Fowler Tapped for San Diego Keynote; Registration Open Soon

GSA will welcome educator, author, and social scientist James Fowler, PhD, as the keynote speaker for its Annual Scientific Meeting in San Diego this November. Registration will be available by the end of June.

Currently a professor of medical genetics and political science at the University of California, San Diego, Fowler is renowned for his research on social networks, cooperation, political participation, and genopolitics (the study of the genetic basis of political behavior).

His presentation during the meeting’s Opening Plenary Session largely will be based upon “Connected: The Surprising Power of Our Social Networks and How They Shape Our Lives,” the 2009 book he co-authored with physician and Harvard University professor Nicholas A. Christakis, MD, PhD, MPH.

“I’m thrilled to be addressing a crowd interested in aging,” Fowler said. The majority of my research support comes from the National Institute on Aging, and our early work on social networks focused on the Framingham Heart Study, which has followed people for decades. Many of them are currently over 60.”

Fowler and Christakis grabbed headlines and the attention of the research community following their examination of the Framingham data, which led them to conclude that obesity, smoking, and happiness have strong social influences. In “Connected,” they explain that social networks can impact a person’s ideas, emotions, health, relationships, behavior, politics, and more.

“Our new work on Facebook shows us that although older people are somewhat less likely to use online social media, they are actually more...

Continued on page 6

Vaccination Summit Provides New Solutions for Prevention Efforts

The latest major event in GSA’s National Adult Vaccination Program (NAVP) brought together experts and advocates to focus on state and national policies that affect immunization rates. A summit held on April 26 in Washington, DC, utilized the attendees’ expertise to assess the policy opportunities of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act’s requirement for essential health benefits — specifically, the category of “preventive and wellness services.”

As initially reported in the February 2012 issue of Gerontology News, the NAVP is a multi-year national campaign to improve adult immunization rates and deliver sustainable change. The April summit was a significant step in this process.

“It was impressive to see the breadth of representation from our health care community coming together and rising to the challenge of immunizing our adult population,” said NAVP Program Director and GSA member Stefan Gravenstein, MD, MPH. “This was one of the most productive, concentrated brainstorming sessions I have experienced.”

Through a series of presentations and roundtable breakouts, over 30 attendees discussed state and national policy components of the Affordable Care Act; policy opportunities to link important national immunization efforts...
From the Executive Director

Charting New Frontiers in Aging: The Power of Networks

By James Appleby, RPh, MPH
jappleby@geron.org

When GSA President Nancy Whitelaw, PhD, introduced this year’s Annual Scientific Meeting theme, “Charting New Frontiers in Aging,” she wrote that it not only focuses on breakthroughs in research, but also on “new approaches that are generating practical solutions to longstanding challenges.”

She went on to say that “charting also implies connections — within and across disciplines, professions, individuals, cohorts, generations, systems, environments, cultures and nations. By making these connections, we move beyond our personal insights and investigations to seek a deeper and more grounded understanding of aging and its implications.”

Thus, the choice of our keynote speaker, James Fowler, PhD — whom you read about on the front page — was ideal. His research shows us that those in the population we study are members of social networks that may have a powerful influence on what are often interpreted as individual behaviors and personal choices.

Hopefully, his message will also serve to remind us that we, too, are part of any number of influential networks, some of which can be strengthened to advance the cause of aging research.

And Fowler is not the only one out there advocating the study of networks to advance the science of aging. At the National Institutes of Health’s recent Alzheimer’s Disease Research Summit — where the Obama Administration formally released its National Plan to Address Alzheimer’s Disease — comments by one of expert presenters really made me think about the true scope of our meeting theme.

“We’re very good at having data and storing it and putting it where people can get to it,” said Stephen Friend, MD, PhD, the president of Sage Bionetworks in Seattle. “What we do not have is necessarily a way where you can jointly work on projects together in the compute space in the way that physicists have and in the way that software engineers do.”

What he was talking about is that while the software industry is known for the power of tracking workflows and versioning, those in the academic world may keep a close guard on their data until after publication due to concerns of recognition, authorship, and tenure. “Until we grow up and find ways where whoever did that work is able to get their recognition before publication — not by citation — we’re not going to get people to share,” he said. “And if we don’t get people to share, we’ll be working in our same linear ways, and other areas are going to bypass us.”

He also advocated a larger role for patients and other members of the public within these scientific networks. Citizen scientists, as he described them, should take a greater interest in research and be willing to contribute information to shared data collections.

This last point reminded me of author Stephen Ambrose’s “Citizen Soldiers,” a book that detailed the ordinary people who stepped up to fight in World War II to help the allied effort. It certainly seems that citizen scientists can play a similar role in the modern era by stepping up to aid the research community fight crippling and costly illnesses.

I look forward to continuing this conversation in San Diego in November and during the intervening months. I am confident that GSA and its members — with a rich history of over six decades of interdisciplinary teamwork — are ideally suited to develop and harness the productive power of networks.

