



ORCACON 2025

NETWORKING · EDUCATION · LEADERSHIP

Register for ORCA CON 2025

**Early bird rates & registration incentive
available until July 31, 2025!**

Event Program

White Oaks Resort | September 9-11, 2025

Presenting Sponsor:



Gold Sponsors:

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Conference essentials



About this event

ORCA CON is the signature event of the Ontario Retirement Communities Association (ORCA).

After over a decade, it has become one of the most respected retirement communities conferences in Canada. This conference is a popular meeting place for retirement community leaders and provides a great opportunity to connect with peers, commercial partners, speakers, and other community members. As an attendee you will have the chance to learn, network, and share valuable insights that will improve your professional success and help further enhance the future of the sector.

This year's conference is taking place at White Oaks Resort in Niagara-on-the-Lake. To learn more about the resort and its amenities, please [click here](#).



Conference activities

GOLF TOURNAMENT

Royal Niagara Golf Club is a 'must play' experience of three 9-hole golf courses in the Niagara Region. Nestled between the historic Welland Canal, the beautiful Bruce Trail, and the Niagara Escarpment. Learn more about this stunning golf course [here](#).

ALTERNATIVE ACTIVITIES

White Oaks OLYMPICS

Teams will compete in non-traditional Olympic challenges and games designed to inspire leadership, trust, communication, and analytical thinking - fun and inclusive for all abilities. To learn more about this activity, [click here](#).

Niagara College JOURNEY OF THE SENSES

Enjoy a vineyard chat, winery and distillery tours with tastings, and a hands-on sensory exercise to deepen your appreciation for wine and spirits from the unique terroir of the Niagara region. **Spots are sold out.**

Ravine WINERY TOUR - SOLD OUT

Explore the family farm and organic vineyard, where you will learn about Ravine's rich history and winemaking process. At the end of the tour you will enjoy a tasting of four of their most popular small batch wines. **Spots are sold out.**

Generously sponsored by:
Torkin Manes

ORCA CON 2025

Registration Incentive

GRAND PRIZE

A two night downtown hotel stay, dinner & two premium tickets to a **Raptor's Home Game!**

Register before July 31 to win!

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Education Days

sessions & speakers



Education Day 1: September 10, 2025

DESIGNING WONDER: REINVENTING THE RETIREMENT EXPERIENCE WITH EMOTION, INNOVATION, AND PURPOSE



Anne BELLIVEAU | *Chief Experience Officer, Cirque du Soleil*

In this inspiring and practical keynote, Cirque du Soleil's Chief Customer Experience Officer, Anne Belliveau, shares how one of the world's most iconic brands lost everything, rebuilt trust, and redefined what it means to create unforgettable human experiences. From near-bankruptcy to global revival, she will explore how Cirque's comeback offers lessons for the retirement sector, particularly around regaining public confidence, designing emotionally intelligent environments, and embracing AI as a way to enhance, not replace, human connection.

OPENING KEYNOTE

Drawing on Cirque's reinvention journey, hospitality best practices, and her work with the Dr. Clown Foundation, particularly La Belle Visite, a therapeutic arts program for seniors, she'll challenge leaders to rethink retirement living not as care, but as experience. Attendees will walk away with a new lens for designing emotionally resonant experiences, inspiration to lead change through purpose-driven innovation, and practical insights on applying AI to elevate—not automate—care.

COO PANEL: FROM INSIGHT TO ACTION - LEADING CHANGE IN SENIOR LIVING OPERATIONS



Cathy HECIMOVICH | *Chief Executive Officer, Ontario Retirement Communities Association*

Panelists: **Adam FINEMAN**, President & COO, Delmanor Communities; **Steve STRONG**, President & COO, Signature Retirement Living; **Karen SULLIVAN**, President & COO, Chartwell Retirement Residences; **LeighAnne VOLL**, COO, Seasons Retirement Communities

MODERATOR

Hear from a panel of Chief Operating Officers as they discuss how they have implemented major changes and transformative ideas within their organizations and what goes into making that a reality. With a focus on innovation, this conversation will explore how operational leaders approach strategy execution, accountability, measurement, and the tough decisions often required to drive systemic change.

ADVANCING SENIORS CARE IN ONTARIO



PRESENTER

Matthew ANDERSON | *President & CEO, Ontario Health*

This session will discuss the current state of seniors care in Ontario, including gaps and challenges. It will outline the provincial strategy moving forward, including a discussion about the important role of retirement homes in serving seniors within the continuum of care.

THE ORCA LEADERSHIP SERIES: A CONVERSATION WITH FRÉDÉRIC SOUCY



INTERVIEWEE

Frédéric SOUCY | *President, Retirement Home Division, Cogir Real Estate*

Moderator: **Jane TABER**, *Senior Vice President, Public Affairs, NATIONAL Public Relations*

The retirement community sector is full of exceptional leaders who are changing the way the world thinks about senior living. ORCA has the privilege of sharing these leaders' stories through the ORCA Leadership Series, a collection of interviews highlighting what retirement communities and their leaders are all about. ORCA continues its Leadership Series with its 9th interview, as former Canadian renowned journalist **Jane Taber** sits down with **Frédéric Soucy**, President of the Retirement Home Division at Cogir, to unpack his thoughts on leadership, his career journey, and his vision for the future of senior living.

