GSA To Host 2017 IAGG World Congress

GSA has been selected by the International Association of Gerontology and Geriatrics (IAGG) as the host organization for the 2017 World Congress of Gerontology and Geriatrics. GSA is a professional home for more than 600 international members from nearly 50 countries, representing 12 percent of the overall membership. The organization’s Annual Scientific Meeting also regularly welcomes hundreds of attendees from other nations. IAGG holds a World Congress every four years to provide an international forum for the exploration of new discoveries about aging; GSA last hosted this event in 1985 in New York, NY.

The 2017 gathering is slated to be held at the Moscone Center in San Francisco, CA, in July. The chosen theme is “Global Aging and Health: Bridging Science, Policy, and Practice.” “The challenges and opportunities presented by an aging society are not unique to the United States,” said former GSA President John W. Rowe, MD, who will serve as president of the Congress. “There is an increasing need for global dialogue, cooperation, and problem solving.”

Atlanta Finale To Honor Longino; Presidential Symposia Unveiled

The Closing Session of this November’s GSA Annual Scientific Meeting in Atlanta, GA, will be held in memory of the late Charles F. “Chuck” Longino Jr., PhD. He was a president of both GSA and its educational branch, the Association for Gerontology in Higher Education (AGHE).

The session, to be titled “Creativity Across the Research Lifespan,” is scheduled for the last day of the conference, November 22.

The featured speaker will be David Galenson, PhD, a renowned professor of economics at the University of Chicago, who will discuss his work studying great artists and the ages at which they produced their greatest work. He is the author of “Old Masters and Young Geniuses: The Two Life Cycles of Artistic Creativity.” “There is a fundamental misunderstanding in our society about the relationship between age and creativity,” Galenson said. “Not only is there a widespread popular belief that creativity is the special domain of youth, but a series of academic psychologists have argued that creativity declines after early adulthood. “My research has shown that this is wrong:
From the Executive Director

Global Outreach Potential Brightens Forecast

By James Appleby, RPh, MPH

GSA’s successful July bid for the 2017 World Congress of Gerontology and Geriatrics (as reported on the front page) was a remarkable capstone achievement for the first half of the current year. It also provides the opportunity to reflect on the many positive indicators of the Society’s strength.

It is clear that the World Congress will be a transformational event for GSA. I applaud our Council for having the foresight to pursue this endeavor. I also want to express sincere gratitude to the staff members and volunteer leaders who made it possible — and to those who, in the coming years, will make the conference a reality.

While we currently have many international members and continue to cultivate several global partnerships, the next decade will see our organization rise to a position of increased prominence among the worldwide community. Consequently, it will also offer members a chance to gain further widespread attention for their research.

The International Association of Gerontology and Geriatrics (IAGG) holds a World Congress every four years. The next one will take place in the Republic of Korea in 2013. Following that, all eyes will be on GSA as we prepare to welcome an expected 6,000 gerontologists to San Francisco.

And once the 2017 meeting concludes, GSA will be home to the IAGG secretariat for the following four years. Our distinguished team of John Rowe, Toni Antonucci, and Jacqueline Angel (as president, vice president/secretary general, and treasurer, respectively) reflects the strength of our interdisciplinary membership. I would like to thank them sincerely for their commitment on behalf of the rest of the Society.

Although the bid for the World Congress is perhaps 2009’s most high-profile achievement so far, several other noteworthy items make the coming months look equally promising.

GSA’s membership has grown nearly five percent since this time last year. That number is quite remarkable given that many professional societies are struggling to retain their members in these uncertain economic times.

The Society’s partnership with contract publisher Oxford Journals also continues to prove beneficial. Journal Citation Reports, one of the most respected publication evaluation tools, has reported significant increases for the impact factor of all three major GSA journals (The Journals of Gerontology Series A: Biological Sciences and Medical Sciences, The Journals of Gerontology Series B: Psychological and Social Sciences, and The Gerontologist). As most of you already know, impact factor is a measure of the frequency with which articles in a journal have been cited in a given period of time.

Of course, the event we are most looking forward to is November’s 62nd Annual Scientific Meeting in Atlanta. The number of abstracts we received is on par with last year, indicating that this conference is on track to be another major success. Registration is live and lodging discounts are now available for our attendees. Please note that GSA has made a major commitment to the conference hotels — the Atlanta Marriott Marquis and Hilton Atlanta — in order to secure a large block of quality rooms at a special group rate. By staying at these facilities, you will ensure that we can keep prices low for future meetings.

James

Gerontology News

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**In Memoriam**

**Earl R. Stadtman, PhD**, a preeminent scientist at the National Institutes of Health whose research contributed to the understanding of the role of free radicals on a person’s health, died on January 7, 2009, at the age of 88. In the 1980s, while studying how damaged or inactivated proteins are removed from cells, Stadtman and his co-workers found that the accumulation of damaged proteins is associated with the aging process and may play a role in such age-related disorders as Parkinson’s disease.

