Journal Metrics Show Increased Performance

A new report reveals that three of GSA’s peer-reviewed journals have experienced significant increases in impact factor within the last two years. Impact factor is a measure of the frequency with which articles in a journal have been cited in a given period of time. The figures are listed in the most recent issue of Journal Citation Reports: Social Sciences Edition, one of the most respected publication evaluation tools. It is distributed by the Institute of Scientific Information, a division of Thomson Reuters. Since 2006, The Journal of Gerontology Series A: Biological Sciences and Medical Sciences has experienced a 40 percent increase in impact factor. Similarly, The Journals of Gerontology Series B: Psychological Sciences and Social Sciences has seen a 17 percent increase, and The Gerontologist a 13 percent increase. These journals have also improved their ranking with other comparable publications in the Gerontology category, occupying three of the top ten spots. (See chart on page 13).

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Calorie Restriction Society To Join GSA in Atlanta

At its upcoming 62nd Annual Scientific Meeting in Atlanta, GA, GSA will partner with the Calorie Restriction (CR) Society to provide a venue for the group’s sixth conference. Attendees are welcome to attend any of the CR sessions, several of which will feature presentations by GSA members.

“We believe that holding the CR Society conference within the GSA meeting represents an opportunity for both organizations,” said Robert Krikorian, PhD, a member of the CR Society’s board of directors. “It will expose many GSA members for the first time to preclinical and clinical CR science and to the practice of CR as lifestyle. In addition, this arrangement will offer members of the CR Society access to current aging research.”

The CR Society originated several years ago from early efforts of a few individuals interested in life extension, including the renowned Roy Walford and Brian Delaney. Its membership is composed of individuals — not necessarily scientists — who are practicing or considering CR as a lifestyle.

The essentials of CR involve reducing calories while maintaining optimal nutrition. This is a practice based on research that has shown that CR increases maximum lifespan in several animal species and improves health parameters in ongoing studies of non-human and human primates.

Continued on page 11
From the Executive Director

From Many, One: Drawing Strength from Diversity

By James Appleby, RPh, MPH

September is GSA’s Membership month and, as explained on the front page, we are encouraging everyone to introduce someone new to our Society. The list of membership benefits and discounts are clearly explained in our brochures and on our website, and I am sure most readers have many personal stories they can share with colleagues about their positive experiences.

Yet there is a particular benefit that should not be forgotten, because it is one of the characteristics that make us truly unique: the interdisciplinary nature of our organization. We are the oldest membership association in the field of aging and GSA owes its longevity to the diverse nature of its members’ backgrounds.

In other words, while the Society has a strong disciplinary focus, we also offer the most effective means for members to engage in interdisciplinary collaboration — and therein lies one of our greatest strengths.

As a prime example, GSA’s 62nd Annual Scientific Meeting is just two months away. This gathering reflects more than six decades of collaboration among biologists, social scientists, policy experts, and health care professionals. Many of the activities coming up in Atlanta will showcase the value of our interdisciplinary membership and I’m happy to share them now.

One of the most prominent events, the Closing Session, will honor the late Chuck Longino, a past GSA president. He was known for “his capacity to transcend interdisciplinary boundaries,” as his predecessor, Terry Fulmer, recalled at the time of Chuck’s passing. In recognition, the panel discussion at this session will welcome a former GSA president from each of our professional sections. At press time, Leonard Hayflick of the Biological Sciences Section, James Birren of the Behavioral and Social Sciences Section, and Carroll Estes of the Social Research, Policy, and Practice Section were confirmed. (Note: this presentation is going to be one of the conference’s highlights and should not be missed. It is taking place on the last day of the conference, Sunday, November 22, and will conclude at 11:30 a.m. Please consider this when scheduling your departing flights from Atlanta.)

The Late Breaker Poster Session is another noteworthy event. It’s co-sponsored by the Biological Sciences Section, the Health Sciences Section, and the joint GSA/AGHE Research, Education, and Practice Committee. As such, not only will this provide a venue for the most up-to-date-aging research, but all of the Society’s constituent disciplines will present their work side by side.

GSA is also happy to embark upon its third year of mentoring consultancies, which are open to members from any section. This program brings students and junior faculty members together with senior faculty, experienced researchers, and GSA editorial board members to focus on the research and publication process, share experiences, and develop problem solving strategies. Interested individuals can indicate their interest in participating on the attendee registration form.

A further relevant conference highlight is the convening of GSA’s Interest Groups. These are formed around a topic or issue that cuts across disciplines. The groups meet in person every November and provide opportunities for networking, collaboration on research projects, and increased involvement for members and non-members in the conference program. Each group also sponsors an e-mail listserv to help its members keep current.

The meetings are always open to newcomers, so check the Program Schedule for exact times and locations. They will convene every evening from Wednesday, November 18 to Friday, November 20. In 2010, we will look to bolster Interest Group activities even further to deepen opportunities for interdisciplinary cooperation.

We reserve the right to reject or discontinue any advertising. Ads do not constitute an endorsement by The Gerontological Society of America.
New Publication by Member

"With Shaking Hands: Aging with Parkinson’s disease in America’s Heartland," by Samantha Solimeo. Published by Rutgers University Press.

