



QUARTERLY  
REVIEW

Arkansas Geriatric Education Collaborative

Volume XX No. 1, Winter 2017

## From the Director's Desk

The Arkansas Geriatric Education Collaborative (AGEC), a Geriatric Workforce Enhancement Program, has reached the halfway point in funding. We continue to achieve goals for this program, along with long-time partners (ASU and UCA) and more recent partners (CareLink, Mainline Clinic in Lincoln County, McAuley Senior Center, and AARP), to educate health professionals, students, caregivers, first responders and the general public about issues and topics that affect the older population. We are also proud of our innovative projects to improve patient care and disseminate best practices information using a variety of delivery systems.

In preparation for a new grant cycle that starts at the end of 2017, we are developing a statewide needs assessment. We really want, need, and appreciate your input and ideas. Please think about what information or experiences you would like to have to provide better care to our older adult patients. Then watch and listen for our notification that the needs assessment survey is available and respond to it! The more input we have, the more valuable our future events will be for you. In the meantime...

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## >IN THIS ISSUE

### Communication and the Normal Aging Process

by Amy Shollenbarger, Ph.D., CCC-SLP  
Arkansas State University

Communication is vital to humanity. Most individuals acquire language with relative ease, yet as we age, certain changes in communication may occur as a part of the normal aging process. Normal changes that occur in our ability to communicate as we age may include language, speech,

## >UPCOMING EVENTS

### Arkansas Geriatric Education Collaborative FREE 2-hour Video Teleconference (VTC)

**March 01, 2017** - "Pharmacogenetics and Older Adults" presented by Elvin T. Price, Ph.D., PharmD.

Dr. Price is an Assistant Professor, Pharmaceutical Sciences (Pharmacogenomics) in the College of Pharmacy at UAMS and adjunct professor in genetic counseling in the College of Health Related Professions at UAMS.

**Location:** Jo Ellen Ford Auditorium at the Donald W. Reynolds Institute on Aging.

**Time:** 11:00 am - 1:00 pm.

swallowing, or hearing. Understanding normal changes due to aging is important so that we know when further examination by a speech-language pathologist or audiologist, due to abnormal changes, may be needed (Busacco, 1999).

Hearing is most negatively affected as we age, with approximately 35% of individuals over the age of 65 having some type of hearing loss (Bance, 2007). Articulation, or the way we produce speech sounds, remains adequate as we age (Hooper & Cralidis, 2009) although significant tooth loss may impact articulation skills (Busacco, 1999). Changes in voice skills may include more tremor, breathiness, roughness, or pitch changes, but...

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## University of Central Arkansas Interprofessional Education Collaboration

by Towino Paramby CScD, CCC-SLP, Veronica Rowe Ph.D., OTR/L, Nina Roofe Ph.D., RDN, LDN, and SLP Graduate Students Kirsten Kubinski, and Laura Jones

Graduate students at the University of Central Arkansas teamed up for a two-day collaboration focusing on interprofessional education (IPE) on September 16th and 19th of 2016. Interprofessional education is defined as two or more professions learning about, from, and with each other to enable effective collaboration and improve health outcomes (WHO, 2010). The speech-language pathology, occupational therapy, and dietetics programs came together for a combined lecture led by Dr. Towino Paramby, Dr. Veronica Rowe, and Dr. Nina Roofe. The lecture emphasized the importance of interprofessional collaboration in the healthcare setting. Topics covered included dysphagia, adaptive devices used for eating, specific modified diets, scope of practice, and interprofessional collaboration. These three professions, when working together, can implement a successful treatment plan for the overall health of patients, often those of the geriatric population. The second day of the interprofessional collaboration allowed students to work together in a hands-on learning experience through a two-part lab. Observations of hands-on learning have shown that students demonstrate strong communication tied to working in teams (Bass et al, 2011). Through this lab, students experienced

**FREE CEs** will be available. For more information, visit our website at [www.agec.org/events](http://www.agec.org/events).

### Arkansas Geriatric Education Collaborative Summer Institute for Faculty May 15-19th Little Rock, Arkansas

The Summer Institute is a FREE week-long program of intense didactic education in geriatrics coupled with clinical observation in various health care delivery sites. This program is designed for faculty teaching the next generation of health care professionals. To register, go to our website at [www.agec.org](http://www.agec.org). You may also request an application by emailing [agec@uams.edu](mailto:agec@uams.edu) or by calling 501.603.1969. Deadline for registering is May 5, 2017.

### Arkansas Geriatric Mentors and Scholars Program (AR-GEMS)

**What is AR-GEMS?** AR-GEMS is a nine-month, online self-study program that covers a variety of geriatric health-related topics, including dementia.

**Who will benefit from AR-GEMS?** This program is for individuals who work with older adults and want to learn more about the aging process.

