

Linking Individuals & Families Through  
Education and Engagement

# 2023 Annual Report



**Prepared by**

Carole Klingler, CEO

Jennifer Tucker, Financial Administrator

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*A Dementia Friendly*  
**LIFE**

# About LIFE:

*A letter from the Founder*

LIFE - A Dementia Friendly Foundation represents the realization of a true calling to do something different for those touched by dementia. Witnessing the growth and development of LIFE has been a deeply fulfilling journey, guided by a strong sense of purpose and supported by remarkable community backing.

LIFE - A Dementia Friendly Foundation is a nonprofit known by the acronym LIFE, which stands for Linking Individuals and Families through Education and Engagement. LIFE was established in 2016 with the aim of supporting individuals affected by dementia. Dedicated to improving the quality of life for both participants and their care partners. LIFE provides a centralized hub for resources, education and engagement activities.

Before LIFE - A Dementia Friendly Foundation offered services, navigating support for dementia often involved a scattered approach, with individuals and their care partners having to seek assistance from multiple sources across the county. This often left care partners overwhelmed with information and uncertain about the effectiveness of various options.

LIFE simplifies this process by offering comprehensive services in one accessible location. Participants living with dementia quickly acclimate to the supportive environment, forming bonds with staff and volunteers. This familiarity allows care partners to step away briefly for peer support and education without causing distress to their loved ones.

The impact of LIFE's approach is evident in the continued engagement and activity of individuals living with dementia, promoting a fulfilling life journey until the end.

Sincerely,

*Carole Kilgus*



# Meet Our Team



## CAROLE KLINGLER

BSN, RN, CDP, CEO & CO-FOUNDER

Carole spent years as an ICU nurse and was the Director of Nursing for Kendal at Oberlin. She also worked as an adjunct faculty member for Lorain County Community College Allied Health and Nursing Program and in Hospice and Palliative Care in the role of Team Leader and Community Facility Coordinator for the Lorain County team. Carole earned her Bachelor of Science in Nursing degree from Indiana Wesleyan University. She is a Certified Dementia Practitioner and a Master Trainer for Dementia Friends Ohio.



## MARYANNE DUNCAN

SERVICE MANAGER, CDP - WELLINGTON, ELYRIA, & NORTH RIDGEVILLE

## KARINA FUERY

SERVICE MANAGER - AMHERST & NORTH RIDGEVILLE

## CHRISTEN UHL

SERVICE MANAGER - WOOSTER



## JENNIFER TUCKER

FINANCIAL ADMINISTRATOR

## EVELYN REYES

BILINGUAL SERVICES DIRECTOR



## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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MAX SCHMITTLE

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LAURIE KING

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AUSTIN WOLFF

# Vision and Mission



## Vision

- LIFE strives to empower communities with a beacon of hope, by uniting essential services and compassionate support tailored for those touched by dementia. Our unwavering commitment is to extend this paradigm of care to underserved communities, enriching lives and fostering resilience.

## Mission

- LIFE's mission of faith is to partner with anyone touched by dementia, and offer resources, education, and engaging activities which promote and improve quality of life.

# About our Memory Cafés

- **2 counties**
- **5 locations**
- **150 active participants**
- **over 300 lives touched since 2016**
- **over 20 community partners**
- **2 new locations planned for 2024**



LIFE - A Dementia Friendly Foundation has the following locations:

## Lorain County

- Monday at Bethany Lutheran Church in Wellington
- Tuesday at Church of the Nazarene in Elyria
- Wednesday at Faith Baptist Church in Amherst
- Thursday at Fields United Methodist Church in North Ridgeville
- 2024 location planned for Avon Lake.

## Wayne County

- Wednesday at First Presbyterian Church in Wooster
- 2024 location planned for Orrville.

Memory Cafés typically host an average of 24 attendees at each location, with 3 volunteers per site. These venues are generously supported by churches and community sponsors, who not only offer space but also supply lunches, organize exercises, plan intermittent activities, and arrange educational speakers. Additionally, some of these sponsors advocate on behalf of LIFE by organizing fundraising events.

# Financial Summary

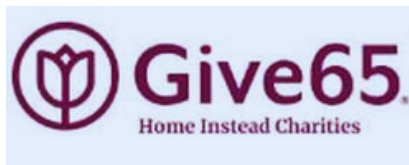
	2022	2023
INCOME	61,549.25	192,011.51
EXPENSES	76,079.81	95,573.32
TOTAL	(14,530.56)	96,438.19 *

LIFE is graciously supported, not only by our valued community partners, but by donations from individuals within the local community, grant support and various fundraising activities.

\*At year end 2023, grants were received by the Good Neighbor Thrift Shop (\$17500) and the Wayne County Community Foundation (\$15000) to support the opening of 2 additional locations in early 2024. In addition, a grant cycle change at the Lorain County Community Foundation resulted in a 1 time adjustment to our annual award (\$20833).



# Highlights & Awards



- in 2020, LIFE was recognized by the Manhattan Institute, as a recipient of the Institutes \$25,000 Civil Society Award for advancing America’s long tradition of supporting a civil society through its work to improve and strengthen community.
- In 2019 LIFE won the 100 Women Who Care About Lorain County with over \$10,000 earmarked to providing music, the Ohio Council for Cognitive Health matched this donation by giving us the training and supplies to offer the Music and Memory Program to Care Partners and Participants.
- For the fourth year in a row LIFE was awarded Give65's top national award. Thanks to big and small donors, we won \$10,000 with a \$5,000 matching award. 2023 was the last year for this fundraising and recognition program.
- LIFE was fortified by grants from the Lorain County Community Foundation from 2021 through the 2024 grant cycle. The Foundation provides funding for non-profit organizations that serve Lorain County residents in the areas of Arts & Culture, Education & Youth Development, Health & Human Services and Strengthening Lorain Counties.



# Testimonials

“I love that everyone at LIFE accepts my Mom just the way she is, even on her "salty/spicy" days!”

“Watching my husband basically evaporate before my eyes is discouraging and challenging to say the least. This LIFE group gives me the tools, strength and encouragement to get through this long journey.”

Ralph a participant says: “It's a great place to be. I like it for the fellowship and activities—it improves your memory. And I enjoy doing the crafts and exercises.”

Kathy, Ralph’s wife: “This program is very unique. My husband loves all the fellowship and activities here. I see a big difference in his attitude and memory since he has been attending. I enjoy the program as well. It gets both of us out of the house and we enjoy all the beautiful socialization and activities and the care providers. Meetings help keep me sane.”

“LIFE is a group that shows me I am not alone. Seeing my Mom active and smiling is a Blessing. Talking to some of the best people that knows what you're going through. I've grown so much as a Caregiver.”

“When I tell my family and friends about my wife’s condition, I get pity and before you know it I feel sorry for myself. But when I come to LIFE, I get practical advice and suggestions that make me feel like I can live out my wedding vows.”



# Contact Us



440.935.3506



info@dflife.org



www.dflife.org

# Donate

When you donate to LIFE, your dollars go directly toward operating costs to manage and staff our Memory Café locations.

There is never a cost to participants or care partners to attend our Memory Cafe` activities and events.

LIFE - A Dementia Friendly Foundation is a 501c(3) nonprofit organization.



send checks to PO Box 117  
Oberlin, OH 44074



www.dflife.org/donate.html

