



Aging
WITH
Dignity[®]

2023 Annual Report

America's premier end-of-life care planning and advocacy organization

Chairman's Letter

February 2024

Dear Friends,

As a founding member of Aging with Dignity's Board of Directors and its current chairman, I have enjoyed watching our organization's growing impact.



This report provides a glimpse into the activities and outcomes of the past year. Tens of millions of Americans have been touched by our services and countless have benefited from our advocacy in 2023. The map on page four shows the vast network of distributors we have assembled as partners of our Five Wishes advance care planning program. Our training programs reached more than 15,000 healthcare professionals in the past year alone. Jim Towey, our founder and CEO, attracted media attention and large audiences through his successful international book tour and speaking events in connection with his widely acclaimed book, *To Love and Be Loved: A Personal Portrait of Mother Teresa*.

In the coming year, look for two new Five Wishes certification programs and digital offerings; a new initiative that shines a light on the insidious expansion of assisted suicide; and continued advocacy about the threats to human dignity posed by the uncontrolled growth of artificial intelligence. To stay informed in 2024 on these and other developments, be sure to subscribe to our free weekly newsletters at www.AgingWithDignity.org/Subscribe.

On behalf of my fellow Board members, I extend to our donors, partners, and friends our deepest appreciation for their faithful support and encouragement. I believe 2024 will be our best year yet.

Sincerely,



Guy W. Smith
Chairman



*Aging with Dignity Board of Directors Meeting,
Falls Church, VA — December 2023*

Aging with Dignity 2023 Annual Report

Mission and Vision

For more than 25 years, Aging with Dignity has defended the God-given right of the elderly, disabled, mentally ill and vulnerable to have their human dignity respected and safeguarded, particularly in times of serious illness.

Aging with Dignity was founded in 1996 by Jim Towey when he served as legal counsel to Mother Teresa of Calcutta. During her lifetime, she wrote in support of Aging with Dignity and urged him to “defend and protect life, the most beautiful gift of God, and to bring God’s love and compassion to the elderly poor.” She believed “there are among us so many who are poor and elderly, in need of our understanding, respect, love and compassion, especially if they are sick, handicapped, helpless or alone.”

From its inception, Towey has followed her advice by positioning Aging with Dignity as the voice of the “little ones,” especially those facing death. Aging with Dignity is now America’s premier end-of-life care planning and advocacy organization, influencing the public debate on aging, disability, and how to cope with serious illness.

2023: Impacting the Lives of Millions

Aging with Dignity reached nearly 5 million people in 2023 through its many services, media outreach efforts, and educational programs, boasting a membership base of more than 150,000 individuals, including 60,000 who receive weekly updates and Jim Towey’s blog. Thousands of healthcare providers and family caregivers were trained by Aging with Dignity last year and more than 1.5 million people were helped through the popular Five Wishes advance care planning program. In addition, at least 1.6 million people were reached through Aging with Dignity’s and Five Wishes’ Facebook, LinkedIn and Instagram posts, with at least 200,000 people visiting the Aging with Dignity and Five Wishes websites.

The popular video counseling series on topics such as aging, grieving, coping with illness, finding spiritual support in the midst of existential crisis, and facilitating family communication on difficult subjects, reaches many homes, hospitals, nursing homes, churches, workplaces and communities. These short videos are available at no cost to Aging with Dignity members and website visitors, thanks to the generosity of our donors.



