

Gerontology Times

Fall 2006

Volume 23, Issue 1

NOTES FROM THE DIRECTOR

Fall, 2006 is off to a great start with many new and returning students – welcome!

We have many exciting events this fall, including a **Gerontology Potluck** for students, faculty and staff on Thursday, **November 1st at 5:00 PM in Stewart Hall, room 365**. We hope to see you all there!



Our local chapters of **SPO** and the **Gerontology Club** have an exciting schedule of meetings & events, starting with our first meeting (and pizza feast) on September 28th. I invite you to consider joining *Sigma Phi Omega (the National Honors Society in Gerontology)*. Sigma Phi Omega seeks to promote scholarship, professionalism, friendship, and services to older persons, and to recognize exemplary attainment in gerontology/aging studies and related fields. Students, faculty, and community professionals are welcome to apply. See Dr. Greenberg or myself for details. Also, our local Sigma Phi Omega Chapter has re-started the *Gerontology Club* as a sister organization to our local chapter of SPO. All are welcome to join!

Finally, even though fall has just begun, it is already time to start thinking about registration for Spring Semester (see page 5 for a “sneak preview” of the Spring and Summer offerings). Don’t forget to check with your advisor (Dr. Phyllis Greenberg: Master’s and Certificate Students; Dr. Rona Karasik: undergraduate minors) to make sure your program is on track. We look forward to seeing you!

Rona J. Karasik, Ph.D.
Director, Gerontology Program
Professor, Community Studies

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Notes from the Gerontology Graduate Coordinator

Welcome back to the start of a new school year. The Gerontology programs are bustling with new students and new graduate assistants: Jennifer Habben and Seal Dwyer and returning assistant Abby Smith. In fact we have one of the largest classes of incoming graduate students in the last few years. We look forward to their contributions to the program and the future contributions they will make to the field of Gerontology.

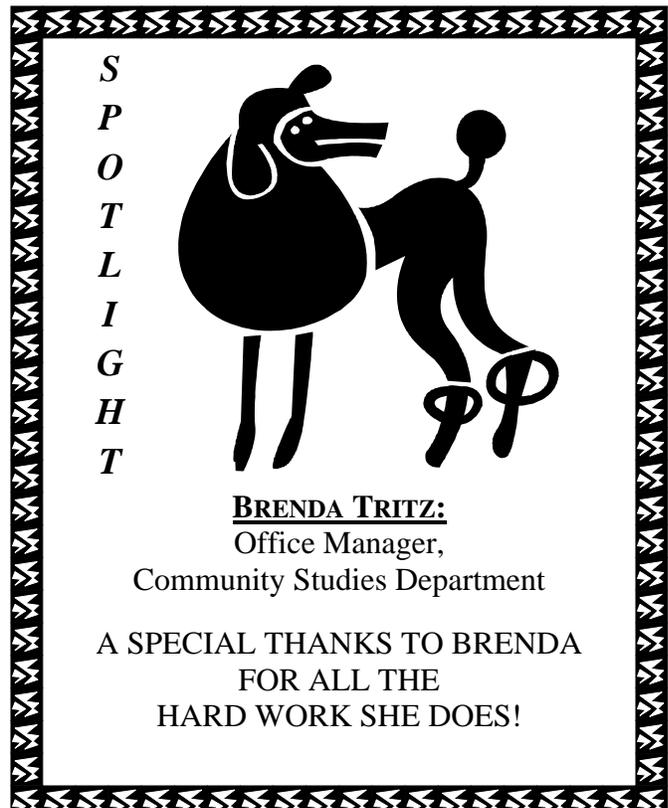
What's happened since the last newsletter? I was fortunate to receive a grant that will provide time for me to develop a service-learning component to Gero 411/511 Aging Policies and Programs. For quite some time I thought that there needed to be more first hand experience in this course – a better way for students to see what they learn in class put into practice and to participate in that process. I will have a re-assigned time during the Spring Semester to develop the service-learning aspect of the course and it should be offered as such in Fall 2007.

