INNOVATING ACROSS HEALTH, HOSPITALITY, AND DESIGN

ANNUAL REPORT
2024
MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTORS

Thank you to our members!

ENGAGE

Outreach

INSPIRE

Education

INNOVATE

Research

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CORPORATE MEMBERS

FOUNDRING MEMBERS

Melissa Ceriale, P’15, ’16, ’18, Emertius Member, Board of Trustees, Montefiore Medicine

Thank you to our members!
We are pleased to present the Cornell Institute for Healthy Futures’ eighth annual report. In the most active year since our founding, we engaged in multiple activities. In fall of 2023 we held an Advisory Board Meeting, a Community Convening, student photo competition and a webinar, “Capturing the Silver Wellness Market”. In spring of 2024 our roundtable on “Design for Mental Health: Exploring the Future of Tech, Place, and Programs” engaged 35 participants. We participated in a student design charette with the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health on safe outdoor environments for older adults, and held a “Freedom of Expression” exhibit and reception. In addition, during the spring we co-hosted a community event, Reimagining+ Workshop: The Mall for Health and Community with over 67 students, healthcare practitioners, community members and mall management. Our spring webinar, “Trauma Informed Design Interventions” offered insight into how architects and designers can utilize pathways to resilience through appropriate built environment interventions utilizing trauma-informed design (TiD) principles.

Heather Kolakowski and Mardelle Shepley continued to serve as directors and were joined by 1 new board member, Amanda Al-Masri, 5 new industry scholars (Peyton Fort, Christine Foster, Nancy Griffin, Michelle Sarkisian, and Serena Dang) and 2 new faculty fellows (Nooshin Ahmadi and Janet Loebach). We were sad to lose Associate Professor Nagesh Gavirneni, who passed away in July 2023. In May 2024 we graduated three new Healthy Futures minors and have 7 students who are currently working toward it, the most since it was started 5 years ago. The Institute for Healthy Futures provides a minor. The minor, combined with the class taught by the directors, has resulted in CIHF becoming one of the most student-engaged institutes/centers on campus.

We are grateful for the contributions of the members of our community.

– Heather and Mardelle
The Cornell Institute for Healthy Futures is a cross-campus collaboration between the College of Human Ecology and the Nolan School of Hotel Administration. The Deans of the schools are chairs of the governing board.
A core mission of the Institute is to provide opportunities for active engagement between industry, faculty, and students. During the 2023-24 academic year CIHF undertook several initiatives to achieve these goals including the following symposia, roundtables, panels, seminars, and social events.

On September 7, 2023, the Cornell Institute for Healthy Futures hosted its Annual Welcome Gathering to kick off the new academic year. This event brought together students, faculty, and staff, fostering a sense of community and providing an environment for networking and exchanging ideas. Attendees shared their interests, discussed upcoming activities, and previewed the year’s roundtables, workshops, and other initiatives. New Healthy Futures minor students and other members were welcomed, setting a positive tone for a productive and engaging year ahead.

The event was held at the Regent Lounge in the Statler Hotel.
Fall Webinar Summary

The Cornell Institute for Healthy Futures hosted an eCornell webinar “Capturing the Silver Wellness Market” addressing myths and misconceptions about older adults that hinder innovation. Heather Kolakowski, Esther Greenhouse, and Nancy Griffin discussed the needs of the 50+ population, emphasizing the importance of the longevity market. They explored strategies to retain or attract older, experienced staff, and highlighted how a wellness-focused real estate approach can yield premiums. The discussion underscored the necessity of enabling clients and staff to thrive by design, aiming to capture and support this vital demographic for the future.

Spring Webinar Summary

In the spring, the Cornell Institute for Healthy Futures sponsored an eCornell webinar “Trauma Informed Design Interventions”. Experts Christine Foster, Christine Cowart, and Janet Roche shared insights on how trauma, including that experienced by aging adults and their caregivers, can be mitigated through design. The webinar highlighted principles promoting safety, trust, and empowerment, and the impact of culture, race, and gender on trauma. This session connected trauma-informed care research with practical design strategies to support aging in place and improve care delivery.

Both webinars can be viewed through the eCornell database.

