Winter 2017

Greetings! As we embark on a new year, we all take time to stop and reflect on the events of the last year.

At the MUSC Center on Aging, we do the same thing. We had a lot of exciting things happen, including hosting our inaugural Senior Expo, the issuance of three research pilot project grants, and co-hosting the SCTR Aging Research retreat at MUSC.

With all of these activities, we were able to see just how many folks at MUSC, and in the Charleston area, are invested in the health and wellness of our senior population.

We want to thank all those who have helped us in our 2017 endeavors, and we look forward to what 2018 has in store.

With that said, I want to wish you all healthy and happy aging as you and your family start this new year!

- Dr. Heather Boger
SCTR Scientific Retreat on Aging Related Research

Friday, October 20, 2017

On October 20, 2017, the Center on Aging co-sponsored a Scientific Retreat on Aging Related Research with SCTR (South Carolina Clinical & Translational Research Institution).

The goal of the retreat was to provide South Carolina students and faculty who are conducting aging related research a forum to network with each other and to stimulate future collaborative projects.

The day began with a keynote address by Dr. James L. Kirkland, from the Mayo Clinic, on his ground-breaking research into potential treatments to stop or slow the process of cellular senescence, or cellular aging, a process which may link many age-related diseases of the brain and body.

Following Dr. Kirkland’s thought-provoking presentation, researchers representing diverse fields, such as bioengineering, public health, and medicine, shared with the audience current findings or ongoing projects and the opportunities they foresaw for collaborations with other researchers.

One of the highlights of the day, was the fast-paced, 3 minute data blitz presentations by students and trainees. The eight selected presenters shared their cutting-edge projects, which included projects investigating the use of vagal nerve stimulation to treat Parkinson’s disease in rats, comparing microcrustaceans (i.e., shell fish) to better understand the aging process, and the use of culturally sensitive architectural design to improve senior care environments.

The success of the retreat was represented in the diversity of the presentations and audience members, who represented many different fields of study, from drug discovery to nursing, and came from colleges across South Carolina, including MUSC, Clemson, University of South Carolina, and Furman University.

For full agenda and videos of the presentations, visit: http://academicdepartments.musc.edu/sctr/programs/retreats/2017_Aging/aging

(Left) CoA’s Dr. Chris Gregory was a moderator and Dr. Mindi Spencer from USC presented. (Right) Dr. James Kirkland was the keynote speaker from Mayo Clinic.
MUSC Wellness Center now offers Rock Steady Boxing for patients with Parkinson’s disease.

Rock Steady Boxing (RSB) is specific to Parkinson’s disease. Every RSB Coach has completed an intensive training and certification program developed over the last ten years that assures an understanding of Parkinson’s disease and the benefits of a RSB style boxing method. As a member of the RSB Affiliate program, they receive on-going continuing education about the treatment of Parkinson’s disease symptoms through non-contact, forced intense exercise, and access to symptom specific consulting which addresses individual challenges.

RSB classes are designed to be modified for all levels of Parkinson’s, at any stage of the disease. Each participant is assessed before they start RSB classes, both for overall physical fitness and for the progression of Parkinson’s symptoms. Class placement is designed to both challenge and allow optimal functioning with other participants of similar ability. This careful evaluation allows coaches to know not only the participant’s stage of Parkinson’s, but also to be aware of other health concerns that should be addressed.

RSB classes are more than just boxing. Classes are designed to help with voice activation and manual dexterity. Many Affiliates design programs especially toward their specific boxers.

Having a knowledgeable coach who understands Parkinson’s can make all the difference. RSB Coaches are trained to identify specific PD symptoms during a workout. Our coaches focus on Parkinson’s specifically and know what signs and symptoms to look for during class.

At Rock Steady, camaraderie among folks fighting the same disease is essential to the overall experience. This is a community of people who are all fighting back against Parkinson’s disease. They are not training for a prize fight, or just trying to get in shape, they are committed to keeping their disease at bay and maintaining their quality of life as long as possible. Parkinson’s can be an isolating disease, and many people with Parkinson’s withdraw from family and friends due to depression. Rock Steady Boxing at MUSC can offer its boxers support through the friendships they develop among other participants.

