

Department of Biological Sciences, University of Alabama

2018 William Darden Lecture

The 150 year old (Wo)man: How soon? How desirable?

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October 18, 2018 at 5pm

1093 Shelby Hall

Reception to follow in the Shelby Rotunda

The greatest verified age reached by anyone is the 122 years of French woman Jeanne Calment. Yet, I have a one billion dollar wager with demographer, S. Jay Olshansky, that the first person to reach the age of 150 years is already alive. In the 17 years since we first made our wager, scientific progress in being able to alter the basic biology of aging has me more confident than ever that I will win. The first part of my talk will describe this scientific progress and also describe the person who I believe will be the first 150 year old. Many people feel that scientific quest for longer human life is misguided and should be discouraged. The reasons underlying these feelings need to be taken seriously. I will discuss the arguments against the quest for longer life and explain why although I believe some of them to be reasonable but off the mark.