

Institute on Aging

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The mission of the Institute on Aging (IOA) at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill is to enhance the well-being of older people in North Carolina by fostering state-wide collaboration in research, education, and service.

Major Accomplishments During the Past Year

Expanding research and dissemination activities

Since July 1, 2008, the IOA has been awarded \$2.2 million in new funding. Grant expenditures for this year total \$1.37 million, up from \$1.1 million last year. We currently have 14 contracts and grants in submission, for a total of \$6.1 million. In the past academic year, IOA researchers published 37 aging-related peer-reviewed articles or book chapters, created 11 reports or other deliverables, and produced eight translational research tools. Additionally, IOA researchers gave over 75 presentations or workshops at national association meetings, national conferences, and state, regional, and local conferences.

The IOA's reputation as a leader in the field of aging continues to grow. During the past year, IOA researchers have been quoted in the *News & Observer*, *Charlotte Observer*, *Washington Post*, *Miami Herald*, *U.S. News & World Report*, and various other publications (all press items are archived and available through our Information Center). The IOA's website has grown to include over 4,300 pages and averaged approximately 107,000 page-views per month.

Working with state and community partners to support education, research, and service

The IOA is lead sponsor of the North Carolina Conference on Aging (NCCOA), which is cosponsored by the N.C. Division of Aging and Adult Services (DAAS), the N.C. Association on Aging, the N.C. Association of Area Agencies on Aging, the Governor's Advisory Council on Aging, and AARP North Carolina. The NCCOA drew 535 attendees, and candidates Beverly Perdue, Walter Dalton, and Kay Hagan made appearances.

The IOA worked in partnership with DAAS to prepare for potential state legislation (SB 195) that calls for meetings of stakeholders to identify and prioritize the issues that state agencies and universities will address to respond to the needs of aging baby boomers. This legislation was subsequently enacted in July, 2009.

Changes in the demographic composition of the workforce that are being created by the baby boomers' aging are expected to create a variety of issues for public, private, and government employers. To address many of these issues, the IOA, the Governor's Advisory Council on Aging, the N.C. Department of Commerce-Workforce Development Board, DAAS, and AARP North Carolina sponsored the two-day Forum on North Carolina's Aging Workforce in September. The forum, attended by over 100 public- and private-sector representatives, was the first statewide forum on issues of workforce aging to cover global, national, and statewide trends, programs, and policies. The IOA also established the Aging Workforce Interest Group to discuss, analyze, and share information about various aspects of the aging workforce in North Carolina, the United States, and globally; the group now has 244 members.

The IOA collaborated with the N.C. Division of Aging and Adult Services and the N.C. Division of Public Health on several federally funded projects (including from the Administration on Aging, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, and the National Association of Chronic Disease Directors) that have built the infrastructure to extend evidence-based health-promotion programming across the state; the IOA also created a three-way Memorandum of Agreement for joint health-promotion projects. The Healthy Aging Roadmap, a resource created by the IOA, is now being disseminated, and workshops are being held across the state to set a more coordinated and systemic effort to promote healthy aging. The IOA and its key health-promotion partners created the statewide N.C. Falls Prevention Coalition in April, 2008. In 2009, the coalition expanded to 95 members, obtained external funding, created a website and work plan, and successfully solicited Governor Perdue to proclaim September 20-26, 2009, as Falls Prevention Awareness Week.

The IOA's initiatives in frontline health and the health-care workforce have affected health-care employers and educational institutions locally and nationally. The WIN A STEP UP program, in partnership with the N.C. Department of Health and Human Services, delivered a 30-hour training program to nursing assistants and a two-day program to managers across the state of North Carolina. A total of 87 nursing assistants finished the training, which took place at their workplace. The WIN A STEP UP nursing assistant curriculum improves both clinical and interpersonal skills. Eighty-four frontline managers participated in a two-day Coaching Supervision course that improves communication among staff in nursing homes. Finally, WIN A STEP UP instructors certified 10 trainers who can now teach and grant contact hours for Coaching Supervision; this increases the capacity for such training in the state of North Carolina. In terms of national relevance, the Jobs to Careers evaluation, funded by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, reached out to over 25 health-care employers (e.g., behavioral-health centers, community health centers, hospitals/health systems, and long-term care providers) and over 30 educational institutions (e.g., community colleges) at 17 sites in 15 states to build a set of promising practices for systems change to accommodate work-based learning and career advancement for frontline workers across the country.