**Judith E. Voelkl, PhD**, passed away at the age of 51 on February 7, 2009. She was a professor of parks, recreation and tourism management at Clemson University. Her academic work focused on quality of life issues for elders residing in nursing homes. She received numerous awards, including the 2005 Scholarly Achievement Award from the American Therapeutic Recreation Association and in 2006 she was inducted into the Academy of Leisure Sciences.

Correction: The July issue of *Gerontology News* misstated the first name of the late Emmanuel Gatchalian, MD. The editorial staff sincerely apologizes for this error.

**Members in the News**

- Several news outlets, including *MIT Technology Review*, *McKnight’s Long Term Care News*, and UPI, featured quotes by former GSA President Leonard Hayflick, PhD, regarding the biological causes of aging. He spoke about this subject at a symposium co-sponsored by GSA at the recent World Congress of Gerontology and Geriatrics in Paris, France.
- James Swan, PhD, was interviewed for a June 17, 2009, article in *The Dallas Morning News*. He said that long-term care needs to be more accessible and more affordable in order for the health care system to manage chronic illnesses effectively.
- John Culberson, MD, was recently quoted in *The Richmond Review*. He discussed the dangers of alcohol abuse by older adults, particularly when combined with medications.
- Richard Besdine, MD, was quoted in a recent article appearing in *Fortune* magazine. He spoke about the impact of the recent economic downturn on retirement accounts.

**Colleague Connected!**

This month’s $25 amazon.com gift certificate winner: **Tara McMullen**

The recipient, who became eligible after referring new member Mark Markeson, was randomly selected using randomizer.org. For more details on the Colleague Connection promotion, which includes a chance to win free lodging at the annual meeting, visit [www.geron.org/ColleagueConnection.htm](http://www.geron.org/ColleagueConnection.htm)

**Saunders Acts on EWA Initiative**

GSA President Michele Saunders, DMD, MS, MPH, attended the June meeting of the Eldercare Workforce Alliance (EWA) as the Society’s official representative. The gathering coincided with the EWAs nation-wide congressional call-in day, which urged interested individuals to contact their legislators to voice support for programs that boost the eldercare workforce. Many other GSA members also attended on behalf of their respective organizations, including Elyse Perweiler, MPP, RN, who chairs the Society’s Public Policy Committee. Among the items discussed were recent legislative activities, how to reach consensus on health care reform, and potential elements of an EWA bill. After the meeting, over 20 Alliance representatives paid visits to House and Senate offices to share information about workforce needs.

**Cantor Honored for Community Service Legacy**

Former GSA President Marjorie Cantor, MA, has been awarded the First Meritorious Service Award by Elders Share the Arts. She is the author of more than seventy articles, books, chapters, and papers. She was the first director of research within the New York City Department for the Aging, Cantor’s areas of expertise include elders in the urban setting, the effects of ethnicity and culture on the lifestyle of older adults, and the role of family and other informal supports in providing elder care. She is currently a professor emeritus and the Brookdale distinguished scholar at the Fordham University Graduate School of Social Service.

**McFarland’s Addiction Work Earns Recognition**

Nicole S. MacFarland, LCSW, CASAC has been selected as the recipient of the Individual of Distinction in Addictions Education and Training award for New York State from the Institute for Professional Development in the Addictions in Albany, NY. IPDA grants this award annually to honor an individual who, through teaching and direct practice experience, demonstrates a high level of personal commitment to addictions education, and is a positive role model for students and professionals in the addictions field. The award was presented at the Teacher Trainer Summit held in June.

**Syracuse Taps Himes To Head Center for Policy Research**

GSA Fellow Christine Himes, PhD, has been named the next director of Syracuse University’s Center for Policy Research, located in the Maxwell School of Citizenship and Public Affairs. She is currently the Maxwell Professor of Sociology at Syracuse. The center conducts a broad range of interdisciplinary research and related activities in aging, urban, and regional studies. Primary topics of focus include aging and long-term care; urban and regional studies; education finance and accountability; public finance; and social welfare, poverty, and income security.
Making a Difference: Writing and Presenting Testimony

The 111th Congress is an activist Congress. It certainly has a lot on its plate: health care reform, economic recovery, two wars, energy and environmental action, a Supreme Court nomination, and the usual scandals, oversight, and investigations. These activities require a requisite number of congressional committee hearings, meetings, and public input.

One way to make a difference on an issue of importance to you is to testify at a committee hearing. Congressional committees hold hearings to elicit information, conduct an investigation, evaluate or oversee the activities of a government department or the implementation of a federal law, educate their colleagues and the public, and raise support for or draw attention to an issue or legislation. Bring in a Hollywood star, for example, and your issue may become a top priority.