THE ORCA DRAGON'S DEN COMPETITION



MODERATOR

John BEANEY | *CEO, Aspen Management Solutions and CIO, StaffStat Inc.*

Finalists: *To be confirmed.*

Hear from companies as they highlight their innovative product or service that aims to improve the senior living sector and vote for a winner in this fast-paced session!

SENIOR LIVING TABLE TALK: PERSPECTIVES IN PRACTICE



MODERATOR

Emily JOHNSON | *Founder & Creative Director, StrongerU Senior Fitness*

Join roundtable discussions focused on tackling real-world business challenges facing the senior living sector today and exploring collaborative solutions. Discussion topics will include recruitment, technology, rising acuity and more. This interactive session offers a unique opportunity to strengthen partnerships, share learnings, and spark new ideas through candid, solution-focused dialogue with peers and sector partners.



Education Day 2: September 11, 2025

TECH TALK & PANEL: THE MODULAR FUTURE - HOW TO MAKE TECH WORK FOR SENIOR LIVING



PRESENTER & PANELIST

Phil VLACH | *Founder, AgeTech Labs and Head of Technology, Schlegel Villages*

Moderator: **Brad BUSHBY**, *Vice President Sales, Marketing and Technology, Schlegel Villages*

Panelists: **Stuart HAMILTON**, *CEO, Amba*; **Amanda LYNDE**, *Regional Director of Community Experience, VIVA Retirement Communities*; **Stephanie SANBORN**, *Senior Director, Innovation & Education, Seasons Retirement Communities*

Senior living operators are at a crossroads. Technology is evolving rapidly, but too often it is layered in ways that create more friction than value. Operators are stuck with siloed systems, inconsistent user experiences, and rising operational costs, while residents and staff feel the pain of fragmented workflows. This session will challenge the status quo by introducing the concept of modular design in senior living technology, a strategy that empowers operators to create a connected, flexible, and scalable tech ecosystem. The presentation will begin by addressing key principles of modular architecture, followed by a panel of operators and vendors who will speak to real-world implementations, technical and operational challenges, and how to overcome them.

THE POWER OF STAY INTERVIEWS: BOOST ENGAGEMENT, RETAIN TALENT



KIM - PRESENTER

Kim GILLIARD | *Senior Vice President, Human Resources & Labour Relations, Chartwell Retirement Residences*

Cheryl JANSSEN | *Senior Director of People Development & Engagement, Schlegel Villages*

We heard you at last year's ORCA CON HHR Innovation Workshop! One key takeaway was the importance of employee check-ins, commonly referred to as "stay interviews." These conversations allow organizations to proactively understand what drives employees, what keeps them engaged, and how committed they are to staying. In this session, discover ORCA's latest resource: the Check-In Meeting Guide.



CHERYL - PRESENTER

This practical tool is designed to help leaders initiate and navigate meaningful one-on-one conversations that highlight individual strengths, pinpoint areas for development, and gauge each employee's commitment to the organization. Presenters will demonstrate how the guide supports leaders in building trust and enhancing employee engagement, all while aligning individual goals with organizational success.

RHRA COMPLIANCE: LEGAL INSIGHTS FOR LEADERSHIP PREPAREDNESS AND RISK REDUCTION



LISA - PRESENTER

Lisa CORRENTE | *Partner & Co-Chair of the Residential Care Group, Torkin Manes LLP*

David GOLDEN | *Partner & Co-Chair of the Residential Care Group, Torkin Manes LLP*

This session will explore recent trends in RHRA findings and enforcement actions.

You will learn how to effectively prepare your team for inspections, the role of the leadership team in RHRA inspections and debrief meetings, and leveraging the inspection report process to reduce non-compliance risks. Considerations for appealing to the License Appeal Tribunal (LAT) will also be discussed, helping you assess when an appeal may be warranted.



DAVID - PRESENTER

With a focus on prevention and accountability, this session offers tools to lead confidently through RHRA oversight.

THE ELEPHANTS IN THE LEADERSHIP ROOM



CLOSING KEYNOTE

Dan PONTEFRAC | *Leadership Strategist, Culture Change Expert, Best-Selling Author & Speaker*

Leadership in retirement living is demanding—and the toughest challenges are often the ones no one talks about. In this energizing close to the conference, five-time award-winning author and Thinkers50 Radar member Dan Pontefract brings a fresh perspective to the unspoken pressures leaders face.

