



# APA Aging Issues Newsletter

April 2005

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**Welcome New APA Committee on Aging (CONA) Members!** Rosemary Blieszner and Florence Denmark began three-year terms on CONA in January 2005. Dr. Blieszner is a professor at Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University's Department of Human Development and Associate Director of the Center for Gerontology. She has a distinguished career in psychology and aging with a particular focus on families, friends and aging and the use of services by rural elderly. Dr. Denmark, a past President of APA, is the Robert Scott Pace Distinguished Research Professor at Pace University in New York. Her area of specialization is social psychology, including the psychology of women and gender, aging issues and cross-cultural and international research. They join current members: Gregory Hinrichsen (Chair), Toni Antonucci (Chair-elect), John Cavanaugh and Barry Edelstein.

### **APA Committee on Aging Award for the Advancement of Psychology and Aging**

CONA invites nominations including self-nominations for its award for the Advancement of Psychology and Aging. This award for outstanding achievement is presented annually to recognize psychologists and friends of psychology who have made significant contributions to the mission and goals of CONA (see next item). Nominations are solicited by CONA on a yearly basis with a **June 15<sup>th</sup> deadline**. Award recipients, selected by CONA, are announced at the APA Convention. Prior recipients include Norman Abeles (2003), and George Niederehe (2004). For a copy of the Call, go to the Office on Aging website, [www.apa.org/pi/aging/conaawardscall.html](http://www.apa.org/pi/aging/conaawardscall.html) or contact [mpal@apa.org](mailto:mpal@apa.org).

**Call for Nominations to the Committee on Aging**

CONA is seeking nominations for two new members to serve three-year terms beginning January 2006 and ending December 2008. CONA is interested in persons with substantive specialization in aging issues. The mission of CONA is to advance psychology as a science and profession and as a means of promoting health and human welfare by ensuring that older adults, especially the growing numbers of older women and minorities, receive the attention of the Association. CONA's goals include to:

- Provide advocacy for a scientific agenda on aging to policymakers and private and public funding agencies
- Advocate for policies that enhance the availability and reimbursement of health and mental health services to older adults and their families
- Contribute to the formulation and support of public policies that promote optimal development of older adults, facilitate psychological practice with older persons, and expand scientific understanding of adult development and aging
- Promote inclusion of knowledge about adult development and aging in all levels of education, including continuing education, training programs, and professional development of psychologists
- Develop and disseminate information concerning the scientific findings and practice issues about older adults to psychologists, other professionals, policymakers, and the public
- Serve as a visible focus for the coordination of information among groups within APA that address aging issues and offer consultation to relevant APA boards, committees, divisions, state associations, and directorates, and
- Ensure that older members of APA receive the appropriate attention of the association.

CONA is committed to ensuring the representation of all constituencies within the APA, including individuals with research experience, clinical experience, policy experience and academic experience. Selected candidates are required to attend two committee meeting each year in Washington, DC, with expenses reimbursed by the APA (2006 meetings will be April 6-9 and September 29-October 1) and are encouraged to attend a CONA meeting held during the APA Convention at their own expense. Members are also expected to work on Committee priorities between meetings, provide consultation to APA Office on Aging staff, and participate in advocacy activities. Nomination materials should include a current curriculum vita and a letter from the nominee that indicates willingness to serve on CONA and highlights specific competencies and interests that they would be able to contribute to the work of CONA. Letters of support from other APA governance groups, APA divisions, state psychological associations and other groups or organizations are also accepted. Nominations are open to all members including those who are retired or employed less than full time. Prior applicants are encouraged to reapply. Nominations and supporting materials should be sent by **September 1st, 2005 to:** Deborah DiGilio, Aging Issues Officer, APA Office on Aging, 750 First Street NE, Washington, DC, 20002-4242 or via e-mail at [ddigilio@apa.org](mailto:ddigilio@apa.org).

#### **APA Committee on Aging Meeting**

The APA Committee on Aging met on March 18-20 as part of the APA Spring 2005 Consolidated Meetings. CONA had a very full agenda working on a number of its initiatives including the Roadmap to Aging Project and the APA Resolution on the WHCoA. CONA met with a number of guests to discuss pertinent issues, including APA President Ron Levant, Steve Breckler, Executive Director of the Science Directorate; Margaret Heldring, BAPPI liaison to CONA and the Chair of the Promoting Health Care for the Whole Person Presidential Task Force; Nina Levitt, Director of Education Policy; and Patricia Kobor, Senior Science Policy Analyst. CONA also spent a significant amount of time reviewing and providing comments to APA Cross-Cutting Agenda Items, including Presidential Initiatives related to Promoting Health Care for the Whole Person, Evidence-Based Practice in Psychology, and Enhancing Diversity in APA; the APA National Standards for the Teaching of High School Psychology; and the Strategic Plan for a Workforce Analysis of Psychology as a Discipline.

