



In honor of

Scott E. Townsley

Managing Principal, Third Age, Inc.
and Trilogy Consulting, LLC

Scott Townsley, J.D. is known for his exceptional foresight. He spent 35+ years developing Third Age, Inc., a boutique consulting firm focused on the nonprofit sector. Scott provided strategic insight to nearly 1,000 organizations, counseling, challenging and inspiring leadership and boards to envision dynamic futures. Scott was instrumental in several movements: creating a structure for On Lok Senior Health Services that enabled its growth and the PACE replication; guiding the nascent CcAh sector; and co-founding the Center for Innovation, sponsor of The Green House Project and Pioneer Network. He also served as Professor of Practice at UMBC's Erickson Graduate School.

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Scott Townsley frequently credits his career to his brother Gregg – who passed on an opportunity to become a dishwasher at Broomall Presbyterian Home (BPH) saying “ask Scott, he’d probably do it.” And so, at the age of 15 Scott entered the aging service field where he’d remain for the next 50 years.

Scott left high school a year early to attend York College, then transferred to Drexel University, also graduating early with a degree in Business Administration. At BPH, he graduated from dishwasher to cook as he worked his way through where he received his Juris Doctorate in 1977.

Scott practiced law for nearly five years with a focus on personal injury, defamation, domestic relations, and criminal law. As fate or providence would have it, he returned to BPH (now Presby’s Inspired Life) to serve as general counsel, formalize a Human Resource function, and head up special projects. He was 26.

While in the Presby’s Inspired Life corporate office, Scott found his passion—the special projects—including developing some of the first adult day care programs in Pennsylvania, selling an older community, and acquiring land for a major expansion at one of the organization’s campuses.

In 1985 Scott joined Third Age, Inc. in an entry-level position and quickly worked his way up to be one of the firm’s youngest Principals. Shortly thereafter, Scott, Jim Standish (the Managing Principal of Third Age), and partner, MaryAnn Christ, agreed that they would buy Third Age from its parent company, Medicon. A serious health issue for the firm’s rainmaker (Jim Standish), the departure of Christ and others, left the fledgling Third Age with a staff of three. An entrepreneurial spirit, late nights, and lots of traveling resulted in Third Age becoming one of the largest and most diverse independent consulting firms in the country focused solely on continuing care and the not-for-profit aging services sector.



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By 1995, Scott had become the Managing Principal of Third Age. Townsley and Standish brought on additional Principals (including Patti Adami who was a key member of the team for nearly 25 years), who added financial, strategic, and marketing expertise to the consulting team and enabled the growth of the firm. For nearly a quarter century, Third Age, Inc. was a recognized leader in the aging services field and Scott was a familiar face and sought-after speaker at scores of LeadingAge and state affiliate conferences around the country. In 2010 the firm was acquired by LarsonAllen (now CliftonLarsonAllen or CLA).

Scott and Third Age assisted nearly 1,000 organizations to grow and transform through strategic planning, development assistance, executive searches, market analyses, marketing/sales, affiliations and mergers, and interim/crisis management. They worked with Anne Brooks and the AAHSA Development Corporation back in the 1990s to create a development guide for nonprofit senior living providers and to promote the organization's development expertise for its members. Together with Marie Louise Ansak, they created an innovative corporate structure that enabled the further expansion of both On Lok Senior Health Services and the PACE replication. More than 30 affiliations and mergers among nonprofit senior living organizations were initiated, facilitated, and completed by Third Age. Working with Sarah Spellman, they supported the nascent continuing care at home sector and developed the first methodology to estimate demand, penetration, and saturation rates for new programs.

In 2010 Scott joined the faculty of the University of Maryland, Baltimore County's Erickson School graduate program, moving quickly from Lecturer, to Adjunct Associate Professor and ultimately Professor of the Practice in 2016. Scott taught courses in Entrepreneurship, Innovation and Design; Social Entrepreneurship; Strategy, Marketing & Service Delivery; and the Capstone Course. If there's a legacy that he's most proud of, it's the more than 100 diverse graduates of his classes who now are entrepreneurs, leaders, and policy analysts in the field of aging services.



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In an email to a former student in 2015 with the subject line: 'A Crazy Idea', he proposed a solution to The Green House Project's then uncertain future. With its sponsor considering shutting the Project down, Scott proposed creating a 501(c)(3) organization to assume sponsorship in order to continue GHP's important work. With the Dean and Graduate Program Director of the School, funding was obtained from the previous sponsor and an existing grant from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation was modified and expanded to enable the transition. He served as the new organization's President, without compensation, for three years working closely with the Senior Director (now CEO) to stabilize operations and to expand vision. Today, the Center for Innovation includes both The Green House Project and the Pioneer Network and has an expanded board, a successful leadership team, and is the preeminent resource for person-centered care and service.

After mandatory retirement from CliftonLarsonAllen in 2016, Scott created Trilogy Consulting, LLC to ensure that services including personalized strategic planning and affiliation were available to nonprofit boards and leaders across the country. In mid-2022 Scott retired and transferred the consulting practice to Diane Burfeindt, who continues the boutique firm as Trilogy Connect.

None of the above could have been achieved without the love and support of his wife of 42 years, Carol. Today, Scott sails, runs half marathons, reads, golfs, continues his board service, occasionally consults with Trilogy Connect, and keeps up his friendships with the many leaders and co-workers he has met along the way.

