Dr. Lars Tornstam, the progenitor of the theory on aging he termed Gerotranscendence, found evidence to support that as people age, their understanding and experience of time begins to change. Though I am still a bit shy of the age group Tonstam was most interested in, I have to say my own experience agrees with his findings. I began my role as Director of the Gerontology Program and the Chesley Center on Aging this past August, and it seems I have not had time to catch my breath since. Even so, over the past four months, I have been delighted to find not only a dedicated group of inter-disciplinary faculty teaching age-related courses, but also an energized and interested group of students at both the graduate and undergraduate levels. As time slips by, measured largely by the passage of committee meetings, course preparations and planning for the Chesley Lecture this April, I have been welcomed and made to feel a true sense of belonging in the important work that lies ahead at the foundation of our program’s efforts. As an Area Agency on Aging Director, I grew to understand the importance of providing high quality support services for elders in our communities. As a graduate student, I learned how much I truly did not know, while trying to develop those programs. Now, as a part of this program and this University, I have the opportunity to help bridge the gap between theory and research, and the practical application of our discipline. Each of us is trying to find some way of supporting the movement toward healthy aging in our communities and facilities, and to continue to be a positive force for social good in the lives of the elders we serve. Even though time is indeed fleeting, and even with the guarantee that all things change, it is a great feeling to know that we are all a part of a truly collective effort, a collaboration between students, faculty and the community, to support those who shaped the society we have had the opportunity to enjoy. Over the past four months, I have found that time is not my enemy, because with time, our program and our efforts to understand and support positive practices in the field of aging, will only improve.
5th Annual Chesley Lecture

The 5th Annual Chesley Lecture will be held Monday, April 12th, 2010 in the Minnesota State University, Mankato Centennial Ballroom. Jane Brody, New York Times columnist and author, will present a lecture entitled: “Jane Brody’s Guide to the Great Beyond: A Practical Primer to Help You and Your Loved Ones Prepare Medically, Legally and Economically for the End of Life.”

The event will be held from 4:00-6:00pm., and a book signing will take place following the lecture from 6:00-7:00pm. Please contact Deb Meyer at deborah.meyer@mnsu.edu or Don Ebel at don.ebel@mnsu.edu for more information.

Upcoming Events

Dates to Remember:


* **Tuesday, March 30th, 2010**-- “Aging and End of Life Issues”, a Healthcare Continuing Education Program offered through the Minnesota State University, Mankato’s College of Allied Health and Nursing Continuing Education Department, will be held at South Central College, Mankato from 9am-4pm.

* **Monday, April 12th, 2010**--5th Annual Chesley Lecture from 4:00-6:00pm in the Minnesota State University, Mankato Centennial Ballroom.

* **Friday, April 30th, 2010**-- Dr. Cory Ingram, MD will present at the Palliative Care Conference at South Central College, Mankato. The conference will be held from 8:30am-3:45pm.

* **Friday, April 30th, 2010**-- The Annual MGS (Minnesota Gerontological Society) Conference will be held at the Earle Brown Heritage Center in Brooklyn Center, MN from 8:00am-3:30 pm.

We’re on the Web! http://sbs.mnsu.edu/
Sigma Phi Omega is the National Honor and Professional Society in Gerontology. It was formed in 1980 to recognize the excellence of those who study aging. Sigma Phi Omega seeks to promote scholarship, professionalism, friendship, and services to older persons, and to recognize exemplary attainment in aging studies and related fields.

The Minnesota State University Beta Mu chapter is currently welcoming new members. If you are interested in joining Sigma Phi Omega or want to be informed about our upcoming events, contact Don Ebel at donald.ebel@mnsu.edu.

The Gerontology Club is open to all Minnesota State University, Mankato students who may have an interest in learning about the study of aging. This past fall, club members assisted with VINE’s Rake the Town event and held a bake sale in the Centennial Student Union. This spring, club members will be performing volunteer activities at a local long term care facility. Meetings are held once a month in the Sociology Department conference room (AH 113) unless otherwise stated. The next meeting will be held on February 9th at 12:00pm. It is never too late to join, and anyone who is interested is welcome to attend!

Current Officers:
President: Adam Massmann
Vice President: Lisa Johnson
Secretary: Ali Garklavs
Treasurer: Claire Lindsay

T-Shirts Available!
Get your new Gerontology Club t-shirt now for $15.00!!
Sizes are available in Medium-Large-and Extra Large.
Contact Deb Meyer at deborah.meyer@mnsu.edu or Ting-Yuan Shiue at ting-yuan.shiue@mnsu.edu if you are interested in purchasing a t-shirt!
How Blue Zones Work  written by Dan Buettner

What if I could tell you how to live another 10 years, as well as look younger and feel younger at every age? Something called the Danish Twin Studies established that less than 25% of how long the average person lives is dictated by genes. In other words, most of how long and how well you live is up to you.

The premise of Blue Zones is: identify the optimal lifestyle of longevity and you have a de facto formula of longevity.

What is the optimal lifestyle of longevity? Does it involve diets? supplements? exercise programs? Should you be eating organic, free range chicken or tofu? And what about physical activity? Should you be running marathons or doing yoga?

To answer these questions, I teamed up National Geographic and hired the world’s best longevity researchers to better identify pockets around the world where people are living MEASURABLY better. In these Blue Zones we found people who reach age 100 at rates 10 times greater than in the United States, where people suffer a fraction of the rate of heart disease and cancer than we do and where people are getting the extra 10 years that we’re missing.

Then, we took teams of scientists to each location who know how to identify lifestyle characteristics that may explain longevity. In Sardinia, Italy we found a wine with the world’s highest-know levels of antioxidants, and in Ikaria, Greece we discovered ancient herbal teas that lower blood pressure. On the other side of the planet, we found an island where purpose and mutual support networks called Moai explain an extra half dozen years of life. In Nicoya, Costa Rica it’s the meso-American diet of beans, squash and a special corn tortilla that is propelling people into their 90’s at rates 4 times greater than in the US. Finally, among Loma Linda’s Seventh Day Adventists, we found America’s longest-lived culture. They’re living about an extra decade longer than the rest of us. How? Part of the reason comes from a diet inspired from the Bible. Genesis, Chapter 1, vs 29.

For the first time in living history, life expectancy of our children is expected to drop, as a nation we’re getting fatter every year. Diabetes is on the rise. Is this because Americans are less disciplined? Have we undergone a moral degeneration or are we somehow inferior to previous generations? I don’t think so. We are products of our environment. Every day, hundreds of marketing messages rinse over our psyches--many of them encouraging us to eat things that aren’t good for us. Machines have engineered physical activity out of lives and networked electronics are replacing face-to-face human contact. We live in environments of sickness. The key to getting the extra 10 years we’re missing is to follow the lessons from world’s longest-lived people and create environments of health.  Retrieved from: http://bluezones.com/