Members in the News

- Eileen Crimmins, PhD, was mentioned in a recent blog entry on the L.A. Times website due to her collaboration on a research study concerning the Tsimane tribe in Bolivia. The information she and colleagues gathered led them to conclude that heart attacks and strokes are modern conditions largely due to sedentary lifestyles and bad eating habits.
- A recent article on msnbc.com featured quotes from Harvey Sterns, PhD. He discussed the health benefits related to continuing work after retirement.
- KETV in Omaha, NE, recently reported on the work of Julie Masters, PhD. In her classroom, she encourages students to envision their lives at advanced ages in order to prepare for the future.
- On August 5, 2009, Lindsey Baker, PhD, was quoted in The Times of India discussing one of her recent research projects. The study found that children living in single-mother families that included a grandparent were 80 percent less likely to be living below the poverty line than families with children living in mother-only homes.
- Jon Pynoos, PhD, was recently interviewed on American Public Media’s "Marketplace." In a story on older home owners, he recommended that home owners in their 50s who are considering remodeling projects include design elements that will make it easier to age comfortably over time.
- Merrill Silverstein, PhD, was quoted in the June 17, 2009, edition of The New York Times. He commented about research showing that children who receive a great deal of support from their parents often reciprocate this later in life.

Colleague Connected!

This month’s $25 amazon.com gift certificate winner: Rebecca Utz

The recipient, who became eligible after referring new member Whitney Blair Hill, was randomly selected using randomizer.org.

For more details on the Colleague Connection promotion, which includes a chance to win free lodging at the annual meeting, visit www.geron.org/ColleagueConnection.htm

Policy Fellows’ Inaugural Year Concludes

GSA hosted an early August reception to recognize the achievements of the very first cohort of Health and Aging Policy Fellows. The group of eight professionals spent the last year working in Washington, DC, and across the country to foster awareness of aging issues in the policy arena. Supported by The Atlantic Philanthropies and administered by Columbia University, the goal of the program is to create a cadre of professional leaders who will help to shape a healthy and productive future for older Americans. The inaugural class consisted of Gretchen Alkema, PhD, LCSW; Tori Miles, MD, PhD; Brian Hensel, PhD, MSPH; Kathryn Kietzman, PhD, MSW; Gregory Hinrichsen, PhD; Elizabeth Bragg, PhD, RN; Judy Zerzan, MD, MPH; and Dorry Segev, MD, PhD.

Cullinane Ascends to Berkeley Director’s Post

Patrick C. Cullinane, MS, has been named the new director of the University of California at Berkeley Retirement Center. This facility serves over 11,000 retirees through programs and services that contribute to their well being as well as support the UCB community. Prior to this position, for the last 18 years, Cullinane was the director of special projects for the American Society on Aging in San Francisco.

King Earns NASW Distinction

Shawn D. King, MSM, MSW, LSW, of Ohio State University has been named the next recipient of the Jane B. Aaron Doctoral Fellowship from the National Association of Social Workers (NASW). This award provides partial support to social work doctoral students who are engaged in dissertation research in health care policy and practice. The fellowship program was established in 1987 as a tribute to Aron, who was a leader in health care policy and education.

Wister To Lead Pioneering Canadian Longitudinal Study

Andrew Wister, PhD, of Simon Fraser University will be heading the newly established Canadian Longitudinal Study on Aging. This 20-year initiative will feature data from 50,000 Canadians aged 45 to 85 to learn how they cope with health, social, and economic changes as they age. The Canadian government will provide $30 million in support. Wister, who serves as the chair of Simon Fraser’s Gerontology Department, co-led the study’s development and will lead the comprehensive data collection team.

Reuben Named to ABIM Board

David B. Reuben, MD, the Archstone Foundation Chair and a professor at the David Geffen School of Medicine at the University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA), and director of the UCLA Claude D. Pepper Older Americans Independence Center, has been named chair-elect of the American Board of Internal Medicine (ABIM) Board of Directors. ABIM sets the standards and certifies physicians practicing in internal medicine and its subspecialties who possess the knowledge, skills and attitudes required to provide high quality care. Reuben is also director of the Multi-Campus Program in Geriatrics Medicine and Gerontology and chief of the Division of Geriatrics at the UCLA Center for Health Sciences. He maintains a clinical primary care practice of frail older persons and attends on inpatient and geriatric psychiatry units at UCLA.

Rebecca Utz

The recipient, who became eligible after referring new member Whitney Blair Hill, was randomly selected using randomizer.org.

For more details on the Colleague Connection promotion, which includes a chance to win free lodging at the annual meeting, visit www.geron.org/ColleagueConnection.htm
Greenlee Vows Dedication to New AoA Role

Kansan Kathy Greenlee is the newly confirmed U.S. Assistant Secretary for Aging at the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS). Greenlee was nominated by President Barack Obama to head the Administration on Aging (AoA), the federal government’s top aging post. In choosing Greenlee, HHS Secretary Kathleen Sebelius drew on her first hand knowledge of Greenlee’s past policy successes and managerial skills. Greenlee was Sebelius’s secretary of aging when Sebelius was governor of Kansas. She also served as her chief of staff and chief of operations.

Greenlee has an impressive background in many areas of aging policy. Prior to serving as the secretary of the Kansas Department of Aging, she was the Kansas state long-term care ombudsman. From 1999-2002, Greenlee served as general counsel at the Kansas Insurance Department, where she led the team of regulators who evaluated the proposed sale of Blue Cross/Blue Shield of Kansas, and oversaw the Senior Health Insurance Counseling for Kansas program. One of Greenlee’s proudest achievements in state government was the expansion of Medicaid dental benefits to frail older adults.

[Editor's note: GSA’s public policy advisor, Brian W. Lindberg, MMHS, conducted the following interview with Greenlee on July 28, 2009.]