James
In an article appearing in Ohio may need to be innovative in order to meet the demand of home due to the aging of the baby boom population, and state resources in indicated that this number is projected to grow by a significant amount older individuals who are living alone as they age. Mehdizadeh appeared on cincinnati.com that focused on the growing number of loss of younger workers throughout the state of Ohio. Specifically, Kunkel noted shortages. The article focused on companies struggling with replacing the recent recession and its impact on job and labor PhD, regarding the recent recession and its impact on job and labor shortages. The article focused on companies struggling with replacing the large number of workers who are now retiring. Specifically, Kunkel noted the loss of younger workers throughout the state of Ohio.

- On April 20, Shahla Mehdizadeh, PhD, was quoted in an article that appeared on cincinnati.com that focused on the growing number of older individuals who are living alone as they age. Mehdizadeh indicated that this number is projected to grow by a significant amount due to the aging of the baby boom population, and state resources in Ohio may need to be innovative in order to meet the demand of home care that will be required.
- In an article appearing in Healthcare Finance News on April 3, Mary Naylor, PhD, described the role women have as decision-makers and leaders in today’s healthcare sector, how women bring perspective to the future of healthcare, and shared her thoughts for better care and lower costs.
- GSA Fellow Laura Carstensen, PhD, was quoted in a recent article on The Huffington Post website that discussed myths about aging. The piece reviewed the top five misconceptions about growing older, which were discussed in Carstensen’s book, “A Long Bright Future.”
- An April 2 New York Times article discussed a recent study in The Gerontologist by JiSun Choi, PhD, which found registered nurses working in nonprofit nursing homes are significantly more satisfied with their jobs than nurses in commercial facilities.

Pacala Named Next American Geriatrics Society President

James Pacala, MD, became the next president of the American Geriatrics Society (AGS) during that organization’s recent Annual Scientific Meeting held in May in Seattle. He currently is the Distinguished Teaching Professor and associate head in the Department of Family Medicine and Community Health at the University of Minnesota Medical School. Pacala has received several awards for his research, teaching, and clinical care, including GSA’s Clinical Medicine Research Award (1989); the University of Minnesota Medical School’s Outstanding Teacher of the Year Award (1999); the University of Minnesota’s All-University Postbaccalaureate, Graduate, and Professional Education Teaching Award (2002); the American Geriatrics Society’s Outstanding Achievement for Clinical Investigation Award (2002); and the University of Minnesota Academic Health Center Award for Excellence in the Scholarship of Teaching (2009).

Stevens Given Texas Board of Directors Post

GSA Fellow Alan B. Stevens, PhD, has been appointed to the Texas Institute of Health Care Quality and Efficiency Board of Directors by Governor Rick Perry. The institute is designed to improve health care quality, accountability, education, and cost to the state by encouraging health care provider collaboration, effective health care delivery models, and coordination of health care services. Stevens currently is the director of Scott and White Healthcare’s Center for Applied Health Research and a professor at the Texas A&M Health Science Center College of Medicine – Temple.

Olinger Appointed to Texas Funeral Service Commission

Texas Governor Rick Perry has appointed Jean “Jeanne” Olinger, PhD, of Wichita Falls to the Texas Funeral Service Commission for a term to expire February 1, 2013. The board oversees the licensing of funeral directors and embalmers, and ensures their compliance with state statutes and regulations regarding funeral services, cemeteries, and crematories. Olinger currently is the nursing facility administrator of senior living properties at Childress Health Care Center.

Doll Earns Faculty Fellowship Award

Kansas State University’s Gayle Doll, PhD, recently received a Faculty Fellowship Award from the Great Plains Interactive Distance Education Alliance for her work in teaching gerontology online. She was given this honor, which comes with a monetary award, at the annual meeting of the alliance on April 3 in Kansas City, MO.
AoA Evolves While Aging Legislation Advances

I could provide an update on what is happening with the federal budget at this moment, but it would be completely different by the time you read this — except in the sense that we probably won’t have final appropriations or major entitlement changes until at least the lame duck session following the November election.

There is other news to report, however — news that affects aging advocates in the near term and gives us something to ruminate on besides the deficit, the economy, and whom Mitt Romney will choose as a running mate.

**AoA Upgrade**

Those who have for years advocated for a stronger Administration on Aging (AoA) find themselves wondering what the creation of the Administration for Community Living (ACL) means for their cause. Health and Human Services Secretary Kathleen Sebelius has, by executive order, placed three federal departments/agencies — the AoA, the Office on Disability, and the Administration on Developmental Disabilities — under the umbrella of the new ACL. Assistant Secretary for Aging Kathy Greenlee has become the administrator of this newly formed department.

The idea behind the ACL is to bring together the key HHS organizations and offices that work on improving the lives of those with functional support needs. The new agency will focus on enhancing community based supports for people with disabilities and for seniors.