In addition to the above my work with Recovery Plus continues – we are entering the 5th year of the grant period and the learning continues. Interesting aspects are that during the last year we had nearly as many women enter treatment as men and the trend of drugs other than or in addition to alcohol continues. We have found out that more families are involved in the lives of these elders than previously thought but that there are still many who have no family or social supports. In addition to working with Recovery Plus, I began working with The Fountain Center in Albert Lea which focuses on support once older adults have completed treatment. I am very excited about expanding our data base and this will add another dimension to the research. The

Fountain Center is also exploring the prospect of an age specific treatment program in Albert Lea – this would be a needed and welcomed addition to programs and services for older adults.

This semester I am teaching a new topics course Mental Health and Wellness. The topics courses are a great venue to try new things and for students to take a variety of courses. Aging and Diversity and Health and Aging started out as topics courses and eventually were made part of the on-going curriculum. Please talk to Rona or myself if you have any ideas about topics for the future. And for that matter please feel free to come by, give a call or send me an email with questions, suggestions or you might just need some information about the Gerontology Programs. Take care and have a great semester!

Phyllis Greenberg
Associate Professor



RECENT PUBLICATIONS AND OTHER FACULTY NOTES

RONA KARASIK:

Recent Publications:

Karasik, R.J. (2006). *Siblings of Adults with Developmental Disabilities: Views from Middle Age and Later Life*. *Family Focus - NCFR Report 51(3)*, F15-F16.

Berke, D.L., **Karasik, R. J.**, Scheer, S.D., & Smay, T. (2006). Finding Balance: Academics' Perceptions of Work and Family Through the Life Course. *Family Focus - NCFR Report 51(2)*, F11-F12.

Karasik, R.J. (2006). Successful Service-Learning. *Thriving in Academe. Advocate Online*. (April, 2006), National Education Association. <http://www2.nea.org/he/advocnew/thriving.html>

Karasik, R. J. (2006). [Review of the book *Humanistic Design of Assisted Living*]. *Educational Gerontology*, 32(10), 921-922.

Recent Presentations:

Karasik, R.J. (2006). Promoting Civic Engagement Through Intergenerational Service-Learning. Poster to be presented at the 59th Annual Gerontological Society of America Meetings, Dallas, TX.

Karasik, R.J. (2006). The community as classroom: Service-learning in geriatrics and gerontology education. Key-note address at the CGEC Faculty Development Conference on Service-Learning (Teaching in the Community: Partnerships in Learning), San Francisco, CA.

Karasik, R.J. (2006). Into the community: Practical approaches to intergenerational service-learning. Invited presentation at the CGEC Faculty Development Conference on Service-Learning (Teaching in the Community: Partnerships in Learning), San Francisco, CA.

Karasik, R.J. (2006). Taking it on the road: Getting the most out of gerontological internships, service-learning, and site visits. Resource exchange presented at the 32nd As-

sociation for Gerontology in Higher Education (AGHE) Annual Meeting and Educational Leadership Conference, Feb. 11, Indianapolis, IN.

Elliott, K., **Karasik, R.J.**, & Wolf, M.A. (2006). Shouldn't we be thriving? Aging populations, the promise of gerontological education, and the challenges of running a gerontology program in changing academic climates. Discussion session hosted at the 32nd Association for Gerontology in Higher Education (AGHE) Annual Meeting and Educational Leadership Conference, Feb. 11, Indianapolis, IN.

Sugar, J., Mendez, J., **Karasik, R.J.**, & Collins, S. (2006). Careers in aging week: A success for gerontology. Symposium presented at the 32nd Association for Gerontology in Higher Education (AGHE) Annual Meeting and Educational Leadership Conference, Feb. 12, Indianapolis, IN.

Gary Whitford, social work, is spending a year researching, studying, and writing in Montreal, Quebec, Canada. He also spends time volunteering at social service agencies. At the Cummings Jewish Centre for Seniors, he is serving on the social action committee and helping out in the Wellness Center. He is also volunteering one morning a week in the day centre at the Jewish Eldercare Centre. At the *Centre et de sante de services sociaux Cavendish*, he will be assisting a social worker with a community mental health initiative.

