GREETINGS FROM SALT LAKE CITY!

Message from our GIP Director

Hello Students, Faculty, Alumni and Friends:

We are excited to share the Fall 2015 issue of the Gerontology Interdisciplinary Program (GIP) newsletter with all of you. So many great things have been happening in our program; I’m very proud to be associated with so many gifted and committed individuals. Please enjoy reading our newsletter and learning more about our program.

I hope you all enjoyed a great summer and had the chance to get away for a fun adventure. I was fortunate this summer to be able to spend eight days in early July Maui with six close girlfriends. No kids, no husbands, no jobs – it was blissful. The week consisted of several outdoor adventures including swimming with dolphins and giant sea turtles, paddle boarding, cliff jumping, kayaking, hiking, and snorkeling. I even took a nap every day! I think this trip needs to become an annual tradition!

I would like to thank the nearly 100 GIP alumni (Masters of Science, certificate, and minors) who took the time to complete our program e-survey sent out this spring. The information regarding your experience in our program, job placement, and career development is instrumental in helping us craft our strategic program plan moving forward. Thank you for your continued support of GIP!

WALK TO END ALZHEIMER’S

The 2015 Salt Lake City Walk to End Alzheimer’s started at Library Square on September 12th. The College of Nursing fielded an enthusiastic team of around 20 people representing GIP, Caring Connections, the Student Nurses Association and the Gamma Rho Chapter of Sigma Theta Tau.

Thank you to everyone who came to walk! Nearly $1500 was raised by the College of Nursing teams. The challenge is on for next year’s walk!

Be sure to consider being a part of this smiling group next September. Team Geron appreciates your support!
MEET OUR NEW STUDENTS

Leilani Jackson

I am a long-distance student from Maryland. I recently graduated with a bachelor's degree in sociology, which led to my interest in social gerontology and aging services. After completing the master's in gerontology, I hope to work with low-income seniors and disabled individuals. I enjoy traveling, eating, watching musicals, and writing poetry and fictional short stories.

Winnifred Howard

I graduated from the University of Southern California in anthropology. I also studied archaeology for a semester at Cambridge University in England. I live in southern California with my husband and three sons, and I love hiking, cycling, and playing tennis. When I have time, I like to work (play) on a garden train layout I built last summer. I also volunteer at my local senior center as a "friendly visitor" and deliver Meals on Wheels.

John Selfridge

John received a bachelor's degree in psychology from Virginia Tech and a master's degree in social work from Howard University. In the DC area he began his social work career working with impoverished and adjudicated youth. He and his wife moved from Virginia to Salt Lake City in the fall of 1997 to check out the Mountain West. John worked for 14 years with the chronically homeless before moving to the Senior Behavioral Health Unit at Salt Lake Regional in 2012 where he oversees the social work services. He has maintained a private practice for the past 12 years working with adolescents and men.

Wendy Mohlman

I'm a Hoosier from Indiana and proud of my roots! My husband and I have four children and reside in Herriman. I work as the director of nursing in a community that specializes in Alzheimer's Disease, dementia, and end of life and hospice care. My hobbies are four-wheeling, tennis, and cheering for my kids in all their activities. My favorite quote is by John Wooden, "You cannot live a perfect day until you do something for someone who will never be able to repay you."

Melanie Loveland

I graduated from the University of Utah in Behavioral Science and currently work as the clinic coordinator at the U's brand new Dental School. I became interested in gerontology after being a caregiver for my mom. My dad and I really struggled to navigate the system to find help and resources. I want to try and make things better – that’s really important to me. I’m a single mom with four terrific kids; two in college (one at the University of Texas in Austin and the other at Seattle University) and two still at home.

Brittany Thurgood

I graduated from the University of Utah in May 2015 with my bachelor's in Spanish. I am currently a volunteer at the University of Utah Hospital with the Hospital Elder Life Program (HELP). It was through this program that I was first exposed to working with older adults, and now I am studying gerontology. I like working with older adults because I feel like I have a lot to learn from them.

CALENDAR

November 18 - 22
Gerontological Society of America Annual Meeting
Orlando, FL

April 3 - 9, 2016
Careers in Aging Week
Stay tuned for more information and news of campus events.

April 14 - 15, 2016
Center on Aging Retreat
Get your posters ready. This is a great networking opportunity.

May 19 - 21, 2016
Annual Scientific Meeting of the American Geriatrics Society
Long Beach, CA

DID YOU KNOW?

- The GIP began in 1972
- The first MS student cohort graduated in 1995
- Scott Wright, PhD, taught the first fully online course in 2001
- More than 100 MS degrees + 500 certificates have been awarded
- Around 50 percent of MS students receive some kind of funding
FACULTY AWARDS

Gerontology faculty have obtained funding to support their scholarly activities from the following sources:

- Administration on Aging
- Alzheimer's Association
- Ben B. & Iris M. Margolis Charitable Trust
- Bureau of Health Professions
- College of Nursing Research Committee, University of Utah
- Health Resources and Services Administration
- Life Care Foundation
- National Cancer Institute
- National Institute on Aging
- National Institute of Nursing Research (formerly National Center for Nursing Research)
- University of Utah Center on Aging
- University of Utah Research Committee

CONGRATULATIONS DR MCESEKEY!