BWL: Thank you for agreeing to this interview. Was coming to Washington, DC, something you had been planning to do at some point in your career?

KG: It wasn’t something I was planning. I have a long interest in public service, having worked for the state of Kansas for 18 years, and an interest in politics. Many of us who do both those things think of Washington quite naturally; watching policy being developed and the whole political atmosphere has always made Washington someplace interesting. This opportunity to be the assistant secretary on aging is not something you can plan, so when this came up it was quite unexpected and pleasant and all of a sudden the thought of Washington became more real.

BWL: You have a long working relationship with the new Secretary of HHS, Kathleen Sebelius. Can you give us a sense of what we might expect from her on aging related issues?

KG: I have had the opportunity to work for her since 1995, and I simply know that she has always been interested in and attuned to the needs of seniors. She has a deep commitment to health and health issues, but also a basic willingness to talk to people, whether they are children or seniors, or families or workers, to find out what their particular issues are and how she might be able to be helpful.

BWL: Since did you serve as the long-term care ombudsman for the state of Kansas, do you have a sense that that training and that experience adds to your abilities to take on this national role of advocate?

KG: Yes, I am one hundred percent convinced that being a state long-term care ombudsman makes me better at my job, both this job and the one I held as [Kansas] secretary of aging.

BWL: How would you characterize the role you may play on aging issues within the administration, because of course, everyone has their hands in aging issues: the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services, the Social Security Administration, and even the Environmental Protection Agency.

KG: I think I have two primary responsibilities as the assistant secretary. One is to work within AoA to administer the Older Americans Act (OAA) programs, highlight and support the network, both the state units and the Area Agencies on Aging (AAAs), make this system the best it can be and promote it. The other primary job is within the department, to bring to the table the perspective of both seniors and the people providing services to seniors, to make connections with other issues, like Medicare and Medicaid, the senior health issues, the women’s health issues.

BWL: Since the deficits that are projected into the future are pretty enormous, how do you foresee the aging network moving forward to address the growing demand for services in this kind of fiscal environment?
KG: Many seniors for whom we are providing services have some amount of money. Seniors indicate that their first choice is to stay home. And what we can do as a network is to provide support and help the seniors extend their own resources in their community longer and postpone any sort of need for public assistance such as Medicaid. We can also work with seniors to help them manage their health through the chronic disease self-management programs that we have, through the exercise programs. Those investments in senior health in the community will also generate some cost savings or certainly some cost avoidance to the Medicare program. We have opportunities right now; the AAAs and the communities are really the laboratories for this, to demonstrate that with a smaller investment now, we can avoid a larger expenditure to Medicare and Medicaid.

BWL: Is one of your roles to advocate among the folks who hold the purse strings for Medicare and Medicaid to help them understand that the programs that you are supporting are actually saving them money?

KG: We have a real commitment here at AoA to demonstrate that the investments here make a difference in the lives of seniors … that a financial investment in these programs can be demonstrated as being helpful in the outcomes so that we can keep promoting the good work we are doing and keep funding it.

BWL: One thing I noted in one of the FY 2010 appropriations bills for AoA is some initial money for civic engagement. Do you have a notion about how civic engagement and the service that older adults and boomers provide can help address our nation’s problems?

KG: I am reading Marc Freedman's book right now, on encore careers (“Encore: Finding Work that Matters in the Second Half of Life”). I think that civic engagement, on the volunteer side and the extended work life, are opportunities … we are talking about healthier seniors living longer lives, more workers and more volunteers, and it's very interesting right now to explore how both of those things and active engagement, will change the landscape for the communities themselves. This is a social capital that needs to be recognized. It's evolving at this point. I am personally interested in learning more about civic engagement so that I can help articulate what's happening and promote it, because I really believe in it.

BWL: One of the issues that has become apparent in recent years is the dearth of geriatricians, gerontologists, social workers, and nurses who have been trained to work with the elderly. Have you thought about this issue as we move into a period when many boomers are going to be demanding services and we don’t have enough professionals with appropriate training?

KG: I am aware of the issue, which I put into the general category of workforce. We have serious issues in the workforce of individuals who care for seniors in any setting, skilled nursing facility, hospitals, or in the community. I am very interested in finding out what the AoA can do to work with HHS and the Department of Labor to address the nursing and geriatric care workforce, everything from the most basic hands on care, like the CNAs, clear up to the geriatricians. I think generally people understand we are facing a critical shortage of nurses who fall in between those two levels of care. It connects back to what seniors are telling us they want, in terms of staying at home; we have to have health care providers and physicians to support them in those communities.

BWL: Are you starting to think about the reauthorization of the OAA? It's one of your first big challenges, I guess.

KG: We started talking about reauthorization in the first week. Because as we look at 2011 and making recommendations for the agency we can come together to talk about the fiscal needs as well as the future of what this service delivery system needs to look like, post authorization. Once I get settled in a little longer, we'll come up with a process for evaluating where we are and evaluating the best structure to move forward, to take input and have a broader conversation about what seniors are needing through the reauthorization.

BWL: You have a unique perspective and view having worked at so many levels of government and in the aging network. I think we are very fortunate to have that — we haven't quite had that combination before and I think a lot of people are excited about the opportunities.

KG: I promise that I will learn everything as fast as I can and have a real commitment to advocacy on behalf of seniors. I'll show up every day keeping that in mind.

BWL: Do you want to mention any other priorities that you have on your mind?

