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Share GSA’s Benefits with New Graduates!
Although perfect for any occasion, GSA memberships make especially thoughtful graduation presents. Transitional memberships also are available for students who are already members. Visit www.geron.org and click on “Gift of Membership” under the “Membership” menu item for details.

GSA Offers San Diego Hotel Discounts
Discounted hotel rates for GSA’s Annual Scientific Meeting in San Diego this November are now available. Attendees can make reservations at the headquarters hotel, the San Diego Marriott Marquis & Marina, as well as two nearby properties, the Hilton San Diego Gaslamp Quarter and Omni San Diego Hotel. Visit www.geron.org/annualmeeting to take advantage of the lower pricing. The meeting is scheduled from Wednesday, November 14, to Friday, November 18, and the theme is “Charting New Frontiers in Aging.” Mark your calendars now!

GSA Gets Green Light for Next Round of Journalism Fellowships

After two years, 31 participants, and over 120 news stories, GSA has received a new grant to continue the successful MetLife Foundation Journalists in Aging Fellowship Program. For a third time, it will bring a cadre of aging-focused reporters to GSAs Annual Scientific Meeting who will be expected to deliver a story from the conference and a major piece or series in the following months.

The program, run jointly by GSA and New America Media (NAM), is made possible by a generous grant from the MetLife Foundation. Half of the invited participants will be chosen from ethnic media outlets that serve communities within the U.S.

There will be a total of 17 fellows — one more than last year as a result of a supporting grant from the John A. Hartford Foundation. Thanks to its involvement, one reporter covering health and aging topics will be designated as the John A. Hartford/MetLife Foundation Journalism in Aging & Health Fellow.

Ten previous fellows also will receive funds to come to the meeting in San Diego to cover the newest developments in the field of aging. “The growing interest from funders and reporters highlights both the success of the program and the fact that GSAs meeting is increasingly seen as a venue for journalists to better understand scientific discoveries, social and policy debates, and solutions to the issues facing our aging population,” said GSA Deputy Executive Director Linda Harootyan, MSW.

The U.S. Census Bureau predicts that a full one-fifth of the country’s population will be 65 and older by 2030. “This is an important development, since the unprecedented growth of the senior demographic calls for a stronger media focus on aging.”

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Continued on page 8

GSA Remains Key Voice in International Aging Dialog

When the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO) convened an April symposium to discuss World Health Day 2012’s focus on aging and health, GSA’s president and several prominent members shared their expertise with policymakers from around the globe.

Every year, World Health Day is celebrated on April 7 to mark the anniversary of the founding of the World Health Organization in 1948. It provides an opportunity to mobilize collective action around a single health challenge with global impact and to engage different actors in the search for solutions.

GSA Fellow Linda Fried, MD, delivered the keynote address, making the case for why aging must be part of the public health and development agenda in all countries. In response to this speech, GSA President Nancy Whitelaw, PhD, outlined proven steps that can be taken to improve health outcomes for older people. GSA Fellow Charles Fahey, MDiv, speaking as the immediate past chair of the National Council on Aging, discussed the challenges and opportunities faced by older people today. U.S. Secretary of Health and Human Services Kathleen Sebelius and PAHO Director Mirta Roses Periago, MD, gave opening remarks.

Continued on page 9
From the Executive Director

Never too Old to Play

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

“I wish grown ups could remember being kids.” That’s a phrase you’ll see on Starbucks’ coffee cups and store windows from time to time. And interestingly enough, this philosophy seems to be appearing in gerontology circles, too.

One of the speakers at last month’s Pan American Health Organization symposium commemorating World Health Day 2012 told the audience, “Within the core of each of us is the child we once were.” He went on to say that our inner child is the basis for what we have become as adults and what we will be in old age. GSA played a role in this event in part because this year’s World Health Day theme is “Good health adds life to years.” (See the front page for more details about the symposium.)

And for May’s Older Americans Month, the U.S. Administration on Aging chose the theme, “Never too old to play.” The administration’s goal is to encourage older Americans to stay engaged, active, and involved in their own lives and in their communities.

In my life, there’s one special person who doesn’t feel too old to play, and I’ll be celebrating her on May 13 — Mother’s Day. At age 80, my mother recently joined my wife, my nine-year-old son, and me on a beach vacation in St. Thomas.

While my mother is full of vitality and in generally good health, she does have a few conditions common among seniors. The whole experience of our trip reinforced for me how valuable GSA and its members are to improving the quality of life for people as they age. There is still much work to be done, but through the type of interdisciplinary collaboration that GSA makes possible, we can achieve a society where all older adults can fulfill their potential.

