

## Dr. Johnnetta B. Cole Announced as Keynote Speaker for South Florida Institute on Aging's 5th Annual Symposium

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*Scheduled for June 23, the "How We Age Matters" symposium tackles existing barriers to an age-friendly society with breakout panels lead by experts in technology, economic stability and diversity*

**FORT LAUDERDALE, FL** — American Anthropologist Johnnetta B. Cole, PhD., national chair and seventh president of the National Council of Negro Women, former first Black female president of Spelman College, former director of the National Museum of African Art and member of Delta Sigma Theta sorority, is the keynote speaker that headlines a group of national experts in aging, civic leaders and members of local communities nationwide as part of the 5th Annual South Florida Institute on Aging (SoFIA) symposium. The "How We Age Matters" virtual symposium is set for Wednesday, June 23 from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Attendees will engage in collaborative and solution-oriented discussions on critical issues facing those 50 and older such as technology, telehealth, economic stability and mental health.

“We are so thrilled to have Dr. Cole as our keynote speaker on these very important, pertinent topics that must be resolved in order to create an age-friendly society,” said SoFIA President and CEO Nikki Austin-Shipp. “SoFIA’s annual symposium is about bringing people together to discover new avenues of empowerment for those who are aging, and Dr. Cole’s insights, thoughts and perspective are a welcome addition to what all of our speakers will be discussing.”

This year’s speakers will include **Economist Rodney Sampson, CEO of Opportunity HUB-Inclusive Startup Ecosystem Builder; Senior Vice President of Global Thought Leadership at AARP Dr. Jean Accius; Executive Director of Northend RISE, Inc. Craig Glover; Director of the Broward County Office of Economic and Small Business Development (OESBD) Sandy-Michael McDonald; Mark Doyle, President and CEO of Holy Cross Health, a member of Trinity Health; Dr. Moshin Jaffer of the Mohsin & Fauzia Jaffer Foundation; Regional Manager of External Affairs for FP&L Juliet Roulhac; and Licensed Psychologist and Program Coordinator for Mental Health Counseling for Students at Albizu University Dr. Tania Diaz.**

The virtual symposium will allow for individual networking and feature breakout sessions led by expert speakers who will address relevant aging topics such as telehealth, bridging the digital divide, using technology as a means to healthier living, diversity challenges in the workplace, mental health for caregivers and economic stability. This forum is designed to encourage conversation and collaborative problem solving to better help adults thrive as they age, while providing information on community efforts and resources.

“According to the U.S. Census Bureau projections, adults 65 years and older are projected to outnumber children by 2034,” noted Austin-Shipp. “They are essential to the economic and social stability of our country, and we cannot leave behind those that are underserved. With the right community resources, like those offered at SoFIA, we can assure that all of us that are aging are well-equipped, supported and empowered to thrive.”

“How We Age” event sponsors include AARP, ASZ Caring Hearts Inc., Belmont Village Senior Living, BMK Media, Florida Power & Light, WLRN and Responsive Home Care.

Visit <https://www.thesofia.org> for more information on sponsorships and to purchase tickets.

Businesses, government entities and members of the community interested in creating a more age-friendly community are invited to attend. General admission tickets are \$50.

SoFIA’s mission is to improve economic and social insights and services to empower people as they age.

Visit [www.theSoFIA.org](http://www.theSoFIA.org) for more information.

### **About SoFIA**

A non-profit think and act tank, the South Florida Institute on Aging (SoFIA) creates and delivers socio-economic support programs for South Florida seniors that can also serve as a model for other communities with aging populations. For more than 55 years, SoFIA has provided innovative services tailored to meet seniors’ caregiving and respite, civic engagement and economic security needs. This past year, SoFIA’s 500 experienced senior volunteers provided over a quarter of a million hours to serve nearly 2,000 residents including: veterans who received the mentoring of fellow veterans; seniors, disabled adults and caregivers who were enabled to live independently through caregiving and companionship programs; children in underserved communities that saw a 90 percent improvement in literacy skills through the Foster Grandparent program; and over 500 seniors graduated from SoFIA’s technology courses.