licensed Social Worker in the Quality of Life & Family Support Services at The Memory Center at the University of Chicago Medicine. She primarily supports all of those that come through The Memory Center with Alzheimer's Disease and other related dementias. Tessa is co-founder and medical sector co-lead for Dementia Friendly Hyde Park, and serves on several boards and professional associations in the field for social work, healthy aging, and dementia care and holds a certification from the National Council of Certified Dementia Practitioners. Additionally, Garcia McEwen serves as a global facilitator for youth and care partners at Lorenzo's House, a local nonprofit with worldwide reach that helps to close the care and connection gap for those diagnosed with Alzheimer's Disease or other related dementia. She completed her Bachelor of Arts in Sociology at The University of Notre Dame, and a Masters in clinical social work at The University of Chicago School of Social Service Administration.

Ms. Delia Jervier is the Regional Vice President and Executive Director of Alzheimer's Association Illinois, where she leads statewide efforts to advance dementia research, advocacy, and care support. Since joining the organization in 2013, she has expanded outreach across diverse communities and built partnerships to improve brain health and caregiving resources. Prior to her current role, Jervier was the Director of Central and Southwest Florida Mass Market Events at the American Diabetes Association, and Executive Director of the African American Chamber of Commerce. She earned her Bachelor's degree from the University of Central Florida.

The Right Honourable Henry McLeish is the former First Minister of Scotland and Ambassador of Alzheimer Scotland. Following his tenure as First Minister from 2000 to 2001, McLeish has chaired the Alzheimer Scotland Fair Dementia Care Commission, working to ensure fair access to dementia services and to integrate dementia care more fully into health and social policy. Motivated by his father's experience with dementia, McLeish continues to speak publicly about transforming the quality of life for people living with the condition and their families.

Mr. Gus Noble, OBE, is the President and CEO of the Chicago Scots and Caledonia Senior Living. Previously, he worked at the British Consulate General in Chicago and helped establish the Chicago office of the Welsh Assembly Government. In April 2021, Noble was awarded the National Tartan Day Award by the Scottish Coalition-USA, and in June 2021 he was named an Officer of the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire (OBE). Additionally, Noble serves on the Boards of the National Trust for Scotland Foundation USA, the Admiral at the Lake Foundation and the Rosehill Cemetery Reserve Fund. Noble holds a degree from the University of Stirling in Scotland.

Dr. S. Jay Olshansky, PhD is a Professor in the School of Public Health at the University of Illinois at Chicago. The focus of his research to date has been on the estimates of the upper limits to human longevity, exploring the health and public policy implications associated with individual and population aging. He is the first author of *The Quest for Immortality: Science at the Frontiers of Aging* (Norton, 2001) and *A Measured Breath of Life* (2013). Olshansky is on the Board of Directors of the American Federation of Aging Research, and was honored with the Donald P. Kent Award from the Gerontological Society of America, the Irving S. Wright Award from the American Federation for Aging Research, and he was named a Next Avenue Influencer in Aging. He received his PhD in Sociology at the University of Chicago in 1984.

Professor Lesley Palmer is the Professor of Ageing and Dementia Design in the Dementia Services Development Centre at the University of Stirling, Scotland. She is also a Director of Iridis Digital Ltd, a joint venture organisation within the University of Stirling established for the purposes of improving quality of life for longer through technology, research, and the design of the built environment. She leads international research and design innovation projects that shape dementia-friendly environments across health care, housing, and public spaces. Palmer is also a voluntary Director to INCH Architecture & Design, and was the Co-chair of the Scottish Government's Dementia and Housing sub-group, a Steering Group Member for the British Standards Institute PAS 6463: Design for the Mind, a member of the Dementia Ageing Research Group at the University of Stirling, and an External Steering Committee Member of the PRIDEM research project at Newcastle University.

Mr. James Pearson is the Deputy Chief Executive of Alzheimer's Scotland. He has a background in welfare rights and a particular interest in promoting and protecting the rights of people living with dementia. He played a significant role in developing Scotland's Charter of Rights for people with dementia and their carers, which puts human and other legal rights at the heart of each commitment of Scotland's first and second dementia strategies. He holds an MBA from Glasgow Caledonian University and joined the Board of Alzheimer Europe in 2014.

Brandon E. Peck is a Partner with Peck Ritchey, LLC. He represents individuals, families, financial and medical institutions. Brandon advises fiduciaries charged with the administration of estates and trusts as well as guides them through the probate process. He vigorously represents all parties in contested guardianships including minors and disabled adults. For the past five years, Brandon has been selected by his peers in multiple statewide surveys of Illinois attorneys as a "Super Lawyer", an attorney to whom other attorneys would refer their family. From 2015-Present he has also been selected by Leading Lawyers Magazine as a top emerging lawyer in Elder Law, Trust, Will and Estate Planning. He also was a contributor to the book Alzheimer's and the Law, which was published by the American Bar Association in 2013.

Ms. Lisa Peters-Beumer is the Director of Operations at The Center for Gerontology at Concordia University, and the Executive Director of the Kott Gerontology Scholars Program. She oversees initiatives focused on healthy aging, intergenerational engagement. Her background spans program development and administration in aging services and public health, with an emphasis on improving the quality of life for older adults. She also held the position of Chair of the Board at the National Adult Day Services Association. Peters-Beumer holds a Master of Public Health degree from Northwestern University, and her Bachelor's Degree in Psychology from the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee.

Dr. Raj C. Shah, MD, is Professor of Family & Preventive Medicine at Rush Alzheimer's Disease Center, Rush University Medical Center, at RUSH. He also has a conjoint appointment as Professor in the Graduate College of Rush University and serves as the Assistant Vice Provost of Clinical Research at Rush University. He also provides or has provided support for longitudinal research and infrastructure projects on memory and aging, including the Rush Memory and Aging Project, the Rush Religious Orders Study, the Rush Minority Aging and Research Study, the Rush Alzheimer's Disease Core Center, the Rush Alzheimer's Disease Assistance Center, the Rush Center of Excellence on Disparities in HIV and Aging, and the Rush Memory Clinic Data and Specimen Repository. Shah completed his Bachelor of Science in Chemical Engineering at Northwestern University, and attended the University of Illinois at Chicago College of Medicine.

Professor David Victorson is a Professor of Medical Social Sciences, and Director of the Flourishing in Society and Health Research Lab in the Feinberg School of Medicine at Northwestern University. He is also Director of Integrative Oncology at the Cancer Survivorship Institute at the Robert H. Lurie Comprehensive Cancer Center and is a principal Co-Founder and Director of True North Treks, a nonprofit for young adults and caregivers. His research program focuses on the role of mindfulness-based emotion regulation, deep social connection, nature contact, and positive health behavior engagement in promoting health, wellbeing, and flourishing in people, our population, and the planet. He received his Ms from Indiana University, and his PhD University of Miami.