FIVE WISHES — THE NATION’S PREMIER ADVANCE CARE PLANNING PROGRAM

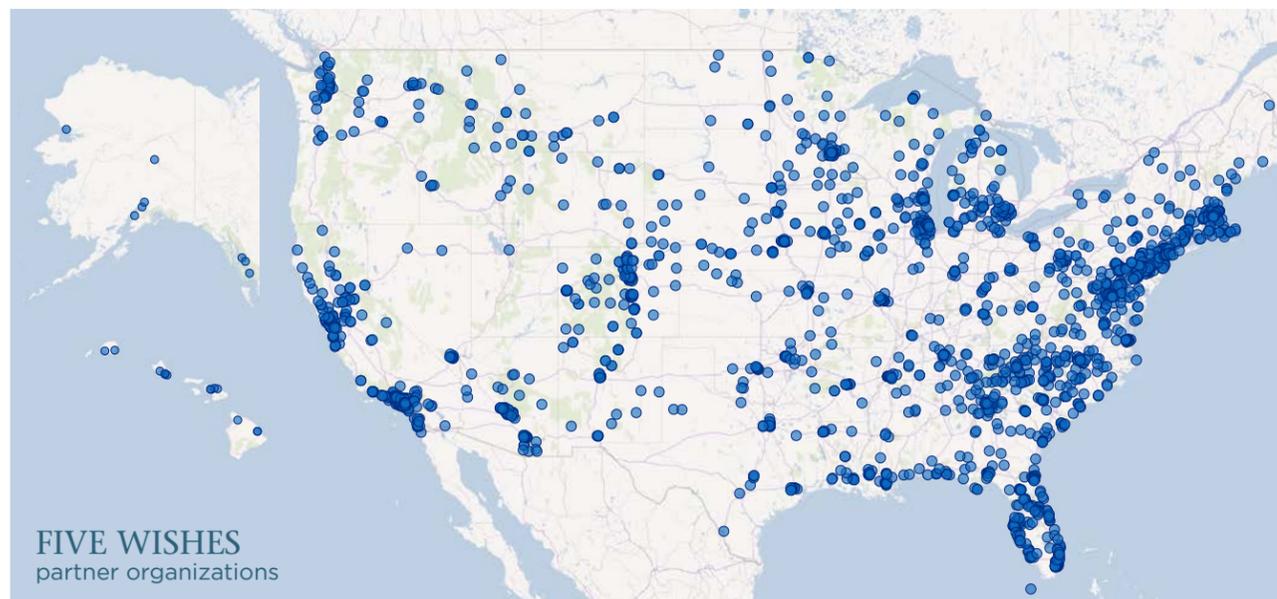
Aging with Dignity’s Five Wishes advance directive has grown from a paper document for Florida residents to a comprehensive nationwide program that includes education for clinicians on how to discuss and document end-of-life conversations with patients, and human resource tools for employers to offer a Five Wishes benefit to their employees.

More than **50,000 partner organizations** have distributed over **42 million copies** of Five Wishes over the past 25 years. It is now available in **32 languages** (plus Braille) and **meets the legal requirements of all 50 states**.

Growing impact

- Since 2022, nearly 4,000 new organizations and tens of thousands of individuals utilized *Five Wishes* resources.

- Corporations and government agencies, including Families at Amazon, MyPath, Velcro USA, and the cities of Alexandria, Evanston and Santa Fe have provided Five Wishes to their employees.
- Five Wishes continues to be the top choice for health care professionals across the nation, and some 75% of Five Wishes products are sold to health care providers.
- More than 15,000 physicians, nurse practitioners, social workers and clinicians utilized Five Wishes’ training resources or webinars in 2023, including Kaiser Permanente, Brookdale Senior Living, Cigna Healthcare, Oklahoma Department of Veterans Affairs, CommuniCare Health Services, ProMedica Senior Care, Methodist Retirement Communities, and Gentiva.



MyDirectives — a Five Wishes digital partner

This past year Five Wishes partnered with MyDirectives, the national leader in advance

directive electronic solutions, to insert the *Five Wishes* document into an electronic format so clinicians can easily assist their patients in discussing and documenting their medical wishes. This new initiative promotes a patient-centered approach to advance care planning and ensures the voices of patients, families, and caregivers are appropriately reflected and easily retrieved.

“We’ve admired and respected Five Wishes since MyDirectives’ formation in 2007,” says Scott Brown, CEO of MyDirectives. “This partnership epitomizes our shared vision to enhance Five Wishes through pioneering tech solutions and bring clinicians, employers and individuals the advance care planning solutions they deserve.”



Laurie Jackson, PhD — Five Wishes Evangelist

For more than a decade, Laurel (Laurie) Jackson, CEO of Tri-

Cities Chaplaincy in Washington State, has built three different advance care planning programs across the west coast including Yakima Valley Memorial Hospital, St. Charles Hospice and now Tri-Cities Chaplaincy. Central to these programs was the Five Wishes Program for Healthcare that provided documentation and training for her clinical team members.