In the specific case of my mother, I could identify accomplishments and discoveries from within all four of GSA professional sections that have made — and will continue to make — an impact in her life.

For example, “never too old to play” should be an outlook very familiar to our Behavioral and Social Sciences Section. Numerous studies have shown that recreational activities can have tremendous health benefits. While I watched my mother enjoy the ocean and later play board games with her grandson, I also imagined how current research will inform ways for us to leverage the human capital that older adults bring to intergenerational activities.

Transportation and mobility issues — an important study topic among those in our Social Research, Policy, and Practice Section — were also a concern during my family’s trip. Navigating major airports brings new challenges when a member of the party must travel exclusively by elevator. Policies that created accommodations for people with disabilities certainly made this particular vacation destination possible for us.

And as I saw my mother confront problems arising from osteoporosis and sarcopenia, I thought of the basic research coming out of our Biological Sciences Section to determine the underlying causes of such diseases. Of course, it is the clinicians and other care providers in our Health Sciences Section who foster the development of the rehabilitative medicine and new treatment options needed to fight these chronic conditions.

I share these thoughts as a way of saying how much I admire the work GSA members do every day — both to advance the science of aging and to ensure that we, too, will never be too old to play.

Sincerely,

James
New Publications by Members


Members in the News

• On March 2, GSA Fellow Peter Martin, PhD, was quoted in a Health Canal website article regarding longevity and his research on centenarians and the oldest-old. Martin outlined six behavior-related factors of longevity. The article also mentioned Martin’s co-authors and GSA member colleagues, Jennifer Margrett, PhD, and Fellow Leonard Poon, PhD, and their published work in a special journal issue on behavior and longevity.

• On March 4, an article in The Detroit Free Press focused on Michigan’s opportunities for the older segment of its population. Thomas B. Jankowski, PhD, offered his insights into recent politics and aging-related issues. He described potential avenues that can be taken to reach the older community.

• GSA Fellow Jon Pynoos, PhD, recently was quoted in an article in The Washington Post that focused on aging in place. Pynoos discussed technologies and at-home devices that enable a growing number of older people to remain in their home during retirement.

• GSA Fellow Gloria Gutman, PhD, was quoted in The Vancouver Sun on March 19, where she discussed employers’ concerns about making changes to accommodate an aging workforce. Barbara A. Mitchell, PhD, was also cited in this article, and said that the well-being and behaviors of older adults change, and previous thoughts about aging from earlier generations are not the same today, and perhaps will be different for future elders.

Member Spotlight

GSA’s website features monthly Q&A sessions with distinguished members. The current spotlight shines on: Kate de Medeiros, PhD
Visit www.geron.org/Membership/member-spotlight to ask questions and read previous interviews.

Colleague Connection

This month’s $25 amazon.com gift certificate winner: Ju-Ping Lin, PhD
The recipient, who became eligible after referring new member Ping-Shan Tai, PhD, 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/connection.

Moody Earns ASA’s Hall of Fame Award

The American Society on Aging (ASA) presented its 2012 Hall of Fame Award to Harry “Rick” Moody, PhD, on March 29. He is the author of over 100 scholarly articles and book chapters, as well as the author of a number of books. Moody is known nationally for his work in older adult education. He has also been active in the field of biomedical ethics and holds an appointment as an adjunct associate of the Hastings Center. The ASA Hall of Fame Award is designed to recognize an individual over the age of 65 who, through their advocacy efforts, has demonstrated leadership on the national, regional, or local level to improve the lives of older adults, their abilities and contributions to society as a whole, and who encourages advocacy efforts among older adults.

Rosowsky Receives ASA Award

On March 20, The American Society on Aging (ASA) bestowed GSA Fellow Erlene Rosowsky, PsyD, with its 2012 ASA Award. Rosowsky is a psychologist who divides her time between clinical practice, education, and research. She is an assistant clinical professor in psychology in the Department of Psychiatry at Harvard Medical School, a core faculty member of the Massachusetts School of Professional Psychology and director of its Center for Mental Health and Aging, and is on the Council of Professional Geropsychology Training Programs. Rosowsky also chairs the Generations editorial board, and serves on ASAs Mental Health and Aging Network Council and Board of Directors. She is an expert on late-life personality disorders. The ASA Award is designed to recognize an individual who has made an outstanding and ongoing contribution to aging-related service, research, administration, or advocacy on the national level and creates visibility for the field of aging and ASA.

