



House Leader Christopher R. Blazejewski

Christopher R. Blazejewski (D) was first elected in November 2010 and represents District 2 in Providence. He was elected by his Democratic colleagues to serve as the House Majority Leader in November 2020 after having served as Deputy Majority Whip since May 2015. As a representative, Leader Blazejewski has championed environmental protection, education, civil rights, senior services, healthcare, and economic opportunity for working families.

Senior Agenda Coalition was impressed with Leader Blazejewski since his first campaign for State Representative in 2010. He held a listening session at the Westminster Senior Center and he really listened to their members and staff. He has remained a trusted advisor on Senior Agenda Coalition's legislative strategy and advocacy ever since. He helped recruit the House Speaker for the first Legislative Leaders Forum in 2017. He reached out to both sides of the aisle.

In 2018, Leader Blazejewski worked with the Senior Agenda Coalition to pass legislation creating an Independent Provider (IP) program for home care in Rhode Island. That innovative program is helping expand the homecare workforce. He also helped win its continued funding. Elected Majority Leader in 2021, he responded to COVID's impact on nursing home residents by helping pass legislation raising quality standards for nursing homes. He again worked with the Senior Agenda Coalition to help pass the Nursing Home Safe Staffing and Quality Care Act.



Deborah Burton

Deb Burton is the Executive Director of RI Elder Info and creator of rielderinfo.com. RI Elder Info maintains the most comprehensive, expert-curated, multilingual resources for Seniors, Caregivers and Professionals in Rhode Island. She is the creator and host of Friday Friends-a weekly live-stream and podcast. Deb is also the Master of Ceremonies for RI Elder Info's Virtual Senior Resource Fairs, annual Calling All Veterans Day and annual Calling All Women Warriors.

Deb is a strong advocate for aging independently, in the community of our choosing, surrounded by those that we care for and who care for us. Providing outreach and education to the community on how to achieve these goals is her passion.

Deb has been involved with Senior's for over 30 years. She holds a Masters in Gerontology and the Management of Aging Services, is a member of Congressman Langevin's "Senior Advisory Committee," the Gerontological Society of America and has been inducted into Sigma Phi Omega (SPO), the International Academic Honor and Professional Society in Gerontology. She writes for Senior Digest and regularly participates in the Lieutenant Governor's Long Term Care Coordinating Council (LTCCC), is on the Housing and Behavioral Health subcommittees of the LTCCC, the Rhode Island Elder Mental Health and Addiction Coalition (RIEMHAC) and the Rhode Island Elder Minority Task Force (RIEMTF).



Doris Stearn Donovan

Doris Stearn Donovan has had an impressive career: valedictorian of her class at Brown; an expert in educational program evaluation; Deputy Director of the Rhode Island Foundation for 11 years; and consultant in organizational behavior at the national and state level. She's served as a leader on many boards including Children's Friend and the George Wiley Center.

Doris has been a staunch supporter of our cause, a generous donor, a volunteer organizer, a conference workshop leader and a trusted advisor to our previous executive director. Most importantly, she has become a powerful advocate for older seniors. During our 2020 Strategic Plan sessions she urged that in the years ahead we work harder to combat ageism, especially discrimination toward people over age 75. As she wrote in our February 2020 newsletter , *"It is my profound hope to live long enough to see a cultural shift to respect for the abilities, mental and emotional capacities and potential contributions of us 'truly old.' "* (See back cover of this program for her full essay.)

Doris has been a true friend and mentor to the Senior Agenda Coalition of Rhode Island and its leadership. We thank her for her wisdom and guidance.



William F. Flynn

Bill Flynn served as the Executive Director of Senior Agenda Coalition of Rhode Island from 2008 to early 2022. Prior to joining the Coalition, Bill's long career in leadership positions for the RI Community Food Bank, George Wiley Center and Urban League of Rhode Island evidence a lifetime of serving social justice.

Under Bill's leadership, hundreds of our older residents have engaged in successful citizen action to win pub-

lic policy changes over the years. He is intent on winning and his formula is grassroots organizing to turn out seniors and advocates, focusing on important winnable issues and holding elected leaders accountable.

Working with other groups and leaders, including all 2022 co-honorees, The Senior Agenda Coalition has achieved impactful wins during Bill tenure: *Permanent state funding for the No-Fare Bus Pass Program for seniors and persons with disabilities; Increasing annual funding for Meals on Wheels and Senior Centers; Higher pay for home health care workers; Raising the Bar legislation for increased staffing and pay increases for direct care providers in nursing homes; and, Increasing eligibility for moderate income seniors for homecare cost-share options.*

Bill's organizing efforts packed rooms annually with seniors speaking truth to the elected leaders. He knows it is the power of many informed seniors that sets the agenda for social change. Thank you, Bill Flynn, for your great work over many years for our older Rhode Islanders, living with dignity, at home and in their communities.



Senator Maryellen Goodwin

Senator Maryellen Goodwin serves as the Rhode Island Senate Majority Whip, the third-ranking member of the Senate Leadership. She was first elected to the Senate in 1986. For many years Senator Goodwin has been a dedicated and effective champion in the Senate for legislation improving long-term care for seniors and persons living with disabilities. Her passion has been driven by her personal experiences as a caregiver for aging parents.