Congratulations to Nanci McLeskey, DNP, RN, MDiv, MCG, Clinical Instructor with the College of Nursing, for successfully defending her project “Improving End-of-Life: An Evidence-based Curriculum” and graduating with her Doctor in Nursing Practice (DNP) in May 2015.

Dr McLeskey currently teaches four courses in the Gerontology Interdisciplinary Program: Physiology and Psychology of Aging (Fall Semester), Caregiving and Aging Families (Spring Semester), Best Practices in Geriatric Care (Spring and Summer Semesters) and Death, Dying and Bereavement (Summer Semester). Teaching about the care of older adults, especially those with Alzheimer’s disease and those at end of life, is her passion.

BRAVO!

Jackie Eaton, PhD,
Project Director of the Utah Hartford Center of Geriatric Nursing Excellence and Adjunct Instructor with the College of Nursing, has been awarded a grant by the Gerontological Society of America and the Hartford Institute for Geriatrics Nursing for her project “Early Intervention for Informal Caregivers using High Fidelity Simulation via Community-based participating Ethnodrama.”

Dr Eaton’s research interests include lifelong learning, late life potential, aging and the arts, and ethnodrama. She currently teaches Aging in the Arts (Spring Semester) and Applications of Research in Aging (Summer Semester).

HATS OFF TO YOU, PROF TOWSLEY

Gail Towsley, PhD, NHA, Associate Professor with the College of Nursing, was awarded a grant from the National Palliative Care Research Center in the amount of $154,000 for her project “Me & My Wishes: Long Term Care Resident Videos to Communicate Care Preferences.” Dr Towsley is interested in applied research on palliative care in long-term care settings and on new approaches for enhancing communication among residents, families and staff in order to provide person-centered care. She teaches Service Agencies and Programs for the Elderly (Spring Semester) and Leadership and Career Advancement (Spring Semester). Dr Towsley is a native Oregonian.
**DECEMBER 2014 GRADUATES + PROJECTS**

**Frederic Mugiraneza**
Assessing Alzheimer’s Disease Awareness Among Racial and Ethnic Population Groups in Salt Lake City

**Amaris Newkirk**
Self-Efficacy of Caregivers of Individuals With Dementia

**Linnea Ketcher**
Support Group Participation and its Relationship to Caregiver Burden and Quality of Sleep among Caregivers

**MAY 2015 GRADUATES + PROJECTS**

**Jennifer (Marie) Tripp**
Vital Involvement and the Baby Boom Cohort: A New Approach to Eldercare Within Assisted Living Facilities

**Galina Polei**
Goals of Care: Recommendations For How to Improve End-of-Life Care and Quality of Life Among Patients With Heart Failure

**Patricia Wilson**
Metamorphosis of Ethical Wills to Legacy

**Yumeng Li**
A Proposal For Improving Community-based Aging Services in Beijing, China: Toward a Hybrid Model

**Sarah Scott**
Advancing Culture Change in Long-Term Care

**Robert Jensen**
Intergenerational Ties: Dispelling Ageism Through Education

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**THE THREE MUSKETEERS**

An inseparable trio during their time together in the MS program, Yumeng (Lemon) Li, Amaris Newkirk, and Linnea Ketcher were dubbed the “Three Musketeers” by gerontology professor Michael Caserta. On the last day of class in Spring 2014, the hardy trio gallantly presented a Three Musketeers bar to their much-beloved professor. Dr Caserta vowed not to eat the candy bar, although his favorite, until all three of the “Three Musketeers” had graduated from the program. At the defense of the last musketeer, Dr Caserta returned the candy bar to the trio. A few weeks later he received a photo of the three proud graduates triumphantly holding the Three Musketeers bar.

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**WISE OWL BOOK CORNER**


The 13th Annual Rocky Mountain Geriatrics Conference was held at Snowbird Ski and Summer Resort on August 31 and September 1. This year’s topic was “The Aging Brain: Exploring the Intersection of Behavioral and Cognitive Disorders.” Our GIP director, Kara Dassel, PhD, was conference co-chair and moderator. Other GIP faculty, Kathie Supiano, PhD, LCSW, led the plenary session, “Understanding What is Lost, Building on What is Left.” This conference is held every year in the spectacular Wasatch Mountains at the end of August.

The Utah Aging Alliance Annual Conference was held at the University of Utah Guest House on the University Campus on September 24 and 25. GIP students, faculty and alumni were well represented in this year’s conference. Nancy Madsen, MS, GIP alumna, Class of 2013, shared her expertise at two sessions. Nancy is currently Program Manager at the Utah Department of Human Services, Division of Aging & Adult Services, where she oversees Caregiver Support throughout Utah.

Hailey Hadean, MS candidate, led a session titled, “Adult Day Care and the Continuum of Care.” Hailey is the Adult Day Services Manager at Neighborhood House in Salt Lake City. Neighborhood House provides quality, affordable day care and support services to children and adults.

Kathie Supiano, PhD, LCSW provided the opening session keynote address, “Learning from Loss: Growing Resilience as We Age.” The focus of the presentation was what we can learn from life losses and how to grow resilience and compassion. Kathie shared a powerful video from the Cleveland Clinic: “Empathy, The Human Connection to Patient Care.” Please check it out.

NEWS TO SHARE?

Please share your stories, news, events and photos with our GIP newsletter editors: Nancy McGee or Nancy Joyce

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