**How do I sign up for this?** Register at [www.agec.org](http://www.agec.org). You may also request an application by emailing [agec@uams.edu](mailto:agec@uams.edu) or by calling 501.603.1969.

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### Other Health Professional Training:

Alzheimer's Disease and Dementia Care Seminar will be held on March 15, 2017, from 8:00 am to 4:30 pm at National Park College in Hot Springs, AR. Please contact Janet Whitten, Exec. Asst. at 501-623-0021 or [whittenjanetl@uams.edu](mailto:whittenjanetl@uams.edu).

### Community Training Around the State

The Centers on Aging around the state are offering a variety of training across the state that began January 30, 2017. Training includes *family caregiver workshops*, *direct care worker in-services*, *first responder dementia training*, *Alzheimer's/Dementia Experience: Take a Walk in Their Shoes*, and the *Diabetes Empowerment Education Program*.

If you are interested in attending a training, please contact the following Centers on Aging to see what's happening near you.

the use of ...



Pictured from left to right: Dr. Veroinica Rowe, Dr. Nina Roofe, and Dr. Towino Paramby

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## Treating Hearing Loss in Older Adults

by Laura Smith-Olinde, Ph.D., CCC/A, and Steven Boone, Ph.D.

Roughly 15%, about 37.5 million people, of the entire adult U.S. population has hearing loss, but the percentages increase with age. In adults aged 55 to 64, 17% have significant hearing loss; that number goes up to 25% for adults aged 65 to 74 and is over 50% in adults older than 75 years.<sup>1</sup>

When we talk with someone who has hearing loss, we usually know it, even though we cannot see the loss directly. Studies have linked untreated hearing loss to dementia, cognitive decline, and increases in social isolation, and depression.<sup>2-6</sup> Recent studies show that older adults using hearing aids or cochlear implants have better communication. They also have slower cognitive decline, and fewer social isolation and depression symptoms.<sup>7-10</sup> With such positive results, urging older adults to seek healthcare for diagnosis and treatment of hearing loss makes sense.

The best hearing healthcare starts with seeing an audiologist for hearing and communication needs assessments. Assessments

**South Arkansas Center on Aging - El Dorado - Contact**  
Lori DeWese, Education Coord. at 870.881.8969

**West Central Center on Aging - Fort Smith - Contact**  
Lana Howard, Administrative Asst. at 479.478.8819

**Oaklawn Center on Aging - Hot Springs: Contact**  
Janet Whitten, Exec. Asst. at 501.601.0021

**Northeast Center on Aging - Jonesboro: Contact**  
Deborah Levins, Education Outreach Specialist at  
870.207.7597

**South Central Center on Aging - Pine Bluff: Contact**  
Charlotte Clausen, Administrative Asst. at  
870.879.1440

**Schmieding Center for Senior Health - Springdale:**  
Contact Fink Holoway, Administrative Asst. at  
479.751.3043 ext. 232

**Texarkana Regional Center on Aging -  
Texarkana: Contact Suzy Carroll, Education Asst. Dir.**  
at 870.773.2030

### Did you know that...?

*Momentary memory lapses are common, and they are not confined to older folks. But should you be concerned? Call these what you want: a brain freeze, a mind blip or that ageist and insulting standby, "a senior moment". Whatever term you use, these little lapses become more alarming the older we get. "Tip-of-tongue experiences -- when you can't retrieve a word or name you know -- are older adults' number one complaint," according to Deborah Burke, professor of linguistics and cognitive science at Pomona College in Claremont, California. But there is no need to panic because these memory glitches can crop up as early as in our 20s, though undeniably their frequency increases as the years pass, and as we lose gray matter. Occasional forgetfulness is ordinary and expected. What is not is a sign of incipient Alzheimer's.*

*Distraction, as much as age is responsible for many memory glitches. "There's a lot of interference in our modern world", whether it is endless multitasking or constant pings from our high-tech gadgets. "Our brains' ability to set high-level goals has exceeded our abilities to enact them: No surprise, then, that after going upstairs to fetch a sweater, we often stare vacantly once we get there. Source: Debbie Galant. AARP Bulletin November 2016. Submitted by Regina Gibson*

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**Ageless Grace® Brain Health Fitness Program**

include...  
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## Ronni Chernoff, Ph.D., FAND, FASPEN Award Recipient



Pictured are Dr. Ronni Chernoff and Dr. Jeanne Wei

Recently at the College of Medicine Annual Faculty Dinner, Ronni Chernoff, Ph.D., Professor in the Department of Geriatrics at the Donald W. Reynolds Institute on Aging and Director of the Arkansas Geriatric Education Collaborative, received an award of admiration and appreciation for her commitment to excellence in education programs.

