

The Ithaca College Gerontology Institute newsletter is designed to keep the campus and community informed of institute activities and other events related to the field of gerontology. Our address is Ithaca College, Gerontology Institute, 953 Danby Road, Ithaca, NY 14850-7002; phone 607-274-1965; website www.ithaca.edu/aging.

The Gerontology Institute Welcomes Interim Director

Upon John Krout's recent retirement as director of the Gerontology Institute, Zenon Wasyliw, Ph.D., was appointed as the interim director while a search is conducted to permanently fill this position. Wasyliw, an Ithaca College professor of history and coordinator of the social studies teacher education program, has his own history with the Gerontology Institute.

In the early 1990s, William Scoones, at that time dean of Ithaca College's School of Allied Health Professions, was administering a grant made to Ithaca College for the purpose of studying and teaching gerontology. Dean Scoones requested that faculty contact him if they were interested in issues of aging. Wasyliw responded to this request, and thus began his relationship with what was later to become the Gerontology Institute. From 1997 to 2004, under the leadership of its first director,

Therefore, my main goal as interim director will be to maintain the good work and visibility of the institute.

John Krout, the Gerontology Institute received a grant to work with teachers in the Ithaca City School District to develop lesson plans on aging and pilot them in their classrooms. The goal was to offer a history of old age and to overcome outdated stereotypes and build a sensitivity to older adults. Due to his knowledge and experience coordinating the social studies teacher education program, Wasyliw played a major role in developing and implementing this grant. He created the critical link between



Zenon Wasyliw, Ph.D.

the Gerontology Institute and the Ithaca City School District, as well as teachers from other area school districts. This link proved to be vital to the success of the program.

Over the years, Wasyliw has continued to be involved in the work of the institute, observing faculty in the classroom and more recently as the chair of the Gerontology Institute Review Committee. He states, "The committee's final report reinforces the strength and high value of the Gerontology Institute. Therefore, my main goal as interim director will be to maintain the good work and visibility of the institute. I am also interested in reaching out to retired faculty regarding an oral history project and revisiting the issues of aging in social studies."

The Gerontology Institute faculty and staff extend a warm welcome to Professor Wasyliw.

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ITHACA COLLEGE GERONTOLOGY INSTITUTE
SCHOOL OF HUMANITIES AND SCIENCES

Celebrating the Work of John Krout



A retirement reception for John Krout was held on December 2, 2010, on the Ithaca College campus. Approximately 80 Ithaca College colleagues and community members attended this event. Tanya Saunders, dean of the Division of Interdisciplinary and International Studies; Carl Segrecci, vice president for finance and administration; and Paul Hamill, director of sponsored programs; all spoke highly of Krout's work during his 17-year tenure as director of the Gerontology Institute. Highlighted were his success in growing the institute, his ability to

work with faculty and administrators across a broad spectrum of departments, his success as a "grants man," and his overall integrity. Mark Macera, executive director of Longview, presented Krout with a citation from the Longview board of directors, acknowledging and thanking him for his role in developing the Longview–Ithaca College collaboration, which benefits both students and Longview residents. Katharyn Machan, professor of writing, read a poem titled "A Life" that she composed for Krout's retirement.

All spoke highly of Krout's work during his 17-year tenure.



Left to right: Paul Hamill, Carl Segrecci, John Krout, Katharyn Machan, Tanya Saunders, and Mark Macera



In honor of John Krout's retirement, students in the Ithaca College Aging and Gerontological Educating Society (AGES) created a caricature image of John to print on T-shirts as part of their annual fund-raising efforts. This image appears on the cake along with Krout's preferred term, "retirement."

ICGI Newsletter Now Available Online

Please join us in our efforts to promote sustainability by signing up to receive future newsletters electronically. To do so please send an e-mail to Marilyn Kinner at mkinner@ithaca.edu with the following request: "Please add me to your electronic mailing list." If you wish to be removed from the ICGI mailing list, please e-mail mkinner@ithaca.edu or call 607-274-1967. You do not need to take any action if you would prefer to continue receiving a paper copy of the newsletter.

As I See It

by Marilyn Kinner

In the summer of 1974, I was new to the Trumansburg community, having arrived with my husband and three-month-old daughter just a year before. Thus, I was surprised by a visit from two ladies representing the local senior citizens' group. They came with a request that I consider becoming their program coordinator. Having no experience in program planning, but with administrative skills and lots of good memories of times spent with my grandparents and great uncle, I decided to give it a try. With that visit began my love of working with older adults and my pursuit of a degree and career in aging. In 1982, I joined the staff of the Tompkins County Senior Citizens' Council (now Lifelong) as the countywide program coordinator and later became its executive director. In 2002, I became the Finger Lakes Geriatric Education Center (FLGEC) program coordinator at the Gerontology Institute and in 2006 took my present role as outreach program coordinator.