#### **APA Aging Leadership Team Update**

The Aging Leadership Team was established in 2003 as a mechanism to increase ongoing communication between CONA, Division 20, and Division 12-II. Current members of the team include the CONA Chair (Greg Hinrichsen) and the Presidents of APA Divisions 20 (Leah Light) and 12-Section II (Barry Edelstein). The Team communicates via regular conference calls. Again this year, the Team worked together to nominate individuals to serve on APA Boards and Committees to enhance their likelihood of selection. Recent topics of discussion have included updates of each group's activities, the proposed

Geropsychology Training Conference, NIH study section reviews, and the 2005 White House Conference on Aging.

### **2005 White House Conference on Aging**

The 2005 White House Conference on Aging (WHCoA) will be held October 23-26, 2005. As stated in the last newsletter, APA is working independently and in cooperation with the National Coalition on Mental Health and Aging (NCMHA) to promote the inclusion of mental health issues and psychological science on the Conference agenda and in its recommendations. Recent actions undertaken include: coordinating and participating in NCMHA's January WHCoA Listening Session (see Collaborations below); a Division 20 sponsored symposium at the APA Convention, which has received WHCoA designation as an "independent aging event," titled, *Psychological Solutions to White House Conference on Aging Issues*; submitting nominations for the WHCoA Technical Advisory Panel; recommending revisions to the WHCoA proposed agenda; submitting nominations for delegates to the WHCoA; and, developing the APA Resolution on the 2005 White House Conference on Aging.

However, more work is needed! It is imperative that we keep mental health issues on the WHCoA radar screen, so that they will be included in the materials sent to the delegates and in the final 50 resolutions resulting from the Conference. **You can help** by providing testimony at scheduled WHCoA events and submitting comments to the WHCoA. (A tally is being kept on commonly raised issues.) Even though no additional events are currently scheduled specifically focusing on mental health, it is critical to make clear to others, what is crystal clear to us – that mental health is not a stand-alone issue. It impacts many, if not all, of the issues that the WHCoA plans to address. The issue of mental health needs to be raised repeatedly at scheduled WHCoA "non-mental health" but relevant events, such as those relating to caregiving and rural health, for example. APA was recently successful in securing a spot for the participation of geropsychology at a HRSA sponsored WHCoA Mini-conference on the Geriatric Healthcare Workforce to be held July 17. Geropsychologist, Toni Zeiss will be representing APA at the Mini-Conference. To view WHCoA scheduled events and directions for submitting electronic comments, go to [www.whcoa.gov](http://www.whcoa.gov).

### **2005 APA Convention**

Once again this year, the APA Office on Aging will compile a comprehensive listing of all convention programs on aging issues. This document will be sent electronically to all subscribers of this newsletter, publicized on relevant listserves and posted on the Office on Aging website <http://www.apa.org/pi/aging> in July. A number of CONA related events follow:

- **Older Adult Mental Health: Multicultural Infusion into Education, Training, Research, Practice and Policy.** Saturday, August 20<sup>th</sup> from 3-4:50 pm at the Washington Convention Center, meeting room 204A. A discussion of the consideration and infusion of cultural diversity in geropsychological research, education, training, policy and service provision chaired by Toni Antonucci with Michael Smyer as the discussant. Participants include Todd McCallum, Jennifer Manly, Richard Zweig, Martha Crowther, and Susan Krauss Whitbourne.
- **Psychological Solutions to White House Conference on Aging Issues.** Friday, August 19<sup>th</sup> from 4:00-5:50 pm. Division 20 has allocated programming hours for the symposium, Psychology and Public Policy: Contributions to the 2005 White House Conference on Aging. Chaired by Toni Antonucci and with discussant, Robert Bernstein, Executive Director of the Bazelon Center for Mental Health Law, papers will be presented on How the Law Affects Older Adults, Creative Approaches to Human Factors and Technology Use by Older Adults, Family and Formal Caregivers: Bidirectional Effects, and Effects of Increased Choice on Economic Resources of Older Adults. Presenters are Erica Wood of the ABA Commission on Law and Aging, Neil Charness, Sara Czaja, Joseph Sharit, Arthur Fisk, Wendy Rogers, Steven Zarit, Sheena Iyengar, and Barry Schwartz.
- **CONA Conversation Hour: The Science of Successful Aging: The Road Best Traveled**  
CONA is pleased to announce its annual Conversation Hour to be held on Thursday, August 18<sup>th</sup> from 4:00-5:50 p.m. at the Grand Hyatt Washington Hotel, Constitution Ballroom D. This year's discussion will focus on CONA's latest project, The Roadmap to Aging. As discussed in the December 2004 newsletter, the project's objective is to translate the wealth of research literature into practical steps to assist young and old adults in planning for and addressing the challenges that often arise as people age. In keeping with APA President Diane Halpern's 2004 presidential initiative on older psychologists, a