FALL ADVISORY BOARD MEETING AND COMMUNITY CONVOCATION

The Fall CIHF Advisory Board Meeting and Community Conveng took place on October 15-16, 2023, at Cornell University. The event began with a reception at the Statler Hotel on Sunday evening, providing a casual setting for attendees to connect. On Monday, the Board Meeting was held at the ILR Conference Center, followed by the Community Convocation.

The Community Convocation session featured presentations from CIHF Faculty Fellows, Industry Scholars, Academic Scholars, Visiting Scholars, and student leaders. Highlights included Madelyn Hill’s insights from her Healthy Futures Minor Internship at Loveday in London, Lisa Chervinsky’s discussion on the Regenerative Hospitality Competition, Jie Zhang’s research on Home Support Service Continuity, and Zain Ismail’s analysis of healthcare disruptors. The convocation fostered rich discussions and collaboration among participants, enhancing the community’s engagement and shared vision of health, hospitality, and design.
On March 22, 2024, the Cornell Institute for Healthy Futures hosted the Thought Leadership Roundtable titled “Design for Mental Health: Exploring the Future of Tech, Place, and Programs” at the Statler Hotel. This event, presented in collaboration with the School of Hotel Administration, the College of Human Ecology’s Department of Human Centered Design, and HKS, Inc., began with a welcome reception on March 21.

The roundtable featured three one-hour sessions, focusing on innovative design, programming, and technology in mental health. Key speakers included Evengelia Chrysikou from The Bartlett School of Sustainable Construction and Erin Peavey, a Health & Well-being Design Leader, Community, Vice President, from HKS, Inc., discussing the future of place; Annie Levy, founder of AnnieLevy.com and retired Cornell faculty member Don Rakow, School of Integrative Plant Science Horticulture Section, Cornell University, focusing on the future of programs; Cindy Kao, a faculty member from the Department of Human Centered Design at Cornell University and Serena Dang, Founder & CEO of Teacup, addressing the future of tech. The event provided a unique opportunity for students, industry leaders, and academic faculty to share insights and shape the future of mental health care.

The Cornell Institute for Healthy Futures collaborated with Cayuga Health, the Brooks School for Public Policy, the College of Human Ecology, and the Nolan School of Hotel Administration to host the “Reimagining+ Workshop: The Mall for Health and Community” at The Shops at the Ithaca Mall. This design charrette, held in the vacant former Ulta Beauty space, aimed to repurpose underused mall space into a community asset by integrating health services. The workshop, facilitated by CIHF Industry Scholar Troy Savage, Strategic Projects and Innovation Manager for engineering firm Mazzetti and the Sextant Foundation, brought together community members and experts in a dynamic “design thinking” planning process, envisioning the transformation of the empty storefront. The event highlighted innovative strategies to enhance quality of life and support the well-being of local residents, emphasizing the potential of repurposed retail spaces to serve diverse community needs.

Attendees at the workshop gathered at nine tables, combining diverse skills and experiences. Participants included residents, community organizations such as the Family Reading Partnership, Southside Community Center, Visiting Nurse Service, and YMCA of Ithaca and Tompkins County, health clinicians, local officials, mall representatives, and an interdisciplinary mix of Cornell experts in health care policy, human-centered design, architecture, and hospitality. Several dozen students from “Health and Healing Studio” and “Designing for Health Equity” courses also contributed to the collaborative planning process.

Some common themes across the groups – improving navigation and access, and infusing more natural and welcoming spaces into the mall – would help advance the preliminary concepts collected from a wide range of perspectives.
Cornell University and John’s Hopkins University Center for Injury Research and Policy collaborated on a design charrette on the JHU campus, focused on enhancing home safety for older adults. The primary goal was to redesign the terrace on the 9th floor of 615 North Wolfe Street, Baltimore, MD to mitigate injury risks and create a safe, supportive environment for seniors. Given the significant growth in the older adult population, the initiative aimed to support the aging-in-place strategy endorsed by healthcare providers and organizations like the World Health Organization’s Age-Friendly Cities Project. This approach is crucial for improving the quality of life for older adults and reducing healthcare costs, as home injuries are a leading cause of loss of independence among this demographic.