Most hearings are open to the public and the hearing records are usually published and available to anyone. State legislative bodies also hold hearings, as do federal and state commissions, fact-finding panels, and other such entities. I hope the following tips on testifying will be useful in these situations.

How does one get the opportunity to testify at a hearing?

If you are a known expert in a particular field, the committee may invite you to speak. If you have established a relationship with your legislator or her/his staff and become a valuable resource on a certain topic, your legislator may be able to secure an invitation for you. Also, you may request to testify.

Depending on the number of witnesses, the information the committee is trying to gather, and the constituencies that the committee wants to have represented, you may be allowed to testify or, at the very least, submit written testimony. The written testimony becomes part of the hearing record, in addition to the oral testimony of the witnesses.

Writing the testimony

The written testimony you compose will be submitted for the hearing record and can usually be of any length. The oral testimony is a shortened version of the written, and is usually no longer than five minutes. Therefore, keep in mind that while your written testimony may contain many statistics or examples, your oral testimony should contain the most salient and memorable information.

I like to start by writing the longer written testimony. Once I have edited it, I go through and highlight what I think would make up the best five minutes. I practice reading it, time it, then edit it to refine it further.

Know your audience

Find out how the legislators feel about the bill or topic being considered. Is it a controversial or expensive program being considered? Is it a popular issue with a lot of bipartisan support? Do any of the committee members have a personal connection to the issue or to your work (e.g., an ailing parent or spouse)? Is your work conducted in the state or district of any of the committee members? You may want to try to use data or an example from one or more of the states in which the committee members reside. After all, it is the job of the members of Congress to know about, represent, and take care of their districts. They are more likely to remember what you say if it strikes a personal chord for them.

Find out from the committee staff what other groups or individuals will be testifying at the hearing. Learn about the groups that oppose the measure or topic being considered and try to understand their perspectives. Knowledge of the costs and benefits, pros and cons, upsides and downsides of the issue will ensure that your testimony is informed and thoughtful, even if your advocacy of a certain position is clear. Understanding the opposing perspectives also will help you to answer fully the questions that a committee member may ask you.

Jargon-free testimony, please

All of us are guilty of falling into the habit of using our professional terms, abbreviations, and acronyms as though they are universally understood. They are not. Keep research, medical, or technical terms to a minimum. On the other hand, use descriptive, interesting, and colorful (not off-color) words to paint clear pictures about the people and issues you are supporting. Can you develop a memorable or “sticky” phrase that will enable your audience to remember your key points after the hearing is over? A great example was the late Senator John Heinz’s phrase “quicker and sicker” to describe diagnostic related groups (DRGs).

Vary the evidence

Statistics are useful and informative in testimony, to a point. Use them for emphasis or to set the stage, but don’t recite number after number. (Remember, you can always include more statistics in your written than in your oral testimony if you need them to make your case.) Similarly, anecdotes and stories about people and situations are great for providing examples, but too many dilute the impact of the message. Try to include elements based on logic, emotion, the credibility of your research or institution, and culturally-based ideals. This will ensure that your testimony is well-balanced and persuasive.

The opening and the closing should be strong

When you are speaking live, you want to grab the audience’s attention at the beginning so that it will be more likely to attend to the body of your argument. A striking statistic, a poignant story, a memorable quote from a client, or even a humorous anecdote makes strong openers and closers. Repeating your two or three main points is also a good way to close. Use the “good parts” up front, and then repeat them for a strong close.
Ask for what you want

Sometimes your testimony is being used to inform or educate or persuade the audience or the panel whom you are addressing. In the context of a legislative hearing where a specific bill or proposal may be on the table, you have the opportunity to ask the committee members or the legislative body to take action. Clearly, politely, and forcefully, ask for their support, their votes, their leadership, additional funding, or whatever it is you want them to do on the issue.

Presenting the testimony

Before the hearing you will be asked to send your written and oral testimony via e-mail to the committee staff in charge of the hearing. You may also be asked to provide copies of your testimony for the committee and the media (50–100 copies). You can bring extra copies for the audience on the day of the hearing.

Prepare to testify by practicing your oral remarks. Be comfortable with the testimony so that you will be less likely to be nervous. Remember, the committee wants to hear what you have to say. Limit the length to five minutes or less. In most hearings, there is a timer set up to keep track of the length of the witnesses’ remarks.

If possible, do not read your testimony word for word. Eye contact with the committee members is helpful. Do not ad lib too much or your time may slip by without your covering you key points.

