

# THE GERONTOLOGY NEWSLINK



GERONTOLOGY PROGRAM  
CENTER ON AGING

MINNESOTA STATE UNIVERSITY, MANKATO

FALL 2001

## Aging Creates Gerontology Jobs

Career opportunities are on the rise in the field of gerontology. The population over 65 in the U.S. is at its highest level ever and will continue to grow through the year 2050. Gerontology professionals will have the chance to work in emerging jobs such as: “designing better service delivery systems and treatment options for older adults; managing complex health systems;” providing case management assistance to older consumers “or helping them navigate the healthcare system; teaching continuous education to healthcare workers; working in home health or as geriatric clinicians; designing and marketing home safety products and conducting home safety audits;” and working as entrepreneurs; or in other jobs that are still in the making (K.H. Wilber at <http://www.asaging.org/am/cia2/jobs.html>).

Many existing gerontology-connected jobs are experiencing growth due to the higher percentage of older people in the population. The U.S. Department of Labor reports that positions for human service workers, gerontological social workers, and geriatric nurses will show much faster than average growth through 2008. Positions in health services management and occupational therapy will also show faster than average growth. Opportunities in recreational therapy will continue to grow as well.

For more information on gerontology careers check out the Administration on Aging web site at [www.aoa.dhhs.gov/naic/notes/careersinaging.html](http://www.aoa.dhhs.gov/naic/notes/careersinaging.html).

## MAGEC South Launches Career Caregiver Leadership Program

The Minnesota Area Geriatric Education Center (MAGEC) South and the Region Nine Area Agency on Aging will offer training opportunities through the Career Caregiver Leadership Program (CCLP) in November 2001. Area home care agency staff will participate in train-the-trainer sessions on topics such as building communication skills, enhancing morale, empowering people toward their career goals, cultural sensitivity and end-of-life care.

The Career Caregiver Leadership program is a part of a follow-up study that is designed to determine whether direct care givers who receive meaningful training and development

opportunities experience greater job satisfaction and stay with their employer for a longer period of time. Once the study has been completed MAGEC hopes to make the training available statewide in Minnesota. Some agency spots are still available for piloting this program.

For more information regarding the Career Caregiver Leadership Program, contact Shirley Murray or Bernadette Prinster at 507-389-5194.

## Gerontology Scholarships to be Awarded

Up to two \$1,600 scholarships are awarded through the Rose M. Hull Endowment each school year. Scholarship applicants must be graduate or undergraduate students at MSU and be working with elders or wish to take gerontology course work. The scholarship can be used for tuition and fees. The deadline for applications is March 22, 2002. The Rose M. Hull Endowment Scholarship was established by Mrs. B.H. Chesley in memory of her mother, Rose M. Hull. The purpose of this scholarship is to recognize and encourage distinguished study in the field of gerontology and to provide financial assistance to gerontology students preparing for a career in the service of older adults.

Scholarship application forms may be obtained from the Gerontology Program/Center on Aging office in Trafton N335 or from the Gerontology Program web site at <http://www.mnsu.edu/dept/gero/hullapp.html>. Scholarship recipients will be announced by April 1, 2002. For more information, please call 507-389-1563.

## Area Professionals Share Gerontology Perspectives

### Future Nursing will Focus on Elders

Norma Krumwiede, Associate Professor in the nursing program at Minnesota State University, Mankato, has found that students' perceptions of the nature of nursing opportunities in their future are much different from what the reality will be. She noted, “Students tend to have a low interest in gerontologic nursing. They need to realize that even if they are not going to be a gerontologic nurse the majority of the

## Gerontology Program - Spring Semester Courses 2002

### Core Courses

<u>Class</u>	<u>Time</u>	<u>Professor</u>	<u>Course #</u>
Biology of Aging	W 6:00-8:45 P.M.	Bentley	BIOL 4/517
Older Adult Nutrition	W 5:00-7:45 P.M.	Weerts	FCS 4/543
Gerontology Theories and Practice	H 6:00-8:45 P.M.	Elliott	GERO 600
Aging: Policy Issues	M 6:00-8:45 P.M.	Shrewsbury	POL 4/564
Psychology of Aging	T 6:00-8:45 P.M.	Widner	PSYCH 4/566
Sociology of Aging	H 6:00-8:45 P.M.	Dunham	SOC 4/504

### Electives

Residential Management For Families and Special Needs People	F 9:00 A.M.-12:30 P.M.	Young	FCS 4/574
Nursing Home Admin. (Held at Lake Shore Inn, Waseca)	W 6:00-8:45 P.M.	Madel	GERO 4/580
Leisure Needs of the Aging	M 6:00-8:45 P.M.	Wise	RPLS 4/582

