

# Institute on Aging

*M. A. Altpeter, P. Dilworth-Anderson, M. H. Palmer, Interim Codirectors*

The mission of the Institute on Aging (IOA) is to enhance the well-being of older adults in North Carolina by fostering statewide collaborations in research, education, and service.

## Major Accomplishments During the Past Year

### *Preparing North Carolina for an aging population*

IOA is a key leader in the state's planning and preparation for the aging of baby boomers and the growing number of older adults. As directed by Senate Bill 195 (Session Law 2009-407) and Governor Perdue's Executive Order No. 54, IOA and the N.C. Division of Aging and Adult Services (DAAS) are working together to support this effort through several initiatives, including the following:

- Through collaboration with the Office of the Governor and her Advisory Council on Aging, DAAS, and the state's 17 Area Agencies on Aging, IOA cosponsored six governor's policy roundtables across the state between April and June, 2010. The roundtables focused on the overall theme, "Building a Livable and Senior Friendly North Carolina," and engaged a diverse group of over 600 stakeholders. Mary Altpeter, Jennifer Craft Morgan, and Peter Stein from IOA presented keynote remarks for three of the roundtables, and Bill Lamb provided managerial support for each of the six events. Each roundtable addressed a specific subtheme; participants identified ongoing and emerging issues within each subtheme that require effective policy and programmatic responses.
- Information garnered from the roundtables will be shared at the Governor's Policy Conference on Aging to be held October 13-15, 2010, in Research Triangle Park. IOA supports the conference by chairing the program committee, designing the program, managing the conference website, registering attendees, spearheading fundraising, and handling all conference logistics. Attendees will be invited to participate in a systematic process to move from the identification of issues to the recommendation of specific actions that will strengthen North Carolina's response to its aging population.
- As a result of the requirements outlined in Governor Perdue's Executive Order No. 54, IOA, in partnership with DAAS and the Governor's Advisory Council on Aging, surveyed 45 state agencies in summer 2010 to understand how the aging of the population is influencing plans, policies, programs, and the agency workforce. IOA developed and tested the survey, and will also be responsible for tabulating, analyzing, and reporting the survey results.
- The information obtained through the aging-readiness survey and regional roundtables will be disseminated through IOA's website. This information will be used to assist the state and local municipalities in addressing accessibility and service delivery for increasing numbers of older adults in North Carolina. Additionally, the results generated by the survey assessment, regional roundtables, and conference will be used by DAAS to develop the 2011-2015 State Aging Plan.

### *Providing national leadership in aging*

Peggye Dilworth-Anderson, interim codirector of IOA, was inducted as the new president of the Gerontological Society of America (GSA) at the organization's 62nd annual meeting on November 22, 2009, in Atlanta, Georgia. GSA has 5,200 members from 40 countries, and is the oldest and largest interdisciplinary organization devoted to research, education, and practice in the field of aging. Dilworth-Anderson also received the Ronald and Nancy Reagan Research Award during the seventh Annual Alzheimer's Gala held on March 7, 2010, in Washington, D.C. This honor is reserved for those who make significant advancements in Alzheimer's disease research.

### *Expanding research and dissemination activities*

Since July 1, 2009, IOA has been awarded \$1.3 million in new funding. Grant expenditures during fiscal year 2009-2010 totaled \$1.69 million, up from \$1.37 million last year. We have 6 contracts and grants in submission to federal, state, and local agencies for a total of \$2.64 million.

IOA's reputation as a leader in the field of aging continues to grow. During the 2009-2010 academic year, IOA researchers published 89 aging-related, peer-reviewed articles or book chapters, created 20 reports or other deliverables, and produced 13 translational research tools/workshops. IOA researchers gave over 90 presentations or workshops in national, state, regional, and local venues. IOA's website averaged approximately 158,700 pageviews per month, an increase of approximately 46 percent from the previous year.

Over 200 faculty, staff, and students attended the fifth annual Aging Exchange in September, 2009. The event featured 40 student and faculty posters illustrating aging research from a multitude of disciplines. During the Aging Exchange, we presented the 2009 Gordon H. DeFries Career Development in Aging Research staff award to Jennifer Craft Morgan, Associate Director for Research at IOA, and the doctoral student award to Susan Fletcher in the School of Social Work.

### *Collaborating to support research, education, and service*

IOA researchers have developed a variety of tools and training resources for providers in public health and aging that are being



IOA interim codirector Peggye Dilworth-Anderson (left) is inducted as President of the Gerontological Society of America.



The IOA cosponsored six governor's policy roundtables across the state to identify major issues facing North Carolina's aging population. Pictured are participants at the roundtable held in Charlotte.

widely disseminated at the local, state, and national levels. These resources include nine web-based modules on evidence-based health promotion programming for older adults; these are disseminated nationally through the National Council on Aging's Center for Healthy Aging website. The modules are considered exemplary training tools, and the Administration on Aging is recommending them for its national evidence-based health promotion, aging, and disability resource center and its Alzheimer's disease support and services program initiatives. IOA also developed the Healthy Aging Roadmap, an online, interactive resource for planning and implementation of healthy aging in North Carolina. The Healthy Aging Roadmap was launched in late 2009 and now features information on over 300 older adult health promotion programs across the state.

