

**Highlights 2004, UNC Institute on Aging**  
**Submitted by Victor W. Marshall, Director, July 19, 2004**

**I. Mission of the IOA**

The UNC Institute on Aging (IOA) is an Inter-institutional Program, established by the legislature and located at The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. The IOA's mission is to enhance the well-being of older North Carolinians by fostering statewide collaboration in education, research and service.

**II. Major Accomplishments During the Past Academic Year**

**1. Strengthening the foundation for research development**

The Institute continued to build research capacity by hiring additional research personnel and submitting applications for funding. To complement our senior research staffing, I appointed Dr. Sharon Williams and Ms Jennifer Craft Morgan as Research Scientists. Williams hold a tenure track position in the Department of Rehabilitation Sciences. Morgan works full time in the Institute, while finishing her PhD in sociology. She received an IMPACT Award from the Graduate School, recognizing the significant impact of her doctoral work and related research on improving the jobs of direct care workers in long term care. We also added a junior staff position to support research development in the Center for Aging and Diversity (CAD) and the IOA.

In June 2004, Dr. Thomas R. Konrad received an award of \$450,000 from the DHHS for a two-year continuation of the Win A Step Up Project. He also received \$90,000 for a three-year Better Jobs Better Care Project. Dr. Peggye Dilworth-Anderson was awarded \$400,000 from GlaxoSmithKline to conduct a Program and Caregiver Intervention Project. Victor Marshall and Mary Altpeter, along with Rebecca Hunter of the UNC-SOM Program on Aging, received a third year cost extension and supplemental funding of \$54,993 from CDC to continue participation in the national Healthy Aging Research Network (HAN) and coordination of the North Carolina HAN. These investigators also submitted a five-year \$250,000 continuation application to CDC. Marshall received private funding from the Cedars residential community in Chapel Hill to conduct a survey to learn more about the transition into a retirement community. In June, Marshall and Dr. Joanne Marshall submitted a two-year, \$1 million IMLS grant application to conduct a national study on the future of librarians in the workforce. In May, Dr. Williams submitted a two-year grant proposal for \$292,000 to NIH to study family management of older stroke patients. Dr. Altpeter received a \$24,000 contract from The National Council on Aging to provide technical assistance in research translation and provider training in health promotion and aging. There were no major budget changes in state appropriated funds for this fiscal year.

**2. Strengthening our educational activities on the UNC Chapel Hill campus and statewide**

The Institute's major contributions in education have been to development the North Carolina Gerontology Consortium (NCGC), and to promote distance and conventional education at UNC at Chapel Hill. During the past year, the statewide NCGC has grown from eight to ten campuses in the UNC system. The NCGC coordinating committee approved seven courses, which increase accessibility to aging education by on-campus and continuing education students. Representing the NCGC, Dr. Altpeter received a \$30,000 distance education grant from the Office of the President to support five faculty stipends to continue to build the pool of online courses. Adding

to the online Human Behavior and Aging course developed last year, William Lamb of the IOA developed and offered an online version of the Aging and Policy course.

The IOA took the lead, but worked with other aging-related units, sponsor a research day in aging at UNC Chapel Hill, to increase communications and recognize students' work in aging. 31 students presented on their aging research, education or service. At the same time, the 4th annual Gordon H. DeFries Career Development in Aging Research Awards were presented to faculty member, Dr. R. Smith (Dept. of Psychology) and graduate student, Dr. P. Reed (Dept. of Health Education and Health Behavior). More than 100 faculty, students and community members attended the event, which the Institute has committed to organize annually.

The Institute's Carolina Program in Healthcare and Aging Research (CPHAR), a NIH-funded training program, continues to thrive and to date, has placed one post doc and three doctoral students into excellent faculty or organizational positions at, respectively, Purdue University, Texas A&M University, The Alzheimer's Association, and Western Carolina University.

