Dear Readers,

Welcome to the spring 2009 Newsletter from the Center on Aging! As we are approaching another spring in the Lowcountry, I hope it will bring with it another season of hope for all of us, in the midst of economic hardship. Just as many of us have seen significant losses in retirement funds and personal wealth with the decline in the stock market, state-supported programs designed to help older adults have experienced significant losses in revenue as well. The economic climate at MUSC and in our state in general is not the best, and research funding is at an all-time low. It is looking grim for many new as well as seasoned investigators, hoping to make it in the tough competition for grant funding. Based on this situation, we decided to postpone the annual Aging Research conference, and instead spend the money on supporting young investigators with pilot grants, and promote scholarships for Geriatric and Gerontological courses for the students. Fostering a new generation of scientists and clinicians who are interested in aging research is a fundamentally important quest which will always be high on the list for Center on Aging faculty and staff.

In terms of new education programs, I am proud to tell you that the Center on Aging will add a new arm to the Senior Mentor program this spring, with the induction of interdisciplinary focus groups in Pharmacy. As the second year medical students enter their Pharmacology assignment in April, some of the groups will be enriched by a pharmacy student, who will meet with the mentor and work as a team with the medical students on this important assignment. This is an exciting and novel concept well worth exploring, as MUSC increases its focus on interdisciplinary teaching methods and is the result of a collaboration between Dr. Kathleen Wiley (Director for the Senior Mentor Program) and Dr. Sarah Shrader in Pharmacy as well as the hard work of scheduling and planning the event by Center on Aging staff.

The Center on Aging continues the collaborative work with several other Centers and Programs at MUSC, including the Alzheimer program, the Movement Disorders Program, and the Stroke program. In the end of March the Center on Aging sponsored a round table discussion and a seminar by the renowned Stroke scientist Dr. Pamela Duncan. Be sure to attend this interesting event. In this issue of our Newsletter, you can also read about current research on movement disorders at MUSC as well as visit with senior mentors and their students in the Senior Mentor section of the newsletter. Don’t forget to check for upcoming events and/or senior mentor assignment due dates in the end of the Newsletter!

Have a great spring!

Lotta Granholm
Director Center on Aging

Our Staff

Dr. Lotta Granholm-Bentley PhD., D.D.S
Director, Center on Aging
granhom@musc.edu

Alyssia Barnes
Program Coordinator
barnea@musc.edu
843-792-5721

Nyssa Sturbin
Business Manager
sturbin@musc.edu
843-792-5678

Dr. Kathleen Wiley, MD
Director, Senior Mentor Course
wileyk@musc.edu

Debbie Bordeau
Director of Development
bordeau@musc.edu
843-792-4342
Research Conducted by the Murray Center for Research on Parkinson’s Disease and Related Disorders

The Murray Center at MUSC has made research on stopping disease progression of Parkinson’s Disease a top priority. To that extent, we are conducting two clinical trials evaluating the safety and efficacy of two medications aimed at slowing or stopping PD from worsening over time. These medications are creatine and coenzyme Q10. Both have shown promising results in small preliminary trials, so that the National Institute of Health decided to design larger scale nationwide research programs to study the efficacy further. Both clinical trials are currently enrolling interested patients with PD. Another research project related to PD is studying the basis for memory loss related to PD. Our research examines MRI brain scans of PD patients for the structural basis of these cognitive problems that can be quite frustrating to the patients.

Essential tremor is different from PD, and actually a much more common form of tremor. Patients often have difficulty using their hands for activities such as drinking from a cup or writing. The Murray Center is researching a new medication to help people with this condition. This clinical trial is currently enrolling patients.

Last but not least, we remain highly interested in yet another movement disorder called dystonia. Dystonia consists of abnormal muscle contractures leading to abnormal postures that can be quite painful. Spasmodic torticollis or cervical dystonia is the most common form of this disorder. We are conducting research to study whether transcranial magnetic stimulation applied to the head can effectively treat this condition.