KG: The only other thing that we haven't touched on directly, Brian, is the role of family caregivers. I very much recognize right now the role of family caregivers globally in providing care for seniors and how necessary that is to the families, the community, and to the larger society. I want to spend as much time as I can learning about and supporting family caregivers because they are just invaluable in many ways. My observation is that it's a responsibility that families take on willingly, as their commitment to each other. What they need from the government is sometimes something as simple as basic information and some modest support, not a shifting of the responsibility from the family to the government, but support to keep the responsibility in the family for as long as possible.

BWL: Good luck to you, Kathy, and thank you for taking the time to speak with me today.
Dear Colleagues:

Another year has gone by, and what a year it’s been! The euphoria of last year’s history-making election is long gone, and although the president has yet to perform miracles, we are seeing some positive signs financially.

When I last spoke to you in November at National Harbor, we expected to end the fiscal year 2008 with a small surplus of around $34,000, thanks to the one-time $500,000 signing bonus we received from Oxford University Press (OUP). At the moment, our audited figures are very close to that, with a net surplus of $34,320.

As I mentioned at last year’s annual meeting, this was a very critical year, as I had been forecasting deficits for several years in a row, and without the OUP bonus, our operating budget deficit in 2008 would have been $465,680.

For the fiscal year 2009, we presented a budget deficit of $608,091. Right now, our projected year end results for 2009 are a deficit of $672,625, but that is very much a moving target: It depends on end-of-the-year results for membership and the annual meeting — the latter being a large ticket item.

It also includes all of our investments priced at current market value (MV). Although we now have a considerable mutual fund portfolio (see Figure 1), the accountants make us carry it on our books at market value, although in actuality we neither gain nor lose money on our investments unless we sell them. This means that the MV reflected toward the end of 2008 was devastatingly low; now, in 2009, our investments are making a good recovery, and they are now approaching their value in early 2008. (NB: Figure 1 shows the total MV of our investments in the upper line, but this is misleading because we bought more shares in early 2009; the lower line shows the MV had we not bought those shares).

We are hoping that we can increase revenues and pare down expenses to basically halve this year’s deficit. GSA’s reserves (see Figure 2) will be used to cover any deficit that may remain. Please be assured that GSA Council, Finance Committee, and staff are working diligently to see that this deficit will not be repeated in 2010. But we need your help! Please help us to recruit and retain members, and encourage all who possibly can to attend the Annual Scientific Meeting in Atlanta!
Revenues — 2008 (Figure 3)
Based on our 2008 end of year results, here is where GSA generates revenue: excluding grant funding, slightly over half of our revenue comes from publishing (51 percent) — these monies come mainly from library/e-subscriptions, not your membership dues. The second biggest source of funds is the annual meeting, which contributed 23 percent in 2008, followed by membership dues (16 percent), income generated by AGHE (7 percent), and other income (3 percent), the latter of which includes investment income.

Expenses — 2008 (Figure 4)
Again, with the grant expenses taken out (grants generally pay for themselves), our largest expense, as with any organization, is salary and benefits for our staff (35 percent). Administrative support (including things like administration and governance, processing fees, supplies and other office expenses, and marketing and communications) comes in at 25 percent, followed by 16 percent for the Annual Meeting, 15 percent for publications, 7 percent for AGHE expenses, and 2 percent for public policy research and advocacy.

The Bottom Line — 2008
It’s important to remember that the figures I’ve just given you represent percents of total revenues and expenses, not the dollar amounts. In a year when we have a significant deficit, this can make a real difference. In reality, we had non-grant revenue of approximately $4 million, with non-grant expenses of $4.6 million, which would have generated a deficit, if not for the one-time signing bonus from OUP.

The Financial Future for GSA
Three things make me optimistic about the financial future for GSA. First, the economy is slowly improving — and our finances are in good hands with our GSA Finance Department, led by Chris Yoder and his staff. Second, under the leadership of new Executive Director, James Appleby, I am confident that we are on the way toward maximizing the operations of the Society in a way that will generate healthy revenues and keep expenses reasonable. Finally, I am very pleased that Nancy Kropf has been elected to succeed me as Treasurer in 2010; Nancy is well-qualified and knowledgeable, and we will have a year’s overlap on the Council so she will be fully prepared to assume the treasurer’s office in November 2010. As always, I urge you to contact me if you have any questions or comments about our finances. You can always reach me by e-mail at sreynold@bcs.usf.edu or by phone at (813) 974-9750.
Distinguished Teacher Nominations Welcome
Nominations are now being accepted for AGHE's Distinguished Teacher Honor. This award recognizes persons whose teaching stands out as exemplary, innovative, of impact, or any combination thereof. Self-nominations are not permitted. The potential candidate must be willing and able to attend the 2010 AGHE Annual Meeting in Reno, NV, and present a teaching workshop there. Full-time faculty members at an AGHE affiliated institution with a minimum of five years of teaching experience are eligible to be nominated for this award. Please visit www.aghe.org for complete details. The deadline for nominations is October 2, 2009.

Secretary, Member-at-Large Positions Open
AGHE’s Nominations Committee is seeking nominations to fill the offices of AGHE secretary and three members-at-large. Elections will take place in late 2009. Self-nominations are permitted. The benefits of serving on AGHE’s Executive Committee are many. Officers have an opportunity to help influence the field of gerontology and geriatric education at the national level. They will forge valuable professional contacts with colleagues from different types of institutions throughout the country. Additionally, they have the potential to gain personal skills in program management, long-range planning, and financial development. To be selected for the slate of officers, the nominee must be affiliated with an AGHE member institution, have had experience working with AGHE committees or with various programs and services, have exhibited prior leadership skills, and be committed to improving and strengthening gerontology and geriatric education. Nomination forms may be obtained from the AGHE office at (202) 289-9806 or from AGHE’s website at www.aghe.org. Please submit nominations by September 18, 2009, to the current Nominations Committee chair, Graham Rowles, c/o AGHE Office, 1220 L Street, NW, Suite 901, Washington, DC 20005-4018, or e-mail to aghe@aghe.org.