What about newly diagnosed, young onset Parkinson’s? Newly diagnosed, young-onset and in-shape people with Parkinson’s make up a very small percentage of the PD population, and they are often able to train among a healthy population. However, this is not always advisable, due to the need for camaraderie and the experience of fighting back with others who truly understand the challenges.

The classes are on-going:
Tuesday and Friday - 11:00 am - 12:15 pm
Tuesday and Thursday - 5:00 pm - 6:15pm

Schedule an assessment appointment: (843) 792-5754. For more information: Alicia O’ Connor (843) 792-1494.

What is GetCareSC.com?
GetCareSC.com is a free online tool that allows seniors, caregivers, and adults to find local services that can help them stay healthy and independent.

What can I do at GetCareSC.com?
GetCareSC.com is a one-stop shop for seniors, caregivers, and adults with disabilities.

The website provides a statewide, searchable directory of service providers, a tool to help you find assisted living facilities, and access to local information specialists to connect you with the help you need.

- Find Help
  We include providers that serve all income levels, because cost shouldn’t be a barrier to finding care. Our comprehensive directory includes government programs, charitable organizations, and private companies that use a traditional fee-for-service model.

- Find Assisted Living Facilities
  GetCareSC.com also provides an up-to-date listing of nursing home and assisted living beds available throughout South Carolina. Searching for a bed can be exhausting—in some areas, there are too few spaces available to meet the need. Our database allows you to view current information about available beds and search for specific criteria, such as Medicaid or OSS beds.

- Find Someone to Talk To
  Our information and referral specialists can direct you to local services and help you determine your eligibility for program assistance.

Visit: www.getcaresc.com
If you would rather talk to a person...
Call: 1-800-868-9095

GetCareSC.com is an initiative of the South Carolina Lieutenant Governor’s Office on Aging.
CONGRATULATIONS to CoA’s long-time friend & senior champion, Chairman of SC Aging Advisory Council, the Honorable Mark Smith, of Mount Pleasant, SC.

Mark was voted unanimously by the SE4A leadership to win the “Local Aging Impact Award” presented during the Southeastern Association of Area Agencies on Aging Annual (SE4A) Conference held in Greenville, SC over the week of Dec 10-13th. The purpose of this award is to recognize outstanding contributions at the regional level by a leader who has made an observable and measurable impact on the quality of life of older adults in his/her community. Only one individual is selected in this category for the whole SE, which is a 9-state district, including the states from Virginia to Florida and west to the Mississippi and up to Kentucky.

Through his leadership, Mark has improved aging in our community by helping our seniors through his advocacy, public policy work, securing of new/additional funding, and expanded programs for our seniors and their families.

Mark has been a longtime advocate for improving the quality of life for seniors in the Lowcountry through his work with the SC Council on Aging, Lowcountry Food Bank, the SC Aging in Place Council, the Lowcountry Senior Network, and many other endeavors. Mark has done all this while being the co-owner and managing partner of McAlister-Smith Funeral Homes.

We are very proud to include you in our CoA family! Well earned, Mark, and keep up the great work!

CoA sponsored Respite Care Charleston’s “More. Good. Days. Art Gala and Silent Auction” to support their day programs for those with Alzheimer’s and other dementia.

CoAs Mary Catherine Dubois helped educate attendees for the Bridges for End-of-Life Candlelight Memorial Ceremony on grief resources to help cope with loss.

CoAs Kelly Franklin was co-chair of the Lowcountry Senior Network’s Holiday Harvest Gala that raised $18k for Charleston Area Meals on Wheels program.
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MUSC Center on Aging Senior Expo
May 24th - 9:00 am - 2:00 pm

Don't miss your chance to talk to over 100 MUSC specialists, exhibitors, and get free health screenings all in one place!
Details inside.