Vanessa Hinson, M.D., Ph.D, Director

If you want to learn more about our research program, please contact research coordinator Jennifer Zimmerman, R.N., at 843-792-9115.

A tribute to Nils-Ake Hillarp and His Students

The Center on Aging organized an international meeting in December of 2008. The meeting was named “A tribute to Nils-Ake Hillarp and His Students” and was tributed to the scientists that mapped the monoamine systems in the brain in the 60s and early 70s. The work from this group in Stockholm (The Amine Group) has had a tremendous impact on neuropharmacology, psychiatry, neurosurgery, and the basic science as well provided significant progress in treatment in many difficult disorders such as schizophrenia, Parkinson’s disease, Alzheimer’s disease and addiction. Scientists from all over the world, who were students and fellows of Hillarp’s graduate students gathered for 3 days in Stockholm to celebrate their mentors. The presentations will result in a special issue of the prestigious journal Progress in Neurobiology. Dr. Granholm is the guest editor in this issue and many prominent international scientists will contribute.

Recruitment for Class of 2012

Recruitment for the Class of 2012 was a huge success. It seems good word has gotten out about the Senior Mentor Program and we recruited over 100 volunteer mentors. We had some very wonderful people help us through the recruitment process. We give special thanks to:

Cam Spencer—Canterbury House
Donna Depine & Ellen Erickson—Franke at Seaside
Beth Jacobs—Sandpiper Village
Sue Duckworth—resident and mentor at Bishop Gadsden
Margaret Kunes—Bishop Gadsden
Sarah Clader—Somerby of Mount Pleasant

Class of 2009 Senior Mentor Program Graduation Luncheon

Thanks so much for the very nice luncheon today. The speakers were outstanding and it was wonderful being with Jason and Trey, the students I mentored, knowing they will be graduating and may move for 2 more years. They are very nice young men and will go a long ways in life.

Thanks again for the nice celebration.

Sincerely,
Mary Ann Bennett

Research to study whether transcranial magnetic stimulation applied to the head can effectively treat this condition.

Thomas Edwards of Cleveland, South Carolina finished his undergraduate studies at Furman University in Greenville.

From Thomas “Trey” Edwards III

I am doing family medicine residency at Palmetto Health Richland in Columbia, SC next year. I changed my mind several times on what type of doctor I wanted to become, but found myself loving every aspect of medicine and therefore decided to do it all. I also enjoy rural and small town medicine. I feel that the aging population will cause us to need greater access for the elderly to physicians. We will need more primary care physicians to help take care of this increasing elderly population. The Senior Mentor Program allowed me to obtain more interaction with elderly patients. I, unlike some medical students, still have living grandparents who are in their late 80’s and early 90’s so I have always had contact with elderly people. Therefore, this program helped me probably a little less than other students because I have had to deal with multiple issues with my grandparents relating to their health, hospitalizations, and end of life issues. I would like first year students to realize that primary care and geriatric medicine is a wonderful profession which can be very rewarding. If you listen to your elderly patients they can teach you a lot about life and can often give you a different perspective on things. I have enjoyed the opportunities to spend time with my senior mentor, Jason, and I had fun time going to visit her knowing she was looking forward to our visit. Over the past four years we have come to know Mrs. Bennett and what is affecting her life. We know what issues cause her grief and trouble and what things she enjoys doing. Our visits and goodbyes are greeted with hugs and we feel at home when she invites us into her house.
Mommy don’t go
Plead her weeping child
I have to go sweetie
People need me
All this echoing in her mind
Repeated time after time
Mommy don’t go
She hears echoing in her mind
As she assists the Doctor in operating room five
Scalpel nurse
His voice interrupts the echo
He is sad at heart as he is trying to save the life of this old lady
Mommy don’t go
He’s sad at heart
Across town his Grandmother is dying
And he can’t be at her side because he has to try to save this Grandmother
Mommy don’t go cries the child
He’s sad at heart because across town his own Grandmother is dying
Regulate the oxygen
She does this with a broken heart
Her friend is leaving for the war right now
Lord guide their hands
Regulate the oxygen
She’s broken hearted
But together in O.R. 5 they struggle to save the life of this old lady
Mommy don’t go
He’s sad at heart
She’s broken hearted
They struggle to save the life of this old lady
He’s sad at heart
She’s dying across town
He may not come back from the war
(May 20, 2008)