At the committee hearing, you will have to wait for the committee chair and the members to make their opening statements. When you are called to the witness table, begin by giving your name and address and state why you are there. For example, “Mister Chairman or Madam Chair, (or Chairman Miller and Ranking Member McKeon) and members of the committee, my name is Jane Doe from Burlington, Vermont, representing … I am here to discuss ….” Speak slowly and clearly; make eye contact.

If possible, do not repeat what others have said and do not respond to their comments, unless that is more important than making your points. You may be able to address them during questioning.

There may be questions from the committee members. Respond to the questions as well as you can, and don’t be afraid to say that you don’t know the answer to a question; just offer to supply the information as soon as you can get it. I like to have a short list of bullet points that I try to fit in during the question and answer period.

After testifying, you should sit in the committee hearing and listen to the other witnesses and to the discussion. After the hearing, there may be an opportunity to talk with committee members, staff, or press in the hearing room.

There may not be a vote or any action on the legislation right away. If the vote is postponed, you may call the committee staff and find out when future action is scheduled.

Press opportunity

Testifying at a hearing is a great reason to write a press release. You control the content and spin of the information in your own press release. The news is that you have informed the nation’s leaders of crucial information and points of view on an important issue. If necessary, the press release can be more opinionated or critical than your testimony.

TOP TEN TESTIFYING TIPS

10. Don’t wear mink • In other words, don’t confuse your message of support for low-income older adults by looking too well-off or out of touch; look the part you are playing. Business attire is the norm.

9. R-E-S-P-E-C-T • It is an honor to testify and it is important to show appropriate respect for the institution, elected officials, their staff, and the process.

8. Keep answers short • Please! They may not give you another question if you go on and on.

7. Personal stories: Yes • If you can add the human element to your testimony it will be more memorable, but it must be relevant to your points.

6. Personal opinions: No • Try very hard to use empirical data, case studies, and the expert opinions of others, and not just your view of the world.

5. I don’t know • It’s much better to admit you don’t know the answer to a question and request an opportunity to get back to the committee with further information than to try to pretend you know.

4. Bridge over troubled questions • Practice answering difficult or controversial questions with colleagues so that you can easily move back to one of the key points that you want to make to the committee.

3. Don’t fight • It’s possible that some committee members may strongly disagree with your testimony. Don’t panic; address their concerns to the best of your ability, remain courteous, and hope for a better question to follow.

2. Don’t be afraid to repeat • You want the committee members, staff, spectators, and the press to remember your key points, so it’s OK to be a bit redundant.

1. Don’t be afraid to repeat • You want the committee members, staff, spectators, and the press to remember your key points, so it’s OK to be a bit redundant.

(Adapted from an AARP handout.)
Dutch Pensioners Benefit from Jackson’s Death

Radio New Zealand has reported that renewed interest in the late Michael Jackson’s music has caused an increase in profits for Dutch state pension fund ABP, which owns the rights to a portion of the pop star’s catalog. Each time a CD is sold or a radio station plays a song ABP owns, the fund makes money. It is the world’s third-largest state pension fund after Japan’s and Norway’s. ABP purchased two large music catalogs in 2008, including the rights to some Michael Jackson songs, including “You Are Not Alone.”

Korea Acts To Protect Citizens from Heat

According to The Korea Herald, the Korean government has undertaken a program to protect its eldest citizens from high temperatures during the current summer season. Officials cited high pressure in the North Pacific, which is expected to create more hot weather than experiences in previous years. Korea’s Ministry for Health, Welfare, and Family Affairs said the number of people treated for heat-related causes has been growing recently, showing a 59.4 percent increase from 2004 to 2007. More than 30,000 air-conditioned facilities and public offices across the nation will be designated as special shelters for seniors, with related campaign activities being conducted there.

Irish Nursing Homes Face New Scrutiny

Ireland has commissioned independent inspections of all public and private nursing homes as part of a new initiative to promote better standards of care, according to The Irish Times. A team of about 45 inspectors from the Health Information and Quality Authority will be responsible for monitoring standards in 600 nursing homes, which accommodate some 25,000 older people. This will be the first time that both public and private nursing homes will be subject to inspections by an independent authority. The new system will involve announced and unannounced inspections of nursing homes and the policing of standards which set out the rights of residents.

Britain Considering Implementation of Long-Term Care Insurance

The Times reports that government officials in the UK are considering introducing a long-term care insurance to prevent pensioners from being forced to sell their homes in order to afford the care. The current British system forces thousands of citizens each year to sell their homes or deplete their savings, which experts believe is unsustainable given the rapidly aging population. Under the proposals, those who want to protect their homes or savings would pay into a plan that would then foot the bill for all members who require long-term residential care.