The design charrette emphasized the importance of outdoor spaces for the well-being of older adults, promoting mental restoration, physical health, and social support. Participants, who were students from Cornell and JHU, were tasked with creating an accessible, nature-rich outdoor environment on the terrace. The design specifications included abundant plantings, varied seating options, wheelchair-accessible paths, and features to encourage wildlife observation and social interaction. The process followed design thinking stages: empathizing with users’ needs, defining the site’s pros and cons, ideating primary goals, prototyping solutions, and testing their effectiveness. This collaborative effort aimed to develop practical, innovative solutions to support older adults living safely and independently.
Our goal is to ignite students’ and community members’ passion for health, hospitality, and design to share knowledge and find solutions within the three fields. CIHF helps develop transdisciplinary educational programs, like our Healthy Futures minor, and provides support to instructors teaching courses offered by Cornell University related to the institute’s mission.

The Cornell Institute for Healthy Futures and the Department of Human Centered Design offers a minor in Healthy Futures open to all undergraduate students. This innovative transdisciplinary focus has the potential to change industry practices and professional attitudes by breaking down the silos that often undermine creative solutions. This minor is of interest to students enrolled in health, wellness, policy, and hospitality related majors, or students interested in applying their education to problem-solving in population health and wellness.

**GRADUATING MINORS**

**Madelyn Hill**
Madelyn graduated from the Nolan Hotel School. She came to Cornell with a passion for senior housing and an interest in the intersection of healthcare and hospitality, which led her to CIHF. After graduation, she moved to Sarasota, FL to work with Grace Management, as a senior living operator. There, she continues to deepen her expertise and passion in the senior housing sector.

**Jordan Amoako**
Jordan graduated from the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences with a degree in Biology and Society and a concentration in public health and sustainable design. Additionally, she obtained minors in Global Health and Healthy Futures. Following graduation, Jordan will be pursuing a Masters of Public Health at Milken Institute School of Public Health at George Washington University.

**Mielle Emouna**
Mielle graduated from the Nolan School with minors in Healthy Futures and Healthcare Policy. On campus, she was involved in the Professional Development of Women Club, Cornell Finance Club, and was a Peer Career Coach with Nolan Hotel School Career Services. After graduation, she returned to Morgan Stanley as a Wealth Management Rotational Analyst in New York.
This organization is a registered student organization of Cornell University.

Cornell University Healthy Futures (CUHF) is the student division of the Cornell Institute for Healthy Futures. CUHF promotes careers, research, and extracurricular activities at the intersection of hospitality, health, and design.

The purpose of this club is to engage students throughout multiple colleges, including the Nolan School of Hotel Administration and the College of Human Ecology, in conversation and professional development. We strive to create a collaborative environment and community for students interested in this intersectional field, and look forward to weekly discussions, networking with leaders in the industry, seminars & guest speakers, graduate panels, professional development, and industry education this semester.

This 1 credit-hour speaker series provides a unique opportunity for students to learn from industry leaders with proven success in the emerging industry that combines elements of hospitality and design with health, wellness, and senior living. Students in this course have an opportunity to gain insights directly from senior executives as they share their views on business, managerial, career, and other critical industry-related issues.

Heather Kolakowski (SHA) and Mardelle Shepley (HCD) are co-instructors for the course.

2024 Speakers:

Alex Carter, PA-C, MMS, Clinical Advisor, Innovation Hub, Presbyterian Healthcare Services
Vaibhav Garg, Director of Talent & Culture, Fairmont Hotels & Resorts
Tammy Thompson, MArch, EdD, RA, RID, CPXP, NCARB, EDAC, President, Institute for Patient-Centered Design, Director of Experience Engagement, Education & Design, ECU Health, Adjunct Faculty, North Carolina A&T State University
Erin Peavey, AIA, WELL AP, LSSYB, EDAC, LEED AP BD+C, Health & Well-being Design Leader, Community, Vice President, HKS, Inc.
Andrea Möhn, Director, Andrea Möhn Architects BV
Amin Mojtahedi, PhD., Assoc AIA, Design Innovation Manager, HGA Architects
Matt Schuler, Director of Culinary Development, SCOPOS Hospitality
Nancy Griffin, CEO, Glowing Older, Founder, SeniorTrade and #ExposeAgeism