As a hospice & palliative care leader, bioethicist, chaplain, and minister, Laurie has experienced firsthand what good conversations and planning can do for patients, families and clinicians. “I have the privilege of breaking down the issues that lead to fear, whether it is in advance care planning presentations to medical school students, colleagues, or community members. I am grateful to have been placed in communities where Five Wishes can grow and thrive.”



ADVOCACY

PROTECTING THE VULNERABLE FROM ASSISTED SUICIDE

Since its founding, Aging with Dignity has warned of the inherent dangers of assisted suicide, noting that the so-called “right to die” would endanger the poor and disabled. A new 2023 collaboration with the Institute for Patients’ Rights (IPR) produced three public awareness videos to coincide with the filing of a landmark federal lawsuit that seeks to protect the rights of people with disabilities by halting the discriminatory practice of assisted suicide. The videos received more than 1.5 million impressions and delivered a compelling portrayal of the real impact when lives are devalued.

This year Aging with Dignity will launch a new initiative to spotlight the ongoing danger posed by the assisted suicide movement. While assisted suicide is not the solution, Aging with Dignity advocates for better services and human accompaniment for those who are very sick, disabled, or mentally ill. Unfortunately, as is apparent in countries like Canada where “medical aid in dying” is readily available and actively promoted, governments refuse to alleviate the misery of individuals through the adequate provision of supportive services, mental health counseling, and companion care, thus making assisted suicide an attractive alternative for those suffering and lonely.



“When I’m not getting enough air, when I’m debilitated, that’s not the time for me to have to sit up and explain why I shouldn’t have to die.”
— **Ingrid Tischer**



“A double standard is very dangerous, it’s discriminatory and leaves the field open too much for someone to unnaturally be harmed.”
— **Lonnie VanHook**

Assisted Suicide Watch: In 2024, Aging with Dignity will launch a new project that monitors the euthanasia and assisted suicide movement in the United States and other countries, exposes the deceptive practices of its proponents, and advocates for the rights of people with mental illness, disability, chronic illness or dementia. For these groups, the “right to die” may become a “duty to die.”

HONORING THE LEGACY OF MOTHER TERESA

Jim Towe’s widely-acclaimed book, *To Love and Be Loved: A Personal Portrait of Mother Teresa* was published by Simon & Schuster in late 2022. Its first year in circulation exceeded all expectations and attracted national media attention. Due to its popularity, it is now available in paperback and also in five languages.

Towe presided at nearly 100 separate book events in North America and Europe, reaching countless people of all faiths and ensuring that the legacy of Mother Teresa would not be forgotten.



Jim signing books at Quarr Abbey, England

“You have portrayed the ‘authentic Mother’ so well... All our Sisters who have read the book send you a big thank you.” — **Sister M. Joseph, Calcutta, Mother Teresa’s successor**

2023 To Love and Be Loved Tour: Washington DC – New York – Denver – Raleigh – Jacksonville – Palm Beach – London – Dublin – Galway – Cavan – Isle of Wight – Rome

Aging with Dignity also supported the establishment and outreach of the new **Mother Teresa Institute (MTI) in Washington DC**. Directed by Father Brian Kolodiejchuk, MC, the MTI facilitates scholarship, academic study, and a broader public awareness of Mother Teresa’s message of love and service. The MTI is the official center established by her religious order of nuns and priests to preserve, protect and promote the legacy of Mother Teresa.



AHEAD OF THE CURVE: THREATS POSED BY ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

More than three years ago, Aging with Dignity began sounding the alarm on the dangers of artificial intelligence (AI) and its potential threat to human dignity through the inevitable dehumanization of everyday life, including care in health and long-term care facilities. The breathtaking speed at which AI seems to have infiltrated the government, education, healthcare, and national defense sectors is astonishing. And sadly, it seems the worst is yet to come. While AI holds much promise if its potential abuses can be held in check, it is evident that the governments of the world are late in responding to the rapid technological advances now upon us. Meanwhile, Microsoft and the Big Tech giants harvest billions of dollars in profit

as they exploit the general public's lack of sophistication on matters of technology.

In fact, Generative AI may make society less human, eliminate millions of jobs, and transform care for the elderly without public review or comment. AI is being force fed to the public like the highly-addictive social media engagement was two decades ago. It is not too late now to put ethical guardrails in place to avoid a repeat of social media's harm. Aging with Dignity believes that computer coders and the algorithms governing insurance practices and medical reimbursement, should not be the masters of modern life.