China Facing Retirement Dilemma

The Center for Strategic and International Studies has issued a new report, titled “China's Long March to Retirement Reform: The Graying of the Middle Kingdom Revisited.” This document warns that the aging of China’s population could usher in a new era of slower economic growth and mounting social stress as tens of millions of Chinese arrive at old age over the next few decades without pensions or adequate family support. The report evaluates recent government efforts to prepare for the challenge and outlines a new reform plan that would create a national and fully portable system of funded retirement accounts. To view the full text, visit csis.org/publication/chinas-long-march-retirement-reform.

Atlanta Closing Session - Continued from page 1

not only did Paul Cézanne, Mark Twain, Robert Frost, and many others among the most creative people in our civilization make their greatest contributions late in their lives, but this pattern is typical of a particular kind of creativity,” he continued.

Following his presentation, Galensen will participate in a panel discussion with four GSA past presidents to illustrate how their respective approaches to creativity have impacted their careers and influenced their life’s achievements. The session will be moderated by the meeting’s program co-chairs, Judith Salerno, MD, MS, and Michael Katz, MD.

GSA President Michèle Saunders, DMD, MS, MPH, has also finalized this year’s line up of presidential symposia for the Annual Scientific Meeting. These sessions are crafted to highlight the overall theme of the conference, which is “Creative Approaches to Healthy Aging.”

Some of the symposia were developed jointly with leaders in each of the Society’s four professional sections, as well as the Emerging Scholar and Professional Organization (ESPO) and AGHE.

• AGHE Presidential Symposium: Preparing a Health Care Workforce for an Aging America: Challenges and Collaborative Solutions
• ESPO Presidential Symposium: Early Career Challenges: Issues and Perspectives on Professional Careers and Family Planning
• Biological Sciences Presidential Symposium: Capitol Hill Update: How Budget and Policy Decisions Are Shaping the Future of Medical Research
• Behavioral and Social Sciences Presidential Symposium: Healthy Aging Through Active Living
• Health Sciences Presidential Symposium: Creative Approaches to Prevention and Healthy Aging
• Social Research, Policy, and Practice Presidential Symposium: Community Approaches to Healthy Aging
• International Presidential Symposium: Involving Older People in Research Around the World
• Presidential Symposium: Transportation & Mobility as a Creative Approach to Healthy Aging
Institute Explores Long-Term Care Solutions
The Urban Institute’s Urban-Brookings Tax Policy Center recently published a report that assesses several federal legislative proposals to restructure the delivery and financing of long-term care services, for which demand and cost are escalating. These proposals fall under three categories: shifting the focus of Medicaid long-term benefits and chronic disease management to home care, expanding the long-term care and geriatric workforce, and restructurings the means of finance to either enhance private long-term care insurance, build a core government insurance model, or incorporate public/private hybrids. The full text of the report, titled “The Future of Long-Term Care: What is Its Place in the Health Reform Debate?,” can be found online at www.urban.org/publications/411908.html.

Elderly Population Boom Continues Worldwide
The average age of the world’s population is increasing at an unprecedented rate. The number of people worldwide 65 and older is estimated at 506 million as of midyear 2008; by 2040, that number will hit 1.3 billion. Thus, in just over 30 years, the proportion of older people will double from 7 percent to 14 percent of the total world population, according to “An Aging World: 2008,” a new report issued by the U.S. Census Bureau. The publication examines the demographic and socioeconomic trends accompanying this phenomenon. The report was commissioned by the National Institute on Aging. The most rapid rise in the elderly population is taking place in developing countries, where the increase in the number of people 65 and older is more than double the rate in developed nations. In 2008, 313 million, or 62 percent, of the world’s elderly lived in developing countries, a number that is projected to rise to more than 1 billion, or a projected 76 percent of the world’s 65-and-over population, the report said. The full text of the document can be found at www.census.gov/prod/2009pubs/p95-09-1.pdf.

New Blog Details Seniors’ Health Care Needs
The John A. Hartford Foundation has launched a new blog, Health AGEnda (jhartfound.org/blog), to stimulate discussion about how the needs of the growing number of older adults are incorporated into the country’s ongoing efforts to improve health care. The blog will explore this and related challenges and point to solutions as public and private sector interests seek to reshape the U.S. health care system. Through their work, the foundation’s officers travel the country reviewing new innovations in aging care, training, and research. The blog will share the knowledge they glean and the stories they hear about older patients and how these patients are faring in clinics and hospitals, homes, and nursing homes.

Brief Explores New Retirement Directions
A new Urban Institute brief, titled “It’s Not Easy Being Gray: The New Rules of Retirement,” summarizes wide-ranging retirement issues and explores how public policies might adapt to an aging population. The topics include strengthening Social Security and Medicare; controlling health care spending; and helping older adults remain in the workforce. This brief results from an Urban Institute-convened roundtable discussion of experts in retirement, aging, health, and long-term care policy. The full text of the report can be found at www.urban.org/retirement_policy/url.cfm?ID=411840; an audio recording of the discussion is available at www.urban.org/events/other/40thanniv3.cfm.

