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National Expert to Offer Research-based Strategies for Successful Aging in Overland Park

Former U.S. Air Force Chief Addresses New Attitudes on Growing Older

OVERLAND PARK, Kan. — New findings from research on aging is changing the way society is looking at aging across the country, according to national aging expert Roger Landry, M.D., M.P.H. Dr. Landry will be speaking at the Ritz Charles in Overland Park on April 3 to educate seniors on the most effective strategies for aging successfully, including how to surround yourself with other active adults to experience the substantial health benefits that come from social engagement.

“People in their 60s, 70s, 80s and above are getting more out of life than ever possible at any other time in our history,” said Dr. Landry, who oversaw health and performance for United States astronauts and Air Force pilots, including Chuck Yeager. Dr. Landry’s approach is based on research, his medical and personal experiences, and the rapidly evolving philosophy of how to make growing older a more rewarding experience.

Dr. Landry will present a free talk with area seniors on Tuesday, April 3, at the Ritz Charles, located at 9000 West 137th Street in Overland Park. He will address the topic of “How You Live, Where You Live, and The Effects They Have on Aging” at 2 p.m. Seating is limited; reservations are requested by calling (913) 906-0990.

“A few decades ago, successful aging meant surviving long enough to reach retirement age,” said Dr. Landry. “Everyone thought older people should take it easy because they had ‘made it’ to age 65 or 70. Today’s definition of successful aging is vastly different, because older adults are discovering they need to remain active, involved and socially connected in order to stay healthy, not just alive. This is one reason for the rise in popularity of dynamic senior living communities like Santa Marta.”

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Dr. Landry's presentation is based on the 10-year MacArthur Foundation Study on Aging, which has changed our views on what is possible as we age.

His message to older adults is to "use it or lose it," and he encourages people to stay both physically and mentally active as they age. Dr. Landry provides practical steps that any senior can incorporate into his or her lifestyle. His presentation is filled with anecdotes of how individuals have reinvented their lives during retirement, discovering new hobbies and activities, and traveling to new and exciting destinations.

Dr. Landry is President of the Masterpiece Alliance Foundation and the former Chief of Aerospace, Occupational and Preventive Medicine for the U.S. Air Force, where he helped maintain the health of fighter pilots and NASA astronauts during the first seven space shuttle missions. He has been medically involved in a number of world events including the Vietnam War, the Chernobyl disaster, the Beirut bombing, as well as the first balloon crossing the Pacific Ocean. Dr. Landry trained at Tufts University School of Medicine and obtained his master's degree from the Harvard University School of Public Health.

"There are so many myths out there about what it means to grow older, but the fact remains that at any age we can't just coast – we must continue moving, learning and staying engaged in life in order to age better and minimize risk for disease," said Dr. Landry.

"Dr. Landry's emphasis is on what we hear from many older adults, that they want to be vibrant and active in order to maintain their health," said Pam Grisafe, marketing director of Santa Marta. "We want to bring Dr. Landry here to talk to older adults about the changing attitudes and philosophies of aging, because they certainly are true with respect to retirement communities. People who move to a senior living community are choosing to stay on the go, instead of simply aging in place."

Santa Marta, under construction and scheduled for completion in fall 2007 at 13800 W. 116th Street across from St. Thomas Aquinas High School, is sponsored by the Archdiocese of Kansas City in Kansas. It will provide adults age 62 plus with a unique lifestyle experience and a variety of residential options, including spacious apartment homes and The Villas at Santa Marta, Tuscan-inspired private homes located in an exclusive setting on the grounds of Santa Marta. The Life Care community will also provide residents priority access to on-site assisted living apartments, skilled nursing suites and memory support suites. Santa Marta residents will enjoy a full range of services and amenities such as maintenance-free living, restaurant-style dining, heated underground parking, chapel, arts and crafts studio, and a fitness and aquatic center.

More information is available by calling Santa Marta at (913) 906-0990 or by visiting the Information Center, located at 11960 Quivira Road, Suite 100, in Overland Park, KS. Additional information about Santa Marta can be found at www.santamartaretirement.com.

The Archdiocese of Kansas City in Kansas is comprised of 21 counties in northeastern Kansas, covering more than 12,500 square miles. The Archdiocese serves more than 180,000 Catholics through its agencies, departments, parishes, schools and institutions.

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Editor's Note: *Dr. Landry is available for phone interviews prior to his April 3 presentation, and available for in-studio interviews on April 3 by request, both prior to and following his presentation at 2 p.m. The media also is invited to attend his presentation - by reservation please. Interviews can be scheduled by calling Brandi Towns at 913-754-2384.*