School’s Grant To Boost Nursing Program
Xavier University, with a $1.5 million federal grant, will offer distance-learning to nurses working in rural areas. The grant from the Health Resources and Services Administration, part of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, is the largest federal grant in Xavier’s history, according to a news release issued by the school. It will allow Xavier to kick off a three-year project that will use high-definition video-conferencing, which will allow the nurses to participate in real-time courses on Xavier’s Cincinnati campus. Nurses in the program will be able to earn a master’s degree in nursing and also be trained as clinical nurse leaders. Coursework and continuing education classes will include informatics, geriatrics, and holistic nursing.

Kansas Enacts Loan Forgiveness Program
The Wichita Eagle has reported that the Kansas State Legislature has expanded a student loan and scholarship program to allow participating students to defer their loans for one year to do a fellowship in geriatric medicine. Then, for every year participating doctors spend working in a medically underserved part of Kansas, part of the loan is forgiven. The aid is focused on primary care physicians. The Kansas Academy of Family Physicians helped lobby lawmakers for the program during the legislative session, as did the Kansas Department on Aging. A 2008 study of board-certified geriatricians by the Association of Directors of Geriatric Academic Programs estimated that Kansas had 54 such physicians — about 2.9 per 10,000 people older than 75 years. The national average is 3.9 geriatricians per 10,000 people.

Meet the Staff
Jessica Lutton
Marketing Manager Jessica Lutton joined the GSA staff in July 2009 after a four-year tenure as a marketing coordinator for the Society of Nuclear Medicine. She is a native of Allentown, PA, who previously worked as a senior research associate for Ziment, a marketing research organization specializing in the healthcare and pharmaceutical industries. As GSAs marketing manager, she oversees the execution of the Society’s marketing plans to promote the products and services offered by the organization, including membership, conferences, and publications. Lutton also manages the annual Careers in Aging Week activities and maintains GSAs online career center, located at agework.com. Her day-to-day activities include developing, writing, and editing content for websites, newsletters, publications, e-mails, and advertising. Lutton also provides project management for print and web pieces related to the Annual Scientific Meeting.
Population Segments Differ on Perceptions of Cognitive Health

A new special issue of The Gerontologist has identified for the first time how ethnically, culturally, linguistically, and geographically diverse groups think about aging and brain health.

This research was conducted based on recommendations from the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention’s (CDC) Healthy Brain Initiative, a project designed to eliminate health disparities. The findings will be used to further the development of effective public health messages to promote cognitive health in older adults across the nation.

“This special issue includes a wide range of cutting-edge manuscripts on cognitive health in old age,” said William J. McAuley, PhD, editor-in-chief of The Gerontologist. “It presents information on perceptions about cognitive health held by various groups, methods of promoting cognitive health, and approaches to preserving physical health among those with cognitive problems.”

All demographic groups studied believed that cognitive health is influenced by physical, mental, and social activity; however, they differed in opinions of the benefits of specific activities, nutrition, and genetics. The respondents also indicated that that media messages about cognitive health are limited and confusing. Furthermore, many agreed that health messages that incorporate specific community values and are delivered within pre-existing social groups by community leaders may be particularly effective.

Silverstein Named New Journal of Gerontology: Social Sciences Editor

GSA has named Merrill Silverstein, PhD, of the University of Southern California (USC) as the next editor of The Journal of Gerontology: Social Sciences.

“We are very pleased to have Dr. Silverstein assume the position of editor. He is an internationally-known scholar with the depth and breadth of knowledge to appreciate and effectively evaluate the wide variety of research associated with the scientific study of the social aspects of aging,” said Thomas Hess, PhD, chair of GSA’s Publications Committee.

“His desire to increase submissions from scientists outside of North America in order to showcase the important gerontological research being conducted around the world will only enhance the already strong reputation of the publication,” Hess added.

The Journal of Gerontology: Social Sciences, published by Oxford Journals on behalf of GSA, contains peer-reviewed articles dealing with aging issues from the fields of anthropology, demography, economics, epidemiology, geography, political science, public health, social history, social work, and sociology.

“I am honored to be following in the footsteps of such impressive predecessors and plan to continue to uphold the scholarly excellence that has been the hallmark of the journal,” Silverstein said.

As a professor in USC’s Davis School of Gerontology and Department of Sociology, Silverstein’s research focuses on aging within the context of family life, including such topics as intergenerational transfers and transmission, social support over the life-course, grandparent-grandchild relations, migration in later life, public policy toward caregiving families, and international perspectives on aging families.

He is also a principal investigator of the Longitudinal Study of Generations, a project that has tracked multigenerational families over four decades, studying how family relationships have changed across biographical, historical, and generational time, and how the well-being of individual family members has been affected.
ESPO Goes Global

By guest author Kelly Fitzgerald, PhD, ESPO chair-elect

As the incoming ESPO chair, one of the goals I would like to accomplish during the next year is to help ESPO become internationally recognized as a world-class organization for emerging scholars in gerontology. I already have begun this work by attending the 19th World Congress of the International Association of Gerontology and Geriatrics (IAGG) in Paris in July and by organizing a web meeting of students from around the world.

