



News Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Contact: Michelle Alleman
Deputy Director
Akron-Summit County Public Library
malleman@akronlibrary.org
330-643-9102

Dementia Friendly Summit County celebrates first year

SUMMIT COUNTY, OHIO—Dementia Friendly Summit County is celebrating one year of progress since its designation by [Dementia Friendly America](#)® last year. In 2024, a coalition of community partners continues to work toward making all 31 communities in Summit County inclusive and accessible for residents with dementia.

Dementia Friendly Summit County is focused on “Four Beats”: changing the narrative of a dementia diagnosis; ensuring those living with memory loss and their care partners are welcomed in community spaces; giving voice to lived experience in personal and community decision-making; and educating community partners with Dementia Friends resources.

“The Dementia Friendly Summit County Action Team had a busy first year, continuing to provide Dementia Friends trainings throughout the community, while also establishing goals and setting priorities in order to continue to develop and sustain a Dementia Friendly community,” said Akron-Summit County Public Library Deputy Director Michelle Alleman, “We are eager as we begin our second year with a strong coalition of partners working together to improve the lives of those living with dementia and their care partners.”

Since earning the Dementia Friendly designation in 2023, the coalition has presented 29 [Dementia Friends](#) trainings for 599 participants, which give participants a baseline understanding of dementia and turn that understanding into action. Additionally, the Akron-Summit County Public Library has continued its [Dementia Inclusive Library](#) initiative and [Memory Café Series](#), and County Executive Shapiro and County Council recognized the annual Alzheimer’s and Brain Awareness Month.

“We all know a family member, friend, or loved one who has been diagnosed with dementia,” said Executive Shapiro, “It is important for us to recognize that dementia is different for everyone, but that every resident with dementia and every person who cares for them deserve to live in a community that is welcoming, inclusive, and accessible. I am proud that my office can be a part of that work.”

As the coalition embarks on another year, Dementia Friendly looks to expand its footprint, share stories of folks living with dementia, their loved ones and care partners, and community partners, and continue to host educational sessions and Dementia Friends trainings. If you or your organization is interested in this work or in hosting a Dementia Friends training, please contact Deputy Director Michelle Alleman at malleman@akronlibrary.org.

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