
LIFE COURSE AND AGING CENTER

LSU'S INTERDISCIPLINARY CENTER FOR TODAY, TOMORROW, AND BEYOND

Volume 5, Issue 1, Fall 2006



Distinguished Scholar, Dr. Lynn Hasher, Visits LSU

The LCAC served as a co-host with the Department of Psychology to sponsor the Chancellor's Distinguished Lectureship Series visit by Dr. Lynn Hasher on March 16th and 17th, 2006. Dr. Hasher is an expert in the cognitive changes associated with aging and with human memory performance. She is currently a Professor in the Department of Psychology at the University of Toronto, as well as a Senior Scientist at the Rotman Research Institute of the Baycrest Centre for Geriatric Care. Among her research awards are the APA Distinguished Professional Contribution to Knowledge Award (1996) and a Guggenheim Foundation Fellowship. She is a Fellow of the American Psychological Society and the American Psychological Association.

Dr. Hasher gave a public lecture on March 16th entitled, "It's About Time: Circadian Rhythms, Cognition, and Development" describing her work on individual differences in circadian arousal, or the cyclic changes that occur in wake/sleep patterns, hormone levels, and body temperature in humans over a 24-hour period. She spoke about the impact of circadian variations in peak arousal on cognitive performance in younger and older adults. Her research has shown that most older adults have periods of peak arousal in the morning, whereas many college students have peak times towards the evening. These "time of day" effects can be very important in understanding the differences in cognitive performance shown often by younger and older adults.

On Friday, March 17th, Dr. Hasher was the keynote speaker at the LCAC Annual Luncheon and Student Poster Session (see related story on page 5). Her visit was a great success, and her research presentations were very relevant to many of the members of the LCAC.



Front row: Becky Ellis, Lynn Hasher, Lilly Allen, Bob Wood.
Back row: Louis Prejean, John Graham, Katie Cherry, Gwen Moore, Leigh Loe, Michal Jazwinski, Dale Welch.

Life Course and Aging Center Updates

- We welcome our new adjunct faculty members: **Jay Bulot** of U of LA Monroe, **Charles Cefalu** of LSUHSC, **Alo Dutta** of SU, **Scott Rubin** of LSUHSC
- Congratulations to LCAC member **Todd Pourciau**! Todd received his doctoral degree in Educational Leadership and Research December 2006.
- Get up-to-date with the latest research being done by center members! Our fourth annual luncheon for community partners will be held on March 15, 2007.
- Visit our website: <http://www.lsuagingstudies.com>

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Faculty Highlights

Dr. Li Li, Department of Kinesiology

Conducted by LCAC members **Drs. Li, Hondzinski, Welsch, Kosmoa and Ellis**, the LSU Peripheral Neuropathy Study gained national and international attention last year. Reports on the study were by WAFB of Baton Rouge (March 24, 2006), WFRV of Green Bay (March 29, 2006), The Advocate of Baton Rouge (May 21, 2006), The Daily Advertiser of Lafayette (September 5, 2006), and Relay - the official journal of the Neuropathy Trust of UK (winter issue, 2006). The community's appreciation of the efforts of the research group was capped by a \$300,000 donation from the Reilly Family Foundation. The money will be used to support research for training effects in people with peripheral neuropathy. For more information, see <http://pn.lsu.edu> or contact Dr. Li at LLI3@LSU.EDU.

Dr. Katie Cherry, Department of Psychology

Dr. Cherry and her colleagues presented a symposium at the annual meeting of the Southeastern Psychological Association in New Orleans, LA on the psychological impact and mental health issues related to Hurricane Katrina that hit the Gulf Coast region in August of 2005. The symposium highlighted ongoing basic research on the effects of Hurricane Katrina on psychological functioning, and various dimensions of health and well-being in college students, middle age adults, young-old adults, and the oldest-old (persons 90 years of age and over). The impact of severe hurricanes on the psychological functioning college undergraduates is not well understood. **Dr. Thompson E. Davis, III**, compared displaced and non-displaced college students on multiple measures of mental health, trauma and quality of life. **Jennifer L. Silva and Jenny Y. Denver**, described the first findings of the Louisiana Healthy Aging Study (LHAS) hurricane study where quantitative and qualitative measures were collected on persons between the ages of 45 to 90 years and older. The LHAS is an ongoing multidisciplinary investigation of the determinants of longevity and health aging in the Louisiana population. Few studies have examined the impact of catastrophic events such as natural disasters on domains of psychological functioning in late life. Virtually no prior research has examined the reaction of the oldest-old to natural disasters such as hurricanes and flooding. **Dr. Joy Osofsky** described *Louisiana Spirit*, an initiative program out of the Louisiana Office of Mental Health. *Louisiana Spirit* addresses post hurricane disaster mental health issues, as well as individual and community level interventions for those directly affected by the storm including disaster survivors and first responders.