One of the many site visits CUHF made this year was to the Nappi Wellness Institute at Upstate Medical University in Syracuse, NY where Chief Ambulatory Officer Nancy Daoust gave the students a behind the scenes tour in the planning and operation of the new state of the art facility. A big thank you to the Upstate Medical team for this unforgettable opportunity!
FALL PHOTO CONTEST
FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION

The 2023 CIHF Student Photography Contest, themed “Freedom of Expression: Contrasting Visions of Health, Hospitality, and Design,” invited all Cornell students to showcase their creativity and artistic talents. The theme, “Freedom of Expression”, was inspired by the CU theme for the 2023-24 academic year. Participants were encouraged to submit up to three high-resolution images that captured the essence of the theme. The contest offered prizes, with $300 for first place, $200 for second place, and $100 for third place.

2023 Contest Winners:

1st Place: Peace by Isabella French ’23 (top left)
2nd Place: Sister Help Me Arrange My Crown by Cátia Dombaxe ’26 (right)
3rd Place: The World Between You and Me by Cátia Dombaxe ’26 (bottom left)

Honorable Mentions:
Unified by Love by Ariana Greenberg ’27 (top left); Paris Protest by Jillian Walker ’27 (bottom left); Life Cycles by Gerardo Garcia Rodriguez ’25 (top center); The Realm Cloud, by Kaitlyn Z Varriale ’26 (center bottom); Flowers by Lauren Rourk ’25 (top right); Race Against Time by Audrey Pinard ’25 (center right); New Era by Akash Munshi ’27 (bottom right)

In May 2024, CIHF was thrilled to showcase the top 10 entries from our 2023 Fall Photography Contest, “Freedom of Expression.” This contest invited participants to explore contrasting visions of health, hospitality, and design through their lenses. The exhibit, sponsored by CHE and the University, opened on May 9th with a celebration from noon to 1:30 PM at 1250 Martha Van Rensselaer Hall and closed on May 17. This event was not only a celebration of artistic talent but also an opportunity for our community to come together and celebrate the end of the semester.

This year, CIHF has driven innovation in health, hospitality, and design by offering funding for mini research grants and conference participation. CIHF directors and fellows published influential works, expanding knowledge in their fields. CIHF remains committed to fostering an environment that supports research, collaboration, and forward-thinking, as it continues to push the boundaries of innovation and shape a healthy future.

**Ruth Browne**, an Advisory Board member and Industry Scholar of the Cornell Institute for Health Futures, was honored by the College of Human Ecology with the inaugural Flemmie Kittrell Visiting Scholar award. Ruth, who serves as President and Chief Executive Officer of Ronald McDonald House New York (RMH-NY), shared her insights during the Flemmie Kittrell Visiting Scholar Lecture titled “Nourishing Innovation and Impact through Health Equity: Is Everyone at the Table?” This event, held on October 4th, provided a platform for Ruth to delve into the crucial topic of health equity and the imperative of inclusive participation in healthcare innovation.

**Saleh Kalantari**, CIHF Faculty Fellow and Assistant Professor of Human Centered Design, was recognized for his contributions as he received the prestigious National Science Foundation Faculty Early Career Development Award. Alongside five other assistant professors at Cornell, Saleh was acknowledged for his research in large-scale artificial intelligence, microbial biomanufacturing, and causal inference methods. This award, granted by the NSF, provides a minimum of $400,000 over a five-year period to support early-career faculty members who demonstrate the potential to serve as academic role models in research and education.

Images: CIHF sponsored lab Health Design Innovations Lab (HDIL) directed by CIHF Faculty Fellow and Associate Professor Rana Zadeh.
The CIHF team had an exhilarating experience at the NIC Conference 2023 in Chicago! CIHF Program Manager, Chris Tanner, along with students Isabella Suffredini and Emily Wang, represented the Institute at this key senior living conference.

The NIC Conference offered sector leaders an unmatched opportunity to form key relationships and acquire actionable insights to identify opportunities and accelerate changes that will define aging well in residential settings. This conference proved essential for advancing business and innovation in the industry.