Now, 36 years after that encounter with the ladies from the Trumansburg senior citizens group, I have become an "older adult" myself and plan to join the ranks of retirees later this year. I ask myself whether all the knowledge I have gained about aging will result in a smooth transition to the next phase of my life. Perhaps most helpful to my transition will be the opportunities I have had to observe many fine role models. These have been retirees who have remained active and engaged in their communities, donating hours of volunteer time and stretching their horizons through recreation and education. These

We know that there is already a critical shortage of geriatricians, nurses, and nursing home and home health aides, and projections are not encouraging.

individuals have learned to be flexible and have had a faith-based view of life, which enables them to successfully cope with changes in their circumstances, such as chronic health conditions and the many losses associated with aging. I hope I can follow in their footsteps.

As I see it, the biggest concern for my cohorts and myself is whether affordable, quality care will be available should we become frail and need assistance. While I am thankful for the Ithaca College students who have chosen to major or minor in aging studies, the question that has yet to be answered is, "Will there be enough of these trained individuals to meet the future needs of such a large portion of the population?" We know that there is already a critical shortage of geriatricians, nurses, and nursing home and home health aides, and projections are not encouraging. Added to this is a movement towards providing more care at home. Most of us hope we can stay in our own home,



but inevitably home care involves a lot of hands-on help from family and friends. Having facilitated and participated in caregiver support groups, I know how stressful it can be to juggle work and care for a loved one. With more and more people aging in place, I believe that communities will have to develop ways of sharing the care of their older members. Volunteer service can help to bolster government programs and support family caregivers. Retirees like myself can play an important role in community care, first by taking responsibility for our own well-being through diet, exercise, and engagement with family and friends, and secondly by volunteering to help others when able and being willing to accept help when needed. My hope is that my generation can be pioneers in promoting a community care system that brings us together and improves the quality of life for all ages.

Position to Begin Summer of 2011:

Director, Gerontology Institute

The Gerontology Institute director position will provide administrative leadership for the Gerontology Institute, the aging studies major and minor, the Ithaca College–Longview partnership, and the Linden Center for Creativity and Aging. This is a 12-month position that will begin in the summer of 2011. Visit www.icjobs.org for a full description and to apply. For more information regarding the position, contact Professor Richard Schissel at schissel@ithaca.edu. For questions regarding applying online, call 607-274-1207.

Discrimination on the grounds of age, disability, marital status, national origin, race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, or military status will not exist in any activity, area, or operation of the College.



Farewell to the Associate Director

In August 2010, the Gerontology Institute bid farewell to associate director Pamela Mayberry. She and her husband moved to Chicago so that he could take a position with a “green energy” organization.

Mayberry started with the Gerontology Institute as assistant director in 1998 and was quickly promoted to associate director in 2000. She had many wide-ranging

responsibilities including developing curriculum, overseeing the Finger Lakes Geriatric Education Center training contract, communicating with faculty in other departments, advising students, overseeing the certificate program, working with the Division of Graduate and Professional Studies to expand the online offerings of the institute, and keeping academic assessment activities on track.

Director John Krout states, “Pam was a great asset to the institute, College, and larger Ithaca community. She was very professional, productive, and collegial; great with students; and supportive of everyone with whom she worked. Pam was instrumental in many of the institute’s achievements, and we simply would not be where we are today without all her contributions. She is sorely missed.”

News from the Finger Lakes Geriatric Education Center: FLGEC Approved for Funding

In our fall 2010 newsletter, we announced that the Gerontology Institute was once again included among five consortium members in a proposed five-year cooperative agreement with the Bureau of Health Professions to continue activities of the Finger Lakes Geriatric Education Center of upstate New York. The consortium is led by the University of Rochester School of Medicine and Dentistry. At the time the fall newsletter went to press, awards had yet to be announced. We are very pleased to report that the FLGEC was approved for a five-year funding period.

The focus of the Ithaca College FLGEC activities is to provide training to professionals in 17 upstate rural counties. Eight workshops were presented during the fall semester. Topic titles included “Exploring the Aging Experience,” “Sorting Out the 3Ds: Delirium, Dementia, Depression,” “Leisure in Little Places,” “Elder Abuse Revisited,” and “Older Adults and Substance Abuse.” Training plans are under way for the spring semester.