Dr. Alo Dutta, Department of Rehabilitation and Disability Studies, Southern University

On February 23, 2006, the Department of Rehabilitation

and Disability Studies organized a day-long symposium on Bio-Ethics and People with disabilities. The presenters were: Walton Schalick, M.D., Ph.D., Assistant Professor of Pediatrics, Washington University School of Medicine, St. Louis, MO; Rev. Cathy Arends, R.N., Director, Paracletia, Inc., Hammond, LA; Dr. Jerome Bickenbach, J.D., Ph.D., Professor and Research Chair, Department of Philosophy, Queens University, Ontario, Canada AND Consultant, World Health Organization, Geneva, Switzerland; and Dr. Sunil Kothari, M.D., Associate Professor, Brain Injury and Stroke Program, Baylor College of Medicine, Houston, TX. The symposium was attended by about 100 faculty, students, and professionals from rehabilitation-related disciplines. Six CRC maintenance hours were provided to eligible attendees. The day's proceedings also included an Initiation Ceremony for the Sigma Upsilon Chi Chapter for the Chi Sigma Iota Counseling, Academic and Professional Honor Society International. The ceremony recognized high achieving students in rehabilitation and counseling related disciplines.

Dr. Dutta was also involved with the Summer Research Institute (July 6-14, 2006) at 224 John B. Cade Library - SUBR). The institute was sponsored by the Rehabilitation Research Institute for Underrepresented Populations (RRIUP), funded by the National Institute on Disability and Rehabilitation Research, U.S. Department of Education. It was attended by 19 graduate (master's and doctoral) students from nine universities and three vocational rehabilitation professionals. The students received 3.0 credits in REHB 565 Rehabilitation Research and Statistics. Eligible attendees received 45 CRC certification maintenance hours. **Dr. Fabricio Balcazar** of the University of Illinois at Chicago and **Dr. David Rosenthal** of the University of Wisconsin at Madison team taught the class along with **Dr. Alo Dutta**.

Drs. Maria Kosma and Rebecca Ellis, Department of Kinesiology

Drs. Kosma and Ellis, in conjunction with **Drs. Bradley J. Cardinal, Jeremy J. Bauer, and Jeffrey A. McCubbin**, of the Department of Nutrition and Exercise at Oregon State University, are involved with a project entitled "Psychosocial Determinants of Physical Activity among Adults with Physical Disabilities". The following is their current project report. National health and governmental agencies have reached consensus that physical activity promotion is a public health priority. However, only 12% of adults with disabilities participate regularly (≥ 5 days/week) in physical activity of moderate or higher intensity. For this project, we examined the psychosocial factors and barriers of physical activity among adults with physical disabilities. Based on our project findings, disability symptoms and lack of access and transportation to adequate facilities, programs, and equipment, were the major physical activity barriers. Most of the participants reported that physical activity improves functioning and

overall health, controls weight, and increases physical fitness and energy. Individuals with disabilities can use the following strategies to increase physical activity motivation: (a) plan your physical activity program based on your physical activity level (e.g., start with a 10-minute mild-to-moderate walk or off-road pushing if you are mainly inactive), (b) seek for social support and information about accessible and inexpensive physical activity facilities/equipment through your local Independent Living Centers, (c) start slow and consult with your health-care providers to alleviate pain and incorporate physical activity in your daily routine, (d) reward participation in physical activity through a social event, (e) use physical activity cues/reminders (e.g., place notes about your physical activity program on the fridge door and place your keys by your gym clothes), (f) use a goal sheet to write your daily activity goals and incorporate physical activity in your daily schedule, and (g) try to participate in enjoyable activities to increase fun and success/confidence.

