

About AGE to age



AGE to age: bringing the generations together was launched by the Northland Foundation in 2008 as part of a national initiative focused on the civic engagement and wellbeing of older adults. AGE to age provides a path for youth, older adults, and the ages-in-between to interact, form friendships and maintain social connectedness, and improve their communities.

Each AGE to age site forms an action plan and devises local projects and programming based on the needs and interests within its community, with guidance and support from the Northland Foundation and its funding partners. Project themes include culture and traditions, health and wellness, volunteer service, history and ancestry research, tech learning, and many others. Representatives from all the AGE to age sites meet regularly as a learning community, as well as participate in an annual Regional Summit.

The success of AGE to age has exceeded every expectation. Annually, this program spurs approximately 15,000 hours of volunteer service among people of all ages.

AGE to age Sites in Northeastern Minnesota



- Aitkin
- Barnum
- Bigfork/Itasca Area
- Bois Forte Band of Chippewa
- Chisholm
- Cloquet
- East Range Communities
- Ely Area
- Floodwood
- Fond du Lac Band of Lake Superior Chippewa
- Grand Portage Band of Lake Superior Chippewa
- Hibbing
- International Falls
- McGregor
- Moose Lake
- Proctor/Hermantown
- North Shore Area
- Two Harbors

Continued

Projects Evolved from AGE to age

AGE to age has created infrastructure in the region's rural communities and Tribal Nations that did not exist before. Thanks to strengthened community connections and volunteers who are engaged and eager to get involved, new projects can "hit the ground running". Projects that have emerged include:

- **AGE to age Reading Pals:** Reading Pals has been implemented in the AGE to age sites of Ely, Proctor, McGregor, Moose Lake, Two Harbors, Hermantown, Barnum, and Aitkin to help early childhood and elementary students strengthen their literacy and reading skills with the support of older adult volunteers. Reading Pals volunteers donate more than 2,300 hours annually to read with children. Teachers report the program has helped their students become more confident readers, increased their comprehension, and made them feel special and valued. The program has also enhanced older adult volunteers' sense of purpose and physical and mental wellbeing.
- **AGE to age College Intern and Fellows Programs:** First piloted in 2012, the AGE to age College Intern Program hired college students to engage in paid, community-based work experience in AGE to age sites. In 2020, the program transitioned to pair an adult 50 plus with a college student to work together in a paid, part-time intergenerational community-building experience. Together, the teams of AGE to age Fellows undertake projects such as community gardens, youth programming, culture and tradition activities, social engagement opportunities for people of all ages, and community events. The Fellows are infusing new ideas, energy, and enthusiasm to build connections across age groups.



AGE to age Honors and Distinctions

The Northland Foundation's AGE to age Initiative has earned national accolades for successfully bringing older adults together with youth in rural small towns and Tribal Nations. It is the community members who deserve recognition for embracing the opportunity to connect with other generations and enhance their communities. Find more about AGE to age on the [Publications & Annual Reports](#) page.

- Designated in 2012 and re-designated in 2015, 2017, and 2020 as a [Program of Distinction](#) by [Generations United](#), a national membership organization focused on improving the lives of children, youth, and older adults through intergenerational strategies, programs, and public policies.
- Honored with the 2019 by the Minnesota Department of Human Services and Minnesota Board on Aging with the Odyssey Award for expectational programming.
- Awarded the 2011 Intergenerational Innovations Award from Generations United.



AGE to age Partners

The AGE to age Initiative receives funding support through the Northland Foundation's Integrated Rural Community Aging Program.