### Nursing Home Administration

Managerial Accounting	Multiple Day Sessions (req. MSU laptop) Tuesday 6:00-8:45 P.M.(no laptop required)		ACCT 210
Aging: Interdisciplinary Perspectives	M 6:00-8:45 P.M.	Elliott	GERO 200
Nursing Home Admin. (Held at Lake Shore Inn, Waseca)	W 6:00-8:45 P.M.	Madel	GERO 4/580
Gerontological Nursing	F 10:00-11:50 A.M.	Smith	NURS 340
Introduction to MIS	Multiple Sessions (req. MSU laptop) M-W 2:00-3:15 P.M.(no laptop required)		MGMT 200
Principles of Management	Multiple Sessions		MGMT 330
Human Resources Mngmt.	Day Sessions W 6:00-8:45 P.M. H 6:00-8:45 P.M.		MGMT 4/540
Sociology of Aging	H 6:00-8:45 P.M.	Dunham	SOC 4/504

Note: This information was accurate at the time of printing. However, times are subject to change prior to registration.

population they will serve in acute care and home care will be elderly clients. Students need to adjust their perceptions because that is where the jobs are going to be.”

Dr. Krumwiede is concerned about the current and future availability of nurses. She says that the nursing field is not ready for the increase in the elderly population. She explained “Nursing is already suffering from shortages. If you have a shortage of nurses you have a shortage of people taking care of the elderly client. At the same time, we have an increasing elderly population, which will require a great deal of additional nursing care. Also, a fairly significant number of nurses are nearing retirement age themselves. It’s a serious situation.”

Dr. Krumwiede talked about attitudes concerning long-term care nursing that originated in the 1950’s. She explained that working in a long-term care facility was viewed as less prestigious, and not as vital as hospital nursing. She noted that this attitude is still prevalent today. She described the complexities of being a gerontologic nurse and providing care in a nursing home, observing, “They are without the support systems that exist in a hospital. They don’t have the technology, the machinery, an IV team to call, or a lab readily available. They are on their own and their assessment skills

have to be very astute.” She also noted that those working in long-term care facilities make equal or often times less pay than their counterparts.”

She feels that nursing education needs to prepare students for their work with an aging population. “Nursing education needs to improve and extend the assessment skills and documentation skills of future nurses. To prepare students for the future, nursing education will need to focus not only on the gerontologic client in the long-term care facility, but also on the gerontologic client in all different aspects of service provision.”

### Everyone Can Learn to Leisure

White water rafting, rock climbing and jumping out of airplanes are just a few of the more daring activities you might find Jim Wise enjoying in his leisure time. Dr. Wise, who is an Assistant Professor in the Recreation, Parks and Leisure Department at MSU, practices exactly what he teaches his students. He notes, “People need to recognize the importance leisure plays in their lives. All people including older folks who are involved in meaningful recreation activities have a higher quality of life and enjoy life more.” He is currently working on research that bears this fact out.

Dr. Wise pointed out that the majority of the people in our society don't plan for recreation and leisure activities as a part of their daily lives. "At retirement people may suddenly go from having 8 hours of free time a day to 16. What are they going to do with that time? Many people are not prepared. One of the roles that therapeutic recreation specialists can play is to help people, especially those who are no longer working, to maximize the use of their leisure time. With so many people rapidly reaching retirement age, there will be a great number of people with time on their hands." This situation will create a growing number of job possibilities for his students.

Dr. Wise encourages therapeutic recreation majors who expect to work with the older population to consider a gerontology minor. "Right now working with older folks is where most of the career opportunities are for people who are planning to work in therapeutic recreation. Many assisted living centers and independent living centers will also be hiring therapeutic recreation specialists." He explained that the large number of retired people in the near future might also produce new entrepreneurial opportunities for therapeutic recreation specialists. More jobs may be born out of the desires and needs of retiring baby boomers. "People will be looking for leisure activities to productively fill their time and enhance the quality of their lives."

For those interested in exploring the recreation and leisure needs of an aging population, Dr. Wise will be teaching a Leisure Needs of the Aging course at MSU in the spring 2002 semester.

## **Nursing Home Retools for the Future**

The days of driving to the local nursing home and checking in are long past, but Peter Madel, Jr. the CEO of Lake Shore Inn Nursing Home in Waseca, Minnesota remembers those days. Madel said, "When we first started the nursing home it was common for people to drive up in their cars and check in. Many of these people were here for twenty years. Today our average length of stay for new admissions is 50 days. It is a very different business than it was then.

