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Welcome from the AGHE Chair



Dear Colleagues,

Just a quick note – I hope everyone is having a relaxing summer.

Registration and housing are open for the [GSA Annual Scientific Meeting](#) in Phoenix from November 10-14. We had a very strong showing with abstract submissions and will be well represented at the meeting. We are planning a fun social event as well...more to follow. I hope you can join in Phoenix in person, but if you cannot, there will be a virtual platform as well.

A few reminders: there are [leadership opportunities](#) available in GSA, and the [summer awards cycle](#) is upon us.

In this issue, our spotlight is on the University of Utah where students represent about 25 different academic degree programs on campus including the behavioral, social, and health sciences, education, business, fine arts, and humanities.

We also include wellness tips from Sigma Pi Omega, a book review from Lisa Hollis-Sawyer, and congratulate University of Georgia's Institute of Gerontology on its 400th graduate!

Thanks to Lisa Borrero for another informative newsletter and for chairing the Communications Workgroup for AGHE.

Stay well,

Judy

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Register for the GSA Annual Scientific Meeting

Registration for the [GSA 2021 Annual Scientific Meeting](#) is Open! The meeting will take place in-person from November 10-14, in Phoenix, Arizona. Certainly, many of us are eager to see our colleagues face-to-face after so long!

Though, as we know that some attendees may not attend in-person, GSA will also offer an online platform, where all presentations will be uploaded. There will also be an on-demand viewing option for attendees to engage with the scholarship presented at the meeting by viewing papers, symposia, and posters when their schedules permit. Additionally, the Opening Plenary Session and the Kent and Kleemeier Award lectures will be available as streamed sessions.

Both in-person and virtual attendees will have access to the on-demand content through December 31, 2021 to allow for extra time to view the scientific sessions and posters of interest to them. As such, all attendees can go back to review, reference, and truly absorb the research presented at GSA 2021 at their convenience.

We hope to see you in-person in Phoenix, Arizona!

Nominate a Colleague for an AGHE Award!

It is time to start thinking about summer awards. Given that we all have outstanding colleagues in our orbits, please consider nominating one or more of them for the following honors, which include:

- Mildred M. Selzer Distinguished Service Honor
- Rising Star Early Career Faculty Award
- Part-Time/Adjunct Faculty Honor
- Administrative Leadership Honor
- Graduate Student Paper Award
- James McKenney Student Travel Award

The nominations are open until August 2nd. Please take the time to visit the [GSA Awards page](#) for additional details and make a nomination!

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Consider Applying for One of GSA's Leadership Opportunities

GSA is currently recruiting volunteers for several society-wide positions to begin in January 2022. We are seeking members who are eager to make a difference and committed to enhancing the field of gerontological research and education.

The current available positions are:

- Membership Committee- Presidential Appointee (early career member)
- Program, Publications and Products Committee- President Appointee 1 (early career member)
- Program, Publications and Products Committee- President Appointee 2
- Humanities, Arts, and Cultural Gerontology Advisory Panel member
- Minority Issues in Gerontology Advisory Panel member
- Public Policy Advisory Panel member

Please consider this opportunity to serve your society. It is a wonderful opportunity to contribute to the profession and, for early career members, to broaden your networks and gain valuable experience.

If you are interested, please apply through the online portal. Please go [to the GSA website](#) for information on available positions and instructions on how to apply.

The deadline to apply is July 15, 2021.

University of Georgia's Institute of Gerontology to Confer 400th Graduate Certificate in Gerontology

The 400th graduate student at the UGA Institute of Gerontology will receive their UGA Graduate Certificate in Gerontology this summer! The first Certificate was awarded back in 1976, and while the program has certainly changed quite a bit since then, our summer graduates join a large and exceptional body of professionals in aging.

Join us in congratulating the University of Georgia on this milestone!