Student Highlights

Iina Antikainen, Department of Kinesiology

Iina graduated from the University of Florida in 2001 with a B.S. in Exercise and Sport Science and specialization in exercise physiology. She then worked in corporate fitness for four years before enrolling in the Kinesiology Ph.D. program at LSU in the fall of 2005. She is currently funded by a research assistantship through the Louisiana Healthy Aging Study/National Institute of Aging and the LCAC enhancement award. Iina is currently involved in various projects under the direction of **Dr. Rebecca Ellis** including the nutrition, exercise, and wellness Project, the Louisiana Healthy Aging Study, and Falls Prevention. Her research interests include the possible changes in physical activity beliefs in a population of diverse older adults.

Jenny Denver, Department of Psychology

Jenny is an LCAC Enhancement student, and she is currently a second-year doctoral student in the cognitive/developmental psychology program at LSU. Jenny is working with **Dr. Katie Cherry** on projects affiliated with the Louisiana Healthy Aging Study. Some of her research includes examining the effects of Hurricanes Katrina/Rita on the coping skills of older adults, practical memory concerns in older adulthood, and age-related differences in flashbulb memories. Jenny presented portions of her research on public and personally selected flashbulb memories in younger and older adults in the spring of 2006 at the annual meeting of the Association for Psychological Science in New York City, as well as at the annual LCAC luncheon and the annual meeting of the Louisiana Psychological Association; she also attended the

Cognitive Aging Conference in Atlanta, Georgia. Jenny previously attended the University of Tennessee at Chattanooga where she received a bachelor's degree in psychology and a master's degree in psychology with a concentration in research. Her thesis research was related to the cognitive effects of breast cancer, and was recently presented at the International Congress of Psychooncology in Venice, Italy. Jenny is currently serving as an executive board member of the Association for Psychological Science Student Caucus. As the RiSE-UP Coordinator (Research on Socially and Economically Underrepresented Populations), she is responsible for organizing and maintaining committees and projects related to research on/by underrepresented populations, as well as for serving as the coordinator of the RiSE-UP Research Award.

Donna Fitzgerald-Dejean, Department of Communication Disorders

Donna, a certified speech-language pathologist and consultant in Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation, has returned to LSU to pursue a doctorate in Communication Disorders. Donna was inducted into the Sigma Phi Omega Honor Society for Gerontology in March. As the current Louisiana Speech-Language and Hearing Association (LSHA) Director of Health Care, Donna has submitted quarterly articles to the LSHA Newsletter along with the following peer reviewed publications this year: Getting your Ph.D.: Making the Decision and Applying (American Speech-Language and Hearing Association—ASHA Leader March, 2006) and D/C Planning: Return on Investment for the Patient, Speech-Language Pathologist and Medical Setting (ASHA Special Interest Division 11 Newsletter March, 2006). In addition to required class presentations, this year Donna presented: Medicare Updates (2 hour course, LSHA Convention, June, 2006), Medicare Primer (a 2 hour course for COMD students at LSUHSC June, 2006 and LSU August, 2006) and ASHA's Advocating and Negotiating with Private Health Plans (a 3 hour LSHA public workshop, October, 2006). Donna's research interests include: environmental symbol recognition testing and training and the efficacy of combining patients with aphasia and traumatic brain injury in speech pathology group treatment (Mentor: **Dr. Scott Rubin**)

Fernanda Holton, Department of Kinesiology

Fernanda graduated *summa cum laude* from Louisiana State University in 2005. She is a 2nd year LCAC enhanced doctoral student in Kinesiology working under the direction of **Dr. Rebecca Ellis**. Fernanda is funded by a research assistantship through the Louisiana Healthy Aging Study /National Institute on Aging (LHAS/NIA) and is currently working on the Physical Function component of the LHAS. She is also involved in the nutrition, exercise, and wellness project and falls screenings, and is a member of the Sigma Phi Omega National Gerontology Academic Honor and Professional

Society. At last year's LCAC Research Student Seminar, Fernanda presented a poster on the predictors of disability in older adults. She also presented research at the 53rd Annual Meeting of the American College of Sports Medicine.