guide for psychologists will be developed first and then tailored for a more general audience. We would welcome your attendance and input during the Conversation Hour. If you are interested in attending, send an e-mail to [mpal@apa.org](mailto:mpal@apa.org).

➤ **Care Alternatives in Prison Systems: Older Prisoners**

As a part of a Board for the Advancement of Psychology in the Public Interest symposium on Mental Healthcare In U.S. Correctional Institutions, Laura Phillips, Rebecca Allen, and Karen Salekin will present on the alarming increase in the number of older prisoners in US prisons and describe their pilot study that explored the influence of race and age at end of sentence upon treatment selection and psychosocial variables such as death anxiety, desire for hastened death, depression, religiosity, impulsivity, and health.

**The Recognition of Geropsychology as a Proficiency in Professional Psychology**

The status of Geropsychology as a proficiency in professional psychology was renewed by the APA Council of Representatives in February, in concurrence with the recommendation of the APA Commission for the Recognition of Specialties and Proficiencies in Professional Psychology (CRSPPP). The petition for specialty status that was filed on behalf of Division 20 and Division 12-II and Psychologists in Long Term Care was denied by CRSPPP at its May 2004 meeting. CRSPPP noted the need for greater elaboration of the training models for geropsychology. APA Divisions 20 and 12-2 have begun initial discussions to convene a Geropsychology Training Conference at which such models would be defined.

**New APA Policy Position: Senior Legislative and Federal Affairs Officer**

This position will manage APA's legislative and regulatory activities related to aging and other emerging health/mental health issues. Duties include: developing and implementing strategies for enhancing the utilization of psychological research by Congress and federal agencies; initiating and maintaining relationships with members of Congress and their staff and executive branch officials to provide psychology's input into research priorities and public service programs, and to monitor federal policies for their impact on public interest constituencies; establishing and maintaining a network of contacts with other professional, consumer, scientific, provider, and government-related health, education, social service, and civil rights organizations and coalitions; and maintaining contact with APA members and governance groups with expertise and/or interest in public interest issues, utilizing their expertise in the development of APA's policy agenda and actions, and keeping them informed of APA public policy activities. Requirements include a Masters degree in psychology or related field (doctoral degree preferred), five years of direct federal advocacy or policy experience (doctoral degree in psychology or related field may substitute for up to 3 years of experience). Qualified candidates should send resume and cover letter indicating salary requirements and referencing Job # 04051 to: APA Human Resources/04051, 750 First Street, NE, Washington, DC 20002, Email: [jobs@apa.org](mailto:jobs@apa.org), Fax: (202) 336-5501.

**Collaborations/Meetings**

**National Coalition on Mental Health and Aging (NCMHA)**

On January 24<sup>th</sup> at APA Headquarters, the National Coalition on Mental Health and Aging sponsored an official WHCoA Listening Session, the only one to focus on mental health. The purpose of the session was to provide visibility for mental health and substance abuse issues and a vehicle to officially submit three comprehensive NCMHA resolutions to the WHCoA. The resolutions address Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services and Interventions, Education and Development of the Professional Mental Health Workforce, and Consumer and Caregiver Issues. Three WHCoA Policy Committee members including its Chair, and 67 individuals, representing Coalition member organizations, consumers, representatives from Congressional Offices, and the staff of the Senate Health, Education, Labor and Pensions Committee, attended the Listening Session. APA was represented by its CEO, Norman Anderson and geropsychologist, Margaret Gatz. The session consisted of five panels with a total of 17 professional and consumer presenters who expanded upon the issues and recommendations of the NCMHA resolutions. The good news is that the updated February 2005 WHCoA Agenda's sections relating to services, education and benefits have been expanded to include *mental* health in areas where *health* alone had previously been mentioned. To view the revised agenda and all NCMHA Listening Session presentations, go to [www.whcoa.gov](http://www.whcoa.gov). NCMHA's resolutions are posted at [www.ncmha.org](http://www.ncmha.org).

