

MEDIA RELEASE

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Douglas County Anti-Ageist Poetry Contest Announced *Residents of All Ages Invited to Create Poems*

CASTLE ROCK - Inspired to create a multigenerational appreciation of aging, the Seniors' Council of Douglas County, with their partners Changing the Narrative, Douglas County Libraries and Douglas County Public Schools, are opening their "Every Age Counts!" amateur poetry contest. The contest runs August 1 through September 15, 2021 and winners will be announced by November 6, 2021.

The contest is open to Douglas County, Colorado, residents of all ages. Contestants are asked to celebrate age in the poetry form of their choice. Poems will be judged within age categories (10 and under, 11-13, 14-17, 18-22, 23-55, 56+), with winners in each. An awards ceremony will be held the afternoon of November 6, 2021 at the Highlands Ranch Library, 9292 Ridgeline Blvd. in Highlands Ranch.

The panel of judges includes published poets, anti-ageism leaders, teachers and librarians. Details and rules can be found at www.ChangingtheNarrativeCo.org/every-age-counts-poetry. Submissions are accepted online and in print, in both English and Spanish.

Through this contest, Seniors' Council of Douglas County and Changing the Narrative want to challenge ageist stereotypes. Ageism—prejudice, stereotyping, and discrimination based on age—has negative impacts on our health, workforce participation and the economy. It divides generations and affects people of all ages. Research shows that both younger people and older people experience ageism in the workplace. Unfortunately, ageism is learned early in life and becomes internalized.

"The one thing that we all have in common is that today, for each one of us, is the oldest we've ever been. So it doesn't make sense to be ageist," said Janine Vanderburg, Director of Changing the Narrative. "The fact that we are living longer and mostly healthier lives gives us the chance to do and become more. Every age has its own unique benefits to celebrate. Ageist stereotypes and intergenerational conflict get in the way of finding solutions to community challenges."

"Ageism diminishes us all and our goal with this contest is to get people to think differently," explains Gretchen Lopez, Chair of the Seniors' Council of Douglas County. "Poetry is all around us, in greeting cards, nursery rhymes and in songs we sing. Expressing ourselves through poetry opens our minds and expands our connection to others."

"We're so excited to partner with the Douglas County Libraries and Public Schools so that we can engage people of all ages," adds Lopez. "We invite amateur writers in Douglas County to participate."

For more information, please go to www.ChangingtheNarrativeCo.org/every-age-counts-poetry.

[Changing the Narrative](http://www.ChangingtheNarrativeCo.org) is a campaign to change the way people think, talk and act about aging and ageism. Our end game? To end ageism.

The Seniors' Council of Douglas County promotes living and aging well in Douglas County, Colorado. Find our more at <https://www.douglas.co.us/aging-resources/seniors-council-2/> ###