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Aging expert E. Ayn Welleford to speak at The Center

Talk by VCU gerontologist who works to #DisruptAgeism will mark The Center's fourth national accreditation

Charlottesville, VA – Nov. 29, 2018 —**E. Ayn Welleford, a visionary leader and trailblazer in the field of aging, will speak at The Center (formerly the Senior Center) in Charlottesville on Wednesday, December 5th, at 2:00 pm.** With “**Turning the Tables on Ageism: Development, Adaptation, Growth,**” Welleford will share insights into the essential roles that only older adults can fill in our culture and our communities and discuss how we can disrupt the dangerous impact of ageism by embracing daily practices to support the pursuit of positive longevity.

Ageism—the stereotyping, prejudice, and discrimination against people on the basis of their age—is everywhere. It is the most socially “normalized” of any prejudice and is not widely countered like racism or sexism. According to the World Health Organization, these attitudes lead to the marginalization of older people and have negative impacts on their health and well-being.

An Associate Professor and former Chair of VCU’s Department of Gerontology, Dr. Welleford works as Gerontologist for Community Voice to #DisruptAgeism while promoting optimal aging for individuals and communities.

The Center is bringing Welleford to Charlottesville to celebrate the achievement of a fourth national accreditation from the National Institute of Senior Centers (NISC), a constituent unit of the National Council on Aging. In 2002, The Center became the first nationally-accredited center in Virginia; it is currently one of just two accredited centers in the state. Less than 2% of the approximately 11,500 senior centers across America are accredited; a mere handful have attained four accreditations. Valid for five years, accreditation is a rigorous, months-long process to demonstrate excellence across nine comprehensive industry standards. It requires tremendous effort from a corps of volunteer stakeholders including Center members, City and County representatives, community partners, and philanthropic supporters.

The Colonnades, a Sunrise Senior Living Community, generously sponsored all of The Center’s accreditation applications and celebrations. **The event on December 5th will include refreshments and music by classical guitarist Greg Brown. It is free and open to the public.**

About The Center

The award-winning Center creates opportunities for healthy aging through social engagement, physical well-being, civic involvement, creativity, and lifelong learning. Long recognized nationally as a leading resource for senior health and independence, The Center’s culture engages members in pursuits from Tai Chi to travel, from poker to book club, from computers to painting—all promoting active aging and fostering community. Through its volunteer program, members donate tens of thousands of hours of volunteer service annually, improving quality of life for people of all ages. The current Center serves more than 8,000 area residents a year with more than 100 programs every week, but a growing senior population means more space is needed. To meet this need, construction has begun on The Center at Belvedere, a new facility opening in spring 2020. For more information, please visit www.thecenterville.org.

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