With humour, insight, and practical strategies, Dan tackles three core leadership truths:

- **The Reality of Your Busyness:** Constant urgency can cloud decision-making. Dan shows how thoughtful reflection can be your greatest strategic edge.
- **Collaborate or Else:** Silos and miscommunication undermine trust. Learn how to lead across teams and functions to drive real results.
- **Being Relatable:** Empathy, humility, and connection aren't soft skills—they're leadership essentials that foster loyalty and resilience. Dan offers tools to lead with authenticity.

Dan will leave you inspired, equipped, and ready to lead with purpose—naming the elephants in the room and walking them out with confidence.

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Event program



TUESDAY SEPTEMBER 9, 2025

8:00 am	Registration Opens
10:00 am	Golf Tournament & Lunch
12:00 pm	Lunch & Alternate Activities
6:00 pm	Cocktail Reception & Dinner with an ORCA Board Member <i>*ticketed event</i>
8:30 pm	Conference Welcome Reception

WEDNESDAY SEPTEMBER 10, 2025

7:30 am	Breakfast & Registration Opens
8:30 am	ORCA Update & Minister Remarks
9:00 am	Opening Keynote: Designing Wonder - Reinventing the Retirement Experience with Emotion, Innovation, and Purpose
10:00 am	Networking Break
10:30 am	COO Panel: From Insight to Action - Leading Change in Senior Living Operations
11:30 am	Advancing Seniors Care in Ontario
12:15 pm	ORCA Marketplace & Lunch
1:15 pm	The ORCA Leadership Series: A Conversation with Frédéric Soucy
2:00 pm	The ORCA Dragon's Den Competition
2:45 pm	Networking Break
3:15 pm	Senior Living Table Talk: Perspectives in Practice
5:30 pm	ORCA Marketplace Cocktail Reception
7:00 pm	Banquet & Awards Night
9:15 pm	Hospitality Lounge

THURSDAY SEPTEMBER 11, 2025

8:00 am	Breakfast
9:00 am	Tech Talk & Panel: The Modular Future - How to Make Tech Work for Senior Living
10:00 am	The Power of Stay Interviews: Boost Engagement, Retain Talent
10:30 am	Networking Break
10:45 am	RHRA Compliance: Legal Insights for Leadership Preparedness and Risk Reduction
11:30 am	Closing Keynote: The Elephants in the Leadership Room
12:15 pm	Closing Remarks & Prize Draw
12:30 pm	To Go Lunch Boxes

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Event packages



Early Bird Rates

Early bird deadline is July 31, 2025.

Tuesday Dinner with a Board Member

\$175

This event is by ticket only.

To attend this dinner, please purchase this option in addition to any other package.

All-Inclusive Royal Niagara Golf Tournament

\$735

Includes access to all events from Tuesday to Thursday, except for Dinner with a Board Member.

All-Inclusive Alternative Activities

\$735

Includes access to all events from Tuesday to Thursday, except for Dinner with a Board Member.

Education Day 1 & 2

\$495

This package offers you access to the Wednesday & Thursday Education Days, including all meals and evening events.



Regular Rates

Regular rates start August 1, 2025.

Tuesday Dinner with a Board Member

\$175

This event is by ticket only.

To attend this dinner, please purchase this option in addition to any other package.

All-Inclusive Royal Niagara Golf Tournament

\$805

Includes access to all events from Tuesday to Thursday, except for Dinner with a Board Member.

All-Inclusive Alternative Activities

\$805

Includes access to all events from Tuesday to Thursday, except for Dinner with a Board Member.

Education Day 1 & 2

\$565

This package offers you access to the Wednesday & Thursday Education Days, including all meals and evening events.

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Event details & protocols



Event details

Registration

To register for this event, you must login to the ORCA [member website](#) and visit the [Upcoming Events Calendar](#). If you need help signing in, contact [Member Services](#).

Payments

Registration payments are only available by credit card. ORCA accepts VISA, MasterCard and AMEX credit cards. All payments must be received prior to the event.

Cancellation Policy

An administrative fee of \$25 will be charged for cancellations received in writing before **August 22, 2025**. Cancellations after this date are non-refundable. No shows are non-refundable. Substitutions are permitted at any time.

Booking Accommodations

The official conference hotel block is now **sold out**. There are several nearby accommodation options within minutes of the conference venue, including:
[Holiday Inn Express Niagara-on-the-Lake](#)

[Staybridge Suites Niagara-on-the-Lake](#)

[Hilton Garden Inn Niagara-on-the-Lake](#)

We kindly suggest arranging your accommodations as soon as possible. **Please note that all options are subject to availability and offered on a first-come, first-serve basis. Accommodation availability is not guaranteed.**



Event protocols

Health & Safety

Please stay home if you have any symptoms of illness. For more information, visit this [website](#).



Questions?

If you have questions about ORCA CON 2025, or need help registering for this event, please email the [ORCA Team](#). We are happy to assist you! If you have questions specific to White Oaks Resort, you can contact [them here](#).

