

Aging Workforce Issues

The Big Picture

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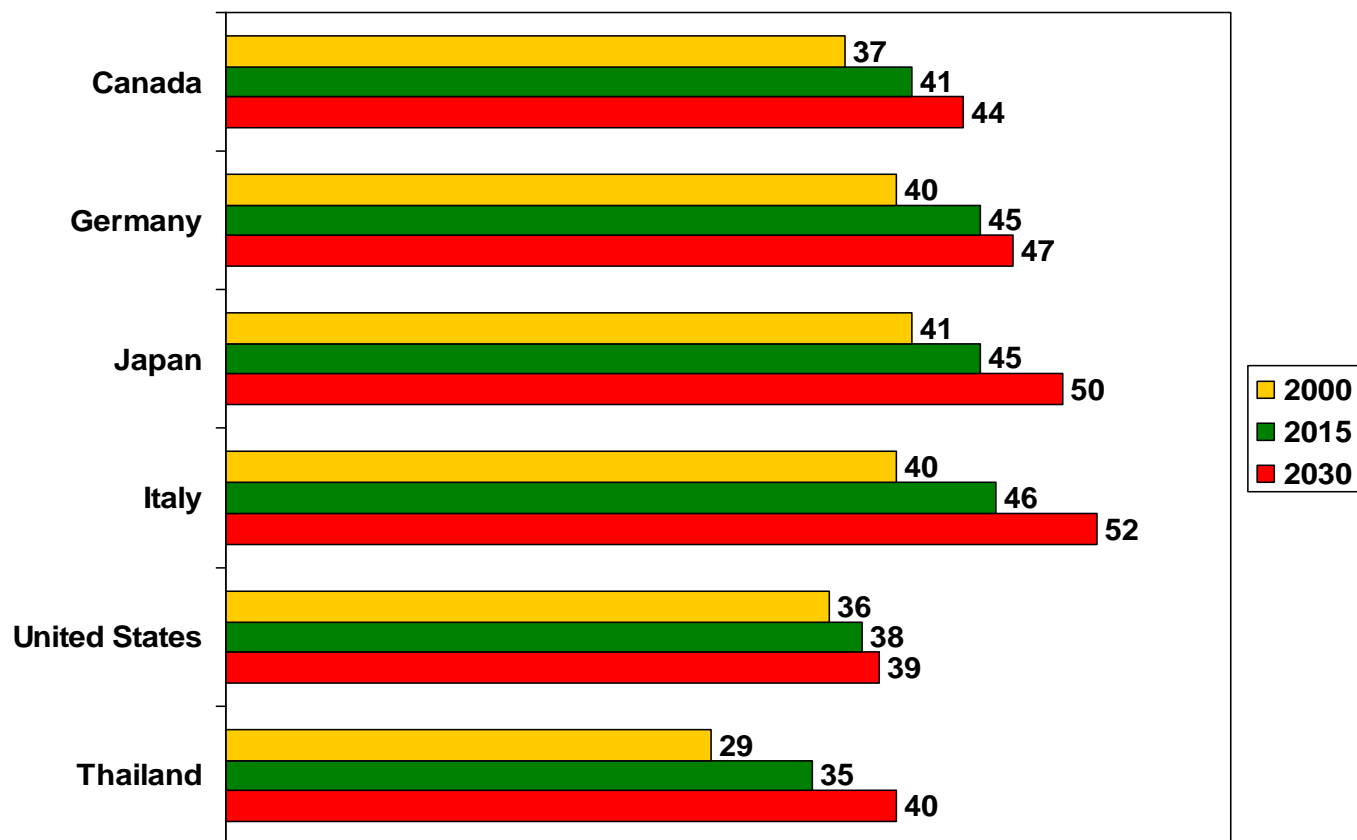