During the IAGG in Paris, over 40 students and early career professionals, representing at least 17 countries, attended the 2nd meeting of the International Council of Gerontology Student Organisations (ICGSO). The purpose of the meeting was to identify how the ICGSO should be developed and organized in a way that would support the various gerontological student and early career professional groups (associated with national organizations and referred to as student groups for this report) around the world.

While the first meeting at the IAGG in Brazil in 2005 offered representatives from the different countries with established student groups to begin to discuss how they could work together to formalize the structure of the ICGSO, not much was accomplished over the following four years leading up to the Paris meeting. The meeting in Paris was different in that anyone interested in becoming involved in the ICGSO was invited to attend regardless of student group status. This offered students from countries that currently do not have national student groups to attend the meeting and discuss how students in their respective countries would like to start their own national student groups and could benefit from the support of other established student groups.

This issue became one of the potential mission points of the ICGSO — to support the development of new national student groups in various countries around the world. To determine how this might be accomplished, an ICGSO development team was organized (through nominations at the meeting) to create a framework and governance for ICGSO.

This team consists of Anthony Kupferschmidt (Canadian Association on Gerontology), Helen Feist (Australian Association of Gerontology), Kelly Fitzgerald (The Gerontological Society of America) and Andre Santos (Brazil).

The team held its first meeting and is well underway to moving the agenda forward. The goal is to have the framework and governance developed and in place within the next 2 years. During the development phase, the team will also work with current and developing student groups to ensure that their needs are addressed in the framework and governance. This is particularly important given the many cultural differences and various levels of gerontological development globally.

Gerontology is a relatively new (if existent) field for students to study in many countries around the world. GSA and ESPO have many years of experience (since 1945 and 1960 respectively) and benefits from a very large membership. Therefore over the next year as ESPO chair, I hope that we can begin to use this ESPO strength both to support the development of the ICGSO as well as other international student groups. Initially, one way this is going to be accomplished is by inviting chairs from other countries like the British Society of Gerontology’s student group (Emerging Researchers in Ageing) to speak at the ESPO Breakfast and Community meeting in Atlanta in November.

In addition, early career and student representatives from various countries such as Australia, Canada, Israel, UK, and the USA have begun discussions about ways to create more interaction between students from the represented countries and others. While creating the ICGSO is one possible solution on tackling the global challenge, the task of actually creating ways in which the student groups can interact will most likely be left to the national level organizations (and not at the ICGSO level). Webinars, exchange programs and mentoring opportunities were just some of the possible solutions discussed in which students and early career professionals may begin to increase their international involvement.

As we work to endeavor what some might call a monumental task, if we as members of ESPO take on the challenge and work together to begin to create ways in which we can support and develop collaborative work with our fellow peers, that monumental task may not seem as big as it first appeared. This is especially important as an emerging scholar if you are interested in possibly working abroad or just collaborating with international researchers.

Aging is a global issue and therefore as emerging scholars I feel it is up to us to take on the challenge of supporting gerontological research and education around the world. Please contact me at kellyfitzgerald@hotmail.com if you have any suggestions on how ESPO might endeavor to increase its international activity.
Lonely Japanese Elders Turn to Crime

A recent article in *The Japan Times* attributes a recent rise in elderly shoplifting to loneliness among older people. Twenty-four percent of 204 people aged 65 and older recently charged with shoplifting cited loneliness as the reason for stealing from stores, according to a survey conducted by the Tokyo Metropolitan Police Department. About 8 percent of the elderly people surveyed cited lack of motivation in life, while 7 percent said their crimes were prompted by frustration, the police said. Forty percent live alone and 53 percent said they do not have any friends. The results underscore a rapid rise in elderly theft. The Justice Ministry said last year that 31,573 elderly people were convicted of theft in 2007, up three-fold from 1998.

Taiwanese Express Worry Concerning Retirement

The *China Post* reports that one-third of elderly workers in Taiwan are worried about unemployment, and roughly the same proportion have no plans on how to support themselves after retirement. These are part of the findings from a study conducted by the government’s Directorate-General of Budget, Accounting, and Statistics. A survey, conducted in October 2008, targeted people aged forty-five and above. People aged 65 and over already make up a significant proportion of the population, accounting for 43 percent of the all people aged 15 and above. A significant proportion of the elderly are worried about their job prospects, with 31.69 percent of this group saying they are worried about being laid off; those in the construction and manufacturing industries indicated they were particularly worried. Roughly the same proportion, or 32.9 percent, also said they have no plans on how to support themselves financially after retirement. Those who said they had such plans mostly cited pension funds, labor insurance, and family support as their sources of income during retirement.

China Beginning To Ease Single Child Restrictions

According to an article in *China Daily*, Shanghai is allowing couples to have more than one. The change in policy stems from concern over the country’s aging population. Shanghai, the country’s most populous city, has more than 3 million registered residents aged 60 and above, nearly 22 percent of the population. By 2020, the proportion is expected to rise to about 34 percent. Family planning officials and volunteers will make home visits and slip leaflets under doorways to encourage couples to have a second child if both grew up as only children. Emotional and financial counseling will also be provided.

Swine Flu Affects Muslim Pilgrimages

AFP reports that a conference of Arab health ministers agreed to ban certain people including the elderly and young children from pilgrimage to Mecca in an effort to contain the spread of swine flu. Egypt recently became the latest country to warn vulnerable Muslims against the journey, after an Egyptian woman back from Saudi Arabia became the first swine flu death in the Middle East and Africa. Subsequently, Egyptian health officials have said all returning pilgrims will be quarantined. Saudi Arabia in June warned elderly Muslims and pregnant women against undertaking the hajj because of the threat of swine flu. Oman issued a similar warning in July.

