



Distinguished Film and Television Actress, Donna Douglas, Visits LSU

The LCAC hosted the 8th Annual Community Partners luncheon on Friday, February 11, 2011. Our keynote speaker was Donna Douglas, best known for her portrayal of Elly May Clampett on the Beverly Hillbillies. In her keynote address, Ms. Douglas provided a unique and personal glimpse into the development of her professional career which began with illustration modeling in New York. After appearances on the Steve Allen and Ed Sullivan shows and other television appearances, she traveled to California to pursue film and television opportunities. Throughout her address, Ms. Douglas emphasized the importance of adhering to core values in the pursuit of personal and professional goals. Through example, she spoke of opportunities, successes, and pitfalls to avoid. She reminded us of the importance of setting our priorities and sticking to them, and to exercise integrity and honesty in all professional and personal pursuits. Overall, her visit was a great success and her presentation was very relevant to many of the members of the LCAC. Ms. Douglas' visit is made possible by a platinum sponsorship by Amedisys Home Health Services.



(left to right), Front row: Lilly Allen, Donna Douglas, Katie Cherry, Hazel Augustin; Back row: Arend van Gemmert, Dana Territo

LCAC Faculty featured on the NPR

Research on adult learner needs and preferences conducted by LCAC associates Dr. Tracey Rizzuto (LSU Department of Psychology) and Dr. Susan Dumais (LSU Department of Sociology) was recently featured on the National Public Radio series, Tomorrow's College, in a segment entitled, "Some College, No Degree." Over half a million Louisiana adults have earned some college credit, but do not have a college degree. Rizzuto and Dumais examined the educational motivations and obstacles that face this population, and the capacity for traditional brick and mortar institutions to meet the unique needs of these learners. The research was conducted with funding from the Louisiana Board of Regents as part of a collaborative effort between LSU LCAC and the Center for Adult Learners in Louisiana (CALL). The podcast and transcript from the segment can be found at:

<http://americanradioworks.publicradio.org/features/tomorrows-college/dropouts/>

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Faculty Highlights

Communicative Effectiveness Survey

Dr. Neila Donovan's Louisiana Board of Regents National Research Competitiveness Grant titled "Using Qualitative and Quantitative Methodologies to Improve the Communicative Effectiveness Survey for Older Louisianians" has entered the final phase. Phases I and II involved qualitative interviewing of older individuals with and without Parkinson's disease and dysarthria, and developing questions for a self-reported survey called the *Communicative Effectiveness Survey (CES)*. In Phase III Dr. Donovan is field testing the improved CES. At the end of field testing, the survey will be computer adapted and serve two populations: 1) as a screening to identify older individuals who might be at risk for loss of independence due to declines in communicative effectiveness; and 2) as a pre- and post-treatment measure for individuals with Parkinson's disease and speech problems.

Parkinson's Patients benefit from Tai Chi Exercise

In 2010 LCAC's Dr. Jan Hondzinski from the Department of Kinesiology received \$100,000 from the Reilly Family Foundation to support research for Tai Chi exercise effects on people with Parkinson's disease (PD). Co-investigators and LCAC members also from the Kinesiology Department were Drs. Arend Van Gemmert and Li Li. Graduate students, Patti Prejean and Zhujun Pan, and several undergraduates also participated in the project. Collection of functional data (symptom severity, functional measures of gait, mobility and balance, leg strength, and writing abilities) was from participants with and without PD. The outcomes helped provided several positive short-term Tai Chi training improvement trends in Parkinson's patients, including increased endurance, leg strength, and better balance. These findings support previous published research. Additional short-term training outcomes were with respect to training effects on hand writing-like movements. Some of the older adults with and without PD revealed improvements in movement duration and speed, suggesting possible

improvements in writing skills with Tai Chi training.