Chernoff is a graduate of Cornell University. She earned two master's degrees from Columbia University and a doctorate in health professions education from the University of Pennsylvania. The author or editor of numerous widely used textbooks including Geriatric Nutrition: The Health Professional's Handbook (Jones & Bartlett), Chernoff has published dozens of research studies, book chapters and other publications on geriatric nutrition, nutrition support, and clinical nutrition. Chernoff has held leadership positions in the...

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On December 1st and 2nd of 2016, AGECE staff, the staff of the Centers on Aging across the state, and other UAMS staff met for an intensive training on the Ageless Grace® Brain Health Fitness Program. Denise Medved, a fitness professional, is founder and creator of the program. Ageless Grace® is an international cutting-edge fitness and wellness program based on the science of neuroplasticity. The 21 exercises activate all five functions of the brain and address all 21 physical skills necessary for lifelong optimal function. Exercises are designed to be practiced in a chair to activate the core of the body and allows all ages and ability levels to participate. The best part is that combined with music, it is loads of fun! Classes will soon be available across the state. Be sure to sign up!

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### Arkansas Geriatric Education Collaborative (AGECE) Announces Geriatric Junior Fellowship Awardees

Ronni Chernoff, Ph.D., FAND, FASPEN, AGECE Director, and Robin McAtee, Ph.D., RN, FACE, Associate Director, are pleased to announce awardees for the 2017 Junior Faculty Fellowship in geriatrics at the Donald W. Reynolds Institute on Aging at UAMS. Upendra Kar, Ph.D., and Lisa Vanhoose, Ph.D., MPH, PT, were notified of the decision in November 2016.

The fellowship program objective is to support the career development of professionals who want to specialize in academic and clinical geriatrics. The award includes \$40,000 in salary support and will support attendance for each at one national geriatric conference. Their fellowships began on January 01, 2017.



Upendra Kar, Ph.D.

Dr. Kar is an Assistant Professor of research in the College of Pharmacy. He received his Ph.D. degree from All India Institute of Medical Sciences in New Delhi, India and post-doctoral training from Johns Hopkins Medical Institute (JHMI) and the University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA). He has extensive training in Stem Cell



# Tracking the Arkansas Geriatric Education Collaborative (AGEC) Progress

by Cynthia C. Mercado, EMBA, and Stanley K. Ellis, E.

Evidence-based outcomes have become the by-word of research organizations, especially to document accountability for use of scarce resources in government-funded research. The Arkansas Geriatric Education Collaborative (AGEC), a Geriatric Workforce Enhancement Program funded by the Health Resources and Services Administration, is a case in point. Currently, in its second year of implementation, AGEC's goal is to educate Arkansas' health care professionals, students, caregivers, first responders and the general public about issues and topics that affect the older population. Advancing such goals requires AGEC to offer a whole host of initiatives such as video teleconferences, Alzheimer's Dementia training, Geriatric Grand Rounds, Arkansas Geriatric Mentors and Scholars (AR-GEMS), evidence-based self-management programs for older adults, caregiver classes, first responder classes, and Summer Institute for Faculty, among others.

How does AGEC track the progress of these endeavors? How does AGEC know whether these initiatives reach their intended end-users? How can AGEC best respond to the current needs of Arkansas healthcare professionals? Answering such questions provides AGEC valuable feedback to guide planning and policy directives.

To answer these questions AGEC, in collaboration with the UAMS Office of Educational Development Evaluation (OED) Team, has designed a process...

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*Biology. His research interest is to understand the molecular mechanism of stem cell exhaustion, a process known to be one of the fundamental hallmarks of aging. Using the 3D ex-vivo organoid culture system and various animal models he intends to 1) understand the underlying basis of human aging and cell death and 2) develop interventions which may enhance the life span and delay the aging process.*



*Lisa VanHoose, Ph.D., MPH, PT*

*Dr. VanHoose is an Assistant Professor in the Department of Physical Therapy at the University of Central Arkansas. She completed her Ph.D. in Rehabilitation Science and MPH from the University of Kansas Medical Center. She also completed the NHLBI PRIDE Summer Institute with an emphasis in Cardiovascular Genetic Epidemiology. Her BS in Health Science and MS in Physical Therapy were earned at the University of Central Arkansas. Dr. VanHoose's research focuses on the incidence, prevalence, and severity of cancer-related side effects with an emphasis on the disease burden of minority and rural cancer survivors.*

***Congratulations to both awardees!***

[more information](#)

## >PEARLS OF WISDOM

### Quote...

***"Nature has but a single path and you travel it only once. Each stage of life has its own appropriate qualities—weakness in childhood, boldness in youth, seriousness in middle age, and maturity in old age. These are fruits that must be harvested in due season."***

*by Marcus Tullius Cicero*

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