Nursing Home Residents, Beds in Decline
The number of both nursing home beds and nursing home residents in the U.S. declined between 1999 and 2004, according to the recently released results of “The National Nursing Home Survey: 2004 Overview.” The number of nursing home beds dropped by more than 10 percent, from 1.9 million in 1999 to 1.7 million in 2004. Meanwhile, the number of nursing home residents fell by 6 percent, from 1.6 million to 1.5 million, according to the study. The report is the seventh in a series of periodic nursing home surveys conducted by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention’s National Center for Health Statistics. The full text is available at www.cdc.gov/nchs/data/sr_13/sr13_167.pdf.

Free iPhone Caregiver Application Available for Download
Caregiver Initiative is a new, free iPhone application that includes a planner where caregivers can store health insurance, prescription drug, and other treatment information. It also has the capacity to hold healthcare provider and emergency contact information. Caregivers can also use the application to take notes during healthcare appointments, and access videos and message boards about caregiving. Johnson & Johnson Consumer Products Company, a division of Johnson & Johnson Consumer Companies, Inc., launched Care Connector earlier this year. It can be downloaded for free from strengthforcaring.com/careconnector.

AARP Publications Examine State-by-State Elder Data
The AARP Public Policy Institute has prepared a new set of briefs that provide a one-page overview of facts on health care data for each of the 50 states and the District of Columbia. Each brief presents information about the state’s older population, the uninsured, Medicare beneficiaries, hospital re-admissions among Medicare beneficiaries, the distribution of Medicaid long-term care funds, and prescription drug spending. The full text of the briefs is available at www.aarp.org/research/health/carefinancing/state_hcb_09.html.
Webster’s Gerontology Programs Go Online

Webster University in St. Louis, MO, is now offering three gerontology-related programs in an online setting. Starting this fall, students will be able to choose from a Master of Arts in Gerontology, a graduate certificate in Gerontology, and a Master of Business Administration with a gerontology emphasis. The school’s master’s degree in gerontology will also continue to be offered in a traditional classroom setting at the St. Louis home campus; in Albuquerque, NM; and in Lakeland, Ocala, and Orlando, FL.

USC’s Andrus Center Nets New Funds

The Ethel Percy Andrus Gerontology Center at the University of Southern California (USC) recently raised over $200,000 to support its educational programs and student scholarships. These funds resulted from the 12th annual Rod Dedeauz Memorial Swing for Healthy Aging Golf Classic. The guest of honor was Edward P. Roski Jr., chairman of the USC Board of Trustees and president and chief executive officer of Majestic Realty Company. A scholarship will be named after Roski and awarded to a gerontology students for the first time this fall.

North Dakota School Cultivates Mental Health Training

North Dakota State University (NDSU) Distance and Continuing Education and the NDSU Department of Child Development and Family Science have initiated a new statewide training program for professionals that addresses aging and mental health. The Mental Health and Aging Program is an online, self-paced program composed of six training modules developed by the NDSU Gerontology Program.

Adler School Launches Master’s Program

The Adler School of Professional Psychology has announced a new gerontology master’s degree program. Starting in fall 2009, the Master of Arts in Gerontological Counseling will prepare students to provide a broad range of services to older adults in a variety of settings as well as prepare graduates to become licensed professional counselors in Illinois. Graduates will be suited for leadership roles in a wide variety of community mental health positions in public and private human services agencies and organizations. The Adler school’s main campus is located in Chicago, IL and has a second campus in Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada.

Texas Tech Adds New Geriatrics-Focused Center

The Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center School of Medicine has established a Center of Excellence for Geriatric Scholarship, Training and Faculty Development at its Amarillo, Lubbock and Permian Basin campuses. The center will be headed by GSA member Stephanie C. McClure, MD, FACP, the Mirick-Myers endowed chair in geriatrics and division chief of geriatrics at the school’s Amarillo campus.

Program Expansion Enhances Chief Residents’ Capabilities

Three schools have been chosen as the newest participants in the Chief Resident Immersion Training (CRIT) in the Care of Older Adults national demonstration project. This announcement was made by the Association of Directors of Geriatric Academic Programs. The three new institutions are Baystate Medical Center, which is the western campus of Tufts University School of Medicine in Massachusetts; Cooper University Hospital, the southern clinical campus for New Jersey’s Robert Wood Johnson Medical School; and North Carolina’s Wake Forest University School of Medicine. CRIT is training program that prepares chief residents at medical schools to diagnose and treat health problems common to older adults — and to prepare the medical students and residents who they help train to do the same. The Boston University Medical Center (BUMC) launched the CRIT program in 2005 with funding from the Donald W. Reynolds Foundation. In 2007, the John A. Hartford Foundation awarded a $2.095 million grant to BUMC and ADGAP to expand the program nationwide.