“The Administration on Community Living will seek to enhance and improve the broad range of supports that individuals may need to live with respect and dignity as full members of their communities,” Sebelius said. “These support needs go well beyond health care and include the availability of appropriate housing, employment, education, meaningful relationships and social participation. Building on President Obama’s Year of Community Living, the ACL will pursue improved opportunities for older Americans and people with disabilities to enjoy the fullest inclusion in the life of our nation.”

The announcement was made on April 16, with little warning provided to Capitol Hill committees. Many advocates for older Americans, while pleased that Kathy Greenlee was named administrator, are still unclear how this will affect the AoA. For example, is it possible that in the future, the AoA assistant secretary might end up reporting to an ACL administrator whose background is not in aging. There is the potential for legislators to amend the Older Americans Act (OAA) reauthorization legislation to address these questions and make certain clarifications to the ACL chain of command. Of course, a future administration is free to rescind or modify an executive order and the organization of federal agencies.

To read the details of the ACL’s organization, go to the Federal Register notice at www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/FR-2012-04-18/pdf/2012-9251.pdf or visit to the ACL website at www.hhs.gov/aoa.

In addition to creating the ACL, HHS has also moved forward on developing the Community First Choice (CFC) Option, part of health care reform. The CFC Option gives states additional resources to make community living a first choice, with nursing homes and institutions a fall back option. Under CFC, states can receive a six percentage point increase in federal matching funds for providing community-based attendant services and supports to people with Medicaid.

HHS also announced the first 16 organizations that will participate in the Independence At Home Demonstration program, which encourages primary care practices to provide home-based care to chronically ill Medicare patients.

**LGBT Elders**

In recent years, the aging Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender (LGBT) community has worked hard to shape public policy on Capitol Hill. One of the most active groups is SAGE (Services and Advocacy for GLBT Elders). In 2005, SAGE became the first official LGBT delegate to the White House Conference on Aging. It is now an active member of the Leadership Council of Aging Organizations, and it recently participated in the first White House Conference on LGBT Aging held on May 7.

At this event, organized by the White House Office of Public Engagement in partnership with the University of Miami Center on Aging, advocates, community leaders, and members of the public took advantage of the opportunity to engage with members of the Obama Administration on issues of health, housing, and security for LGBT elders. Many LGBT elders have faced a lifetime of some degree of discrimination and fear. It is important to examine ways to remove these stressors from their lives as they face the difficulties of old age. For further information, contact LGBT@who.eop.gov.

SAGE also has influenced Senator Bernie Sanders’s (I-VT) OAA reauthorization draft and it is backing the introduction of Representative Linda Sanchez’s (D-CA) bill, the Social Security Equality Act of 2012 (H.R. 4609). This measure was introduced along with 95 cosponsors on April 24 and was referred to the Ways and Means Committee, which has jurisdiction over Social Security. The bill would ensure equal benefits for LGBT older adults.

Nearly 54 million people, or one in four households, receive Social Security benefits. The Social Security program provides economic support to American workers who are retired, who have lost a spouse, or who are disabled. It also provides financial support to children who have lost a parent. Right now, same-sex partners are
not eligible for Social Security spousal benefits, survivor benefits, or death benefits, which can contribute to higher poverty rates among LGBT older adults and significantly reduce retirement income. According to SAGE, reports show that a same-sex partner’s average loss under the denial of the survivor benefit can cost up to $28,152 per year. This can mean the difference between poverty or a sustainable living income.

SAGE Executive Director Michael Adams argued that “LGBT older people pay into Social Security just like everybody else, and they deserve the same benefits as everybody else.”

**GEC Funding**

HHS announced recently that approximately $2 million in supplemental funding is available in the FY 2012 Prevention and Public Health Fund for current Geriatric Education Center (GEC) grantees. The funds are for updating, revising and disseminating materials on Alzheimer’s Disease and related dementias. (This comes out to about $42,000 per grantee.) For FY 2013, approximately $4 million will be available to supplement grants. For more information, visit www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/FR-2012-03-20/pdf/2012-6658.pdf.

**Violence Against Women Act**

The Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) passed the Senate on April 26 by a vote of 68 to 31; 15 Republicans joined every Democrat in voting for the measure. The bill, introduced by Senator Patrick Leahy (D-VT), reauthorizes for five years a wide variety of services for abused women (and men). The bill included a provision introduced by Senator Herb Kohl (D-WI) last March during a hearing on elder abuse, the End Abuse Later in Life Act (S. 464). The bipartisan bill was co-sponsored by Senators Richard Durbin (D-IL) and Susan Collins (R-ME). This provision would provide approximately $4 million will be available to supplement grants. The next step in moving the VAWA forward would be a reauthorization bill to be passed in the U.S. House of Representatives. This seems to be in motion, as Representative Sandy Adams’s (R-FL) bill, H.R. 4970, was passed by the House Judiciary Committee on May 8. Adams has a law enforcement background with personal experience of domestic violence. Her bill is significantly different from the Senate bill.