Doctoral student Cherie Rosemond (left) and junior faculty member Lea Watson (right) were the winners of the 2008 Gordon H. DeFriese Career Development in Aging Research Awards. Center: Gordon H. DeFriese.



The WIN A STEP UP program, in partnership with the N.C. Department of Health and Human Services, delivered two nine-day Train-the-Trainer courses to equip nursing home supervisors and charge personnel to teach the course Coaching Supervision to staff in their home facilities.

Providing leadership in aging education and research at Carolina

In 2008, the IOA received five years of renewal funding from the National Institute on Aging to continue the Carolina Program in Health and Aging Research (CPHAR), which prepares predoctoral and postdoctoral scholars to make significant contributions to aging and health-care research through intense, guided career development. The renewal grant supports an expansion of CPHAR fellowships to two postdoctoral fellows and four predoctoral fellows.

The Center for Aging and Diversity (CAD) and the IOA announced a call for three pilot grant proposals, for a maximum of \$20,000 each and funded by the National Institute on Aging grant, Closing the Gap on Minority Aging and Health Research. The grant will encourage small-scale pilot research projects that can be completed within 12 months and have the potential to lead to a larger, federally or foundation-funded award application. CAD funded three junior scientists from the School of Medicine in June 2009. CAD developed and disseminated a caregiving resource guide, mostly in medically underserved counties in North Carolina, to educate caregivers on dementia care to elders with Alzheimer's disease and associated disorders.

The IOA is helping to develop interdisciplinary research at Carolina. This year, three junior researchers—from Allied Health Sciences, the Department of Pathology and Laboratory Medicine, and the Department of Public Policy—received Research Stimulus Grants in Aging; the first two were continuation grantees from the 2007 cohort. In 2009, two IOA researchers received funding through the new “Bringing Basic Scientists to Aging Research” grant to collaborate on projects with the Department of Computer Science and the School of Information and Library Sciences at Carolina and the Department of Biology at NC A&T University.

The IOA received funding from Carolina for public service and engagement for the North Carolina Collaboration on Lifelong Learning and Engagement (NCCoLLE) project, an initiative that will stimulate lifelong learning and civic engagement through public libraries across the state. The IOA is partnering with the School of Information and Library Science, the State Library, and

the N.C. Division of Aging and Adult Services to design a program that will help public libraries to redefine their services for older adults and promote civic engagement in their communities.

Over 130 faculty, staff and students attended the fifth annual Aging Exchange in October, 2008. The event featured recommendations from the 2007 Aging Research Retreat, 40 student and faculty posters illustrating aging research from a multitude of disciplines, and the presentation of the 2008 Gordon H. DeFries Career Development in Aging Research Awards.

Goals for the Coming Academic Year

Under new interim leadership, the IOA's goals include the following:

- In concert with campus and statewide partners, develop a strategic plan to advance research, education, and service in aging.
- Leverage organizational resources and reduce dependence on state funding by collaborating with institutes and centers across campus to share resources.
- Enhance capacity for community engagement by creating new partnerships on campus (e.g., the N.C. Translational and Clinical Sciences Institute) and across the state.
- Along with the N.C. Division of Aging and Adult Services, take a leadership role in helping North Carolina prepare for increased numbers of older adults.
- **Health promotion:** Expand statewide infrastructure and build capacity for planning, implementing, and evaluating evidence-based health-promotion programs and policies for older adults. Continue to build external funding to conduct community-based aging and public-health research to expand the knowledge base about determinants and effective interventions that promote healthy aging, and translate and disseminate findings to research and practitioner audiences.
- **Center for Aging and Diversity:** Submit a PO1 program grant by May 2010 on dementia care and diverse older populations, and an R21 grant, which will be developed from an unfunded Challenge Grant. Write and submit manuscripts from three recently completed studies on dementia.
- **Aging workforce:** Strengthen links and identify possible areas of common research and policy interest with several private- and public-sector companies. Develop and disseminate an array of public awareness materials and programs in areas such as low-income/diverse older workers, technology, retirement, and work/family.
- **Program on workforce issues for frontline health and health-care workers:** Use our accumulated knowledge from the demonstration and research/evaluation projects to engage North Carolina and national stakeholders to develop and evaluate systems change in health-care employers and educational institutions to support work-based learning and career advancement for this critical workforce.
- **Program on workforce issues in library and information technology:** Extend our current research on workforce issues in library and information science to focus more concretely on the translation of lessons learned, community-based participatory research, and sustainability of workforce data systems that were started with funding from the Institute on Museum and Library Services (Workforce Issues in Library and Information Science Projects I and II).