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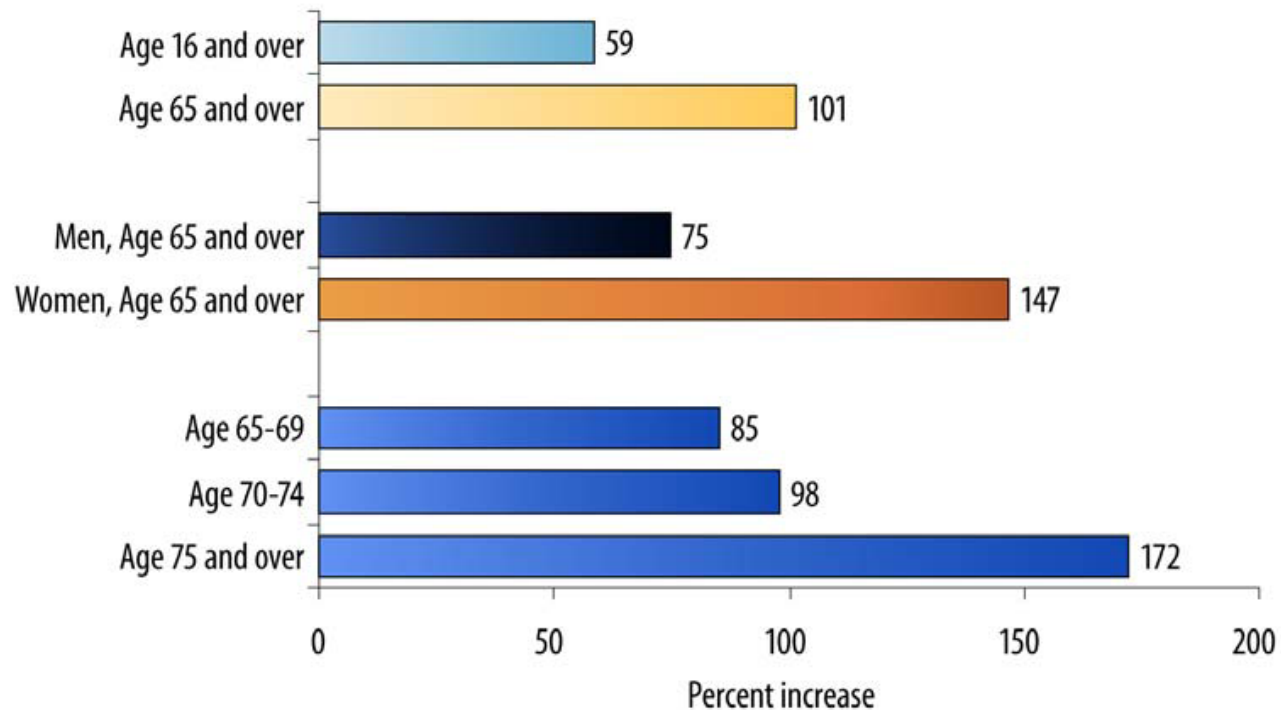
Median age in 6 countries: 2000, 2015, and 2030