If your agency or community group would be interested in partnering with the FLGEC to provide training in your area, please contact Christine Decker at decker@ithaca.edu.

Gerontology Institute's New Administrative Home

Since 2004, the Gerontology Institute has been part of the Division of Interdisciplinary and International Studies (DIIS). Under the leadership of the division's dean, Tanya Saunders, the DIIS has successfully met its mission of expanding the possibilities for IC students to study abroad and to incorporate interdisciplinary perspectives into their major fields of study. In light of the College-wide emphasis on integrative learning and international studies anticipated in the IC20/20 vision being developed by Ithaca College's academic and administrative leadership, the distinctive mission of the DIIS is no

longer confined to a single division within Ithaca College and is being eliminated.

With this change, the Gerontology Institute is pleased to announce that it will now become a part of the School of Humanities and Sciences. "The Gerontology Institute has long been a wonderful asset for Ithaca College, and we welcome its faculty, staff, students, and programs to the School of Humanities and Sciences," said Leslie Lewis, dean of the School of Humanities and Sciences. "Within H&S, we are committed to interdisciplinary collaboration and community engagement, and look forward to the wonderful synergies



Dean Leslie Lewis

that will be created by shifting the Gerontology Institute to its new administrative home within our school."

Gift Promotes Artistic Creativity

A generous gift from the Tompkins Trust Company has allowed the Ithaca College Gerontology Institute to hire local muralist and decorative painter Mary Beth Ihnken to offer arts workshops for area residents. The Gerontology Institute supports academic coursework and research as well as campus and community programs that highlight the links between creativity and aging through its Linden Center for Creativity and Aging. The workshops were conducted at Brookdale Senior Living Center and the Titus Towers housing complex in downtown Ithaca. The purpose of the project was to provide opportunities for older adults living in congregate settings to "do art." Participation in the arts has been found to improve the quality of life of well and less-well elders. Many artists continue to flourish in old age, with some producing their most creative work in their later years.

At Brookdale's memory unit (Clare Bridge Cottage), Ihnken conducted a series of six sessions with residents who worked with a variety of different materials including watercolor, color pencil, acrylic paint, and clay. Val VanAmburg, program coordinator at Clare Bridge said,

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"Ihnken's special program with our residents was a perfect example of how the arts have a positive effect on older adults. Watching their faces light up with excitement while engaged in the program and appreciating the results of the efforts was

truly inspiring for all of us." Up to 10 seniors at Titus Towers worked on an involved watercolor project. Billie Nordby, director of resident services at Titus says the class was wonderful for the tenants. "Some folks are very talented and really enjoyed using their gift again. Others were real beginners and had so much fun trying. They were all made to feel what they did was an

expression of who they are and felt valued for their work." Ihnken is "happy to see how much enjoyment participants are getting from creating the art," and also says the older adults seemed eager to "interact with someone younger."

Ithaca College students participated in many of the sessions as volunteers or as part of the Fieldwork in Gerontology course. Both locations are planning on having art shows to celebrate the work of the residents. The grant also allows Ihnken to work on a mural at Cayuga Ridge Health and Residential Community on Trumansburg Road in Ithaca.



In the summer of 2010, Jay Sokolovsky conducted fieldwork in Mexico studying aging in an indigenous community.

Jay Sokolovsky, Ph.D., is the Gerontology Institute's spring 2011 distinguished speaker. Sokolovsky is professor and chair of the Department of Anthropology, Interdisciplinary Social Sciences, and Criminology at the University of South Florida, St. Petersburg. He is a cultural anthropologist with specialties in rural development in Mexico, urban anthropology, anthropology of aging, and video documentation. The third edition of Sokolovsky's

award-winning book, *The Cultural Context of Aging*, was published in 2009. His research has been conducted in a Mexican peasant village; New York's inner city; Tampa, Florida; the new town of Columbia, Maryland; and in urban neighborhoods in England and Croatia. His latest ethnographic videos include *Urban Garden: Fighting for Life and Beauty*, documenting the community garden movement in New York City, and *Rosalba's Quinceañera*, examining the adoption of the 15th

SPRING 2011 GERONTOLOGY INSTITUTE DISTINGUISHED SPEAKER Jay Sokolovsky, Ph.D.

birthday ritual within an indigenous Mexican village.

On Thursday, April 14, 2011, at 7:00 p.m. in Emerson Suites, Campus Center, Sokolovsky will present a lecture titled "Will We Grow Up before We Grow Old? What America Can Learn from the Global Response to the Age of Aging." This lecture is free and open to the public. There will be a reception following the presentation. For more information, contact Marilyn Kinner at 607-274-1967 or mkinner@ithaca.edu.