Senator Goodwin's efforts have led to improved reimbursement rates for nursing homes, and regulations ensuring planning to help seniors to remain in their own homes as they age. Most recently she was the lead sponsor of the Nursing Home Staffing & Quality Care Act, also known as "Raise the Bar." This landmark legislation mandates increased staffing levels and minimum standards of care for nursing home patients.

Her other legislative priorities have included promoting cancer prevention awareness, domestic violence protections, and high quality child care and job creation. She has received awards from many groups for her efforts, including Leading Age-RI, RI Partnership for Home Care, RI Coalition Against Domestic Violence, MADD's 2014 Legislator of the Year, Cèsar Estrada Chavez Award, President's Award from the RI National Guard, American Heart Association, Volunteers in Providence Schools and the Rhode Island Catholic Schools Parents' Federation.



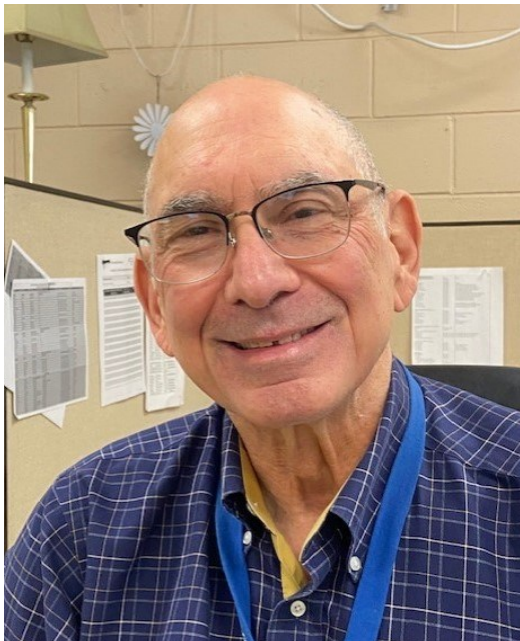
Senator Harold Metts

Senator Metts served as a State Representative from 1984 to 1998. Prior to being elected to the Senate in November 2004, he was also a State Committeeman and a member of the 11th Ward Democratic Committee. In 1988 he was a delegate for Jessie Jackson for President at the Democratic National Convention in Atlanta Georgia. Senator Metts was President, Vice President and twice Secretary of The

Rhode Island Black Caucus of State Legislators; and former Secretary/Chaplain of The Rhode Island Caucus of Black and Latino State Legislators.

Senator Metts served in the Rhode Island Senate from 2004 to 2020. He was a member of the General Assembly for a total of thirty (30) years. Over the years Senator Metts has participated as a member of the Providence Branch NAACP; the Urban League of Rhode Island; and many other non-profit community advocacy organizations. He serves on the Deacon's Ministry and several auxiliaries at the Congdon Street Baptist Church, where he also is a prison ministry and food pantry volunteer. He served in the Rhode Island Army National Guard from 1970-1976. In addition, he presently is a member of the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. State Holiday Commission, that he considers an honor.

Among his many legislative accomplishments, Senator Metts advocated and received the support of Senate Leadership to restore funding for Meals on Wheels; and Restoring free bus passes for the elderly, disabled and poor citizens.



Saul Richman

Saul works in Protective Services for Tri-County Community Action Agency for several years. His responsibilities include helping educate people about Medicare benefits, and also works as a case manager for Protective Services, which takes up most of his time. When the state of Rhode Island gets a report that an older adult needs assistance, Saul makes a home visit and works to provide them with public

services. He has helped countless elderly clients and victims get through their crisis with kindness and compassion. He is tireless in his efforts in resolving several issues that arise and goes above and beyond his duties to come to ensure the safety and security that they require. His countless hours of work go beyond his workday schedule to resolve issues. Saul treats his clients individually and treats them with dignity and respect that they deserve.

FROM ALL OF US AT TRI-COUNTY COMMUNITY ACTION AGENCY

Congratulations

SAUL RICHMAN

**AND ALL OF THE 2022
SENIOR HEROES**



HERO - a person who is admired or idealized for courage, outstanding achievements, or noble qualities.

www.TriCountyRI.org / 401.351.2750



Marjorie Waters

Marjorie Waters is a Community Organizer for the Rhode Island Organizing Project (RIOP), a leadership role she has been in for the past eight years. Prior to RIOP, Marjorie directed the Westminster Senior Center in Providence after an earlier career in information technology and six-sigma.

Marjorie has dedicated her life to fighting for those who needed someone to stand for them when they might have not been able to themselves. She has been a pivotal partner in fighting for one of Rhode Island's most vulnerable populations seniors and those living with disabilities. Marjorie was a leader in both the Home Care Independence Provider Program and the Raise the Bar coalitions, both of which passed the legislature and have a great impact of the daily and quality of living situations for those who need home-care and nursing home care.

Marjorie is organizing primarily in senior housing where relationships with resident service coordinators are key. She employs the RIOP house meeting organizing approach of telling your story, no judgement, no problem-solving. In her daily work she listens to what older adults are saying. Her rule is "don't think you know what you're going to hear". Marjorie listens, then she takes action.