Meyer, Himes Accept Co-Editor Positions

GSA Fellows Madonna Harrington Meyer, PhD, and Christine Himes, PhD, both professors of sociology at Syracuse University’s Aging Studies Institute, have accepted positions as co-editors of Baywood Publisher’s Society and Aging Series. Authors and editors interested in submitting full-length manuscripts for the series should contact them at mhm@maxwell.syr.edu or clhomes@maxwell.syr.edu.

Corrections

• An item in the March issue announced the appointment of GSA Fellow Dennis Kodner, PhD, as an international visiting fellow by the King’s Fund in London. His first name, rather than his last name, was mistakenly placed in the headline. The correct title should have been “Kodner Appointed International Visiting Fellow.”

• The April issue did not name both co-editors of “Geropsychiatrics and Mental Health Nursing (Second Edition),” which recently earned the American Journal of Nursing’s Book of the Year Award. This publication was co-edited by GSA Fellow Karen Devereaux Melillo, PhD, and Susan Crocker Houde, PhD, both affiliated with the University of Massachusetts Lowell.
As Older Americans Month Takes Place, Older Americans Act Faces Uncertain Future

Each May, aging advocates and advocates for the aging celebrate Older Americans Month. Sometimes I run across a head-in-the-sand individual or two who don’t know about this annual commemoration. I try not to judge this lapse too harshly, considering that Older Americans Month also has to compete for everyone’s attention with National Chocolate Custard Month and National Zombie Awareness Month.

This year’s theme is “Never Too Old to Play.” This topic emphasizes that older adults benefit from staying engaged in the lives of their families, friends, and communities. It’s never too late to learn a new skill or start a new activity. As you may know, GSA members and other promotional ideas at www.aoa.gov on Aging website has press releases, ready-made posters and clip art, advocating for the Older Americans Act (OAA). The Administration newspaper publication, participating on panel discussions, and our research and policy agendas by writing opinion pieces for David J. Kupfer, MD: “Brain Health” by Floyd E. Bloom, MD, M. Flint Beal, MD, and “Adult Life and Normal Aging,” taken from “The Dana Guide to primary promoters of brain growth and mental strength.

“Never too old to play” reminds us that we are never too old to learn, too. Studies show that brain cells continue to grow and change even in old age, with social interaction and physical activity being primary promoters of brain growth and mental strength.

Consider this excerpt from Sandra Ackerman’s “The Brain in Adult Life and Normal Aging,” taken from “The Dana Guide to Brain Health” by Floyd E. Bloom, MD, M. Flint Beal, MD, and David J. Kupfer, MD: Good “workouts” for the brain can be found in almost any area of life. Productive, satisfying work — whether in paid employment, volunteer programs, or a challenging hobby — provides exercise for the brain on a regular basis. Socializing with old and new friends and visiting with family in person or by long-distance communication; analyzing new information (current events, for example, or the nitty-gritty of building a retirement portfolio) in the light of what is already known; and maintaining old skills or practicing a new one (sports, gardening, bird-watching, playing a musical instrument) all stimulate the brain in various ways. When these activities include mild physical exertion as well, the brain receives a bonus; numerous studies now show that physical exercise at all ages makes a major contribution to the overall health of the brain.

Older Americans Month affords us all the opportunity to promote our research and policy agendas by writing opinion pieces for newspaper publication, participating on panel discussions, and advocating for the Older Americans Act (OAA). The Administration on Aging website has press releases, ready-made posters and clip art, and other promotional ideas at www.aoa.gov /aoaroot/Press_Room/Observances/2012/Older_Americans.aspx.

Older Americans Act Update

It is appropriate this month to focus on providing an update on what is happening and not happening with the OAA reauthorization.

In the U.S. House of Representatives, the committee of jurisdiction for the OAA is the Subcommittee on Higher Education and Workforce Training within the Education and Workforce Committee. Neither the subcommittee nor the full committee have taken any action on the OAA — not one hearing, not one reauthorization bill introduced by any members of the committee. The chair of the subcommittee is Representative Virginia Foxx (R-NC) and the ranking member is Representative Ruben Hinojosa (D-TX).

Elsewhere in the house, there has been minimal action on the OAA. Representative Debbie Wasserman Schultz (D-FL) introduced the Holocaust Survivors Assistance Act of 2011 (H.R. 2786). This bill would amend the OAA to make Holocaust survivors a priority population. It was referred to the Subcommittee on Higher Education and Workforce Training with 14 cosponsors.

The Expanding Opportunities for Older Americans Act of 2011 (H.R. 3749), was introduced by Representative Linda Richardson (D-CA). This bill would amend the Senior Community Service Employment Program. The bill was referred to the Subcommittee on Higher Education and Workforce Training with no cosponsors.