Spaghetti Dinner Fundraiser

for Kaleidoscope Playground
November 4th, 5:00 pm to 8:00 pm

East Side VFW
24 5th Ave SE
St. Cloud, MN 56304

Adults: \$7.00
Students: \$5.00
Kids 12 and under free

Donations accepted.
Questions or more information call: 320-308-3156



Gerontology Potluck

November 1st, 2006
Stewart Hall Rm. 365
5:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m.
Everyone Is Invited!
Bring a favorite dish to share!

STUDENT TO PRESENT AT MAJOR CONFERENCE

Abby Smith, a Gerontology graduate student, will be presenting a poster during the Gerontological Society of America's 59th Annual Scientific Meeting this November 16-20, 2006, in Dallas, TX. Rona Karasik, the professor of GERO 630, led students Abby Smith, Sarah Jones, Michelle Kuhlmann, Wendy Forbregd, and Suzanne Snyder through the project.

DEVELOPING A DEMENTIA TRAINING MANUAL: OUTCOMES OF INTERGENERATIONAL SERVICE-LEARNING PROJECT

Intergenerational service-learning has been shown to promote civic engagement in students, while providing needed service to the community. In the current project, gerontology graduate students in a course on "Aging and Community" were approached by a local care facility for assistance in creating accessible staff training in dementia. The training materials were to be directed toward staff in newly opened Memory Loss Cottages which were designed to provide dementia care for residents in the early to mod-

erate stages of dementia. The staff were Certified Nursing Assistants but had received no formal dementia training. After touring the facility, the class researched and created a dementia training manual that began with an overview of dementia in later life.

Communication, challenging behaviors, catastrophic reactions, sundowning, environmental modifications, and dealing with day to day caregiving were all covered in detail. The manual also included a pre-test and post-test for staff to assess their own learning. In addition, the class developed a dementia-appropriate box of activity ideas for staff and visitors tailored to the needs of the current residents. At the end of the semester, the class shared their material with the agency and taught in-services to the staff. Outcomes of this service-learning project, including the staff training materials, students' reflection on their learning experience, and agency satisfaction with the service provided will be presented.

SPO and Gerontology Club Updates

Sigma Phi Omega (National Honors and Professional Society in Gerontology) & Gerontology Club had their first meeting on Thursday, September 27th. We had great attendance and some really good, fun ideas for the semester! Some activities we will be participating in include pumpkin painting at St. Ben's, "Life & Death Decisions": a seminar at the Whitney Senior Center, Meals on Wheels, the St. Cloud Heart Walk, and much more. As a group we want to show a presence in the community, give our support, and get involved! The fall semester meetings will be at 5:00 PM in SH332 on November 9th and December 7th.

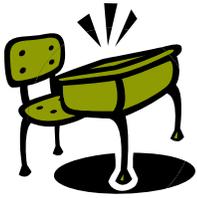
It's never too late to join, and we hope to see you at our next meeting. For more information, check out the club's website:
<http://www.stcloudstate.edu/gerontology/sigmaphiomega.asp>

2006-2007 Beta Zeta Executive Board

*SPO President: Abby Smith
SPO Vice-President: Sarah Jones
SPO Members at Large: Erin Jensen
& Angela Saari
SPO/GERO Club Joint Secretary/
Treasurer: Seal Dwyer*

*GERO Club President: John Tasto
GERO Club Vice-President: Lesa
Riedel*

*GERO Club Members at Large: Ro-
chelle Platz & Michelle Hartmann*



SPRING 2007 COURSE SCHEDULE



UNDERGRADUATE COURSES IN AGING:

Gerontology

GERO 208-01	INTRO TO GERONTOLOGY	11:00-12:15	T/R
GERO 415-01	WOMEN & AGING	5:00-7:45	T
GERO 435-01	AGING & HOUSING OPTIONS	2:00-3:15	T/R
GERO 440-01	ELDER LAW	6:00-8:45	R
GERO 444-01	INTERNSHIP		
GERO 465-01	HEALTH & AGING	5:00-7:45	M

Community Studies

CMTY 333-01	STUDYING COMMUNITIES	11:00-12:15	T/R
CMTY 455-01	GRANT DEVELOPMENT	6:00-8:45	W

Psychology

PSY 345-01	PSYCHOLOGY OF DEATH & DYING	11:00-12:15	T/R
PSY 345-54	PSYCHOLOGY OF DEATH & DYING	*Online course	
PSY 345-55	PSYCHOLOGY OF DEATH & DYING	*Online course	
PSY 443-01	PSYCHOLOGY OF ADULT DEV/AGING	11:00-11:50	M/W/F
PSY 443-54	PSYCHOLOGY OF ADULT DEV/AGING	*Online courses	

Sociology

SOC 350-54	SOCIOLOGY OF AGE & AGING	*Online course	
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Communication Studies

CMST 431-01	COMMUNICATION & AGING	5:00-7:55	W
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For Registration information visit:
www.stcloudstate.edu/register

SCSU Admissions:
 (320) 308-2244 or 1-800-369-4260

*Contact Continuing Studies for more information:
 (320) 308-4721

GRADUATE COURSES IN AGING:

Gerontology

GERO 515-01	WOMEN & AGING	5:00-7:45	T
GERO 535-01	AGING & HOUSING OPTIONS	2:00-3:15	T/R
GERO 540-01	ELDER LAW	6:00-8:45	R
GERO 565-01	HEALTH & AGING	5:00-7:45	M
GERO 620-01	ADVANCED POLICY ISSUES IN GERO	5:00-7:45	W
GERO 644-01	GERONTOLOGY INTERNSHIP		
GERO 696-01	PRACTICUM		
GERO 697-01	STARRED PAPER		
GERO 699-01	THESIS		

Remember to check the on-line schedule for any last minute changes!

Counselor Education and Educational Psychology

CEEP 678-01	INTRODUCTION TO GRADUATE STATISTICS	2:00-4:45	R
CEEP 678-02	INTRODUCTION TO GRADUATE STATISTICS	5:00-7:45	M
CEEP 678-02	INTRODUCTION TO GRADUATE STATISTICS	9:00-4:30	Sa
		5:00-8:00	F
CEEP 678-54	INTRODUCTION TO GRADUATE STATISTICS	*Online Course	



Psychology

PSY 543-01	PSYCHOLOGY OF ADULT DEV/AGING	11:00-11:50	M/W/F
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Sociology

SOC 679-01	ADVANCED RESEARCH METHODS	5:00-7:55	M
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Be sure to get your Aging:
 Journey of a Lifetime t-shirt.
 All proceeds benefit SPO activities.

T-shirts are \$16.00 and can be purchased at the grad assistant office, Stewart Hall 342.
 Many sizes to choose from!



GERONTOLOGY STUDENTS AT WORK

My name is **Nicole Backman**, and I am a licensed social worker with a minor in Gerontology. I am currently working full time and pursuing a Masters Degree in Gerontology. When I graduated with my degree, I began working for the Central Minnesota Council on Aging in St Cloud and was there for 3½ years. They are a non-profit agency that helps to keep older adults in their home by helping them access community services.

My classes about policies such as social security and Medicare gave me a basic understanding of those programs prior to entering the workforce. Through class work, readings, and service learning projects, I obtained a better understanding of what older adults needed to help them age in place.

Currently I am employed by Wright County Human Services as an Adult Services Social Worker. I am a case manager for older adults and work with many other programs to arrange for service providers to go into the home to help with activities like bathing, grooming, dressing, meals-on-wheels, and transportation.

I really like another aspect: vulnerable adult reporting. I receive a report regarding things like older adults and self-neglect, caregiver neglect, financial exploitation, and investigate to see if the report is true or false. I have only been working at this job for a few months, but I like the variety of work

with older adults.