The Senate bill contains several provisions that Republicans are resisting, including a provision concerning Native American tribal courts, visas for illegal immigrant battered women, and protections for victims in same-sex relationships. The House and the Senate will have to iron out the differences. Considering the particularly rancorous partisan divide and the fact that it is an election year, arriving at an agreement on these provisions will be nothing short of miraculous.

In the past two reauthorizations, VAWA attracted no such disagreements. This year, Democrats may be hoping to capitalize on the dispute as further proof that Republicans are waging a “war on women.”

For some conservative groups, however, even the core of the nearly 20-year-old law is unacceptable. The Concerned Women for America and Independent Women’s Forum has called the law a “slush fund” for feminist causes that harms men unfairly and encourages the dissolution of marriages.

**World Elder Abuse Awareness Day**

World Elder Abuse Awareness Day (WEAAD), taking place on June 15, was launched six years ago by the International Network for the Prevention of Elder Abuse and the World Health Organization at the United Nations. The purpose of WEAAD is to provide an opportunity for communities around the world to promote a better understanding of abuse and neglect of older persons by raising awareness of the cultural, social, economic, and demographic processes affecting elder abuse and neglect.

The International Network for the Prevention of Elder Abuse (INPEA) has produced the “Community Guide to Raise World Awareness on Adult Abuse Tool Kit.” This resource provides sample ideas and templates for activities and examples of materials, resources, proclamations, and messages. The toolkit is available for free at www.inpea.net.

The National Center on Elder Abuse (NCEA) website also contains many resources to help you find assistance, publications, data, information, and answers about elder abuse at www.ncea.aoa.gov.
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Fowler Tapped for San Diego Keynote; Registration Open Soon

receptive to behavior change,” Fowler said. “We hope that works wonders as we use the power of networks to try to reverse the obesity epidemic, increase the effectiveness of vaccination, and capture multipliers that will help us to reduce the cost of health care.”

“Connected” has been the winner of a Books for a Better Life Award, translated into twenty languages, named an Editor’s Choice by the New York Times Book Review, and featured in Wired, Oprah’s Reading Guide, Business Week’s Best Books of the Year, and a cover story in New York Times Magazine.

Fowler also has appeared several times on “The Colbert Report.” He was recently named a Fellow of the John Simon Guggenheim Foundation, one of Foreign Policy’s Top 100 Global Thinkers, and Most Original Thinker of the year by “The McLaughlin Group.”

GSA’s Annual Scientific Meeting will take place from Wednesday, November 14, to Sunday, November 18. Fowler’s talk will take place on the morning of Thursday, November 15. Following the keynote address, he will participate in a book signing in the meeting’s Exhibit Hall.

The majority of sessions will take place at the San Diego Convention Center. GSA’s headquarters hotel is the San Diego Marriott Marquis & Marina, where a small number of meeting sessions will also take place. GSA has secured discounted room rates here and at two nearby properties, the Hilton San Diego Gaslamp Quarter and the Omni San Diego Hotel.

The convention center is located on San Diego Bay near the city’s Gaslamp Quarter.

GSA’s Program Committee has generated many plans to make the San Diego meeting a unique experience. In the coming months, Gerontology News will contain details on all the special guests and activities.

Visit www.geron.org/annualmeeting for complete details on registration and hotel reservations.

NYU College of Nursing Expands Nurse Leaders Scholar Program

The Jonas Nurse Leaders Scholars Program at New York College of Nursing (NYUCN) has received a grant from the Jonas Center for Nursing Excellence. This award will support one PhD and two doctor of nursing practice students for the coming two years. The annual $5,000 scholarships from the Jonas Nurse Leaders Scholar Program will be matched by NYUCN. The monies will go to help to prepare three NYUCN nurses with doctoral degrees to assist in combating a national nursing faculty shortage as advocated by the Institute of Medicine’s 2010 report, “The Future of Nursing: Leading Change, Advancing Health.”

UCLA Nurse Program Reports Success After First Three Years

UCLA’s Young Scholars Program, administered through the School of Nursing’s Center for the Advancement of Gerontological Nursing Science, identifies students early in their pre-licensure program who are interested in caring for older adults and offers them the opportunity to participate in a highly personalized and engaging one- to three-year mentorship experience. Students accepted into the program are matched with faculty mentors and participate in a variety of projects, including co-authorship of research and clinically focused articles, podium and poster research presentations, and involvement as paid research assistants on faculty research grants. In the three years since its inception and initial funding through a federal Health Resources and Services Administration grant, UCLA’s Young Scholars Program has mentored eight students, five of whom have been accepted into PhD programs and two who have entered the gerontological nursing practice. There are currently three young scholars who will be graduating this year and another four who will join the young scholars in September.

YSU Convenes Annual Ohio Association of Gerontology and Education Conference

Youngstown State University (YSU) hosted the 36th annual Ohio Association of Gerontology and Education Conference in April. This meeting provided an opportunity for students, professionals, and educators in the field of aging to share new research that affects the various conditions facing the aging population throughout the state of Ohio.
School’s (Kind of…) Out for Summer!