In the U.S. Senate, members have been working hard to push for the OAA reauthorization. The jurisdiction falls under the Subcommittee on Primary Health and Aging within the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions. The subcommittee chair is Senator Bernard Sanders (I-VT).

On March 28, Sanders held a briefing to highlight the reauthorization action to date. Joining him were Senators Richard Blumenthal (D-CT), Robert Casey (D-PA), Herb Kohl (D-WI), Joe Manchin (D-WV), and Sheldon Whitehouse (D-RI). Hundreds of participants from the concurrent American Society on Aging/National Council on Aging conference attended. Sanders said he plans to merge proposals advanced by Senate Democrats into a single Democratic OAA package for markup this summer, probably in June.

In January, Sanders introduced the Older Americans Act Amendments of 2012 (S. 2037). The centerpiece of the legislation is a funding increase of 50 percent for meal programs, supportive services, senior service employment, and health promotion and disease prevention. The bill would also strengthen the long-term care ombudsman program with a 25 percent boost in funding and greater independence for ombudsmen. Sanders also wants to redefine “greatest economic need” to be 200 percent of the federal
poverty level and re-define “greatest social need” to include lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and HIV-positive older individuals and persons with Alzheimer’s disease. S. 2037 gives states flexibility to select an agency to coordinate legal services contracts and modernize senior centers and community planning for an aging population.

In February, Blumenthal introduced the Elder Protection and Abuse Prevention Act (S. 2077) to amend the OAA by adopting new definitions of elder abuse, neglect, and exploitation (from the Elder Justice Act) and by establishing new training and coordination requirements for OAA programs. The bill directs the National Adult Protective Services Resource Center to work with states to develop best practices on incorporating elder abuse screening into health and wellness services. Victims of elder abuse, neglect, and exploitation would be considered part of those “in greatest social need” under this legislation. Senators Al Franken (D-MN), Whitehouse, and Casey co-sponsored the legislation. In December, Casey introduced the Improving Care for Vulnerable Older Citizens through Workforce Advancement Act of 2011 (S. 1982), which would establish a new grant program under Title IV, the Demonstration Program on Care Coordination and Service Delivery, providing more than three million dollars to six new, three-year programs to study care coordination and improved delivery of health services for older adults suffering from chronic illness or at risk of re-hospitalization. The programs would focus on finding ways to use direct care workers to address more efficiently and effectively the needs of older adults with multiple chronic conditions and long-term care needs. It would accomplish this by utilizing these workers to monitor health status, to help patients follow prescribed care, and to educate patients and their families and to make care transitions; and to take on deeper clinical responsibilities, as trained, related to specific diseases, such as Alzheimer’s dementia, congestive heart failure and dementia. Franken co-sponsored the legislation.

On November 8, 2011, Senate Aging Committee Chairman Kohl and Senator Barbara Mikulski (D-MD) introduced the Strengthening Services for America’s Seniors Act (S. 1819). Mikulski serves on the Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions Committee’s Subcommittee on Primary Health and Aging and holds the title of the longest-serving woman in Congress. S. 1819 would amend the OAA by creating a voluntary program to help states assess family caregivers and to provide these caregivers with referrals for supportive services. The bill would also address some of the existing limitations of the Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program and establish an advisory committee to assess, coordinate, and improve OAA legal assistance activities.

Franken, one of the earliest legislators to show interest in reauthorization, conducted forums in Minnesota that led to his introduction of an OAA reauthorization bill, the Home Care Consumer Bill of Rights Act (S. 1750) last October. The bill would protect individuals who receive long-term services and supports at home or in the community by guaranteeing these individuals their basic rights and protection against abuse and neglect. S. 1750 would direct states to develop a home care consumers’ bill of rights and establish a home care ombudsman program.

Senator Amy Klobuchar (D-MN) introduced the Guardianship Accountability and Senior Protection Act (S. 1744). This bill was referred to the Committee on the Judiciary rather than the Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions Committee, unlike the other OAA bills, because it requires the U.S. assistant secretary on aging to work with the justice system to collect data on, analyze, and evaluate the process of establishing guardians and conservators.

**It’s Never too Late to Take Action**

I continue to hold out hope that the senators and representatives of the 112th Congress will realize the seriousness of this issue and what is at stake. Many federal programs are being charged with being duplicative, inefficient, wasteful, and full of fraud. That may be true for some federal programs and the bureaucracies they have developed, but it is unfair to paint all federal programs with the same brush.