Zahra Kadivar, Department of Kinesiology

Zahra, a second year doctoral student, is finishing her coursework and her Milestone Examination under the direction of **Dr. Jan Hondzinski**. She presented the results from her current research in a poster entitled "Temporal characteristics of gait under rhythmic auditory stimulation" at The Society for Neuroscience (SFN) annual meeting in October 2006. Zahra plans to focus her future research on the effects of external auditory stimulation on the gait patterns of individuals suffering from Parkinson's disease.

Brad Manor, Department of Kinesiology

Brad is a 2nd year LCAC enhanced doctoral student pursuing a degree in Biomechanics under the direction of **Dr. Li Li**. Brad's current research activities include the management of the Peripheral Neuropathy Intervention Program within the Department of Kinesiology at LSU. His main research interests include the motor control of weight-bearing activities, and the characteristic changes in stability and variability associated with aging and specific disease. At the 2006 NASPSA conference, Brad gave a verbal presentation on the functional response of peripheral neuropathy patients to group-based Tai Chi and functional exercise training.

Delilah Moore, Department of Kinesiology

Delilah, a third year doctoral student, is finishing her coursework in the Department of Kinesiology and preparing to take her general exam in spring 2007. Delilah is also working towards completing her Masters in Applied Statistics. She is funded through a Department of Kinesiology graduate assistantship and the College of Education's Lillian Oleson Scholarship, and she is the treasurer of the LSU chapter of the Sigma Phi Omega honor society. In January 2006, Delilah submitted an article to *Research Quarterly in Exercise and Sport* with several coauthors from the LCAC entitled, "Construct validity of physical activity surveys in culturally diverse older adults: A comparison of four commonly used questionnaires", that is currently in the review process. Delilah is currently working with her advisor, **Dr. Rebecca Ellis**, and several members of the LCAC on the *Falls and Fracture Risk in Southeast Louisiana Seniors* project. As a part of this research, she plans to examine the psychological outcomes of falls among independent living older adults and has recently submitted a grant to the American Alliance for Health, Physical Education, Recreation and Dance entitled "Validation of fall-related psychological measures to predict falls risk among independent living older adults".

Emily Olinde, Department of Psychology

Emily Olinde is currently a third year psychology graduate student under the direction of **Dr. Katie Cherry**. She received her master's degree over the summer with a thesis entitled, "Spaced-Retrieval Effects on Memory for Scenes in Older Adults with Probable Alzheimer's Disease." Emily's research interests include memory and clinical interventions for older adults. Emily is funded by a grant for the Louisiana Healthy Aging Study and takes part in the cognitive portion of the research.

Ryan Russell, Department of Kinesiology

Ryan is currently working towards a PhD in Kinesiology under the direction of **Dr. Mike Welsch**. Ryan recently changed from examining a purely metabolic focus of aging using oxygen uptake efficiency to focus more on cardiovascular health markers such as brachial artery flow-mediated dilation (BAFMD) and how these measures relate to daily physical activity and energy expenditure. Additionally, Ryan submitted an abstract to the annual American College of Sports Medicine Conference associated to BAFMD as it relates to daily physical activity.

Jennie Silva, Department of Psychology

Jennie is a 2nd year Ph.D. student in the Psychology department and is currently working with **Dr. Katie Cherry**. She previously attended the University of New Hampshire, where she earned her bachelor's and master's degrees in Psychology with a specialization in Behavioral Neuroscience. Jennie's interests include the examination of stress exposure on a person's perceived health, memory, and psychological functioning. Her current projects include investigations of the impact of Hurricanes Katrina and Rita on the older adult populations in southern Louisiana.

Promoting Healthy Aging: Role of Exercise, Nutrition, and Instruction

In 2004, **Drs. Carol O'Neil** (Human Ecology), **Lilly Allen** (Social Work), **Katie Cherry** (Psychology), **Pam Monroe** (Human Ecology), and **Bob Wood** (Kinesiology) were awarded an interdisciplinary faculty research grant from the Office of Research and Graduate Studies at LSU to investigate physical activity and nutrition among culturally diverse older adults. This was an extension of **Dr. Becky Ellis'** individual faculty research grant that was used to examine the physical activity beliefs, attitudes, and intentions of these older adults.

