



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

November 18, 2025

OFFICE OF THE MAYOR

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City of Westlake Earns National Recognition as a Dementia Friendly Community

New "Dementia Friendly Westlake" Initiative Unites City Services, Library, Non-Profits, and First Responders to Support Residents and Care Partners

WESTLAKE, OH – The City of Westlake has been welcomed into the Dementia Friendly America (DFA) network, a national movement of communities dedicated to creating safer, more respectful, and supportive environments for residents living with dementia and their care partners.

This designation recognizes the launch of "Dementia Friendly Westlake," a multi-sector coalition that brings together individuals, businesses, non-profits, and local government. The initiative's goal, as stated in the internal brief, is to ensure dementia is met with understanding rather than fear, allowing every person to live a more fulfilling and joyful life.

Dementia Friendly Westlake is a collaborative effort led by The Carolyn L. Farrell Foundation for Brain Health, with support from the Westlake Community Services (Senior) Center and the Westlake Porter Library. The initiative also includes vital training for the city's law enforcement and fire departments.

“This recognition is a testament to Westlake's core values of providing 'Top-Notch Services' for all residents and fostering a community of 'Involved Citizens,’” said Mayor Dennis M. Clough. “In Westlake, we believe in supporting every member of our community at every stage of life. This initiative formalizes the deep, collaborative work our city departments and local partners do every day to ensure Westlake is a safe and inclusive place for everyone.”

The initiative leverages the unique strengths of each partner to create a 360-degree support network:

- The Carolyn L. Farrell Foundation will provide its expert-led arts enrichment and education programs, which are proven to empower individuals and families living with brain health issues.
- The Westlake Community Services Center will expand its wide range of brain health, educational, recreational, and social programs.
- The Westlake Porter Library will continue to provide an "inclusive environment" through specialized staff training and by offering classes and informational meetings for people with dementia and their families.
- Westlake's Police and Fire Departments will receive specialized training, enhancing their already-robust community wellness programs to interact more effectively and compassionately with residents living with dementia.

The next phase of the initiative will focus on providing training and resources to local businesses, especially banks and restaurants, to help their staff interact compassionately with customers and families impacted by dementia.

“The Community Services Center is committed to our mission to engage, enrich, and empower our residents,” said Lydia Gadd, Director of Westlake Community Services. “This initiative strengthens our ability to provide meaningful social and wellness programs that support brain health and reduce stigma, ensuring our center is a welcoming hub for all.”

The Westlake Porter Library and The Carolyn L. Farrell Foundation have a history of collaboration, exemplified by shared leadership, that demonstrates Westlake's integrated community spirit.

“A library's mission is to foster community growth and connection in an inclusive environment,” said Andrew Mangels, Director of Westlake Porter Library. “We are proud to be a dedicated resource where families can find information, attend supportive programs, and interact with staff who are trained to help. This initiative is a perfect extension of our core service to the community.”

For more information about the initiative and available resources, visit

<https://www.westlakelibrary.org/dementia-friendly-america>.

“Our Foundation was created in Westlake to end the fear and bring about compassion,” said Jerry Devis, Executive Director of The Carolyn L. Farrell Foundation for Brain Health. “By formally joining with the City, the library, and our first responders, we are building a powerful coalition of support. Together, we can ensure that every person living with dementia and their care partners are empowered to live a more fulfilling life.”

About the City of Westlake The City of Westlake, Ohio, a suburb of Cleveland with over 34,000 residents, is a vibrant community committed to providing top-notch services, scenic parks, and a thriving commercial sector. Led by Mayor Dennis M. Clough since 1986, Westlake is dedicated to leading with vision, integrity, and service to enhance the lives of its residents.

About Westlake Community Services The Westlake Community Services Department is driven by a mission to engage, enrich, and empower Westlake residents of all ages, with a special focus on programs for those 50 and older. The department provides a wide range of social, recreational, and educational programs at its state-of-the-art center, fostering a vibrant, caring, and active community.

About Westlake Porter Library Westlake Porter Public Library provides an inclusive environment that fosters learning, community growth, and connection in an ever-changing world. The library serves the residents of Westlake and surrounding communities, offering extensive collections, modern amenities, and a wide array of public programs for all ages.

About The Carolyn L. Farrell Foundation for Brain Health The Carolyn L. Farrell Foundation for Brain Health is a Westlake-based non-profit whose mission is to empower, engage, and educate individuals, care partners, and families living with dementia or other brain health issues. The Foundation provides arts enrichment, social interaction, and community outreach to help end the stigma of dementia and improve quality of life.

About Dementia Friendly America Dementia Friendly America (DFA) is a multi-sector national collaborative effort to foster and support the growth and development of dementia-friendly communities throughout the United States. DFA's mission is to increase dementia awareness, reduce stigma, and provide resources that foster the creation of communities where people living with dementia and their care partners can live, engage, and thrive.