Through the years, the OAA programs have helped millions of older adults in many ways using precious few dollars. The OAA has a broad mandate to assist vulnerable elders primarily through the programs of the aging network. These programs target a variety of older adults in the community and in long-term care facilities, including the hungry, the poor, the abused, the medically needy, and the underemployed. Through the nutrition program alone, 2.6 million elderly are helped each day. The OAA supports caregivers, ombudsmen, legal services, financial literacy, and research and demonstration projects. There’s hardly a community or constituency that is not touched by the OAA.

We need to see action in the Senate with a Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions Committee markup and movement toward consideration by the full Senate in order to pressure the House of Representatives to do its job. In an election year, it is difficult to accomplish reauthorizations, but the OAA would be a positive bill for both parties to pass. At the very least, positive movement this year would lay a good foundation for speedy action in the next Congress.

Please let your members of Congress know that you want the OAA reauthorized this year. To find your senators, go to www.senate.gov and key in your state. To find your representative, go to www.house.gov and key in your zip code.

Also, contact the leaders of the committees of jurisdiction and let them know that we are watching and waiting for action on this critical piece of legislation. The Health, Education, Labor and Pensions Committee chair is Senator Tom Harkin (D-IA) and the ranking member is Senator Mike Enzi (R-WY). The House of Representatives Committee on Education and the Workforce chair is Representative John Kline (R-MN) and the ranking member is Representative George Miller (D-CA).

And don’t forget, May is also Correct Posture Month.
Canada Explores Seniors’ Automobile Needs

Canada’s auto industry is considering the effect aging baby boomers may have on its business, according to a recent article published in The Globe and Mail. The paper reported that companies are debating the implementation of several senior-friendly options. For example, cars with touch-screen and voice-activated controls can be easier to use for those with stiff hands or wrists, or declined fine motor skills. Larger door openings, tall seating positions, spacious vehicles, and seats that are heated could be useful for those with sore backs or joints. Lane-departure alert systems or parallel parking programs may be beneficial to those with vision issues. In addition, brighter instrument displays and larger fonts found throughout the vehicle on various instruments, knobs, buttons, and clocks, may help too.

Expected Dementia Rise in Australia Impacts Need to Complete Advance Directives

According to The Sydney Morning Herald, a recent report by Alzheimer’s Australia has found that only about 55 per cent of Australians have a will, and even less have recorded their directives related to nursing, guardianship, or power of attorney in a legal document. The report, by Alzheimer’s Australia, calls on the federal government to implement a national awareness campaign planning for these decisions, as well as for general practitioners to invest more time with encouraging patients to complete legal documents that express their wishes for their future care. The report indicates that many service providers did not know or understand the importance of future care planning, nor how to access the information. This organization indicated that they expect a rise of people with dementia.

Bristol May Experience Closures to Care Homes and Centers

According to the Bristol Evening Post, up to 10 residential care homes and twelve care centers could be closed down in Bristol, U.K., a move being considered by the Bristol City Council. The remaining care homes and centers that remain open may be managed by other organizations, including private organizations. The changes to the day centers would involve personal care budgets, which would allow individuals to select the services they will use, rather than having the services selected for them. The closures would be phased in over a three-year period. Demand for care services is growing in the area. As of December last year, the council supported 6,737 older people, and this figure is expected to go up by 17 percent in the next 10 years. The article also stated that the demand for these services has been changing, and that an increasing number of people are interested in living more independently by remaining in their own homes or in assisted living facilities.

New Zealand Will Retain Current Retirement Age

The Dominion Post has reported that the New Zealand treasury is putting pressure on the prime minister to address the cost of an aging population. The treasury endorsed a report last year that called for an increase in the age of eligibility for retirement from age 65 to age 67. However, the prime minister is reported in this article as having said that this issue will need to be considered in the future, but the age of retirement will remain the same for now, as the change isn't necessary for the next eight years.

Number of ‘Lonely’ Deaths Increasing in Japan

The Daily Yomiuri recently published a story that described an increasing number of unnoticed deaths within single households of caregivers and care-recipients who are often either an older parent or a disabled child or relatives. These types of deaths are referred to as “lonely deaths” and are an increasing social concern for many Japanese. In many cases, a family member who cared for an older parent or a disabled relative died of disease first, leaving the survivor, who later died without care. Last year, the Tokyo-based NLI Research Institute estimated that a slightly more than 15,600 persons aged 65 or older die every year without their deaths being noticed for at least four days.

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

To the Editor,

As Canadians, we read with interest the article in the international news section of the March issue of Gerontology News entitled “End-of-life case brought before Canada’s Supreme Court.” It is true that end of life decisions in Canada are complicated not just by struggles between patients/caregivers and medical personnel but also in terms of trying to “allocate resources in the best way possible.” This exacerbation is not because of Canada’s public health system but because both public and private health care systems face competing demands on scarce resources and, as such, the U.S. health care system shares this exacerbating factor. The difference is that in Canada those scarce resources are more likely to be distributed equitably.