Since PD is degenerative, the next logical stage was to determine if relatively long-term Tai Chi training for people with PD could limit disease progression or reveal improvements in functional measures. Although participants varied in their response to training, the results revealed significantly greater leg strength, maintenance of good balance or improvement in poor balance, and better mobility and endurance in all but one participant after 7-9 months of training. These data showed that participating in a modified Tai Chi training program, even a limited amount (1-2 days/week on average), may help those with PD curb functional degeneration. These results were presented locally at the 2011 LSU Life Course and Aging Center Annual Luncheon, where

Kinesiology graduate student, Patti Prejean, won the student poster award for this research. She subsequently presented the results at the 2011 North American Society for the Psychology of Sport and Physical Activity meeting. Many PD participants continue to practice and reap the benefits of Tai Chi.



(left to right): Kathy Vilas of the Grief Recovery Center, Jan Hondzinski, Patti Prejean

LCAC Faculty in Louisiana Enhancing Aging

Lilly Allen serves as a board member of Louisiana Enhancing Aging with Dignity through Empowerment and Respect (LEADER). LEADER is dedicated to advancing culture change in eldercare within the state of Louisiana. LEADER supports consumer-driven and person-directed care in all settings -- from long-term nursing home care to short-term transitional care to community-based care. The Board attended a two-day strategic meeting in Marksville in October to advance our mission and planning, including planning a statewide conference was held in March, 2010. The group worked to promote the vision through action as follows: LEADER believes that Louisiana elders deserve care that is life-affirming, satisfying, humane and meaningful. To advance these goals, LEADER supports collaboration among Louisiana's eldercare stakeholders in the following ways: providing educational programs and networking meetings for providers; communicating through newsletters and website; and educating consumers, policymakers and regulators about culture change.

Creating a Research Niche: A Case for Literacy Leadership



*Margaret-Mary Sulentic
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The role of the principal as the instructional leader of an elementary campus is an accepted and well documented aspect of schooling in the United States educational arena. Instructional leadership is a focus of administrative leadership preparation as recommended by the Interstate School Leaders Licensure Consortium of the Council of Chief State School Officers and National Association of Elementary School Principal. However, creating literacy leaders has not been a strategic goal of principal preparation.

Although principal leadership involves a myriad of managerial tasks and leadership skills, traditionally, the complex and multifaceted nature of the principalship emphasizes customary roles and expected demands including supervision, evaluation, working with teachers, students, families, and communities. Little is known of the literacy knowledge, perspectives, and resultant instructional leadership practices of elementary school principals. The No Child Left Behind Law (2001) brought intense scrutiny on literacy achievement. Serious emphasis of the principalship in an era of assessment and school improvement involves addressing the demands of literacy learning, literacy teaching, and literacy coaching.

Traversing the fields of literacy scholarship and school leadership research, examining elementary school principals' engagement in instructional literacy leadership knowledge and practices is an avenue of research that is greatly warranted. College of Educational and Department of Educational Theory, Policy and Practice faculty member, Margaret-Mary Sulentic Dowell has melded her past experiences as a literacy teacher and assistant superintendent with her research on urban literacy practices to create a hybrid field of study garnering national attention. Together with College of Education colleague, Dana Bickmore, Sulentic Dowell has developed a literacy leadership framework that defines the literacy knowledge and skills needed to lead elementary literacy efforts. She

has presented her research at several national and international venues and has three publications focused on literacy leadership (one published, one in press, one in review). In addition, she has proposed the establishment of a Special Interest Group to study Literacy leadership to the Board of Directors of the International Reading Association. As a faculty member of the LSU Life Course and Aging Center, Sulentic Dowell views the acquisition of literacy as a crucial life skill. She can be reached at: sdowell@lsu.edu.

Community Partners' Corner

Dementia Training Course Update

In 2008 Governor Jindal signed Act 571 into law. The law requires all long term care and assisted living facilities in Louisiana that care for individuals with Alzheimer's and other dementias receive 8 hours, 4 hours, or 2 hours of training during their first 90 days of employment. The amount of training varies depending on the amount of direct care a person provides to individuals with dementia. After the first certified training, facilities are required to provide 5 hours of dementia-related training per year.