### **3. Extending our contributions to service**

The Institute coordinates The North Carolina Conference on Aging. The 2nd annual Conference was held in Charlotte and more than 450 service providers, policy-makers, faculty and senior advocates attended. IOA staff are currently working on the 3rd annual conference, to be held in conjunction with the Southeast Association of Area Agencies on Aging in Raleigh in October.

The IOA has also sponsored numerous community-based education initiatives. Targeting senior learners, the IOA increased its sponsorship for the *Senior Leadership Program* 15-month traineeship program from four to six stipends. The program has 37 graduates and this year supported six trainees from around the state. In cooperation with the NC Association on Aging, the IOA helped to conduct two orientation to aging sessions, one in Concord and one in Jacksonville, for new employees in the aging network. With the AARP/Faith in Action/Care Team Volunteers, a National Program of the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, the Institute provided training and consultation to volunteers working in Assisted Living Facilities in eight sites around the state.

The Institute's Information Center supports research development as well as being a resource for the broader aging service network. Emphasis is on expanding our digital library, providing tailored assistance to institute personnel for research and distance education development and maintaining updated, state of the art websites for the IOA's many programs. We averaged 60,000 pageviews/month on the IOA web site between June 2003 and June 2004, up from the average of 24,000 pageviews/month reported last year. During the same time period, we added 436 new items to our digital library; the digital library now contains 2825 items. The Information Center also completed the "Aging Research from a Distance," an online tutorial in partnership with the Academic Affairs Library and implemented a new html format for our e-newsletter, NC\*Aging. Center staff added/updated several major new sections to the IOA web site: redesigned the web site for the Center for Aging and Diversity, created an online database for students and alumni of the Certificate in Aging program, and redesigned and completely revised the Women Growing Older web site.

As part of our goal to increase the visibility of the IOA with community stake holders, IOA service staff participate in a wide array of working groups and boards of organizations including: the Governor's Advisory Council on Aging, Wake County Human Services Aging Committee, Duke School of Nursing Evidence Based Nursing in Geriatrics, NCSU Cooperative Extension Partners in Wellness, NC DHHS Consumer Directed Care Initiative, Division of Aging and Adult Services SAFE in Long Term Care Task Force, Triangle United Way Wake County United Way Senior Issues Team, Division of Medical Assistance CAP-DA Standards Work Group, Division of Aging and Adult Services Funding Formula Committee, NC Institute of Medicine LTC Quality Work Group, NC Coalition on Aging, NC Association on Aging, NC AARP Executive Committee, Resources for Seniors Board and Executive Committee, Wake County Adult Care Home Community Advisory Committee, and the Shepherd House Assisted Living. In addition IOA staff serve in leadership roles in professional associations, including: the Association for Gerontology in Higher Education, the Southern Gerontological Society, and the Gerontological Society of America.

#### **4. Contributions to promote diversity**

Dr. Peggye Dilworth-Anderson, a nationally recognized minority researcher with expertise in health disparities, minority aging, and family and caregiving issues, has been the director of the Center for Aging and Diversity for this past year. We anticipate success on her NIA K07 training grant application, because of the very high evaluation score it received. She also secured a contract from the Alzheimer's Foundation that will support some information collection and dissemination activities, adding another specialization area for the Institute's Information Center. Dr. Dilworth Anderson is also planning a conference on aging and diversity issues, and to develop (in collaboration with the School of Public Health) a major program grant to train young investigators in the SPH in aging and health disparities research. Racial minorities are increasingly represented among our staff, including two administrative staff, two post-doctoral fellows, several graduate student and undergraduate research staff.

### **III. Goals for Coming Academic Year**

Each of these goals is immediate, but they all coalesce to broaden the financial and institutional support base beyond our current heavy reliance on state funds.

- provide more stable, dedicated program coordination and research development support, especially for further development of the Center on Aging and Diversity.

- develop more in-house research in health promotion, rural aging, and aging workforce and retirement issues

- secure stable funding for administration and educational development for the NC Consortium on Aging, with continuing development of distance education initiatives.

- continue to increase visibility of the Institute with community stake-holders