Sincerely,

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ESPO Members Address How Students Can Get Involved in International Aging Issues: Part 2

By Guest Authors: Thao Tran, MSN, RN, PHN, Julie Norstrand, MS, MSW, and Heehyul Moon, MSW

In this edition of ESPO News, we will first follow-up on last month’s column, where we examined issues related to global aging. During the economic recession, much of the public’s attention has been on the impact of the lives of working adults, rather than the experience of older adults. In the U.S., a major concern for many older Americans has been the net effect on their retirement. Since this population segment has a relatively short time, compared to younger workers, to regain lost wealth, the loss of employment opportunity or retirement savings is a serious concern.

Internationally, older adults have been adversely impacted by the loss of jobs and declines in economic growth. Phillip Martin described in his 2009 paper, “The Recession and Migration: Alternative Scenarios,” that prior to the financial crisis in 2008, China experienced enormous rural to urban migration; and, as a result of factory closings, many of these migrants have lost their jobs. Nancy Hooyman and the late H. Asuman Kiyak, elaborating on this research in their chapter in the 2010 book, “Social Gerontology: A Multidisciplinary Perspective,” explained that these continuous internal migrations are resulting in older adults being left behind without family members living nearby to provide care.

Limits in government funding available to care for older adults and obstacles for family members to provide care, such as work or financial ability, will require emerging scholars in the field of gerontology to help address the needs of an aging population through research, teaching, clinical care, and policy.

What is the Role for ESPO and Gerontology?

The field of gerontology is working to respond to a need for preparing an adequately trained workforce to meet the socioeconomic and health needs of baby boomers. The potential overutilization of services and lack of geriatric professionals to deliver the social and health needs of this age group may result in critical gaps in geriatric care.

Baby boomers are living longer and redefining several aspects of aging. This changing societal view regarding aging is represented in educational institutions that are working to “gerontologize” their educational programs by building gerontological competencies into the curriculum. In the future, those going into gerontology or any fields working with older adults will need to have a holistic view of aging. This includes possessing strong knowledge of how health care is delivered, recognizing the myriad number of social services available, and familiarizing themselves with the aging network. Furthermore, the role of gerontology will consist of advocacy, education, research, delivery of best clinical practice and awareness for the aging community.

How Can ESPO Members Become Involved in Aging Issues Worldwide?

Become a part of our ESPO network. Within the GSA membership, students, postdoctoral, and transitional members are a part of the ESPO community, and can use this opportunity to network with aspiring gerontology scholars. For example, establishing a Campus Ambassadors Program (www.geron.org/campusambassadors) at your institution is a great way to create and nurture your global professional and social networks and at the same time promote gerontology at colleges and universities. Since EPSO members are based internationally, there is rich opportunity for international research where students can learn from one another how to meet the needs of population aging.

Join the International Federation on Ageing (IFA). The IFA works to disseminate knowledge and increase support that can have a positive impact on an aging population across the globe. As an ESPO member, you can meet other individuals across the world interested in population aging, attend conferences, discover internship opportunities and other IFA activities, and be connected through the IFA to the United Nations and the World Health Organization.

Raise funds or work with local politicians to make care accessible. Many countries will face an increased need for caregivers for an aging population. However, in China, the enforcement of the one-child-per-family policy may result in a single person having the responsibility to care for aging parents and grandparents. For parents who may prefer to go to a nursing home, they may require outside support to secure the necessary funds to pay for this care. Establishing contact with politicians around the globe can make them aware of important aging issues, such as caregiving.

Run a book drive. Developing countries often do not have a sufficient number of books to disseminate knowledge on gerontology-related issues to scientists and practitioners. Ask your former colleagues and professors for any books they would like to clear from their shelf.

Summary

The impact of population aging on a global basis can be seen in health, social, political, and economic fields. It is not clear what specific impact the current economic recession will have on aging policies in the future. While governments work to reduce vast financial debts, communities may bear a greater responsibility. Ultimately, uncertainty of the long-term impact of the global recession on older adults calls for ESPO members to unite to improve older adults’ well-being. Our role for the next century not only entails advocacy but includes promotion of community awareness, education, and research that meet the needs of our critically important aging population.
Continued from page 1 - GSA Gets Green Light for Next Round of Journalism Fellowships

All applications for the fellowship program will be reviewed by a selection committee of representatives from GSA and NAM. The criteria will include clarity and originality of proposed long-term projects; quality of samples of published or produced work; and high-impact potential of proposals geographically and across different ethnic or racial populations.