(US Census 2000)



Percent increase in employment by age and sex, 1977-2007

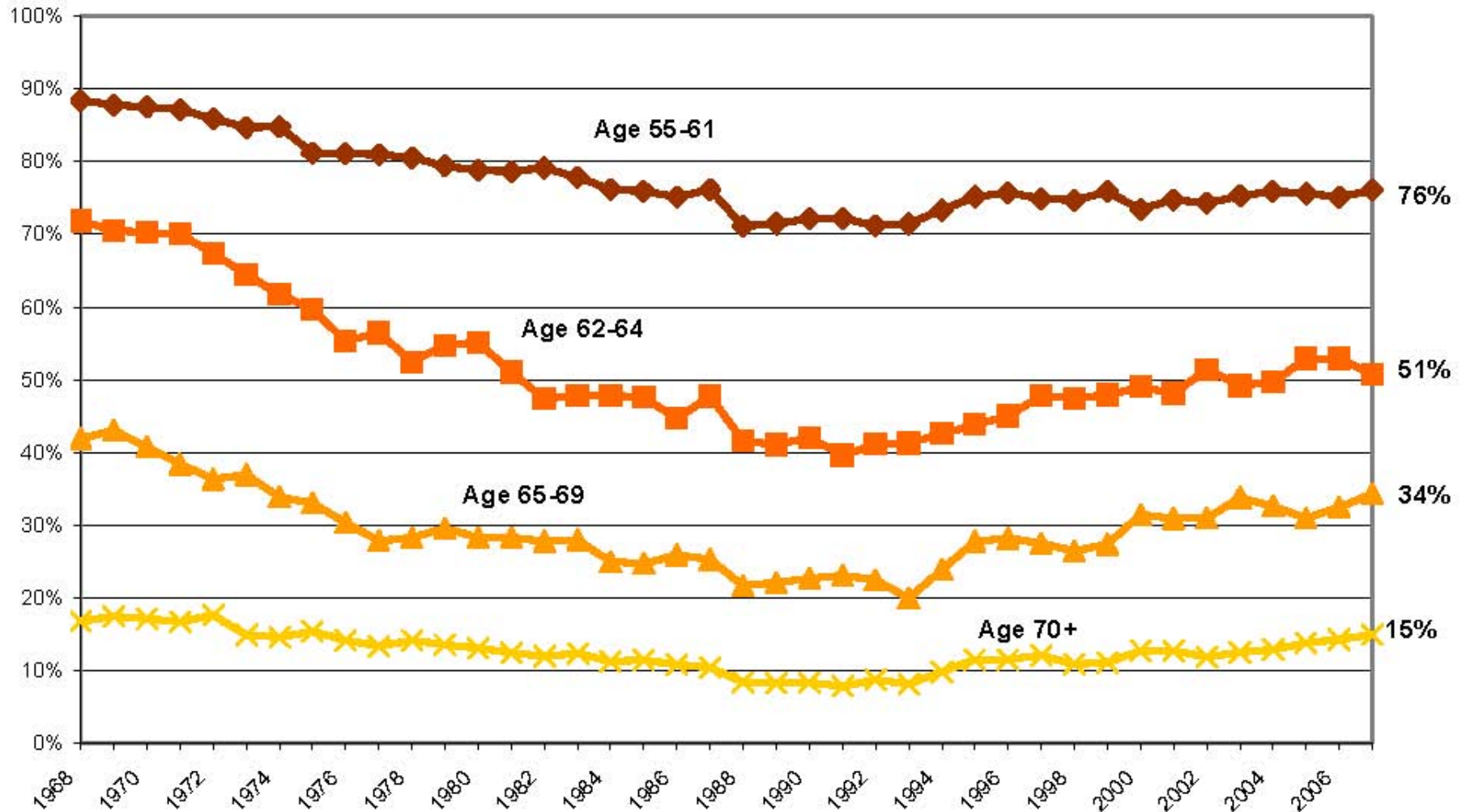
Percent increase in employment by age and sex, 1977-2007



Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics

www.bls.gov

Figure 2. Older Men's Labor Force Participation Rates, by Age, 1968-2007



Source: Author's estimates from the March Current Population Survey.

Johnson, Richard W., (2007). Should People Work Longer, and Will They? Urban Institute. Accessed from: <http://www.urban.org/url.cfm?ID=411584>.
Prepared by the UNC Institute on Aging