Eighty-three culturally diverse older adults (aged 50 and older) were recruited from the Leo S. Butler Center and

the Catholic-Presbyterian Apartments in Baton Rouge. Sixty-one participants completed five testing sessions to assess health-related quality of life, physical function, physical activity, cognitive function, and food availability.

Participants were then randomly assigned to one of four test groups for a 16-week physical activity and nutrition intervention. The four groups were categorized according to the type of physical activity educational materials they received (standard vs. pictorial) and their attendance of the nutrition seminars (during 16-week physical activity program vs. wait-list control). The intervention was initiated with a home visit in which education about the principles of physical activity was provided, as well as a demonstration of physical activities by an exercise leader from their communities. All participants received a packet of information about physical activity that was designed according to their testing group and this packet contained a theraband for the home-based physical activities. Participants were quizzed on their knowledge of physical activity before and after the education about the principles of physical activity. The topics of the monthly nutrition seminars were based on the identified needs of the population and they included the following: (a) dietary guidelines and MyPyramid, (b) food labels, (c) nutrition and aging, and (d) food safety. Participants were quizzed on their knowledge of each nutrition topic before and after the seminars.

At the completion of the 16-week intervention, participants were asked to complete two post-tests that included a reassessment on health-related quality of life, physical function, and physical activity. Post-testing concluded November 2006 with 49 participants.



The “Sensational Seniors” Program at the Leo S. Butler Center directed by Theresa Townsend.



LCAC Students Inducted in New LSU Delta Upsilon Chapter of Sigma Phi Omega National Honor Society



Front row: Emily Olinde, Jenny Denver, Donna Fitzgerald-DeJean, Delilah Moore. *Back row:* Becky Ellis (Co-advisor), Marla Ewin, Fernanda Holton, Iina Antikainen, Brad Manor, Jennie Silva, Jan Hondzinski (Co-advisor).

Graduate student members of the Louisiana State University Life Course and Aging Center (LCAC) realized their goal of becoming Sigma Phi Omega members on March 17, 2006. The LCAC serves as a vast network across Louisiana for promoting interdisciplinary research, education and service delivery for life stages including aging. Faculty are drawn from numerous departments across biological, social and psychological sciences, as well as Louisiana universities, while numerous institutions participate as community partners. For LSU graduate students who participate in LCAC via participation in research in aging, monthly consortiums and periodic lectures by visiting scholars, the national gerontology honor society was an obvious adjunct to their professional development.

News from LCAC Alumni

Karri Hawley, August 2005 graduate of the LSU Department of Psychology and previous student of Dr. Katie Cherry

Dr. Hawley is an Associate Investigator at the Rehabilitation Research and Development Center at the Atlanta VA Medical Center. The Atlanta VA Rehabilitation Research and Development Center’s Research is directed toward a multidisciplinary understanding of the mechanisms causing and interacting with vision loss and then applying this understanding to develop creative interdisciplinary rehabilitative



interventions. Karri is currently in her first year of an Associate Investigator Award, for which her research focuses on the effects of sensory and cognitive aging on health management, including everyday function and healthy literacy, and health related quality of life.

Rania Mekary, May 2005 graduate of the LSU School of Human Ecology, Division of Family and Consumer Sciences, and previous student of Dr. Maren Hegstead

Dr. Mekary is working on several projects as a post-doctorate fellow at Harvard University's School of Public Health with an emphasis on better understanding the correlation between dietary factors and cancer end-points in different body sites. She has written a methods paper on physical activity (PA) epidemiology, that describes the different statistical models that properly control for other components of PA while examining specific components of PA in relation to health outcomes. The paper is currently under internal review. She is writing a manuscript on a project where she studied the association between physical activity type, intensity, and volume with long term weight gain prevention (Nurses Health Study). Another project associated with this study is a project designed to evaluate the association between the FRAP score (Ferric Reducing Ability of Plasma) that measures the TAC (Total Antioxidant Capacity) intake from foods and supplements and the risk of colon, proximal colon, distal colon, and rectal cancer. Data collection on a validation study designed to measure the association between dietary Heterocyclic Amine (HCA) intake and hair HCA has begun. HCAs have been hypothesized to increase the risk of human cancer, while hair HCAs have been suggested to serve as a biomarker for dietary HCAs.

