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**UAMS and Hendrix College to Hold Social Support Symposium
for Older Arkansans April 22**

LITTLE ROCK — The University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences' (UAMS) Donald W. Reynolds Institute on Aging, in conjunction with Hendrix College, will host the “Social Support and Connections for Older Arkansans Symposium” on Thursday, April 22, from 11 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. on Zoom.

The event, organized by UAMS' Arkansas Geriatric Education Collaborative (AGEC), is free and open to the public, and registration is not required. Access the link [here](#) to attend.

The COVID-19 pandemic has presented social isolation challenges in older adults nationwide, and AGEC and Hendrix have collaborated to explore how the pandemic has affected Arkansans more than 65 years old. The symposium will provide a variety of informational resources to help them navigate social opportunities in the virtual world, and facilitators will also address personal health.

“In the midst of isolation, older adults had to make numerous adjustments to stay connected, particularly as one of the population groups most susceptible to COVID-19,” said Laura Spradley, outreach coordinator for AGEC. “The pandemic may have also heightened any individual obstacles they were working through, and we want to provide tools that will help them.”

The program will feature the following speakers and topics:

- Jennifer Baker, MPH – “Changing the Aging Paradigm: Creating Opportunities for Meaningful Engagement Across the Lifespan;”
- Sarah Clay Griffin, Psy.D. – “Healthy Aging: The Importance of a Sense of Belonging and Good Sleep;”
- Anne Goldberg, Ph.D., Jennifer Peszka, Ph.D., and Hendrix students – 2021 Survey Results on Social Support and Connections Among Older Arkansans.

Baker is an aging services consultant with a background in leading community-based programs for seniors and has facilitated support groups and educational classes with

Alzheimer's and dementia patients. Additionally, she has drafted aging policy and launched several initiatives designed to increase quality of life among older adults.

Griffin is an advanced fellow in mental illness research and treatment at the Durham Veterans Affairs Healthcare System in Durham, North Carolina. She has an array of experience in psychological services and has written multiple publications about aging, loneliness, trauma exposure, sleep and insomnia, primary care psychology and phantom limb pain.

Hendrix professors Anne Goldberg, Ph.D., and Jennifer Peszka, Ph.D., along with a group of their students, will present results from a survey of older Arkansans conducted by the Hendrix College/Talk Business & Politics Polling Project. The survey focuses on seniors across the state regarding in-person and virtual social interaction during the pandemic and will also share actionable programming methods to help reduce loneliness and isolation among older Arkansans.

This program and the AGEC are supported by a Health Resources and Services Administration grant of \$3.7 million from the United States Department of Health and Human Services for a Geriatric Workforce Enhancement Program.

UAMS is the state's only health sciences university, with colleges of Medicine, Nursing, Pharmacy, Health Professions and Public Health; a graduate school; hospital; a main campus in Little Rock; a Northwest Arkansas regional campus in Fayetteville; a statewide network of regional campuses; and seven institutes: the Winthrop P. Rockefeller Cancer Institute, Jackson T. Stephens Spine & Neurosciences Institute, Harvey & Bernice Jones Eye Institute, Psychiatric Research Institute, Donald W. Reynolds Institute on Aging, Translational Research Institute and Institute for Digital Health & Innovation. UAMS includes UAMS Health, a statewide health system that encompasses all of UAMS' clinical enterprise including its hospital, regional clinics and clinics it operates or staffs in cooperation with other providers. UAMS is the only adult Level 1 trauma center in the state. *U.S. News & World Report* named UAMS Medical Center the state's Best Hospital; ranked its ear, nose and throat program among the top 50 nationwide; and named six areas as high performing — COPD, colon cancer surgery, heart failure, hip replacement, knee replacement and lung cancer surgery. UAMS has 2,876 students, 898 medical residents and four dental residents. It is the state's largest public employer with more than 10,000 employees, including 1,200 physicians who provide care to patients at UAMS, its regional campuses, Arkansas Children's Hospital, the VA Medical Center and Baptist Health. Visit www.uams.edu or www.uamshealth.com. Find us on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), [YouTube](#) or [Instagram](#).

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