In 2010 the Dementia Training Curriculum developed through a partnership between LCAC and Alzheimer Services of the Capitol Area was approved by the state of Louisiana. Since February 2010, the training curriculum has undergone two major changes to meet the needs of the consumers we hope to train. First, we now offer a state-approved 2-day Train-the-Trainer course and a 2-hour on-line course. The 2-day training trains individuals to train the curriculum and certify the individuals they train in all of the required courses. The 2-hour on-line course allows individuals to obtain certification in the 2-hour training according to their own schedules. Our next goal is to develop a 4-hour on-line training that will be ready for dissemination by May 2012.

Since the initial training in February 2010, we have certified 9 people in the 8-hour required course and 14 people in the 2-day Train-the-Trainer course. Those 14 certified trainers have gone on to provide dementia training to 1,337 employees in long-term care and assisted living facilities throughout Louisiana.

Student Highlights

Chris Aiken – Department of Kinesiology

Christopher is a first year doctoral student working with Dr. Arend Van Gemmert. He received his Bachelors degree in Psychology from the University of Nevada, Las Vegas in 2007 and received his Masters degree in Motor Behavior and Sport Psychology from the University of Tennessee, Knoxville in 2011. His research interests include the effects of self-control on motor learning and how age affects the usage of augmented feedback within a self-controlled learning environment. Christopher is also interested in the learning effects of increased cognitive load across life span.

Alicia Briganti – Department of Psychology

Alicia is a fourth year doctoral student in the Cognitive and Developmental Psychology program under the direction of Dr. Emily Elliott. She graduated with her bachelor degree in psychology from LSU and received her master's degree in Developmental Psychology from the University of Texas in Austin. Her past research has included topics such as infant word learning and the irrelevant speech effect. She is currently studying how time-of-day preferences (e.g., being a "morning" person vs an "evening" person) affect cognitive task performance.

Samuel Hensley – School of Social Work

Samuel is a second year master's student in social work, and is pursuing the certificate in gerontology through the Master of Social Work (MSW) program. He graduated from the University of West Florida with a BA in English Literature in 2003. His areas of interest include grief and bereavement, and working with combat veterans with post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD).

Johanna Noel – Department of Communication Sciences and Disorders

Johanna is a first year graduate student pursuing her Master's degree in Communication Disorders at Louisiana State University. She graduated in 2011 with her Bachelor's degree in Communication Sciences and Disorders from James Madison University in Virginia. She is interested in the neurogenic aspects of aging and their effects on speech and language. In the future, she would like to work as a speech language pathologist in a skilled nursing facility or rehabilitation center.

Patti Prejean – Department of Kinesiology

Patti is a second year master of science candidate planning to graduate in May 2012. She currently is a student in the motor behavior program in the Kinesiology Department working with Dr. Jan Hondzinski. She graduated in May 2009 from Louisiana State University with a bachelor of science in Kinesiology with a concentration in human movement. She was the winner of student poster award at last year's LCAC Annual Luncheon for research on the potential benefits of long-term limited Tai Chi training for Parkinson's patients. She presented work at the North American Society for the Psychology of Sport and Physical Activity (NASPSA) conference in Burlington, Vermont this past summer.

Amanda van Lamsweerde – Department of Psychology

Amanda is a fifth year cognitive/developmental psychology doctoral student under the advisement of Dr. Melissa Beck. She graduated with a bachelor's degree in psychology from the University of California, Irvine in 2006. She earned her master's degree in cognitive/developmental psychology from Louisiana State University in 2010, thesis, "Attention is not required to maintain feature bindings in visual working memory."

Ashley Ortego – Department of Communication Sciences and Disorders

Ashley is a second year graduate student in Communication Sciences and Disorders. She received her bachelor's degree in Communication Disorders at Louisiana State University. She studies under the direction of Dr. Neila Donovan and is interested in treatment of adults with acquired communication disorders, and understanding how normal aging processes contribute to changes in communication.

Zhujun Pan – Department of Kinesiology

Zhujun is a third year doctoral student in the Kinesiology department under the direction of Dr. Van Gemmert. She graduated with her bachelor in electronic science and technology from the Southwest Jiaotong University in 2005. She graduated from Capital institute of physical education with her master's degree in sport psychology in 2009. She is currently the President of Sigma Phi Omega, the gerontological honors society. She presented her study of "Aging reduces learning benefits as result of bilateral transfer" in July 2011 at the Progress in Motor Control VIII conference.