Individuals with disabilities requiring accommodation should contact Marilyn Kinner as much in advance of the event as possible.

Longview Highlights, Fall 2010

by Christine Pogorzala

- Eleven Longview residents read Thoreau's *Walden* over the summer, and five came to campus to participate in a first-year reading discussion group with incoming freshmen.
- The Ithaca College–Longview Intergenerational Choir, under the guidance of Jennifer Haywood (music education), met weekly at Longview during the semester and gave several performances.
- Elizabeth Bergman (aging studies) and students from her Sociology of Aging class met three times during the semester in small groups with 10 Longview residents to discuss the ways their life experiences have shaped their aging and retirement, as well as the thoughts and experiences the residents had regarding Social Security, Medicare, and other age-related programs.
- Katharyn Machan (writing) held a program called Belly Boo! at Longview, a Halloween belly dancing performance and party for the Longview residents.
- Mary Ann Erickson (aging studies) and students in her Creativity throughout the Life Span class met eight times at Longview with 10 Longview residents to conduct a number of creative activities that included tie dying, photography, writing, and imaginative thinking.
- A number of Longview residents attended the Harvest Moon Dance, an annual intergenerational dance hosted on campus by the AGES student club.



Ithaca College Gerontology Institute 2010 Annual Conference

Dignity, Compassion, and Choice: New Approaches to Geriatric Care



On October 1, 2010, 150 individuals attended the Gerontology Institute's annual conference titled "Dignity, Compassion, and Choice: New Approaches to Geriatric Care." The attendees were professionals working in the fields of long-term care, aging services, mental health, and acute care settings, in addition to Ithaca College faculty and students.

The focus of the conference was on the need for a different approach to the medical treatment of elders, many of whom have a complex mix of multiple chronic conditions, disability, and frailty. Keynote speaker Dennis McCullough, M.D., associate professor of community and family medicine at Dartmouth Medical School, spoke of having to navigate a bumpy journey on the road to helping his mother live well toward the end of her life. From this experience he developed a philosophy that he calls "slow medicine," which embraces a compassionate approach to caring for aging loved ones. McCullough states, "In our quest for quality in the late years of life, slow medicine brings together the best medical caring with our age-old traditions of support and caring for elders and their families."

Other topics addressed were the importance of an interdisciplinary geriatric assessment; one hospital's development of an aging and complex care service line; how a transitional life care team can assist with palliative care decision making; and the research evidence that teaching individuals how to self-manage their chronic disease can reduce health care utilization and costs.

A video called *The Case of Mr. Springer* was addressed by a panel and opened up for general discussion.

The conference ended with a presentation by G. Allen Power, M.D., Eden mentor at St. John's Home in Rochester and clinical associate professor of medicine at the University of Rochester.

Power presented striking evidence of how changes in behavior can be made when the needs or environmental triggers are addressed, thus reducing the use of drugs.

Power's presentation titled "Dementia beyond Drugs: Changing the Culture of Care" addressed the need to adjust our thinking about dementia and the way we treat it. The use of antipsychotic drugs to control dementia-related behavior has doubled in recent years. Power stated, "Studies have shown that the vast majority of behavioral expressions can be linked to unmet needs or environmental triggers." Through case studies and videos, Power presented

striking evidence of how changes in behavior can be made when the needs or environmental triggers are addressed, thus reducing the use of drugs.

The conference was well received and summed up by one attendee's evaluation statement: "One of the best conferences. Very relevant to health care and the problems we face."

Looking Ahead

ICGI Spring 2011 Workshop Series

- March 16** **Dementia Beyond Drugs: Changing the Culture of Care**
Presenter: G. Allen Power, M.D.
Eden Mentor, St. John's Home, Rochester, New York
Clinical Associate Professor of Medicine, University of Rochester
- April 6** **Vision and Aging: Common Diagnosis and Adaptations for Aging Eyes**
Presenter: Julie Nastasi, OTD, OTR/L, SCLV
Assistant Professor, Ithaca College Department of Occupational Therapy
- April 13** **Function Follows Fit: Wheelchair Maintenance, Selection, and Use**
Presenter: Carol John, M.Ed., OT
Retired, Ithaca College Department of Occupational Therapy

All workshops will be held at Longview, 1 Bella Vista Drive, Ithaca, from 2:00 to 4:30 p.m. There is a registration fee of \$20 or \$12 for retired persons. To register and for more information visit www.ithaca.edu/agingworkshop or contact Marilyn Kinner at mkinner@ithaca.edu or 607-274-1967.