The summer semester is upon us, and it is a great time to catch up on all of the things you say you are going to do throughout the year but you never have time to actually do. Whether it is research, writing, teaching, or taking classes, we have provided some tips below to help you make the most of your summer!

At the end of the academic year, you may feel increasingly fatigued and frustrated with a never-ending workload. You are longing for the start of summer and the chance to get some respite. Now that it’s summer, it’s a great time to ask yourself, “How can I make most of these months?” Now it’s time to plan out your next steps. Will you be taking comprehensive or qualifying exams? Publishing papers? Collecting or analyzing data? As you ask yourself these questions, remember these helpful tips:

First and foremost, take a little break and do something fun and relaxing. Once your batteries are recharged, you can get started with your schedule.

Try to get organized early so you have an idea what you will be working to accomplish. This way you can develop a schedule in advance to help you manage your time over the summer.

Set reasonable, realistic goals for yourself to help lower stress and increase productivity, and work on setting both short-term goals and long-term goals to keep you on track.

Know the dates your mentors will be out of town so you can plan accordingly.

Look ahead to the fall semester and identify important deadlines to help yourself avoid procrastination.

Summer is a great time to seek extra content to support your research, such as statistics or other courses. Research groups often hold workshops during the summer, such as the National Institutes of Health (NIH) Summer Genetics Institute or the National Institute on Aging (NIA) Summer Training Course in Experimental Aging. Summer is also a great opportunity to engage in teaching activities, such as assisting another course, prepping fall coursework, or taking teaching workshops. Many research opportunities are offered during the summer. For example, the NIA Grants Technical Assistance Workshop can help young scholars gain an in-depth understanding of the grants process. The NIH website (www.nih.gov) lists conferences and workshops designed for all levels of researchers. In the end, there are a vast number of ways to make the most of your summer, and planning ahead and finding the right activities for you will hopefully help you to avoid burnout after a long school year. We hope these tips will help you to have a productive and enjoyable summer!

Congratulations ESPO Members on Your Accomplishments!

Shannon M. Sisco, MS, will be graduating this summer from the University of Florida’s Clinical and Health Psychology program and beginning an advanced geriatric research fellowship at the North Florida/South Georgia Veterans Health System’s Geriatric Research, Education, and Clinical Center.

Gloria Luong, MA will be graduating from the University of California, Irvine doctoral program in psychology and social behavior (developmental psychology emphasis) this summer and she will start a position as a post-doc at the Max Planck Institute for Human Development.

Frank Infurna, PhD, graduated from the doctoral program in human development and family studies at Pennsylvania State University in May, and he will be working as a visiting researcher at the Deutsches Institut für Wirtschaftsforschung e.V. this year.

Chivon Mingo, PhD, will be completing a postdoctoral fellowship in the Institute on Aging at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and she will be starting a position in the fall as an assistant professor in the Gerontology Institute at Georgia State University in August.

Amanda Szabo, MS, will graduate this summer from the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign with a degree in kinesiology (exercise psychology emphasis), and she is starting a postdoctoral fellowship at the University of Kansas Medical Center in August.

Katherine Hall, PhD completed her advanced geriatrics research fellowship at the Durham Veteran Health System’s Geriatric Research, Education, and Clinical Center (GRECC) in February, and has transitioned to her new role as a health behavior research scientist at the Durham GRECC and the Duke Aging/Claude D. Pepper Centers.

Tam Perry will be graduating this fall from the University of Michigan joint doctoral program in social work and anthropology. She will start as an assistant professor in the Wayne State School of Social Work this fall.

Patrick Doyle, MA, will be graduating this summer from the University of Maryland, Baltimore County with his PhD in gerontology. He will be joining the gerontology faculty in the Department of Human Services at Bowling Green State University as an assistant professor.

Philip Haley, MA will graduate from The University of Alabama’s PhD program in clinical psychology this summer, and afterward he will work at the South Texas Veterans Healthcare System as a postdoctoral resident in palliative care psychology.

Thanks are given to Terrie Vann-Ward, MSN, APN, FNP-BC, GNP-BC, Jo-Ana Chase, MN, APRN-BC, and Julie Norstrand, MS, MSW for their contributions to this column.
Careers in Aging Week exists to increase the awareness and visibility of gerontology-related vocational opportunities. It is sponsored every April by GSA and its educational branch, the Association for Gerontology in Higher Education (AGHE). Support also is provided by the Hartford Geriatric Social Work Initiative, which GSA administers. Universities and colleges participate by hosting events at their schools or in their communities. These activities may include guest speakers, career fairs, poster sessions, video presentations, panel discussions, and receptions.

GSA and AGHE would like to thank the participating organizations and commend the imaginative ways they promoted gerontology on their campuses. The examples below highlight just some of the events held across the country.