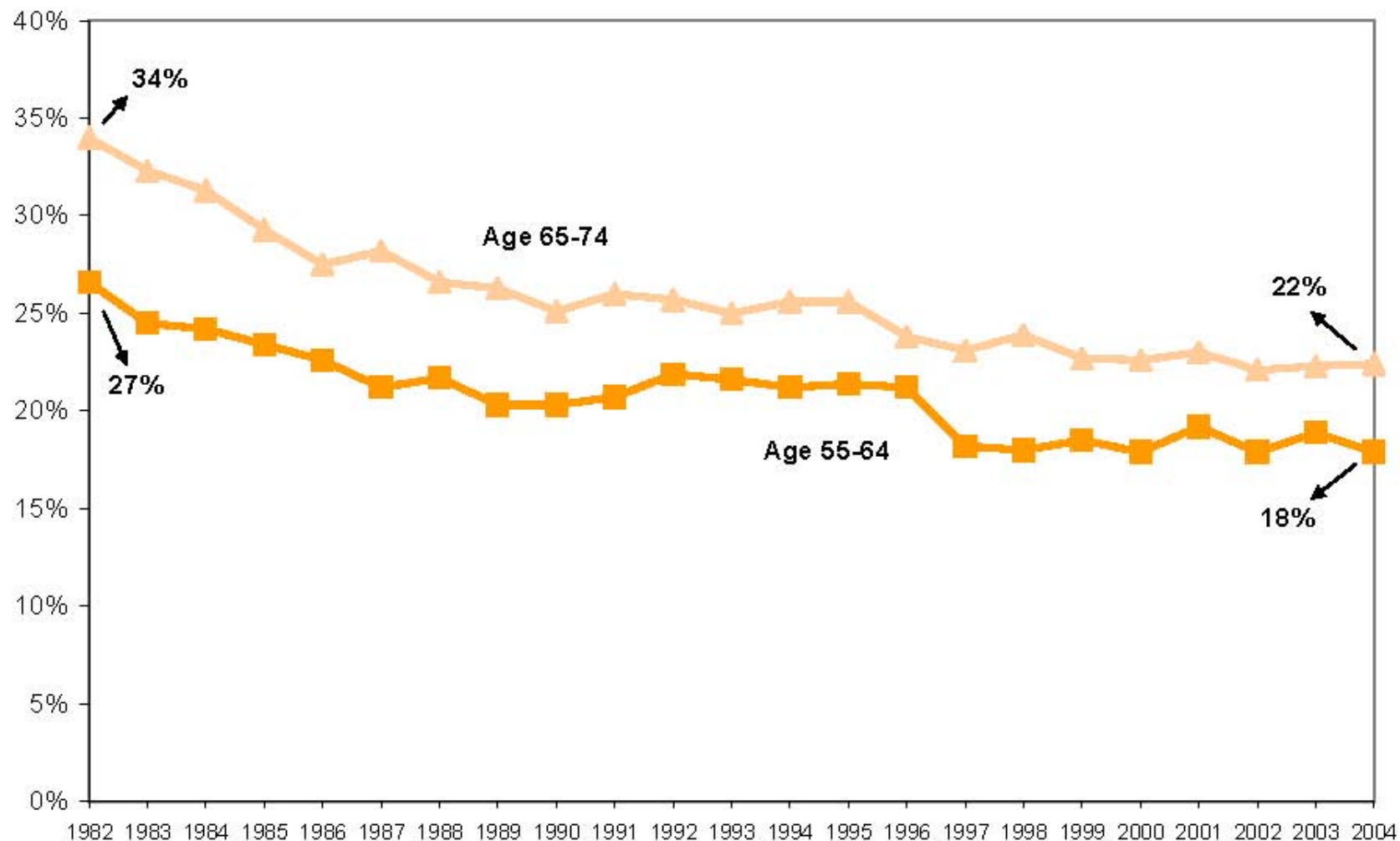
Changing the Culture

- Reversing the idealization of early retirement – “Freedom 55”
- Age friendly workplaces
- Health Promotion
- Flexible Working Arrangements

Countering Age Discrimination

- Ageism (attitudinal) is not the same as Age Discrimination (behavioral)
- Perceived age discrimination can lead to mental health problems (Yuan 2007)
- “Younger” job seekers 40% less likely to get interview (Lahey 2005)
- Ageism related to concerns about health and ability to adapt to technological and organizational change