The Life Course and Aging Center
is an interdisciplinary initiative out of the Office of Research and Graduate Studies at LSU

Faculty

- Katie Cherry, PhD, Director of LCAC, Department of Psychology
- Lilly Allen, PhD, Associate Director of LCAC, School of Social Work
- Mark Batzer, PhD, Department of Biological Sciences
- Alan Baumeister, PhD, Department of Psychology
- Joan Benedict, PhD, School of Human Ecology
- Teresa K. Buchanan, PhD, Department of Curriculum and Instruction
- Rita Culross, PhD, Department of Curriculum and Instruction
- Thomas Durant, Jr, PhD, Department of Sociology
- Emily Elliott, PhD, Department of Psychology
- Rebecca (Becky) Ellis, PhD, Department of Kinesiology
- Kristin Gansle, PhD, Department of Educational Theory, Policy, and Practice
- Betsy Garrison, PhD, School of Human Ecology

- Gary Gintner, PhD, Department of Educational Theory, Policy, and Practice
- Kevin Grobman, PhD, Department of Psychology
- Maren Hegsted, PhD, School of Human Ecology
- Petra Munro Hendry, PhD, Department of Educational Theory, Policy, and Practice, Director of Women and Gender Studies
- Geraldine Johnson, PhD, School of Human Resource Education
- Jan Hondzinski, PhD, Department of Kinesiology
- Yoshinori Kamo, PhD, Department of Sociology
- Maria Kosma, PhD, Department of Kinesiology
- Roger Laine, PhD, Department of Biological Sciences, Biochemistry and Molecular Biology Division; Department of Chemistry; Adjunct, Department of Entomology
- Robert Laird, PhD, School of Human Ecology
- Sean Lane, PhD, Department of Psychology
- Li Li, PhD, Department of Kinesiology
- Janet McDonald, PhD, Department of Psychology
- Pam Monroe, PhD, Associate Dean, Graduate School
- Janna Oetting, PhD, Department of Communication Sciences and Disorders
- Carol O'Neill, PhD, School of Human Ecology
- Loretta Pecchioni, PhD, Department of Communication Studies
- Todd Pourciau, Assistant Vice Chancellor, Office of Research and Graduate Studies
- Becky Ropers-Huilman, PhD, Department of Educational Theory, Policy, and Practice
- George M. Strain, PhD, Comparative Biomedical Sciences
- Georgianna Tuuri, PhD, School of Human Ecology
- Michael Welsch, PhD, Department of Kinesiology
- Scott Wilks, PhD, School of Social Work

LCAC Adjunct Faculty

- Stanley P. Brown, PhD, Dean, School of Health Sciences, Our Lady of the Lake College
- Jay Bulot, PhD, Department of Gerontology and Sociology, University of Louisiana - Monroe
- Charles Cefalu, MD, MS, Department of family Medicine, Louisiana State University - Health Science Center
- Norman A. Dolch, PhD, Louisiana State University – Shreveport
- Alo Dutta, PhD, Department of Rehabilitation and Disability Studies, Southern University
- John Fortenberry, PhD, Louisiana State University – Shreveport
- Bonnie Hatchett, PhD, Department of Gerontology, University of Louisiana at Monroe
- S. Michal Jazwinski, PhD, Department of Biochemistry and Molecular Biology, Louisiana State University Health Sciences Center
- Melda Kunduk, PhD, CCC-SLP, Department of Communication Disorders, LSU/SAHP, LSU-Otolaryngology-head and Neck Surgery
- Ann O'Hanlon, PhD, Department of Human Performance and Health Promotion, University of New Orleans
- Helen K. Powell, PhD, Louisiana State University – Shreveport
- Eric Ravussin, PhD, Pennington Biomedical Research Center
- Scott Rubin, PhD, Department of Communication disorders, Louisiana State University - Health Science Center