CIHF’s presence not only showcased the Institute’s commitment to the field of health, hospitality, and design, but also fostered invaluable connections.

Shape the Future of Senior Living Management
by Torie Andersen, eCornell

Tori Andersen of eCornell published an article based on our fall 2022 Keynote “Affordable Senior Living: Challenges and Opportunities Ahead.”

“Driven by longer lifespans and the aging Baby Boomer generation, the number of older adults in the United States is expected to exceed 80 million by 2040, accelerating the demand for senior living solutions. Professionals in the sector are adapting to provide affordable housing and quality care as demographics shift.”

The full article is available on the Cornell Chronicle and the eCornell blog. Watch the full “Affordable Senior Living: Challenges and Opportunities Ahead” Keynote on the eCornell website.
Statler Hotel Partners with Cornell Group, Volunteers, Feeds 400 Tompkins Residents

To keep occupied during the winter break, a period when many Cornell students are away, Eric Szymczak, a chef at the Statler Hotel, aimed to do more than simply discard leftover items.

“I’m more of a cook, not an organizer, so I reached out to [food and beverage management lecturer] Heather Kolakowski, I know she’s involved with Loaves and Fishes and a lot of other charities, and I just said to her ‘can you point me in the right direction?’ then she reached out to Cornell Hunger Relief and some community charities,” Czymczak said.

Heather Kolakowski is the Executive Director of CIHF and a senior lecturer at the Nolan School of Hotel Administration. Additionally, Heather serves as President of the Board of Loaves & Fishes.

Read the full article on the Ithaca Journal webpage. Image from the Ithaca Journal.

AI May Improve Doctor-patient Interactions for Older Adults with Cancer

AI has the potential to help older adults with cancer communicate with their doctors and participate more fully in decisions about their treatment, according to new Cornell research led by Yuexing Hao, a doctoral student in the field of human centered design, has developed an AI tool that uses machine learning and large language models to identify treatment options based on patients’ diagnoses, demographic information and priorities. CIHF helped to fund this research.

Sensory-friendly Fashion Exhibit Brings Awareness and Empathy

This exhibit was a collaboration between Florencia Ardon, neurodivergent student support program manager in Cornell’s Learning Strategies Center, and Catherine Blumenkamp, of the Department of Human Centered Design and Mardelle Shepley CIHF Academic Director and Professor in the Department of Human Centered Design. In the Sensory Friendly and Adaptive Fashion exhibit, visitors were encouraged to touch, fidget and experience both positive and negative stimuli.

The exhibit was part of Cornell’s Neurodiversity Celebration Week, March 18-22, campus-wide events designed to increase awareness, understanding and acceptance of neurodiversity, to ultimately help create a more inclusive and equitable Cornell community.
A Structured Literature Review on the Research and Design of Rehabilitation Environments—Samira Pasha, Mardelle McCuskey Shepley, 2024. (n.d.).


Lee, J., Kim, M., & Won, C. W. (n.d.). Physical Frailty As A Predictor of Incident Disability In Specific-Iadl Items Among Older Adults.


The CIHF Faculty Fellows Program provides collaboration opportunities and support for invited Cornell University faculty for developing or enhancing research, curriculum, and industry-related activities that link hospitality, health, and design. CIHF Fellows form a diverse, yet cohesive, learning community and collectively create a strong multidisciplinary knowledge base.
NOLAN SCHOOL OF HOTEL ADMINISTRATION

Judi Brownell
Professor Emeritus
Management & Organizational Behavior

HaeEun Helen Chun
Assistant Professor
Services Marketing

Lisa Chervinsky
Lecturer
Property Development & Management

Ravinder Kingra
Lecturer, Food & Beverage Management

Li Chen
Associate Professor,
Operations, Technology & Information Management

Shawn Mankad
Assistant Professor,
Operations, Technology and Information Management