**Kansas State University** partnered with four local businesses to host its first annual Amazing Careers in Aging Race. Gerontology ambassadors used the CBS show “The Amazing Race” as inspiration to help participants see how an education in gerontology can be used in the workplace. At each of four destinations, teams competed in a challenge — some physical and some mental — while learning about careers in aging along the way.

**New York University**’s Silver School of Social Work Gerontology Student Collective hosted a panel designed to explore innovative and creative careers in the growing field of aging. From wellness programming to creative arts, care management, intergenerational programs and more, the panel discussed interesting ways in which other master’s program graduates are using their degrees creatively to benefit the aging population.

**St. Catherine University** welcomed the Minneapolis Southside Singers, a group of senior entertainers. The school also hosted a research poster session, an inter-professional skills learning lab that involved faculty and students from six different disciplines, and a screening of the film “Calendar Girls.”

**Saint Cloud State University**’s Gerontology Program hosted a series of events, including “Don’t Be a Target of Healthcare & Consumer Fraud” colloquium; a panel with representatives from the local area agency on aging, senior center, ombudsman office, and Faith in Action coalition; a panel with alumni, community partners, and a representative from the university’s Career Services Office; and a Gerontology Open House. Students also collected personal care items for older adults in need as part of the week’s events.

The **University of Nebraska at Omaha**’s Gerontology Department, partnering with the College of Information Scientist, welcomed GSA Fellow Karen A. Roberto, PhD, who presented “Aging Research and Practice in the 21st Century: Crossing Disciplinary Lines.” Also, in cooperation with the Grace Abbott School of Social Work, the department hosted a panel of individuals who discussed their aging careers in diverse fields — such as finance, demography, information systems, and social work administration.

**Save the date for next year’s Careers in Aging Week:**
April 7 to 13, 2013
The University of North Carolina at Charlotte’s Gerontology Program and Gerontology Clubs held their annual Careers in Aging Week events at the nearby Madison Saints Paradise South Senior Living facility. Several students were inducted into Gamma Psi, the local chapter of the Sigma Phi Omega honor society. The school also hosted roundtable discussions with program alumni about their career paths.

Virginia Tech celebrated Careers in Aging Week during its 16th Annual Center for Gerontology Recognition Ceremony. The school honored several distinguished faculty and students and welcomed GSA Fellow Keith Whitfield, PhD, as the keynote speaker. His talk was titled, “Lessons My Father Taught Me About Aging.”

Visit www.careersinaging.com for more information!

**GSA and AGHE gratefully acknowledge the Geriatric Social Work Initiative for providing grant support for schools of social work around the country. Other grants were made possible through the GSA Innovation Fund.**
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Inside it includes the following topics:

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- Why Aging?
- What Job and Career Opportunities Are Available?
- How Do You Become a Professional in Aging?
- How Do You Select a Program in Aging?
- How Can You Find Out More About the Field of Aging?
- Contact Information
- Is Aging the Field for You?

Continued from page 1 - Vaccination Summit Provides New Solutions for Prevention Efforts

The roundtable discussions generated numerous policy proposals. ‘out of the box’ solutions to achieving improved adherence to immunizations across the entire adult continuum,” she said. “The issues and challenges around immunizations for adults can only be best addressed using a comprehensive social ecological model approach.”

She added, “This type of approach will require input and implementation from GSA members who have the expertise to facilitate environmental and policy changes, implement interpersonal interventions, and address the intrapersonal or individual aspects within older individuals and their caregivers that will help us achieve our immunization goals set forth by Healthy People 2020.”

In addition to the release of the white paper, other forthcoming NAVP endeavors include new issues in GSA’s Public Policy & Aging Report, WHAT’S HOT newsletter, and From Publication to Practice series; a session at the 2012 GSA Annual Scientific Meeting in San Diego; and a 2013 invitational conference where states who are preparing to face massive demographic changes, and if not, what policy tools are available to meet the housing needs of older adults. The report can be accessed at www.nhc.org/media/files/AgingReport2012.pdf.

AARP Examines Family-Centered Care

The AARP Public Policy Institute has released a new paper, “Moving Toward Person- and Family-Centered Care.” Although person- and family-centered care has gained attention in recent years as a mechanism for transforming health care and long-term services and supports (LTSS), it has not been fully integrated as an essential part of all care and support. The paper, authored by GSA Fellow Lynn Feinberg, MSW, describes what person- and family-centered care is, and discusses why many experts believe it improves care and quality of life for older adults and for their families. It can be downloaded at www.aarp.org/relationships/caregiving/info-03-2012/moving-toward-person-and-family-centered-care-insight-AARP-ppi-ltc.html

Genetic Information Added to HRS Database

The Health and Retirement Study (HRS), a 20-year nationwide survey of the health, economic, and social status of older Americans, has added genetic information from consenting participants to its massive database. The data are comprised of approximately 2.5 million genetic markers from each person and are immediately available for analysis by qualified researchers. Data from a total of 20,000 HRS participants are expected to be posted to the database by the end of 2013, enabling genome-wide association studies (GWAS) to be conducted. The GWAS technology will allow researchers to conduct studies of survivorship, longevity, and genetic determinants of aging, along with studies of complex disease traits, physiological measures and functions, biomarkers, and physical performance. The longitudinal design of the HRS greatly enhances the power to detect genetic effects and to study determinants of age-dependent changes in health and function. Specific information on the data can be found at hrsonline.isr.umich.edu.