Book Review: *Creative engagement: A handbook of activities for people with dementia*

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As the aging population continues to live longer and live longer with chronic conditions, it is an ethical imperative for caregivers to engage adults with dementia in a meaningful manner effectively. This book by Wonderlin and Lotze is an excellent resource text on how to meaningfully engage people with Dementia in activities to fully engage their mental, physical, and social "self." The book contains activities with clear guidance for both persons with Dementia and their caregivers. This book can be a helpful resource for many different audiences, from filial caregivers to formal caregivers and activity coordinators at long-term care facilities. Throughout the chapters, the "flow" of information is logical in its transitions and well-written in both tone and content. A significant aspect of the book is that it explains complex dementia and activity planning concepts in understandable terms for laypeople and practitioners. Wonderlin and Lotze have created an excellent resource for any person interested in better understanding and utilizing creative task approaches to engage adults with dementia in a multi-dimensional manner. The benefits of this creative engagement for persons with dementia can have life-long quality of life improvements for both the care recipient and persons working with the adult.

The authors provide thorough coverage of topics for the reader. The book contains 22 chapters introducing "tailored" activities in response to the unique needs of adults living with dementia. The book's activities range from "one-on-one" tasks like cooking, exercise, and mental brain puzzles/games to broader social group activities. There is no assumption that activities are a "one size fits all." Importantly, Wonderlin and Lotze emphasize that "dementia-friendly" activities should be adapted to the person's social environment and personal preferences. The authors consider, for example, if the person with dementia is living at home or in a formal care setting. Meaningfully, personal characteristics, background, and cultural differences could be considered in the design process. Wonderlin and Lotze acknowledge that it takes time and effort to construct these types of activities. With that in mind, the time and effort invested in designing tailored activities create outcomes of meaningful engagement for persons with dementia. Engagement in activities is critical to combat the social isolation and loneliness that is almost a pandemic among our aging population. Further, this same feeling of isolation and loneliness impacts their caregivers.

How do you know if an activity is creating the desired outcomes? Follow-up assessment is critical if activity improves the quality of life for the engaged person with dementia. The authors remind

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the reader that continuing observation and ongoing communication during the activities is vital to verify that the intended therapeutic benefits are being achieved. In the book's Part I, the authors offer necessary information about dementia and how it impacts both the person with dementia and those that care for them. In the book's Part II, Wonderlin and Lotze review the details and effort required to create and implement practical activities that inspire meaning and creative engagement for all involved in doing the activity. In Part III, the authors present clear guidance and provide tips regarding how tailored activities should be derived from a clear understanding of the person with dementia and, conversely, knowledge of what should be discouraged in this design and implementation process.

Overall, the authors have presented a clear template or "map" for creating practical activities to engage an adult with dementia on cognitive, social, and psychological levels. To facilitate the process, the authors incorporate helpful images to illustrate how caregivers can do the engagement activities and offer assistive tips for technology usage (e.g., apps) within activity design and implementation. The tracking of which activities "work" and which do not for persons with dementia is a necessary part of this ongoing engagement planning over the short- and long-term. The book's contents present all steps to create tailored activities for the beneficial engagement of both caregivers and people with dementia. Knowing how to "connect" to and engage with people with dementia during the care experience cannot be underestimated in its importance for a caring society.

Reference

Wonderlin, R., & Lotze, G. M. (2020). *Creative engagement: A handbook of activities for people with Dementia*. Johns Hopkins University Press.

Summer SPO Check-In

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Hello AGHE and SPO folks!

Congratulations on finishing the semester, and special congratulations to our graduates!

As I considered content for this month's article, I imagined it might be helpful to dedicate this month's offerings to various aspects of wellness, well-being, and self-care.



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I've collected a dozen tips from various sources; please read on if you are feeling curious.