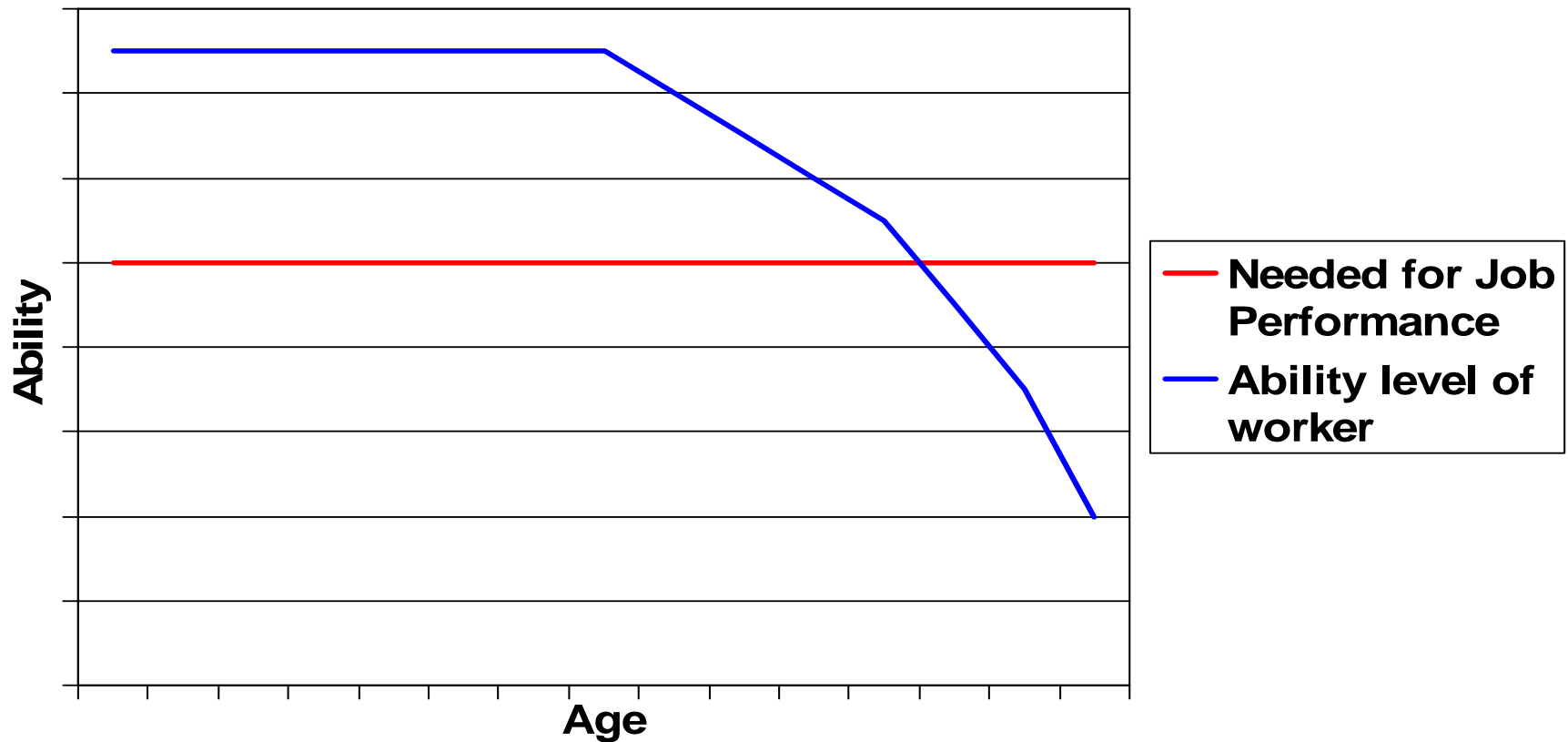
Figure 5. Percentage of Older Adults Reporting Fair or Poor Health, by Age, 1982-2004



Source: National Center for Health Statistics (2006).

Schematic: performance ability and age

most people will retire or reach very advanced age before declines in ability fall below levels needed for their job



Are Older Workers Less Productive?

- "... no reason to believe that (older workers') performance and the value of their accumulated knowledge do not compensate the higher cost" (ILO, 1995)
- There are many reasons to think that older workers can be as productive as younger workers, particularly if we increase job flexibility and design jobs suitable to them.

Lost Knowledge

“Now companies are worried about losing their most skilled workers, especially as the baby-boom generation nears retirement. Areva, a nuclear-power group, recently launched a scheme to address the needs of older employees, and plans to use about 100 retired people a year through Experconnect [a Paris employment agency which places retired people]. Because nuclear power was unpopular for decades, Areva stopped training engineers, so that much of its expertise lies with its oldest staff. Now it is taking much more interest in them. ‘We have to bring about a revolution in opinion,’ says Jean Cassingena, its human resources strategist.”

(The Economist 2008).

Summary of the argument

- 1. North Carolina, the USA, and most of the world is experiencing population aging.
- 2. Both demography and policy create workforce is aging.
- 3. We need *workers*- since they are increasingly older, we need *older workers*.
- 4. We need to reverse the culture of early retirement.
- 5. This means countering age discrimination.
- 6. We have to change the workplace to accommodate and retain older workers.
- 7. But we also need to be ready for the exodus of older workers.

Thanks for your attention

- And thanks to IOA Library and Information Staff (Elise Allison, Danielle Borasky, and Marlys Ray) and research staff (Amber Wells)
- See notice in your program about the Institute on Aging Aging Workforce Initiative