Mommy don’t go
Sponge nurse he says
Across town his Grandmother is dying
And he can’t be at her side because he has to try to save this Grandmother
Mommy don’t go
She’s dying across town
He may not come back from the war
(May 20, 2008)

Mommy don’t go
She hears echoing in her mind
As she assists the Doctor in operating room five
Scalpel nurse
His voice interrupts the echo
He is sad at heart as he is trying to save the life of this old lady
Mommy don’t go
He’s sad at heart because across town his own Grandmother is dying
Regulate the oxygen
She does this with a broken heart
Her friend is leaving for the war right now
Lord guide their hands
Regulate the oxygen
She’s broken hearted
But together in O.R. 5 they struggle to save the life of this old lady
Mommy don’t go
He’s sad at heart
She’s broken hearted
But together in O.R. 5 they struggle to save the life of this old lady
Mommy don’t go
He’s sad at heart
She’s dying across town
He may not come back from the war
(May 20, 2008)

Mommy don’t go
Sponge nurse he says
Across town his Grandmother is dying
And he can’t be at her side because he has to try to save this Grandmother
Mommy don’t go
She’s dying across town
He may not come back from the war
(May 20, 2008)

What Kind of a Legacy Will You Leave?

We all have a desire for significance. For many of us, significance comes through creating a legacy during our lives – something for which we will be remembered in the future. A bequest is perhaps the easiest and most tangible way to leave a lasting legacy to the people and charitable organizations that mean the most to us.

A Bequest is a gift made through your will or trust. There are several ways to make a bequest:
- Specific dollar amount
- Specific asset
- Percentage of your estate
- Residue of your estate

For more information on how to create a lasting legacy through a bequest, please contact us or log on to our web site at www.MUSCGiving.com. We look forward to helping you!

Advertisements and Upcoming Events

We offer FREE, confidential memory screen to individuals over the age of 50 who have a study partner and a primary care physician. Call Stephanie at 843-740-1592 x14 to set up an appointment.

10 Warning Signs of Alzheimer’s disease
- Memory Loss
- Difficulty performing familiar tasks
- Problems with language
- Disorientation to time and place
- Poor or decreased judgment
- Problems with abstract thinking
- Misplacing things
- Changes in mood or behavior
- Changes in personality
- Loss of initiative

Dates to Remember:
May 21, 2009 from 9-4:30
Memory Screen Day at the James Island Senior Center
865 Riverland Dr
Charleston, SC 29412

May 16, 2009
Forget Me Not Ball at the Francis Marion
We offer FREE, confidential memory screen to individuals over the age of 50 who have a study partner and a primary care physician. Call Stephanie at 843-740-1592 x14 to set up an appointment.

Senior Mentor Program Assignments & Due Dates

Class of 2009  Advanced Care Planning  Due February 20, 2009
Class of 2010  Fall Risk Assessment  Due at end of Students Medicine Rotation
Life Review  Due at the End of the Semester
Class of 2011  Nutrition  Due October 5, 2008
Pharmacology  Due April 26, 2009
Class of 2012  Physiology of Aging  Due week of February 16, 2009
Medical History  Due week of April 26, 2009

Forgetting names of familiar people?
Having trouble with daily activities?

Alzheimer’s Disease
Fades Memories
We offer FREE memory screens to individuals over the age of 50 who are concerned about forgetfulness.
Call Stephanie today for more information.
Tel: 843-740-1592 x14