Meghan Savage – Department of Communication Sciences and Disorders

Meghan is a fifth year doctoral student mentored by Drs. Neila Donovan and Paul Hoffman. To date, she has successfully completed the treatment study for her dissertation, and is now analyzing the data and preparing for her dissertation defense in the spring of 2012. Her study examines the effects of two different treatments on improving the participants' conversational abilities. The first treatment uses a conversation therapy approach that Meghan created, and the second uses traditional language stimulation therapy. Using multiple baseline, single-subject design, the goal of the study is to determine which treatment protocol produces better conversational language production. Helping individuals with aphasia become better conversational partners is the ultimate outcome of any aphasia treatment program, however, until now, conversation has not been specifically targeted in aphasia therapy.

Shuqi Zhang – Department of Kinesiology

Shuqi Zhang is a third year doctoral student working with Dr. Li Li in the motor behavior program in the Kinesiology department. She graduated with her bachelor in Kinesiology major from Shanghai Sport University in 2009. She presented her study of "Loss of Foot Sole Sensation Affects Pressure Distribution during Standing and Walking" in July at the 2010 annual meeting of the American College of Sports Medicine (ACSM).

Brad Manor, Ph.D.

Dr. Brad Manor, a 2008 graduate from Louisiana State University's Department of Kinesiology under the direction of Dr. Li Li, is currently an Instructor at Harvard Medical School and the director of the Aging and Balance Control laboratory at the Beth Isreal Deaconess Medical Center. Manor was recently awarded the "KL2 Medical Research Investigator Training Grant" by the National Institutes of Health (NIH) and the Harvard Catalyst to continue his research on the neural control of balance in older adults with diabetic peripheral neuropathy. He was also named the Outstanding Young Researcher Award by the American Alliance for Health, Physical Education, Dance and Recreation (AAHPERD).

Amanda Stead, Ph.D.

Dr. Amanda Stead, a December 2011 graduate from Louisiana State University's Department of Communication Sciences and Disorders under direction of Drs. Neila Donovan and Paul Hoffman, has taken a tenure track assistant professor position at Pacific University in Forest Grove, Oregon. Her primary research focus will be on communication processes associated with healthy aging and dementia, as well as adult language assessment. Amanda is one of first faculty members hired to build a new Speech-Language Pathology Master's degree program at Pacific University. To keep in touch with Dr. Stead contact her at: astead1@gmail.com.

Alumni Corner

Zahra Kadivar, Ph.D.

Dr. Zahra Kadivar graduated in December 2009 with a doctoral degree from Louisiana State University's Department of Kinesiology under direction of Dr. Jan Hondzinski. She is currently a post-doctoral fellow at Baylor College of Medicine, Houston, Texas. Her primary research focus is rehabilitation of adults with spinal cord injury and stroke. Kadivar is collaborating with engineers at Department of Mechanical Engineering and Material Sciences at Rice University to develop robotic devices for upper limb rehabilitation of adults with movement disabilities. Their team is one of the few in the country to investigate standard rehabilitation methods for tetraplegic spinal cord injury patients.

2011 LCAC Luncheon



The Life Course and Aging Center *is an interdisciplinary initiative out of the Office of Research and Economic Development at LSU*

Community Partners

Hugh Eley, Assistant Secretary, Department of Health and Hospitals
Ken Ritter, President/CEO St. James Place
Gwen Moore, PhD, St. James Place Retirement Community
Kathy Vilas, JD, LCSW, Executive Director, Grief Recovery Center
Kathryn Grigsby, CEO, Hospice of Baton Rouge
Susan DeMers, Capital Area Agency on Aging
Teri Fonenot, President/CEO, Woman's Health Foundation
Todd Hamilton, Deputy Director, Catholic Charities
Barbara Auten, Executive Director Alzheimer's Services of the Capital Area
Dr. Susan E. Nelson, Geriatrics, Lake Senior Care
Twanda L. Lewis, Baton Rouge Area Foundation
Sharilyn Livingston and Sally Palmer, Baton Rouge Parkinson's Support Group

Faculty

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