

AARP Holds Conference on Diversity and Aging in the 21st Century

June 19, 2007

AARP, the leading non-profit organization for Americans 50+, today announced it is hosting the Diversity and Aging in the 21st Century conference on June 19-21 at the Hotel Bonaventure in Los Angeles, California. The conference is designed to begin a dialogue with experts and national leaders to exchange ideas and discuss best practices in the fields of diversity and aging across all segments of the population -- including race and ethnicity, gender, physical ability and sexual orientation.

"AARP is in a unique position to bring together leaders and stake holders from across America to examine the intersection of diversity and aging on public policy and programs," said AARP Chief Operating Officer Tom Nelson. "Our goal with this conference is to spark an ongoing, solutions-oriented debate and to work together to craft sound and reasonable policy recommendations."

Influential experts from the field of aging and diversity scheduled to attend the conference include: Julian Bond of the NAACP, Amber Hollibaugh of the National Gay & Lesbian Task Force, Winona LaDuke, Native American Activist and AARP CEO Bill Novelli. The conference will focus on issues such as health care, financial security, and housing, and explore ways to get people involved in influencing public policy to achieve positive social change.

"As the recent U.S. Census data confirms, we live in a nation of increasingly diverse cultures," said AARP Chief Diversity Officer Percil Stanford. "We must pay close attention to the needs of diverse aging populations so that there is no divide or disparity in their quality of aging experience in America."

The opening plenary "Investing in the Future of Aging," will include leaders from seven national aging organizations exploring topics such as housing, workforce issues, the health care system and Medicare and Medicaid reform. The final plenary will feature a conversation with AARP CEO Bill Novelli and NAACP Chairman Julian Bond.

America is growing older and for the first time in its history, people from diverse backgrounds and lifestyles are in significant numbers. Today's ethnically diverse older populations comprise almost 19 percent of the 50+ population, with almost 30 percent reporting some form of a disability, and at least 20 percent of coupled gays and lesbians are 55 and older.

A complete listing of the conference events can be found at:
<http://www.aarp.org/diversityandaging>.

AARP is a nonprofit, nonpartisan membership organization that helps people 50+ have independence, choice and control in ways that are beneficial and affordable to them and society as a whole. We produce AARP The Magazine, published bimonthly; AARP Bulletin, our monthly newspaper; AARP Segunda Juventud, our bimonthly magazine in Spanish and English; NRTA Live & Learn, our quarterly newsletter for 50+ educators; and our website, AARP.org. AARP Foundation is an affiliated charity that provides security, protection, and empowerment to older persons in need with support from thousands of volunteers, donors, and sponsors. We have staffed offices in all 50 states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, and the U.S. Virgin Islands.