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has the vision, experience, and capacity to support IAGG in successfully addressing these issues.”

Rowe — a professor in the Department of Health Policy and Management at the Columbia University Mailman School of Public Health and a former chairman and CEO of Aetna, Inc. — will assume his presidency following the 2013 World Congress in the Republic of Korea. Two other prominent GSA members will join him in positions of IAGG leadership.

Former GSA President Toni Antonucci, PhD, will become the secretary general/vice president of the Congress; she is the Elizabeth M. Douvan Collegiate Professor of Psychology, program director, and senior research professor in the Life Course Development Program at the Institute for Social Research at the University of Michigan.

Current GSA Secretary Jacqueline Angel, PhD, will become the treasurer of the Congress; she is a professor of sociology and public policy at the LBJ School of Public Affairs and faculty affiliate in the Population Research Center and the Center for Health and Social Policy at The University of Texas at Austin.

After the 2017 World Congress concludes, Rowe, Antonucci, and Angel will assume the same respective roles on the Executive Committee of the IAGG Council for the subsequent four years.

IAGG has member organizations in over 64 countries worldwide with a combined membership of over 45,100 professionals. Its mission is to promote the highest levels of achievement of gerontological research and training worldwide, and to interact with other international, inter-governmental, and non-governmental organizations in the promotion of gerontological interests globally and on behalf of its member associations. The IAGG is also a member of the Conference of Nongovernmental Organizations in Consultative Relationship with the United Nations (CONGO).
Career Transitions

For students and emerging professionals in academia, summer is often a time of transitions — anticipating a new phase of your program, finding a job, or embarking on a new stage of your career. We recently interviewed six ESPO members at different stages of the academic process. Two are beginning to write dissertations, two have just graduated, and two have been working in their fields for about a year since finishing their degrees. We asked them to share their goals, challenges, and experiences to help put in perspective the transitions that we undergo in this process. We also asked them for words of wisdom for those who will soon follow in their footsteps.

The pre-dissertation stage is characterized by a feeling that graduation is in the distant future (although it is actually pretty close). It is right in the middle of learning, proposing, studying, and writing. Those who have just graduated express a mixture of relief, excitement, and nervousness about what will come next and what will be left behind. Those on the job for a year express surprise at how much there is still to learn, look forward to establishing long-term career and life goals, and discover that things aren’t necessarily as they had imagined as students.

Structure, Goal Setting, & Self-Rewards

Our interviewees repeatedly mentioned the challenges presented by the undefined structure that comes when course work ends and you move into the phase of writing or studying for comprehensive exams. You must be very self-motivated and seek structure. Our interviewees recommended setting small short-term goals, setting writing deadlines, and seeking the reinforcement of classmates or mentors for accountability. This continues to be true once you leave school and work on new projects. The respondents also recommended ensuring time to let off steam, take breaks, and really get away from the work. A popular website, www.PhDComics.com, is good for a laugh when you feel frustrated about the stresses of academic life. It is nice to be reminded that we all experience these challenges.

Perspective & Expectations

One wise student quipped that “life is not a sprint, but a marathon.” Being in a hurry to finish will only leave you disappointed. When you’re building your career, you have to be in it for the long-haul.

Another pre-dissertation student was in the middle of her career when she decided to pursue a PhD. This is quite a different experience than for those who pursue a degree right out of college. She says this makes her feel like the “doctoral education is providing [her] with a scenic route, off the busy highway of the rest of life.” Having already been in the work world, she is less anxious about where she will go in the work world once she finishes the degree.

Adjusting to a New Setting

Many new changes accompany the transition out of school. For many it means moving to a new city, state, or even country. You may leave behind the social networks you spent a long time developing. At the new job you may experience a change in focus from intense attention to one project under your sole responsibility to a broader focus on several projects. Depending on the type of position you take, there may be a different authority structure. You may be part of a team of collaborators or you may have one boss. You may only be answerable to yourself. You will likely find yourself taking on new duties (e.g., writing grants, advising students, serving on committees) in addition to the ones you already had (e.g., researching, teaching).

De-mystifying the Post-Degree Career

Sometimes we imagine that once we finish the degree, we will somehow magically mature into professionals. I am sorry to report that getting a diploma will not automatically make your journal submissions more likely to get accepted or give you the perfect words to say when standing in front of a room of colleagues. And what about that darn dissertation? You thought it was finished already! But you still have to revise it and send it out for publication. There’s nothing magic about it. Grad school is a perfect opportunity to try out all the skills that we hope to continue perfecting as we advance in our careers.