Report Focuses on Older Adults’ Housing

The Center for Housing Policy has released a comprehensive report on the challenges of housing the growing numbers of older adults, “Housing an Aging Population — Are We Prepared?” This resource explores whether states, communities, and the nation at large are prepared to face massive demographic changes, and if not, what policy tools are available to meet the housing needs of older adults. The report can be accessed at www.nhc.org/media/files/AgingReport2012.pdf.
Research Creates Discovery

Explore novel approaches to improving health and well-being of older adults and their family members and discover vibrant, inter-professional research opportunities at

www.nursing.jhu.edu/agingcenter

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Funding Opportunity Issued for Services to Older Refugees

The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Administration for Children and Families Eligible has issued a grant opportunity for those providing services to older refugees. The Office of Refugee Resettlement (ORR) invites individuals responsible for refugee programs to submit applications requesting funds to ensure the provision of social and supportive services to older refugees, defined as refugees and other ORR-eligible populations who are age 60 and above. The applicant should establish and/or expand a working relationship with state agencies on aging and local community area agencies on aging to ensure all older refugees in the community will be linked to mainstream aging services in the community; provide appropriate services to all older refugees who are not currently being provided for in the community; demonstrate that the proposed purposes are related to linking older refugees with appropriate services in the community to help increase independent living; and develop services for or link older refugees to naturalization services, with special attention to newly-arrived older refugees and those who have lost or are at risk of losing Supplemental Security Income and/or other federal benefits. Applications are due June 25. For additional details, visit www.acf.hhs.gov/grants/open/foa/view/HHS-2012-ACF-ORR-RL-0319.

Residential Complex in The Netherlands Provides Experiences of a Normal Household

According to The New York Times, there is a new residential complex, Hogewey, located in the Netherlands that is designed for older men and women suffering from severe dementia. However, rather than a typical nursing home, the 23-unit complex is virtually indistinguishable from other residential developments in the area. The apartments open onto a courtyard with benches, ponds, fountains, and beds of flowers. Amenities include a small supermarket, a theater, and a restaurant and cafe that attract people from around the area. The residents can participate in a variety of activities, like clubs for music, baking, painting, and gardening. The residents are confined to Hogewey for their own safety, but within the complex they are able to move around freely, to the extent that they are able and/or wish. When the home’s operator, a government-owned nursing home group called Vivium, decided to build new facilities, the design reflected changes that would enable its residents to experience the smells and sounds of a normal household. The 240 staff members wear street clothes and they cook and care for the 152 residents, bathe them, and organize their activities.

U.K. to Begin Automatic Pension Enrollments

According to The Telegraph, employees in the U.K. will start to be automatically enrolled in workplace pensions by their companies, in an effort to start millions of people saving for their retirement. However, under the current plans, individuals will be enrolled automatically once they reach the income tax threshold. This means that 675,000 people will not be automatically enrolled in workplace pensions. However, people with low incomes will still be able to opt in to a workplace pension and receive a contribution from their employer.

Walking Benefits Singapore Seniors

According to Channel News Asia, the Health Promotion Board (HPB) in Singapore released the findings of a study involving 1,200 seniors, which showed that those who participated in the National Brisk Walking Program were, on average, eight percent fitter than their peers. The HPB is reported to be developing a reward system for older adults who spend at least 100 minutes a week brisk walking. The news article indicated that the South-West Community Development Council (CDC) will begin a pilot for exercises such as brisk walking, which will be rolled out by other CDCs over the next three years.

Borchard Foundation Offers Grants for Law, Policy Studies

The Borchard Foundation Center on Law & Aging underwrites an academic research grant program to further scholarship about new or improved public policies, laws and/or programs that will enhance the quality of life for older adults (including those who are poor or otherwise isolated by lack of education, language, culture, disability, or other barriers). Up to four grants of $20,000 each year are available. The center encourages applications that propose to analyze and recommend changes in one or more important existing public policies, laws, and/or programs relating to older people; or anticipate the need for and recommend new public policies, laws, and/or programs for older people. This program is open to all interested and qualified legal, health sciences, social sciences, and gerontology scholars and professionals. Organizations, whether profit or non-profit, are not eligible to apply, although they may administer the grant. However, two or more individuals in the same institution or different institutions may submit a collaborative proposal. Grant recipients must be U.S. citizens or legal residents of the U.S. and must be affiliated with a U.S. based institution or organization. The online application submission due date is October 15. For additional details, see www.borchardcla.org/academic-research-grant-program/grant-application-process.
Call for Nominations
2013 Busse Research Awards

To promote international research in gerontology, two Busse Research Awards will be given at the 20th IAGG World Congress of Gerontology and Geriatrics in Seoul, Korea, June 23-27, 2013. Two gerontologists (junior or mid-career) will be selected. One award will recognize a scientist from the social/behavioral sciences; the other from the biomedical sciences. Awards are $6,000 (USD) each, plus up to $3,000 (USD) for travel/living expenses. Awardees must present a lecture based on their research at the conference. Deadline for receipt of applications: October 1, 2012.

