



National Center for Creative Aging

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STUDIES SHOW THAT OLDER ADULTS WITH CREATIVITY IN THEIR LIVES ARE HEALTHIER THAN THOSE WITHOUT

National conference on creative aging will bring together leaders in the arts, health, and senior care.

WASHINGTON, Apr. 24, 2014 – The National Center for Creative Aging is hosting its first annual conference and exchange on how the arts help older adults lead healthier lives June 10-14, 2014 in Washington, DC at a variety of arts and culture organizations including Arena Stage, The Phillips Collection, and the Corcoran Gallery of Art.

Creative aging is a field that promotes artistic expression in the lives of older adults in order to improve health and wellbeing. Studies show that for those over 65, people involved in weekly art programs have fewer doctor visits and take less medication than those without creative outlets. Additionally, art has been shown to foster connections between those with Alzheimer’s and dementia and their caregivers, whether family or professional.

“There is a growing body of evidence indicating that creative programs for older adults improve the health and wellness of older adults, as well as encourage social connectivity,” said Dr. Marc Agronin, adult and geriatric psychiatrist who has served since 1999 as the Medical Director for Mental Health and Clinical Research at the Miami Jewish Health Systems (MJHS), Florida’s largest long-term care institution.

This June, leaders in creative aging, from the DC area and around the world, are coming together for the National Center for Creative Aging’s first annual leadership exchange and conference. The conference will facilitate the exchange of research and best practices, retool practitioners, and showcase successful programs in areas including the arts, social and community services, education, caregiving, health, research, policy, and veteran services. Keynote speakers include Liz Lerman, choreographer, MacArthur Genius; Marc Agronin MD, adult and geriatric psychiatrist, Miami Jewish Health Systems; Tim Carpenter, EngAGE founder and director, Ashoka Fellow; and Susan Perlstein, NCCA and Elders Share the Arts founder, American Society on Aging award for Excellence in Training.

“We’ve seen it in both established programs and in individual cases,” said Gay Hanna, PhD, MFA, Executive Director of National Center for Creative Aging., “Arts programs make a significant difference. They help older adults live healthier lives. We look forward to bringing together leaders in the field to learn, share, and show how we can help older adults live better lives through the arts.”

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For more information visit the conference website at www.conference.creativeaging.org

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NCCA's mission is dedicated to fostering an understanding of the vital relationship between creative expression and healthy aging and to developing programs that build in this understanding. The process of aging is a profound experience marked by increasing physical and emotional change and a heightened search for meaning and purpose. Creative expression is important for older people of all cultures and ethnic backgrounds, regardless of economic status, age, or level of physical, emotional, or cognitive functioning. The arts can serve as a powerful way to engage elders in a creative and healing process of self-expression, enabling them to create works that honor their life experience.