Words of Wisdom:

- Research (or a dissertation) is mostly about persistence and determination despite setbacks.
- Take your time when choosing your first job or a post-doctoral mentor who can help guide you through the transition.
- The dissertation is just the beginning, not the end of the career process.
- Keep your eye on the big picture. Be patient, flexible, and true to yourself.
- Seeking the advice and support of others can be a huge comfort during rough times.

Transitional Membership in GSA

When you are ready to graduate and move on to your next career opportunity, GSA offers a transitional membership to ESPO members. You get all the benefits of regular members (plus continuing ESPO benefits) for a lower price than that of regular membership. If you were previously an ESPO member, you can qualify for a transitional membership for two years for only $90 per year.

Special Thanks to those who agreed serve as interviewees for this column. Congratulations on your accomplishments!
Geriatricians Eligible for Loan Forgiveness
Geriatricians, geriatric psychiatrists, and geriatric dentists are now eligible for loan repayment through the National Health Service Corps (NHSC) Loan Repayment Program, which is funded by $200 million of American Recovery and Reinvestment Act funds. The NHSC Loan Repayment Program provides $50,000 (or the outstanding balance of qualifying student loans if it is less than $50,000), tax free, to primary care medical, dental, and mental health clinicians in exchange for two years of service at an approved site in an area with a shortage of health professionals. Upon completion of the service commitment, clinicians may be eligible to apply for additional support for extended service. Applications will be accepted continuously until funds are expended or September 30, 2010, whichever comes first. For more information and to apply, please visit nhsc.hrsa.gov/loanrepayment.

Monies Slated for Population Health Studies
The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation Health & Society Scholars program provides two years of support to postdoctoral scholars to address the multiple determinants of population health and contribute to policy change. Its goal is to improve health by training scholars to investigate the connections among biological, genetic, behavioral, environmental, economic and social determinants of health. Up to 18 scholars will be selected to begin training in August or September 2010 at one of six nationally prominent universities. Scholars will receive an annual stipend of $89,000 in year one and $92,000 in year two of the program. Visit www.healthandsocietyscholars.org to apply online. The deadline for the receipt of materials is October 2, 2009.

FNID Encourages Muscle Mass Studies
The Biomarkers Consortium of the Foundation of the National Institute of Health (FNID) has released a request for proposals on the subject of clinical criteria for the diagnosis of clinically important weakness associated with low muscle mass in older adults. The FNID is soliciting proposals to analyze existing data sets to support the development of guidelines for the diagnosis of sarcopenia, muscle weakness, and indicators of treatment benefit. Applications are due by September 8, 2009. More information is available at www.biomarkersconsortium.org/images/stories/docs/sarcopeniarfpfinal.pdf.

RWJF Expands Community Outreach
Given the emergence of community-based focus funds created by people who share common places, experiences, language and culture, the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation (RWJF) Local Funding Partnerships program has identified a new partnership opportunity in order to create lasting collaborations to root innovative and sustainable solutions in these diverse communities. The program, titled Peaceful Pathways: Reducing Exposure to Violence, seeks to increase well-being and improve health by removing the obstacles caused by violence. Suggested projects must be new, community-based and culturally appropriate, reflecting how language skills, significant cultural differences, education, income, and discrimination affect health outcomes. Up to $1 million is available for the 2009 grant cycle. Proposals may be submitted at any time throughout 2009; however, the next review process will take place on September 1, 2009. Please visit www.rwjf.org/files/applications/cfp/cfp_LFP_PP2009.pdf for details.

Cynthia Davis
GSA's director of meetings and education, Cynthia Davis, is a relative newcomer to the organization, having joined the staff in April 2009. She is a native of Worthington, OH, but has spent most of her life in the Washington, DC, area. Her first experience in meeting planning was at the National Association of Home Builders. She then took on roles of increasing responsibility at the Society of Petroleum Engineers and the National Recreation and Park Association. Davis’ two biggest projects each year are GSA’s Annual Scientific Meeting and Annual Meeting and Educational Leadership Conference of the Association for Gerontology in Higher Education, GSA’s educational branch. She coordinates all logistical aspects of these meetings, including exhibits, abstract submission and review, scheduling processes, and continuing education. Davis contracts and negotiates with hotels and vendors. Additionally, she works closely with GSA’s Program Committee to develop the scientific meeting program.

Her expertise has proved valuable for governance meetings and many other events as well. For example, she was instrumental in providing support for the reception GSA recently held to commemorate the signing of The Edward M. Kennedy Serve America Act.
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THE BETTY IRENE MOORE SCHOOL OF NURSING at UC Davis is founded on a vision to advance health and ignite leadership through innovative education, transformative research and bold system change. The school seeks visionary nurse faculty to join the founding team to establish this new nursing school at the UC Davis Health System Sacramento campus.

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