1. The Harvard Business Review has an [intriguing article on coping with stress](#). Spoiler alert: while we often think there are two ways to deal with stress – grinding through or getting away, they present a third option. While they frame this third option within the workplace, I also think the concept works when applied elsewhere, with similar benefits.
2. Are you looking to cultivate something in your life? Joy, awe, humor, hope, engagement, mindfulness, perspective, a kinder internal voice? The [Duke Center for Healthcare Safety and Quality](#) has your back. They offer simple tools with the express intent to help individuals recover from burnout.
3. Zoom fatigue is a new phrase I imagine we all identify with. This [Stanford article](#) discusses four causes of Zoom fatigue, with simple fixes! There is also an opportunity to participate in a study survey if you are so inclined.
4. I know it can be taxing on our bodies to be in front of our computers for more of our day – attending our meetings online, as an example. Here is a [46-second upper body movement break](#) you can do right now. Click on the link and... go! We can make a difference for ourselves with less than a minute's investment.
5. Do you find it hard to actually “sign off” at the end of the work day? Many of us have a 3-second commute these days from work to home. It's still important to clearly mark the transition. Check out this [Going Home Checklist](#). So simple and so effective! Let me know if it helped you.
6. I loved this [piece on self-compassion](#). Self-compassion increases resilience to stress and trauma, and the authors make the case that self-compassion is essential for teams.
7. And we need a nourishing entry, don't we? Check out [Food Heaven Made Easy](#), founded by two Black registered dietitians, which also posts their latest podcast episode at the top of the site. And [Your Latina Nutritionist](#), who promises to help you live a life free of food rules. I signed up for the free intuitive eating guide.
8. How about a self-check-in? [Signs You Need a Mental Health Day + How to Take One](#) article.
9. Steve Jobs, Albert Einstein, and neuroscience all agree: [Your Daily Routine Needs More “Non-time”](#). This article says that while your busy daily routine is healthy and productive, and essential for success, it might also be kryptonite for your creativity... read on for how to incorporate a necessary ingredient.
10. It's been a great year for our fur babies having us home all the time. Wondering how they're going to do when we aren't home all the time? See this great guide on [“How to Prepare Pets for Your Return to the Office”](#).
11. Many years ago, I was lucky enough to attend a retreat with the Vietnamese Buddhist monk and peace activist, Thich Nhat Hanh, a formative figure in my life. I went with a girlfriend, and we got lost on the way to the retreat center. After several wrong turns and

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an inability to retrace our steps, we were panicked. We stopped and called the retreat center, and the call went directly to voicemail. This was the entirety of the message we received: “Hello. Thank you for calling. If you are lost, breathe. Smile. You will find your way.” And, we did. If you’re a quotes kind of person, check out [55 great ones](#) or at least thought-provoking ones, by Thich Nhat Hanh.

12. Here is the most well-balanced version of practicing [Three Good Things](#) I’ve read so far. I love this practice and highly recommend it.

I hope you found a tidbit above that entertained or inspired you. This is an odd time in our lives, as we begin to emerge from the pandemic and design, or adjust to, a life that is both the same and different. Please take care of yourselves and each other during this latest transition.

Program Spotlight: University of Utah

The Gerontology Interdisciplinary Program (GIP) at the University of Utah began in 1972 and is housed in the College of Nursing. Degrees offered include an undergraduate minor, certificate (undergraduate and post-baccalaureate), and Master of Science.

The Gerontology Interdisciplinary Program’s underlying purpose in research, teaching, and service activities is to prepare the next generation of leaders in the field of aging. We are committed to developing and disseminating knowledge that leads to improved health and quality of life among individuals, families, and communities throughout the life course. Courses and programs are open to students from all academic disciplines and professions. Students represent about 25 different academic degree programs on campus including the behavioral, social, and health sciences, education, business, fine arts, and humanities. The Program faculty also has similar diversity in their academic backgrounds, including health promotion, human development, psychology, theology, social work, and nursing. We offer all of our courses in a fully online learning format, making this an ideal program for those living at a distance, working professionals, or others who need the flexibility that online degree programs offer.

Additionally, our Master of Science degree has been designated as a Program of Merit by the Academy for Gerontology in Higher Education (AGHE). The GIP has an active Sigma Phi Omega (Gerontological Honors Society) Chapter, Alpha Chi.

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