

# AGE FRIENDLY FAYETTEVILLE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## Formal Launch - Age-Friendly Fayetteville

**Age Friendly Fayetteville, a World Health Organization & AARP Community Initiative will be Launched at Fayetteville Farmers Market May 17, 2014**

Age-Friendly Fayetteville

Website: <http://agefriendlyfayetteville.uark.edu/>

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/AgeFriendlyFayetteville>

Email: [aff@uark.edu](mailto:aff@uark.edu)

Contact:

Dr. Jean Henry, University of Arkansas

[ljhenry@uark.edu](mailto:ljhenry@uark.edu)

Phone: 479-575-2899

Cell: 479-935-6166

Dr. Alishia Ferguson, University of Arkansas

[ajfergus@uark.edu](mailto:ajfergus@uark.edu)

Cell: 479-856-3235

**Fayetteville, Arkansas, May 17, 2014**— By the year 2020, it is expected that in the United States, 1 in 4 people will be over 65 years old. According to AARP, the majority of these older adults prefer to remain in their homes and maintain an active, independent and interactive lifestyle.

To encourage and enable the establishment of environments that encourage active aging, the World Health Organization (WHO) launched the WHO Global Network of Age-Friendly Cities. In the United States, the WHO has partnered with AARP to promote age friendly cities and communities across the country. In January of 2014, the city of Fayetteville was accepted into the WHO/AARP Network.

The WHO/AARP certificate will be formally presented to Mayor Lioneld Jordan at the Fayetteville Farmer's Market on Saturday, May 17, 8:00 a.m., by the initiative Co-Directors, Alishia Ferguson and Jean Henry. This recognition begins a 5-year process of community-based needs assessment, engagement, planning, goal-setting, and policy recommendations.

The Age-Friendly Fayetteville initiative is a true Community–University collaboration. Support has been secured from the following offices and organizations: Mayor L. Jordan, the FFEAC Council Inclusion Group, The Office of Aging Studies at the University of Arkansas, the Area Agency on Aging, the Fayetteville Chamber of Commerce, the University of Arkansas Fulbright College of Arts and Sciences and College of Education and Health Professions.

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## **Background:**

According to the World Health Organization, an age-friendly city encourages active ageing by optimizing opportunities for health, participation and security in order to enhance quality of life as people age. In practical terms, an age-friendly city adapts its structures and services to be accessible to and inclusive of older people with varying needs and capacities.

There are 8 components or topics that should be addressed when determining whether a city should receive age friendly status, or not.

- Transportation
- Housing
- Social Participation
- Respect and social inclusion
- Civic participation and employment
- Communication and information
- Community support and health services
- Outdoor spaces and buildings

The Age-Friendly Fayetteville initiative will rely heavily upon the active participation of citizens of all ages and from all sectors. A successful effort will require creating social, political, and economic structures that are supportive of aging in community. Community participation and support will be a key factor in truly establishing Fayetteville as an Age-Friendly City

## **About the Age-Friendly Fayetteville Initiative and Project Team**

Following a pilot study, conducted by Community Health Promotion graduate students at the University of Arkansas, an Age-Friendly Fayetteville (AFF) Project Team was formed to begin the process of gaining formal acceptance into the Age-Friendly Cities network. The AFF Project Team is led by University of Arkansas faculty members Dr. Alishia Ferguson, Social Work, and Dr. Jean Henry, Community Health Promotion. Currently Drs. Ferguson and Henry are recruiting interested community members to serve as an advisory committee for the initiative.

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