World’s Centenarian Population Increasing

The countries of the world are learning to accommodate a growing number of citizens over the age of 100, according to a recent article from the Associated Press. The number of centenarians already has jumped from an estimated few thousand in 1950 to more than 340,000 worldwide today, with the highest concentrations in the U.S. and Japan, according to the latest U.S. Census Bureau figures. Their numbers are projected to grow at more than 20 times the rates of the total population by 2050, making them the fastest growing age segment. In the U.S., centenarians are expected to increase from 75,000 to more than 600,000 by midcentury.

World’s Oldest Man Dies in Britain

The BBC has reported that the world’s oldest man, who was also the UK’s oldest surviving World War I veteran, has died. Henry Allingham passed away in July at the age of 113. He served with the Royal Naval Air Service during the war, later transferring to the Royal Air Force and above. Roughly the same proportion, or 32.9 percent, also said they have no plans on how to support themselves financially after retirement. Those who said they had such plans mostly cited pension funds, labor insurance, and family support as their sources of income during retirement.

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Study Explores Economy’s Role in Health Care Coverage
A new paper from Changes in Health Care Financing & Organization, an initiative of the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, pulls together research findings to explore how health care is affected by the current economic cycle. This brief shows that a recession almost immediately leads to loss of coverage for many people. Studies show that a 1.0 percentage point increase in the unemployment rate results in a .59 percentage point increase in the uninsured. While few employers actually drop coverage, they may cut costs by changing the benefit and/or restructuring cost-sharing with employees. Typically, employers in low-wage jobs (or those working in small firms) are most likely to be uninsured after losing their job, but this recession is affecting a broader swath of the workforce. The effects of the economy also include changes in the demand for (or access to) health care — as well as the financial status of practitioners and health organizations. Reports from across the U.S. describe falling revenues due to decreased demand for less non-urgent or elective care, more patients unable to pay their medical bills, significant losses in investment income, less charitable giving, and cuts in state and federal health care funding. To view the brief, visit www.rwjf.org/files/research/47288economyimpact.pdf.

Institute Explores Long-Term Care Solutions
The Urban Institute’s Urban-Brookings Tax Policy Center recently published a report that assesses several federal legislative proposals to restructure the delivery and financing of long-term care services, for which demand and cost are escalating. These proposals fall under three categories: shifting the focus of Medicaid long-term benefits and chronic disease management to home care, expanding the long-term care and geriatric workforce, and restructuring the means of finance to either enhance private long-term care insurance, build a core government insurance model, or incorporate public/private hybrids. The full text of the report, titled “The Future of Long-Term Care: What is Its Place in the Health Reform Debate?,” can be found online at www.urban.org/publications/411908.html.

Government Develops Tools for ARRA Grantees
The U.S. Office of Management and Budget (OMB) recently held a series of webinars related to the American Reinvestment and Recovery Act (ARRA) guidance on recipient reporting that was issued on June 22, 2009. Although the series has concluded, OMB has made recordings of the webinars available at www.whitehouse.gov/Recovery/WebinarTrainingMaterials. Additionally, the National Institutes of Health plans to make FAQs and other information on recipient reporting requirements available through http://grants.nih.gov/recovery/ in the near future.

Brief Outlines Plan for Long-Term Care Reform
The SCAN Foundation has issued a new policy brief that examines four ways to include long-term care in health reform: expand Medicaid support for home and community-based services; improve coordination of medical and long-term care for individuals who are eligible for both Medicare and Medicaid (dual eligibles); improve coordination of medical and long-term care for Medicare enrollees with chronic conditions; and establish public insurance protection for long-term care for the broad population. This document is available for download at www.hcbs.org/files/158/7887/LTCPolicyBrief.pdf.

Partnership Publishes Assisted Living Manual
The Center for Excellence in Assisted Living (CEAL) and the Cecil G. Sheps Center for Health Services Research at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill (UNC) have released a first-of-its-kind manual on improving practices and informing policies in assisted living communities, through the use of a collaborative method of research: community-based participatory research. The manual can be downloaded from the CEAL website at www.thecel.org. Community-based participatory research is a social science research method whereby researchers work as full partners with community members in the area being studied. The manual explains the principles and methods of community-based participatory research with actual examples from the medication management research.

Report Explores Civic Engagement Among Immigrants
“Community Treasures: Contributions of Older Immigrants and Refugees” is a new report issued by the Center for Intergenerational Learning at Temple University with funding from the MetLife Foundation. This resource analyzes the motivations of immigrant elders engaged in civic roles and highlights the promising practices of agencies who successfully engage them. To learn about the state of civic involvement among immigrant elders, focus groups and individual interviews were conducted in Philadelphia, PA, Atlanta, GA, and Orange County, CA, with 99 immigrant elders from seven major ethnolinguistic groups. Researchers also spoke with key informants in the communities, including community-based organizations, to learn about the current efforts that sustain and promote the civic roles of elders who are foreign-born. To view the full text of the report, visit projectshine.org/files/community_treasures.pdf.
GSA has named Rafael de Cabo, PhD, of the National Institute on Aging (NIA) as the next editor of The Journal of Gerontology: Biological Sciences.