Upon arrival in San Diego, the fellows will participate in a day-long pre-conference session. GSA will showcase research highlights from the meeting and host discussions with veteran journalists on how to position aging stories in the current media environment.

The MetLife Foundation, the funder for this program, was created in 1976 by MetLife to continue its longstanding tradition of contributions and community involvement. Its goal is to empower people to lead healthy, productive lives and strengthen communities. The foundation typically makes grants related to the areas of health, education, civic affairs, and culture.

The current application and a continuously updated list of stories from the first two years’ fellows are available at www.geron.org/journalistfellows.

New Reports Lay Foundation for Relieving Seniors’ Pain

The pain suffered by older adults is the shared focus of the two newest entries in The Gerontological Society of America’s (GSA) From Publication to Practice series. Together they address both pain management and new labeling changes for one of the most popular pain medications, acetaminophen. Both issues aim to provide readers with information on how new advances in pain prevention, treatment, and management may improve care and quality of life for older adults. The From Publication to Practice series was launched in 2011 to promote the translation of research into meaningful health outcomes. Further information is available at www.geron.org/Publications/from-publication-to-practice.

SAGE Releases LGBT Service Guide

The Services & Advocacy for Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, and Transgender Elders (SAGE) organization recently released a guide created to answer questions from older adult service providers about differences in the aging experience among the LGBT community. According to SAGE, there are an estimated 1.5 million adults aged 65 years and older who identify themselves as gay, lesbian, or bisexual. This number is expected to double by the year 2030, and housing may become a top need for these seniors. However, SAGE has indicated that providers need to be aware that the effects from stigma, discrimination, isolation, and other experiences increase the risk for physical and mental illnesses among their potential service recipients. The new guide, “Inclusive Services for LGBT Older Adults: A Practical Guide to Creating Welcoming Agencies,” is intended to provide various aging-related service providers with information to improve the lives of LGBT older adults. To view this resource, visit www.lgbtagingcenter.org/resources/pdfs/NRCInclusiveServicesGuide2012.pdf.

AARP Examines Transportation Funding Reform for Older Americans

A new AARP Public Policy Institute report, “Transportation Funding Reform: Equity Considerations for Older Americans,” examines transportation funding sources at all three levels of government for low-income people, rural residents, people with disabilities, or older adults. It found that many current financing mechanisms at the federal, state, and local levels do not address the differences in how older people use the surface transportation system. The authors state that Congress must reauthorize the multibillion-dollar federal transportation law, which expired in fall 2009; however, given the national debate over alternatives to the gas tax, and the financing mechanisms being adopted at the state and local levels of government, this is a suitable time to examine the equity of various transportation taxes, fees, and charges and identify ways to address inequities while meeting the needs of an aging society. This report can be downloaded at www.aarp.org/homegarden/transportation/info-12-2011/transportation-funding-reform.html.

New Resources

New Reports Lay Foundation for Relieving Seniors’ Pain

The pain suffered by older adults is the shared focus of the two newest entries in The Gerontological Society of America’s (GSA) From Publication to Practice series. Together they address both pain management and new labeling changes for one of the most popular pain medications, acetaminophen. Both issues aim to provide readers with information on how new advances in pain prevention, treatment, and management may improve care and quality of life for older adults. The From Publication to Practice series was launched in 2011 to promote the translation of research into meaningful health outcomes. Further information is available at www.geron.org/Publications/from-publication-to-practice.

SAGE Releases LGBT Service Guide

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Continued from page 1 - GSA Remains Key Voice in International Aging Dialog

“The charge and the tasks ahead of us are many but I think the opportunities are huge,” Fried said. “And if we learn how to bring public health into the clinic, into the community, and into our vision of the roles and opportunities and needs we have for contributions by older adults in the coming decades, we will have an opportunity to create a world of ‘win-wins’ for all ages and all generations.”

Fried added that stakeholders must give attention to how new institutions and new health systems are created, as well as how health professionals are trained, in order to both compress morbidity and realize the benefits of an aging society.

Whitelaw said that whatever steps are taken, older adults themselves must be engaged in the effort, and noted that GSA members have a proven track record of large-scale change in support of community-based models for healthy aging.

“We need to embrace self management as an essential component of a broader healthy aging agenda,” Whitelaw said. “And we need to understand that the knowledge and the skills for self management are not simply delivered or taught, but rather they are developed through full participation of older adults in creating and implementing practical, visible, and evidence-based solutions and supports for their own individual aging and for population aging more generally.”

She also called for further collaboration between research communities in PAHO countries and GSA and its members.