**APA/ABA Assessment of Capacity in Older Adults Project**

The APA/ABA Assessment of Capacity in Older Adults Project has just completed its first product, *Assessment of Older Adults with Diminished Capacity: A Handbook for Lawyers*. Single copies of the handbook will be sent to interested psychologists, free of charge beginning in May. For more information see the Resources Section toward the end of this newsletter. A companion document for judges is currently being developed. Presentations based on the handbook have been conducted by Project Working Group members around the country to audiences such as the National Association of Elder Law Attorneys and state guardianship associations. In addition, an all-day continuing education workshop for psychologists will be held on August 17, 2005 in conjunction with the APA Annual Convention. (See training opportunities below) Members of the APA/ABA Capacity Assessment Working Group include APA representatives Barry Edelstein, Gregory Hinrichsen, Daniel Marson, Jennifer Moye, Leonard Poon, and David Powers. ABA members are Nancy Coleman, Charles Sabatino, and Erica Wood of the American Bar Association's Commission on Law and Aging.

#### **APHA Public Health Week**

APA was a national partner in the American Public Health Association (APHA)'s annual National Public Health Week (April 4<sup>th</sup> -10<sup>th</sup>). This year, APHA dedicated the national observance to empowering Americans to stay strong and healthy throughout their later years. APHA and its partners promoted the three P's in adding more healthy years back to life: Prevent, Protect and Plan. Among the tools available to the public during the week was a listing of public health departments offering a free health assessments and a Living to 100 Life Expectancy Calculator for conducting a personal health assessment. View the calculator as at [www.livingto100.com](http://www.livingto100.com). A link to the APA webpage was included as a resource on the project's webpage [www.apha.org/nphw/05-resources.htm](http://www.apha.org/nphw/05-resources.htm).

#### **Older Americans' Mental Health Week**

APA is also partnering with Older Women's League (OWL), supporting Older Americans' Mental Health Week which will be observed May 22-28, 2005. This year's theme is "Mental Illness is Not a Normal Part of Aging". As part of the public awareness campaign there will be a Congressional briefing during this week sponsored by Senator Rodham Clinton (and possibly other sponsors of the Positive Aging Act which will be reintroduced shortly). CONA Chair, Greg Hinrichsen will be testifying at the briefing on APA's behalf. Older Americans' Mental Health Week resources including a link to the APA's Office on Aging webpages and educational materials can be found at <http://www.owl-national.org/mentalhealthweek/index.html>.

### **Training Opportunities**

#### **APA Continuing Education Program**

##### *Psychological Assessment of Decision Making-Capacity of Older Adults*

This full day workshop on August 17<sup>th</sup> is designed to meet expressed practitioner needs and interests identified by the APA/ABA Capacity Assessment Project. Practitioners want information on conceptualizing and conducting assessments in specific capacity domains, and guidance on questions such as obtaining informed consent, assessing capacity to make a will, and the role of the psychologist in legal proceedings involving capacity. Participants will: learn the legal basis of clinical capacity assessment, how capacity evaluations differ from more general clinical evaluations, and the key issues to address in capacity evaluations; how to utilize standardized neuropsychological and functional instruments in capacity evaluations; understand ethical issues and assessment approaches to driving evaluation; techniques for clinical evaluation of financial capacities, including testamentary capacity; and how differences in age, race, and culture may impact the capacity assessment. Faculty include Dan Marson, Barry Edelstein, Karleen Ball, Andrew Clifford, Martin Zehr, and Charles Sabatino (ABA Commission on Law and Aging).

#### **2005 National Clinical Geropsychology Conference**

"*Psychotherapy for Depression and Anxiety in Older Adults*" is co-sponsored by APA Division 20, the Retirement Research Foundation, and the Gerontology Center at the University of Colorado at Colorado Springs. It will be held on June 30- July 3. The Mission of this conference is to build service capacity in geriatric mental health by cross-training experienced providers in knowledge and skills needed to work with older adults. Faculty include: Deborah Frazer, Paula Hartman-Stein, Greg Hinrichsen, Bob Knight, Ken Laidlaw, and Forrest Scogin. For more information: <http://www.uccs.edu/~lases/Gero2005.htm>.