“Dr. de Cabo is well-suited to carrying on the duties of editor and promoting [the journal] as a premier outlet for research on the biology of aging,” said Thomas Hess, chair of GSA’s Publications Committee. “He is a well-respected and highly productive scientist whose own work on calorie restriction has had an important impact on the field. His desire to emphasize translational research as editor fits well with the mission of GSA.”

The Journal of Gerontology: Biological Sciences, published by Oxford Journals on behalf of GSA, contains peer-reviewed articles on the biological aspects of aging in areas such as biochemistry, biodemography, cellular and molecular biology, comparative and evolutionary biology, endocrinology, exercise sciences, genetics, immunology, morphology, neuroscience, nutrition, pathology, pharmacology, physiology, genetics, and biological underpinnings of late life diseases.

“As editor-in-chief, my goal is to showcase the creativity, visibility, and impact of biological sciences research through The Journal of Gerontology: Biological Sciences,” de Cabo said. “This will be a team effort and as such I look forward to working with our current associate editors as well as expanding our editorial board. I also look forward to collaborating with Dr. Luigi Ferrucci, editor-in-chief of The Journal of Gerontology: Medical Sciences, and I hope to emulate his success with the journal.”

In 2004, de Cabo was appointed as a tenure track investigator in the NIA’s Laboratory of Experimental Gerontology, where he now heads the Aging, Metabolism, and Nutrition Unit. This facility investigates the effects of nutritional interventions on basic mechanisms of aging and age-related diseases. In particular, de Cabo’s work seeks to identify protective mechanisms invoked by caloric restriction and to evaluate the consequences of dietary interventions on lifespan, pathology, and behavioral function.

After receiving a BS and an MS degree from the University of Cordoba in Spain, de Cabo earned his PhD from the Department of Foods and Nutrition at Purdue University. He subsequently received a postdoctoral position in the Laboratory of Neurosciences at the NIA.

“Although not a perfect measure, the impact factor is a rough gauge of a journal’s status in the field,” said Thomas Hess, PhD, chair of GSA’s Publications Committee. “A strong impact factor indicates that the research published in a journal is being widely cited elsewhere, which is a reflection of the quality of said research. This, in turn, encourages investigators to send their best material to the journal, thereby building upon its status.”

To further strengthen the performance of these publications, a GSA Task Force on Publications has been established to focus specifically on the journals’ impact factors. Steven Zarit, PhD, will serve as the chair.

“The new numbers are encouraging, but we want to take a careful look at the journals to assure their long-term health,” Zarit said.

“The journals have traditionally been among the top outlets for quality gerontological research, and the increasing impact factors are evidence of the regard in which they are held,” Hess added.

“Oxford University Press, our publisher, has been working with the Publications Committee and the new task force to guarantee that the impact factors for each of the journals are a true reflection of their status.”
Federal Agencies Seek Research on Stress and Aging

The National Institute on Aging, the National Cancer Institute, and the National Institute of Mental Health have issued a funding opportunity announcement for research on mechanisms underlying the links between psychosocial stress, aging, the brain, and the body. The grants are designed to encourage aging-relevant research elucidating the underlying mechanisms and processes that link psychosocial stressors to health outcomes in older individuals. Multidisciplinary and interdisciplinary research at multiple levels of analysis in animal models and in humans, integrating neuroscience and biological processes with behavioral and psychosocial approaches is strongly encouraged. Visit grants.nih.gov/grants/guide/pa-files/PA-09-216.html for more information. Applications may be submitted starting September 5, 2009. This funding opportunity expires September 8, 2012.

RWJF Partnership Bolsters Mental Health Initiatives

Rethinking Mental Health: Improving Community Wellbeing, an online, open source competition co-sponsored by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation's (RWJF) Vulnerable Populations Portfolio and Changemakers, challenges organizations to explore innovations that allow individuals, families, communities and society to move past narrow perceptions of mental health and expand understanding and collective involvement in finding solutions. The competition is open to all types of organizations (charitable organizations, private companies, or public entities) from all countries. Three competition winners will each receive $5,000 from Changemakers. Entries are accepted until October 14, 2009. Visit www.changemakers.com/en-us/mentalhealth for further details.

NIA Moneys Target Neuroplasticity Studies

The National Institute on Aging (NIA) invites applications for the study of factors regulating neuroplasticity with a particular emphasis on the age-dependent changes in the functions of dendrites, spines, and synapses of key cell types in regions of brain especially vulnerable in Alzheimer's disease (AD), and in models (in vitro and in vivo) of aging and of AD. Neuroplasticity refers to the changes in both structure and function of the brain that occur in response to experiential stimuli. This ability of the brain to reorganize itself is critical both in normal development and learning, and it is no less important in aging and neurodegenerative disorders. This funding opportunity announcement will expire January 8, 2012. For complete details, please visit grants.nih.gov/grants/guide/pa-files/PA-09-061.html.
The Association for Gerontology in Higher Education (AGHE), the educational unit of The Gerontological Society of America, invites applications for editor of the *Journal of Gerontology & Geriatrics Education*. The position requires a four year commitment and will begin with Volume 32, January 2011.

To be considered, the following materials must be provided by October 30, 2009:

- A current vita, dated and signed
- A complete list of the applicant’s publications and reprints or photocopies of no more than three of the applicant’s most significant journal articles
- A statement from the applicant discussing manuscript recruitment strategy and the editorial direction of the *Journal of Gerontology & Geriatrics Education*
- A statement from an administrator of the applicant’s institution or organization (if appropriate) describing support for the appointment

Visit www.aghe.org for complete instructions. Questions and applications may be submitted to:

Dena Shenk, PhD
Department of Anthropology • UNC Charlotte
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