“We can offer proven, evidence-based successful programmatic approaches that promote healthy aging and the engagement of older adults in their health both personally and at a population level,” she said. “These programs can be widely replicated if we build systems and structures to make that happen — and that is all quite doable.”

PAHO, the host for the April symposium, is an international public health agency with over 100 years of experience working to improve health and living standards of the people of the Americas. It is part of the United Nations system, serving as the Regional Office for the Americas of the World Health Organization, and as the health organization of the Inter-American System.
**AHRQ Aims to Bridge Clinical, Health Services Research**

The Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ) has issued a funding opportunity announcement to solicit resource-related research project (R24) applications from applicant organizations that propose to build new and/or enhance existing capacity in research and dissemination infrastructure that will bridge the gap between clinical and health services research and everyday practice. This is expected to be achieved by building a knowledge base about how to improve the translation and dissemination of evidence-based health information, interventions, and clinical practices to populations not traditionally reached by such information or practice. In addition, AHRQ is aiming to seed a sustainable infrastructure that would continue to disseminate appropriate evidence-based health information to such a population independent of research grant support. Applicants are invited to use collaborative expertise to propose innovative approaches to customizations of content and delivery mechanisms of existing evidence-based health information and/or tools for their use in the target audience(s) so as to increase their use, implementation, and impact. Innovations should aim to increase the impact and effective use of evidence-based health information and/or tools by developing, implementing, and evaluating customizations that target important audiences, stakeholders, systems, or settings; these customizations should engage multiple user-stakeholders, including the target audience, and be grounded by the original evidence-based information/tools’ contents.

Applications are due May 22. For more information, visit grants.nih.gov/grants/guide/rfa-files/RFA-HS-12-005.html.

**NIA Interested in Multidisciplinary HIV/AIDS Studies**

The National Institute on Aging (NIA) has announced plans for a grant opportunity related to multidisciplinary studies in HIV/AIDS and aging. It is expected to be published in this spring with non-standard receipt dates beginning in the summer. NIA will encourage applications proposing to study HIV infection, HIV-associated conditions, HIV treatment, or biobehavioral or social factors associated with HIV/AIDS in the context of aging and/or in older adults. The research areas encouraged is based, in part, on the recommendations of the Working Group on HIV and Aging convened by the National Institutes of Health Office of AIDS Research. Studies considered for this opportunity will likely have some or all of the following characteristics: clinical orientation; a focus on aging and/or the aged; attention to outcomes appropriate to aging population; use of existing resources where possible; and selection of appropriate controls. For further information, visit grants.nih.gov/grants/guide/notice-files/NOT-AG-12-004.html.

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**Single Baby Boomers Facing Increased Challenges as They Age**

Nick and Bobbi Ercoline, the couple depicted on the “Woodstock” soundtrack album cover, have now been happily married for over 40 years. However, a new special issue of *The Gerontologist* showing the Ercolines as they look today — a portrait of successful aging — finds that their unmarried baby boomer counterparts generally fare much poorer in terms of economic, health, and social outcomes.

In 2011, the first of the 79 million American baby boomers (those born between 1946 and 1964) reached age 65. Among this population, approximately one in three people are unmarried; the vast majority are either divorced or never-married, while only 10 percent are widowed.

Study authors I-Fen Lin, PhD, and Susan L. Brown, PhD — using data from the 1980, 1990, and 2000 Census and the 2009 American Community Survey to measure marital status trends over time — found that the number of boomers that are unmarried has grown by more than 50 percent since 1980, and that these singles also face increasing difficulties.

“Unmarried boomers are disproportionately women, younger, and non-white,” the authors state in their article. “They tend to have fewer economic resources and poorer health. The prevalence of disability is twice as high among unmarrieds and marrieds.”

And despite this higher rate of disability, single boomers are less likely to have health insurance.

Among women, widows appear to be the most disadvantaged as they enjoy fewer economic resources and have poorer health than divorced and never-married women. In contrast, those who never married are the least advantaged among men. Despite having relatively high levels of education, never-married men have poorer economic circumstances and are most likely to live alone.

Overall, 19 percent of unmarried boomers said they received food stamps, public assistance, or supplemental security income, while only six percent of married boomers indicated they used these services.

The article on marriage related disparities, “Unmarried Boomers Confront Old Age: A National Portrait,” is one of several in the latest issue of *The Gerontologist*, which is titled, “Not Your Mother’s Old Age: Baby Boomers at Age 65.” Other studies within this installment address caregiving issues, concerns among minority boomers, and intergenerational relationships. GSA members may access the journal at www.geron.org/thegerontologist.
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.

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