IOA is also expanding the state's infrastructure for planning, implementing, and evaluating evidence-based health promotion programs and policies for older adults, and specifically for falls prevention. In spring 2010, four workshops were held statewide to coordinate and systematize efforts in falls prevention. These workshops, led by IOA researchers and our strategic partners, generated five new community-level falls prevention initiatives. Falls prevention educational tools developed by IOA and its partners are being disseminated by aging-services providers, emergency medical services, health-care providers, faith-based organizations, and many other groups that serve older adults.

IOA's initiatives in the area of frontline health and health-care workforce have made an impact on workers' job quality and on the policies and practices of 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 30-contact-hour training to 61 nursing assistants and a two-day program to 89 managers from long-term care employers across the state. The WIN A STEP UP nursing-assistant training improves both clinical and interpersonal skills. To complement this program, frontline managers participate in a two-day Coaching Supervision curriculum aimed

at improving essential skills (active listening, problem solving, and self-management) of leaders. IOA researchers have published extensively on the impact of the program for national audiences ([www.winastepup.org](http://www.winastepup.org)).

In terms of national relevance, the Jobs to Careers evaluation, funded by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, has worked with over 35 health-care employers and over 30 educational institutions at 17 sites in 15 states. IOA's role is to evaluate the demonstration projects and collect the lessons learned to disseminate to both the research and practice communities. Frontline employees receive rewards for building skills and expanding knowledge necessary for their current jobs, helping them to advance to new positions. Employers build and retain talented and committed employees while bolstering a workplace culture that supports professional development, mentorship, and collaboration across the entire health-care team. IOA is disseminating findings to national associations in key target areas, including community colleges, acute-care employers, long-term care employers, and community and behavioral health employers. IOA has received funding from the Hitachi Foundation to extend these efforts by developing additional case studies of hospitals that capture both lessons learned and promising practices.

IOA's initiatives in the area of workforce aging in librarianship have increased the capacity for workforce and educational planning in library and information science across the country. As an older-than-average profession, librarianship must have an evidence base from which to plan for an impending wave of retirements and the need for both organizational-knowledge transfer and increased workplace flexibility as workers age.

IOA was recently awarded a grant from the Laura Bush 21st Century Librarian Program for the Workforce Issues in Library and Information Science 3 (WILIS 3): Sustaining the Career Tracking Model through Data-sharing. This project extends our current work in understanding workforce aging in library and information science (WILIS 1 & WILIS 2). This project will document the process of data archiving and how data must be prepared for public use. In addition to documentation, the project, in partnership with the Odum Institute for Research in Social Science, will create publicly accessible datasets; develop an interactive program-specific data system; and produce a data-archiving toolkit for use by other researchers.

The goals in the past year for the Center for Aging and Diversity (CAD/IOA) included continuing to support junior scientists and conducting community-based research on health disparities in later life. CAD announced a call for three pilot grant proposals for a maximum of \$20,000 each (funded by the National Institute on Aging, KO7 Award, AG023113: Closing the Gap on Minority Aging and Health Research) to 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 July 2009-10, and continued to support junior scientists through a research working and mentoring group, which meets once a month and consists of four senior faculty and a diverse group of 15 junior faculty and postdoctoral students. The primary focus of the group is to provide mentoring to junior faculty and postdoctoral fellows and to mentor underrepresented minority faculty. CAD continued

to engage in community-based research that addresses medically underserved populations in North Carolina. The primary area of research is on dementia care for elders with Alzheimer's disease and associated disorders. CAD, in collaboration with the School of Public Health, held two major research meetings with Johnson & Johnson Company and Sanofi-Aventis, US, Inc. to identify and advance aging research at Carolina. Talks with these companies are ongoing.

*Preparing the next generation of leaders in aging*

During 2009-2010, IOA was in its second year of a five-year renewal grant from the National Institute on Aging (grant number 5T32AG000272-08) to fund the Carolina Program in Health and Aging Research. The program assists in preparing predoctoral and postdoctoral scholars to make significant contributions to aging and health-care research through intense, guided career development. The grant supported two postdoctoral fellows and four predoctoral fellows.

A team of four Carolina students completed their yearlong Master of Public Health Capstone project by working with IOA, Carolina Geriatric Education Center, and N.C. Falls Prevention Coalition to address older adult falls prevention in the state of North Carolina.

**Goals for the Coming Academic Year**

- Analyze and disseminate data and information relevant to Senate Bill 195 (Session Law 2009-407) and Governor Perdue's Executive Order No. 54, "Preparing for Aging Baby Boomers," and use this information to inform policy and plan new IOA programs.
- Leverage IOA resources to reduce dependence on state-appropriated funding.
- Enhance IOA's work with individuals and groups within North Carolina by creating and sustaining partnerships with state agencies, national organizations, and those on the Carolina campus.