### **In the News**

**Older consumers factor more positives, specifics into product choices.** *Monitor on Psychology*, Volume 36, No. 4, April 2005. <http://www.apa.org/monitor/apr05/older.html>

**Aging lessens tendency to take others' perspectives.** *Monitor on Psychology*, Volume 36, No. 4, April 2005. <http://www.apa.org/monitor/apr05/aging.html>

**Happiness in men usually drops after age 65, study finds.** *Monitor on Psychology*, Volume 36, No. 3, March 2005. <http://www.apa.org/monitor/mar05/happiness.html>

**On the practice horizon: Economic and demographic trends are among those changing the professional landscape** *Monitor on Psychology*, Volume 36, No. 2 February 2005. <http://www.apa.org/monitor/feb05/horizon.html>

**Psychologists earn new Medicare testing supervision privileges** *Monitor on Psychology* Volume 36, No. 1 January 2005 <http://www.apa.org/monitor/jan05/privileges.html>

**Brain imaging suggests how higher education helps to buffer older adults from cognitive declines.** APA Press Release, March 13, 2005 [http://www.apa.org/releases/education\\_aging.html](http://www.apa.org/releases/education_aging.html)

**Older people with the “Alzheimer’s Gene” find it harder to “remember to remember” even if they’re healthy.** APA Press Release January 23, 2005 <http://www.apa.org/releases/alzheimersmemory.html>

## Resources

### ***Assessment of Older Adults with Diminished Capacity: A Handbook for Lawyers.***

The first product of the American Psychological Association and American Bar Association Working Group on Capacity Assessment in Older Adults. Contents of the handbook include: The Importance of Attorney Assessment of Client Capacity; Legal Standards of Diminished Capacity; Clinical Models of Capacity (including General Clinical Model of Capacity and Specific Domain Models of Capacity); Lawyer Assessment of Capacity; Techniques Lawyers Can Use to Enhance Client Capacity; Attorney Referrals for Clinical Consultation or Formal Assessment of Capacity; and Understanding and Using the Capacity Assessment Report. Appendices include Case Examples, a brief guide to psychological and neuropsychological instruments, and a dementia overview. Although developed for lawyers, this handbook is also useful for psychologists. To receive a single complementary copy, please send an e-mail including your mailing address to [mpal@apa.org](mailto:mpal@apa.org). The handbook will also be downloadable from APA's Office on Aging website shortly. Additional copies of the document can be purchased from ABA Commission on Law and Aging. <http://www.abanet.org/aging/>. Proceeds from the sale of the handbook will be used for future ABA-APA Workgroup activities.

### ***Geriatrics at your fingertips***

An Online version of the 2005 (7<sup>th</sup>) edition of by David B. Rueben (UCLA School of Medicine) is available for free online. The book is a guide to the evaluation and management of the diseases and disorders that most commonly effect older persons. The appendix on assessment instruments includes copies of several instruments, including the GDS (short form) and the AIMS. A free PDA version of the book is also available for download from: <http://www.geriatricsatyourfingertips.org>

## Aging at APA

**The Office on Aging** – Within the APA Public Interest Directorate, the APA Office on Aging works to promote aging issues within APA, among APA members, other professionals, policy makers and the public. It strives to bring psychological knowledge to bear on discussions regarding matters that affect older adults. Deborah DiGilio staffs this office and the APA Committee on Aging. Milly Pal is the Office's new Administrative Assistant. For more information, visit the Office on Aging website at: <http://www.apa.org/pi/aging> or contact Deborah at: 202-336-6135 or [ddigilio@apa.org](mailto:ddigilio@apa.org) and Milly at 202-336-6046 or [mpal@apa.org](mailto:mpal@apa.org).

**The Committee on Aging (CONA)** - CONA is a six-member committee of psychologists with substantive professional expertise in aging issues who are selected to serve three-year terms. CONA works toward the optimal development of older adults, expanded scientific understanding of adult development and aging, and the delivery of appropriate psychological services to older persons.

**APA Division 20 (Adult Development & Aging)** - APA's Division 20 is concerned with the study of psychological development and change throughout the adult years. Their website includes resources for educators and students, information about graduate programs for students interested in pursuing this field, publications, conference information, and links to other sites. <http://aging.ufl.edu/apadiv20>

**APA Division 12-II (Clinical Geropsychology)** - APA's Division 12, Section II is devoted to research, training, and the provision of psychological services for older adults. Their website includes information on training opportunities for students and professionals including clinical psychology internships, postdoctoral fellowship opportunities, and continuing education offerings, and research funding and job information. <http://www.geropsych.org>.