It used to be that like most nursing homes we had a 99.9% occupancy rate. The only vacancy we had was between someone dying and the next person moving in. Nationally the occupancy rate today is around 85%." In Minnesota, the state is providing incentives for nursing homes to de-license beds. Mr. Madel noted that this is a positive move, because many nursing homes were built with only a few private rooms, primarily due to the desires of major funding sources. Customers today want private rooms and a set of services and amenities to which they are accustomed. Today Lake Shore Inn and other nursing homes are reducing beds available, remodeling to offer more private rooms and revamping services to be more responsive to this market change.

Peter Madel, Jr. feels that, overall, the nursing home industry is going to become more specialized. Lake Shore Inn has specialized in offering rehabilitation services. Unlike most nursing homes, Lake Shore Inn has employed a full-time registered physical therapist and an occupational therapist for many years. This created a natural market niche for them. He emphasized that it is important for nursing homes to

determine their market niche and the levels of service that offer the greatest efficiencies and cost savings, while still keeping quality care and service as a top priority.

"Nursing homes will need to figure out how much they can handle. To what degree might nursing homes handle care still being provided by hospitals? How can nursing homes expand services beyond their walls? Should we offer respite care or adult day care? How can we do that? What are the state's demands? Are there too many requirements to deal with? Who do we have to talk to get the license and regulations modified?" Many nursing homes are downsizing and others have closed or are in the process of closing. Mr. Madel indicated that these questions yet to be answered will affect the level and type of nursing home services that will be offered in the future

Peter Madel, Jr. has a strong passion for the nursing home field and strongly urges students interested in gerontology or business to get into MSU's nursing home administrator's licensure program. He indicated that the numbers of people who are taking the nursing home administration licensure exam are down quite significantly at this time, which will result in more opportunities for those who earn their license. The U.S. Department of Labor indicates that health services administration jobs will experience faster than average growth through the year 2008 largely due to the increased development of long-term care services.

Mr. Madel was instrumental in assisting with the development of the Nursing Home Administration track of courses at MSU. To stay connected with the program, Lake Shore Inn serves as an active practicum site for it and Peter Madel, Jr. will once again be teaching a nursing home administration course to be offered in the spring 2002 semester on site at Lake Shore Inn in Waseca.

## **New Gerontology Resources in Library**

- *Age and Inequality: Diverse Pathways through Later Life* by Angela M. O'Rand
- *Understanding Old Age: Critical and Global Perspectives* by Gail Wilson
- *Age Power: How the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Will Be Ruled by the New Old* by Ken Dychtwald
- *Aging in Place: Designing, Adapting, and Enhancing the Home Environment* by Ellen D. Taira
- *Assessing Older Persons, Measures, Meaning, and Practical Applications* by Robert L. Kane
- *Continuing to Care: Older Americans and their Families* by Karen Ann Conner

## **Upcoming Training Sessions Provide Continuing Education for Professionals**

**The 28th Annual Meeting and Educational Leadership Conference for the Association for Gerontology in Higher Education (AGHE)** will be held in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania



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from **February 28 – March 3, 2002**. The conference theme is “Teaching and Learning about Aging through Interdisciplinary, Intergenerational, and International Programs.” Some of the topic areas that will be explored at the conference include collaborative teaching and interdisciplinary education; intergenerational learning; international curriculum initiatives; collaborative learning styles; education and community partnerships in providing programs, services and practice sites; innovative strategies in teaching and learning; and many others. Additional topic areas and information about the conference can be viewed at [www.aghe.org/annmeetinfo.htm](http://www.aghe.org/annmeetinfo.htm).

**MAGEC South will be offering a “Pain Management” workshop on March 22, 2002** at South Central Technical College in North Mankato, Minnesota. At this time planning

for the event is in the preliminary stages. As the event draws nearer, more information will be available from the MAGEC South Office. To contact MAGEC South call 507-389-5194.

**The First Joint Conference of The National Council on the Aging and the American Society on Aging will be held in Denver, Colorado from April 4-7, 2002.** The conference theme is “Crossing the Great Divide: A Call for Compassion and Creativity.” The conference will focus on issues such as recruiting young people into long-term care jobs; affecting our society’s perceptions and compassion regarding older people, exploring and sharing the development of creative solutions to lingering long-term care problems; and identifying and considering new partnerships, practices and policies and how they might be funded. For additional information visit the conference web site at [www.agingconference.org/](http://www.agingconference.org/).

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Name (if this is a name change, include your maiden name) \_\_\_\_\_

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Aging Agency

Graduate Student

Undergraduate Student

Other – Please Specify \_\_\_\_\_

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