
AGING TODAY

Vol. XXVIII, No. 2

PAGE 15

March–April 2007

ISSN: 1043-1284

www.agingtoday.org

CREATIVE AGING CENTER MOVES

A new partnership focusing on creativity and aging was announced recently at the 2007 Joint Conference of the American Society on Aging and National Council on Aging in Chicago. The National Center for Creative Aging (NCCA) will move from New York City to George Washington University's Center on Aging, Health and Humanities (CAHH) in Washington, D.C., in July.

NCCA executive director Susan Perlstein emphasized that the partnership will build the capacity for best practices in arts and aging by developing and highlighting research findings pointing to the physical, social and psychological benefits of cultural programming for older people.

CAHH director Gene D. Cohen, a former deputy director of the National Institute on Aging, stressed, "Despite a growing recognition that creativity matters, older adults lack ready access to the arts, and much of the programming that is available is of limited quality and duration. Sharing one roof in Washington will double each organization's efforts to effect policies that will change this."

RESEARCH

Cohen, author of *The Creative Age* (New York City: Avon, 2000), conducted the first multisite national longitudinal study of the efficacy of cultural programming on the well-being of older people. The research found "demonstrable improvement in nearly every variable tested—from a heightening of morale and the lessening of depression to an increase in social and recreational activities," Cohen said. Furthermore, the study showed a decrease in doctor visits and medication usage.

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