Thank you, Lisa.
Good morning, everyone. I am John Feather, Chief Executive Officer of Grantmakers In Aging.
And I’m delighted to welcome you to the 2015 GIA annual conference.
For those of you who are Tweeting, that’s hashtag - GI Aging15.
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You COULD say the future of aging arrived in 2011, when the Boomers started turning 65. Only fifteen years from now, the LAST Boomer will turn 65, and older people will make up more than 20 percent of the country. But that last Boomer’s 65th birthday is NOT the end of this story.
The Millennials’ generation is even larger than the Boomers’. These are the people born between 1980 and 2000, and even THEY are going to get old.
As the Boomers end their life journeys, the Millennials will START turning 65, making population aging a PERMANENT reality in the United States, and to some extent globally as well.
So aging has changed, and will CONTINUE to change. I suggest that PHILANTHROPY MUST DO THE SAME.
It’s appropriate that we are discussing this HERE, steps from the White House, because one immediate change we face comes from the Affordable Care Act: or, if you prefer, ObamaCare.
When we look back in 20 years, the REAL impact of the ACA will NOT be health coverage for 16 million uninsured people. It will be its effect on aging services. New measures (such as bundled care), and financial incentives (such as penalizing preventable hospital readmissions) are changing the way large health care systems operate, and what services they want and need to provide. This is driving widespread consolidation of health systems, which are merging with (or simply BUYING UP) community-based aging services providers -- many of whom are OUR nonprofit partners.
All this CHANGE is bringing about some things we always WANTED, like better integrated social services. The difficulty is that many nonprofits have a hard time meeting the technical requirements of these big health system bureaucracies.
Where does philanthropy fit into this picture? We can sit on the sidelines and shake our heads, or we can RESPOND.
I am pleased that a number of GIA members have done just that, creating programs that directly work with community-based organizations to help them to make this adjustment, such as the John A. Hartford Foundation and Archstone Foundation’s work with Partners In Care, a national learning collaborative for Administration for Community Living grantees, and the SCAN Foundation’s Linkage Lab.
One way of responding is to add some new PARTNERS. Look BEYOND traditional aging services – and TOWARD many other things in our society that SHOULD benefit older adults, but often DON’T. Things like transportation. Housing. Programs that promote connection to community (and stave off the silent killer, social isolation.) These are crucial elements of successful aging-in-place. (If you noted that they are also key domains of an age-friendly community, you are correct.)
For the past three years, with support from the Pfizer Foundation, GIA has partnered on age-friendly work with five localities, through our COMMUNITY AGENDA initiative.
This has also modelled a way to engage new partners, some of whom would never call themselves “aging funders.”

What these new partners DO care about is improving bus routes and sidewalks, designing affordable housing, strengthening intergenerational connections, improving access for people with disabilities, and a variety of other things that matter to people of ALL AGES.
At this meeting, we are releasing an important new resource: “Guiding Principles for the Sustainability of Age-Friendly Community Efforts.” This was an initiative that brought together all the major networks of age-friendly communities, both in the U.S and internationally, to create a framework for how we can continue this important work once initial funding ends.
Another response to consider: getting out of town. RURAL AMERICA needs YOU.
Just last month, former US Secretary of Agriculture Tom Vilsack expressed disappointment that foundation investment in rural America has actually DECREASED in the last few years. If we look for funders who focus specifically on RURAL aging, the number is even SMALLER.
Today I am excited to announce that our newest GIA age-friendly project, Project SOAR, will focus on Supporting Older Adults in Rural communities. This will take place in four communities in South Dakota and is made possible by a grant from the Margaret A. Cargill Foundation.
Looking at aging through a RURAL LENS reveals, even more clearly than usual, the need to meet communities WHERE THEY ARE -- getting the job done, rather than trying to design the PERFECT model. In fact, many rural communities have so few service providers that there is often little competition anyway– and sometimes little service, either.
You may be wondering where all these new partners are going to come from. We know aging can be a “hard sell” and many of us have bemoaned the fact that often people “just don’t get it.” But being able to connect with a wider range of partners – from government to business to funders outside aging – is more important than ever.
That’s why GIA is working with the Leaders of Aging Organizations and the FrameWorks Institute on a research project called *Gauging Aging*. 
Our goal is also our hashtag: #ReFraming Aging.

This work has been supported by GIA members and can help us understand – and overcome - the gaps between the way those of us in the FIELD perceive aging, and the way the general PUBLIC does.
#ReFraming Aging has received considerable well-deserved attention for helping us identify these communications stumbling blocks.

Better yet, the next phase, under way now, will produce tools and messages that we can all use to help us bridge those gaps.
So where do we go from here? We must find new ways to do what we do best.
Bring people together.
Help set the agenda, particularly in areas that tend to ignore aging.
Leverage the work of innovators.
Take on partners we wouldn’t have considered five years ago. Maybe even a for-profit company!
As we all try to work differently, GIA is doing the same.
We are adding a new membership category, welcoming non-traditional funder groups we’re calling NATIONAL PARTNER MEMBERS, mainly from the social services arena.

We also welcome two PARTNER SPONSORS for this conference. One is the law firm of Matz, Blancato and Associates, and we’ll hear from Bob Blancato in just a few minutes.

The other is NEXT AVENUE, the PBS news website for people 50-plus. Next Avenue has just released their first-ever LIST of INFLUENCERS in AGING, many of whom you will recognize as grantees and partners and friends.
In closing, I want to thank you for the important work that you do, and will continue to do. I look forward to another great conference and another year full of opportunities to work together.

And now it is my pleasure to introduce Lisa Marsh Ryerson, President of the AARP Foundation, and moderator for our opening Plenary Session.