WHAT WE BELIEVE

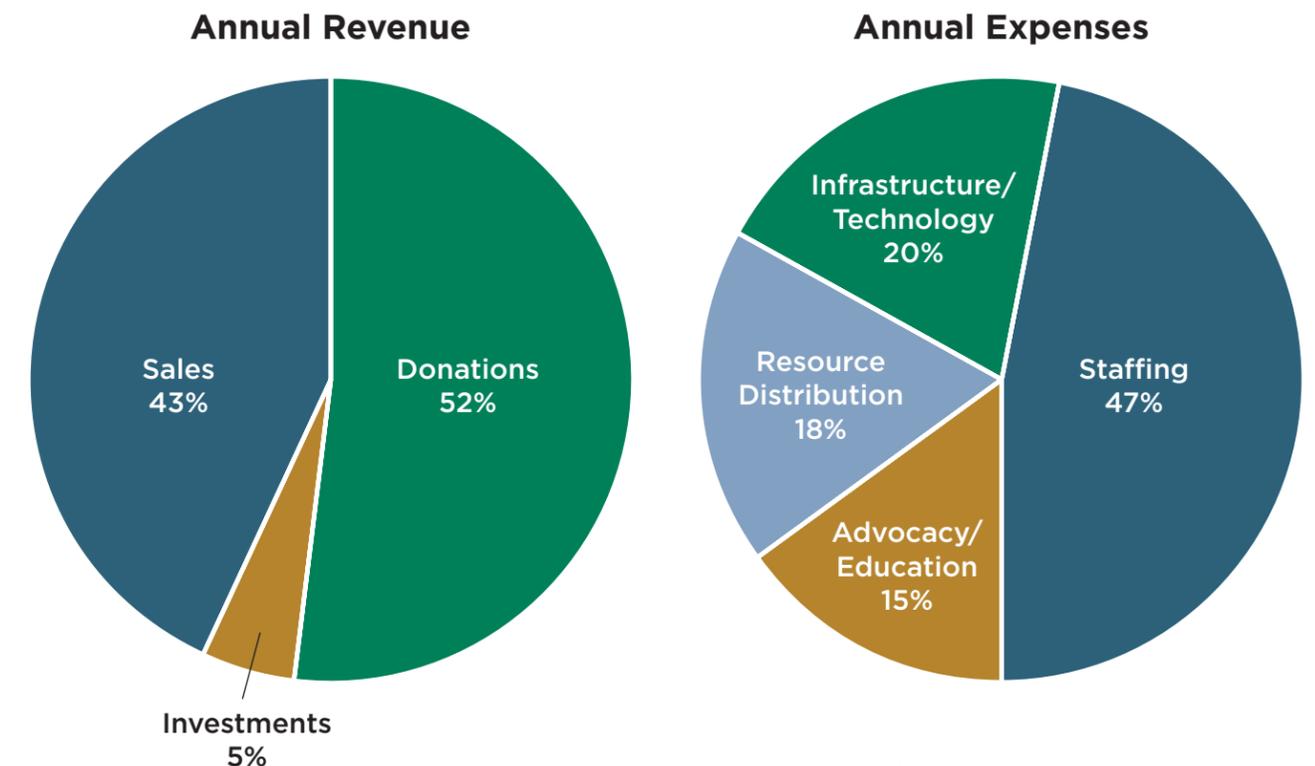
- Every person has the right to age with dignity.
- This right is conferred by God, not government, and exists regardless of one's health, wealth, race or creed.
- The primary need of every human is to love and be loved, and this is most acutely true in times of increased dependence on others.
- People are gifts from God, not burdens to society. They are no less valuable when they are sick and are not defined by their diagnosis and incapacitation.
- Dying is not simply a medical moment but a deeply personal, spiritual and emotional time.
- Patients have the right to decide the kind of medical treatment they want or don't want when they are gravely ill.
- Assisted-suicide and euthanasia are not compassionate choices for those suffering; better pain management, accompaniment and humane treatment are.
- Improving end-of-life care and decision-making is urgently needed, particularly for the elderly poor, disabled and mentally ill who cannot afford their illnesses.
- Those who suffer and are near death deserve the warmth of human accompaniment.
- Advances in "tech medicine" and artificial intelligence can help as long as people are its masters and robots do not replace human beings in the provision of health and long-term care.