Elizabeth Mannix
Associate Dean for Executive MBA

Larry Robinson
Professor, Operations,
Technology, & Information Management

Heather Kolakowski
Lecturer, Food & Beverage Management

Robert Kwortnik
Associate Professor
Service Marketing

Peng Liu
Distinguished Professor in Asian Hospitality Management

Peggy Odom-Reed
Associate Professor
Service Marketing

Sunita Sah
Assistant Professor
Management & Organization

Jamie Perry
Assistant Professor,
Employment Relations & Human Resources & Law

Tony Simons
Associate Professor,
Management & Organizational Behavior

Vince Slaugh
Assistant Professor,
Operations Management & Information Systems

Alex Susskind
Associate Professor,
Food & Beverage Management

Gary Thompson
Professor
Services Operations Management

Kate Walsh
Dean &
E.M. Statler Professor

Brad Wellstead
Lecturer
Property Development & Management

Kristina Workman
Assistant Professor
Management & Organizational Behavior

Anke Wessels
Lecturer
Executive Director of the Center for Transformative Action

JOHNSON GRADUATE SCHOOL OF MANAGEMENT

THE DYSON SCHOOL OF APPLIED ECONOMICS & MANAGEMENT
The CIHF Academic Scholars are faculty members at universities other than Cornell University who collaborate in research projects, educational activities or industry events that link hospitality, health, and design.
The CIHF Industry Scholars are colleagues from non-educational organizations who collaborate in research projects, educational activities or industry events that link hospitality, health, and design.
The CIHF Visiting Scholars are faculty members at universities other than Cornell University who are currently visiting CIHF to collaborate in research projects, educational activities or industry events that link hospitality, health, and design. CIHF welcomes Visiting Scholars who conduct research studies supported by the institute.

Giulia Andreani
Visiting Graduate Researcher
Department of Food and Drugs at the University of Parma

THANK YOU TO ALL FELLOWS & SCHOLARS!

Email healthy-futures@cornell.edu for more information on becoming a fellow or scholar.

REMEMBERING PROFESSOR NAGESH GAVIRNENI

The Cornell Institute for Healthy Futures reflects on a year of highlights but also must share the news of the passing of Professor Nagesh Gavirneni, Professor of Operations Management in the Nolan School of Hotel Administration and a Faculty Fellow at CIHF. He passed away on July 21, 2023.

Since our Institute’s beginning, he had been a strong supporter, generously sharing his expertise and knowledge during conferences and other gatherings. His presence at CIHF events was always appreciated. Nagesh’s research, focused on supply chain management, inventory control, production scheduling, simulation, and optimization, extended to solving critical problems in healthcare, agriculture, and humanitarian logistics in developing countries. His academic work earned him numerous accolades and a respected position in the global academic community.

Born in 1967 in Andhra Pradesh, India, Nagesh earned degrees from the Indian Institute of Technology in Madras, Iowa State University, and Carnegie Mellon University. Before joining Cornell in 2004, he held positions at Indiana University and Schlumberger in Texas. At Cornell, he was known for his dedication to the Semester in Strategic Operations immersion course, which he integrated with a network of local industry partners.

Nagesh’s passing leaves a significant void in our community. Nagesh will be deeply missed by all who had the privilege of knowing him.
FOUNDING MEMBERSHIP

Benefits include:
All benefits associated with the Corporate Membership Recognition as founding member above regular members.

Priority consideration for speaking opportunities.

Exclusive sponsorship of one of the following each year as a founding member:

- CIHF Roundtable or CIHF conference (Platinum sponsorship)

FOUNDING MEMBER
$100,000

ADVISORY BOARD MEMBERSHIP

The board, composed of senior-level leaders in the industry, meets twice annually.

Recognition as a partner of CIHF on our website, including your corporate logo, a link to your company’s website, & the advisory board member’s personal bio & photo.

The commitment is an individual gift of $10,000 per year for 3 years.

ADVISORY BOARD MEMBER
$30,000

VOLUNTEERS AND INTERNSHIP HOSTS

Volunteer as a guest lecturer in classes or as a panelist at CIHF events and the Hospitality, Health, & Design Industry Seminar:

- DEA/HADM 3055 &
- DEA/HADM 6055

Connect with highly-motivated students for employment & internship opportunities. All CIHF minors participate in a 100 hour internship during the course of their studies at Cornell.

STAY IN TOUCH

Join our email list to be notified of CIHF announcements and opportunities to participate in webinars and industry events.

Sign up to receive the newsletter online
ihf.cornell.edu or by emailing CIHF@cornell.edu.