For information and application forms, visit WEBSITE:
www.geri.duke.edu/busse/busse.html or contact:

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GSA Innovation Fund

The Gerontological Society of America’s Innovation Fund will enable GSA to strengthen its commitment to fulfilling the needs of its members in the years ahead. Given the forthcoming demands on aging-related professionals, this initiative is the founding investment in the future of gerontology.

Please consider a donation to the GSA Innovation Fund.

- DEVELOP funding to educate the public on the significance of research.
- EXPAND the pipeline of the next generation of students.
- BUILD programs to facilitate international collaboration.

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Hartford Awards Social Work Scholars

The prestigious Hartford Scholars Program has granted eight geriatric social work researchers a two-year award that will provide career development, mentorship, and support for projects that will improve healthy outcomes for the country’s aging population.

The 2012 scholars are examining such topics as civic engagement, trauma among African American seniors, and the psychosocial impact of female sexual dysfunction. The cohort also includes one scholar supported by the Veterans Health Administration (VA) who will focus on the distress experienced by older cancer patients.

The Hartford Scholars Program provides individualized mentorship from top-tier national researchers who offer comprehensive feedback and guidance, and covers travel expenses and registration fees for several gerontology and social work conferences and professional development institutes. The program is funded by the John A. Hartford Foundation and administered by The Gerontological Society of America as a component of the nationwide Geriatric Social Work Initiative, which seeks to expand the training of social workers in order to improve the health and well being of older people and their families.

National Program Director Barbara Berkman, DSW, PhD, works together with a national program advisory committee to select the recipients, which total 125 individuals to date. Listed below are the new scholars and their primary research topics:

Sharon Bowland • University of Louisville
Research Topic: Older African-American Trauma Survivors: Problems, Processes, and Attempted Resolutions

Christina Costa • Boston College
Research Topic: The Experience of Engagement in the Third Age: An Exploration of Productive Activities

Emily Greenfield • Rutgers University
Research Topic: Aging in Community, Aging with Community: Examining Older Adults’ Civic Engagement in NORC Programs

Annie Hughes • Michigan State University
Research Topic: Decreasing the Psychosocial Impact of Female Sexual Dysfunction through Self-Management

Dennis Kao • University of Houston
Research Topic: Using Geo-Ethnography to Explore the Spatial Accessibility of Health Services for Aging Minorities

Terri Lewinson • Georgia State University
Research Topic: Mental and Physical Health Outcomes of Older Adults Residing in Extended Stay Hotels

Frances Nedjat-Haiem (Hartford/VA Scholar) • Greater Los Angeles Healthcare System
Research Topic: Managing Distress in Elderly Cancer Patients Near the End of Life

Avani Shah • University of Alabama
Research Topic: Motivational Interviewing and Self-Administered CBT to Address Depressive Symptoms and Medical Compliance in Older Cardiac Rehabilitation Patients

Whitelaw Advocates Retirement Choice

To the editor:

I am writing on behalf of The Gerontological Society of America, a membership organization of approximately 5,400 researchers, educators, and clinicians who work to improve the quality of life for people as they age. A significant percentage of our members are employed as faculty in university settings.

In an interview in the March 16 issue of Science, Association of American Universities President Hunter Rawlings III made a very unfortunate and ageist statement. In response to a question about academic researchers who are delaying retirement, he stated, “I think it’s irresponsible when faculty members stay on in their positions because the law allows them to.”

While Mr. Rawlings does not say directly that older faculty members are less competent than their younger counterparts, he appears to advocate policies that support discrimination based on age. We believe that it is wrong to establish a culture that relies upon chronological age to formally or informally remove people from work. Such policies are against the law. While we agree that research support should go to those who can make the greatest contributions, we recommend that such decisions be based upon merit and not age.

Mr. Rawlings points out that faculty positions may be increasingly scarce for the next generation. There are many reasons for this possibility; pitting generations against one another is not a helpful path for achieving understanding and appropriate solutions. In any academic field, established researchers are vital both to the training of new investigators and to the advancement of science.

By 2030, a full one-fifth of America’s population will be 65 and over. The current demographic transformation creates great opportunities as well as challenges. Many scenarios are possible, but informed discourse based upon science should be the basis for shaping the organization of academe and its research centers.

Sincerely,
Nancy Whitelaw, PhD
President of The Gerontological Society of America
June 2012
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