One class in particular that helped me to better understand this avenue of my work was *Elder Law*; which is an elective for the Gerontology Degree. I have really enjoyed participating in the program and wish those of you that are in the program or considering to be a Gerontology student the best of luck!



Hello! My name is **Kristen Flygare**, and I am currently the Housing Coordinator of Lake Song Assisted Living in Onamia. We are a 35-unit facility, 8 of which are memory care. Lake Song is the newest addition to the Mille Lacs Health System campus which includes a hospital, clinic, home care agency, nursing home, and therapy department. Lake Song opened its doors on September 5th, 2006, and I have been working hard ever since to make sure that everything runs smoothly. Some of my responsibilities include: marketing, billing, budgeting, handling all inquiries, tours and admissions, and, most importantly, the day-to-day operations of Lake Song, including complaints and staff issues. Because we are in a new building, I also deal with construction issues and develop all the standard procedures for the way things run each day. I never imagined all the things that this job would entail or how challenging it would be to be the only full-time manager for the building.

I majored in Public Administration and minored in Gerontology with the intentions of obtaining my Nursing Home Administrator's license, but decided that Assisted Living was a much more exciting field for me. The *Housing*, *Public Policy*, and *Dementia* courses have been the most impact-full in my life, but I



also learned a lot from Service Learning and Interning. There is no better way to learn and to network with other professionals than to get to work in their facilities for free. If they see that you are willing to spend your spare time there, they will see that you are dedicated and are much more likely to give you a great reference during the job hunt or maybe even fit you into their organization. It is also a good way to figure out exactly what you want to do with your degree.

Overall, the Gerontology program has helped prepare me in many ways for the role that I play now as Housing Coordinator for Lake Song Assisted Living. I am looking forward to my career in the field of aging. I hope everyone can see that there are many career options with a background in Gerontology considering the way that demographics are changing in this country!



Gerontology Club president John Tasto and SPO president Abby Smith



My name is **Amanda Milbrandt**. I am a licensed social worker with a minor in Gerontology. I was employed at Crystal Lake from February 2006 until its closure in September. I was a part-time social worker. That meant I had to fill out reports, perform tests, coordinate care conferences for seniors and their family in the care center, handle complaints, listen to complaints, find lost clothing. With my minor in Gero, I was able better understand the aging process as it was happening. It gave me better insight into the world of a dementia resident. I found myself able to be more empathetic to the resident as I had a basic understanding of how the aging process occurs. A Gero minor provided me a academic background for real life experiences.



My name is **John Tasto**, and my degree is a Bachelor of Elective Studies with a Self Select Major and a Gerontology Minor. I currently work part time at Whitney Senior Center in a Program Coordinator, Scheduler position. I am in charge of all the scheduling of the daily events and activities which numbers over 4500 per year! I was hired after completing my internship at WSC.

I also work part time for the Central Minnesota Senior Federation where I am the Outreach Coordinator. I travel around Central Minnesota and do presentations on Medicare and other health-related issues. I also recruit new members to advocate politically on issues relating to seniors.



Gerontology Program
Department of Community Studies
St. Cloud State University
720 4th Ave S
St. Cloud, MN 56301

Introducing Our Graduate Assistants

This semester we have three graduate assistants.

Abby Smith is returning for her last semester with us. She will be graduating this spring. Abby is from Sumner, Iowa. She did her undergraduate work in psychology and philosophy at Clarke College. She plans to continue on to get her Ph.D. in geriatric neuropsychology.

Jen Habben is just starting the Masters program this semester. She is from Paynesville, Minnesota. She did her undergraduate work in psychology at the College of St. Scholastica in Duluth.

Seal Dwyer is also starting the Masters pro-

gram this semester. She is from St. Cloud, and did her undergraduate work in women's studies and gerontology at St. Cloud State. She plans to go on to get her Ph.D. in women's studies, with a focus on older women.



Be sure to check out our website: www.stcloudstate.edu/gerontology