2023 Financials

Maintaining Independence

Because of the generosity of its members and benefactors, Aging with Dignity has successfully maintained its financial independence from the government throughout its 25-year history, accepting no taxpayer funds.

The organization's 2023 operating budget of nearly \$3 million funded the outreach efforts in support of Aging with Dignity's advocacy agenda, furthered the growth of the Five Wishes advance care planning program and supported the production of new public awareness videos defending the rights of people with disabilities.



More than 1,400 donors contributed 52% of the annual revenue, mission-related sales represented 43%, and the remainder comprised of investment income.

About 47% of expenses supported the employees behind Aging with Dignity's advocacy and outreach efforts, 20% was devoted to infrastructure and technology, 18% to resource distribution and 15% to advocacy and education expenses.

Aging with Dignity Board of Directors



Guy Smith, Chairman and Founding Director

Smith has had a distinguished corporate career overseeing long term care facilities in the United States and Canada

and most recently was the co-founder of Harmony Living Centers, a family focused network of 19 assisted living facilities in Wisconsin. He remains active on the national and Milwaukee boards of the Boys & Girls Clubs of America.



E. Zimmermann Boulos, Vice-Chairman and Founding Director

Boulos recently retired as the president of Office Environments & Services, Jacksonville, Florida,

where he served as president for over 40 years. He also serves on the Board of Directors of American Forests and numerous Jacksonville-area community organizations..



Jim Towey, Founder, Chief Executive Officer and Director

Jim Towey is the founder and chief executive officer of Aging with Dignity. His career includes service

on the senior staff of U.S. President George W. Bush, heading Florida's health and human services agency, and the presidency of two Catholic universities.



Robert M. Brochin, Founding Director

Brochin is a partner of the Miami, Florida, office of Morgan Lewis. He served as deputy general counsel to the governor of Florida

and later as its inspector general.



Patricia Russell, Secretary and Founding Director

Russell is certified in clinical pastoral care through Advocate Lutheran General Hospital,

Park Ridge, Illinois, and is involved in elder care and hospice advocacy in her home state and southwest Florida.



James C. Capretta, Director

Capretta holds the Milton Friedman Chair and is a senior fellow at the American Enterprise Institute, as well as a senior

adviser to the Bipartisan Policy Center, both in Washington, D.C.



Mary McElroy, Director

McElroy is the senior vice president of hospice services with Community Hospice & Palliative Care, Jacksonville, Florida, one of the nation's largest non-

profit hospice providers, where she has served since 2009.



Tonja Myles, Director

Myles is the co-founder and executive director of Set Free addiction recovery services and the Set Free Indeed ministry in Baton Rouge, Louisiana.

Her leadership helped make the national 988 suicide and crisis hotline a reality.



Ron Retzke, Ph.D., Director

Retzke is president of Retzke & Associates, Inc. in Wisconsin and has served as a consultant to multiple health and long-

term care providers and also to nonprofit organizations. He is also on the board of directors of the Ice Age Trail Alliance.



John Scalia, Director

Scalia serves as general counsel for Barton & Associates, Inc., a national health care staffing firm. He is based in its West Palm Beach, Florida, office.

Aging with Dignity Executive Leadership



Paul Malley, Aging with Dignity President

Paul Malley, who recently celebrated his 25-year anniversary, directs day-to-day activities and overall mission advancement



Joanne Eason, Five Wishes President

Joanne Eason begins her tenth year leading the marketing, sales and promotion efforts for *Five Wishes* as well as

overseeing the nationwide network of *Five Wishes* distributors.



Ed Towey, Vice President of Communications

For 15 years, Ed Towey has been responsible for communications, media relations and website management.



Dave Simison, Aging with Dignity Vice President of Operations

Dave Simison has served in this capacity for 18 years and manages the financial, information technology and sales order fulfillment activities.



Jamie Towey, Vice President of Advocacy

Jamie Towey, an Oxford University MBA graduate and former consultant with Ernst and Young, develops strategic partnerships and

membership services while focusing on the growing threats of assisted suicide and artificial intelligence.

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