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Submit SPO news by:
September 1, 2006
December 1, 2006
April 1, 2007

From the President

I am honored to begin my term as President and wish to thank Dr. Jennifer Kinney (Past-President) for the significant work she accomplished this past year to envision the future of SPO. I look forward to carrying on the work we need to do to build a strong organization that can help advance scholarship, leadership and excellence in the field of aging.

SPO was founded to recognize meritorious gerontology students as well as the outstanding service of professionals who work with or on behalf of older persons. It can provide a much-needed link between gerontology students, alumni, professionals, and academics if chapters provide opportunities for personal and professional interaction.

During the upcoming year I encourage chapters to develop and build connections within their communities and broaden the diversity of our membership. A membership that includes professionals and academics as well as students will enable us collectively and individually to have a greater impact and make a difference on the lives and well being of older adults.

Our honor society can make distinct and visible difference in the value of gerontology to the greater good of our aging communities and nation.

Over the next few months the SPO leadership will be finalizing a new membership brochure. AARP generously provided funds to cover our printing. Brochures will be mailed to each of the chapters. Please distribute them widely among your colleagues and regional aging networks. Word of mouth is our most successful way to grow. We are also redesigning the SPO website making it easier for you to access information, get involved, and grow your chapters. The Board of Directors is currently reviewing our organizational by-laws and proposing several changes. Please look for these motions later this fall and be sure to vote.



Looking to the future, AGHE's 33rd Annual Meeting and Educational Leadership Conference will be held in Portland, Oregon from March 1-4, 2007. Plan now so that you and your colleagues can attend and participate. SPO will sponsor several sessions and will hold the annual business meeting during the conference. The 2nd annual President's Award will be given to recognize an outstanding SPO student presentation. This award is funded entirely through donations and we hope you will consider making a donation to SPO so that we can build an endowed fund. (Please note "President's Award" on the memo line of your check).

On that note, I wish you a bountiful fall enriched through collaborative relationships within your learning and service communities. ~ Submitted by Debra Sheets, RN, Ph.D., Coordinator, Interdisciplinary Gerontology Program Associate Professor, Department of Health Sciences California State University, Northridge, CA, 818-677-2344, debra.sheets@csun.edu

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.

SPO Chapter News from ...



Alpha Zeta Chapter, University of South Alabama, Mobile, Alabama

With several officers and members graduating this spring, Alpha Zeta Chapter launches into fall semester actively recruiting from several disciplines to fill these voids. Three events have been planned for 2006. Frank Willis, adjunct Professor, SPO member and Past-President of Alpha Zeta, is conducting “*Everything you always wanted to know about online writing classes *but were afraid to ask your professor**” in an effort to help new students become proficient using “e-college” capabilities. Mr. Willis is a favorite Sociology and Gerontology professor and brings personal style and humor to this event. In October, we host a Film Extravaganza showcasing “Iris”, “Something’s Gotta Give”, “Driving Miss Daisy”, and “Cocoon”. Sociology, Psychology and Gerontology professors will provide credit to students who attend and write summaries of the films and how they relate to the biopsychosocial model of aging. SPO and the Gerontology Club are also sponsoring a WALOP (We All Love Our Pets) Pet Food Drive in November, a new program for Meals on Wheels clients who have pets. Volunteers observed some seniors were sharing their meals with their pets and decided to help clients obtain pet food. Local pet food stores provide locations for collecting pet food during the holiday season. Please visit our updated website at www.southalabama.edu/gerontology.
~ Submitted by Pamela S. Brown psb401@jaguar1.usouthal.edu 251-776-2755

Delta Epsilon Chapter, California State University, Northridge, CA

Delta Epsilon takes great pride in announcing that SPO President Maneshka Perera and SPO Secretary Mary Kirby were selected as 2006-07 Presidential Scholar recipients at CSU, Northridge. This prestigious honor comes with a \$5000 scholarship and was awarded to only 8 undergraduate students with a 3.50 GPA. Each student will complete a specially designed project in the next 12 months. Mary Kirby is writing a book based on 23 interviews with adults age 50+ who volunteer with recreation and natural environment organizations in the Los Angeles area. Maneshka Perera is conducting research studying changes in the health and function of people aging with spinal cord injury (SCI). These high-achieving students reflect the excellence in scholarship that SPO inspires! ~ Submitted by Debra Sheets, RN, Ph.D., Coordinator, Interdisciplinary Gerontology Program Associate Professor debra.sheets@csun.edu 818-677-2344

Delta Eta Chapter, California State University at Long Beach, Long Beach, CA



We welcome our new Delta Eta Chapter President for 2006-2007, Ellen Yan! We are excited as we plan for our 3rd Intergenerational Reading Day, participation in the 2006 Alzheimer's Association Memory Walk, organizing a Career Panel, and on-going fundraising for local senior centers. The photos are from our last Intergenerational Reading Day, where seniors from the community read to the children in the Family and Consumer Sciences Child Care Center, a fabulous success!

~ Submitted by Dr. Melanie Horn Mallers mhorn@csulb.edu 562-985-7494



Delta Gamma Chapter, University of North Carolina at Greensboro, Greensboro, NC

During our first meeting for the academic year, we elected officers and planned activities. Officers are: Burgin Ross, President; Catharine Sutherland, President-Elect; and Margaret Rakestraw, Secretary/Treasurer. The October meeting speaker is Dorian Fredrickson, Ombudsman for the local Area Agency on Aging, followed by a February meeting at the local Abbotswood Retirement Community hosted by Executive Director Greg Woodward. Following the success of a jointly sponsored Gerontology Program-SPO AARP Driving School, the chapter plans a spring driving school. Ten new members were inducted in the spring of 2006 and we look forward to new nominations. We also welcome Dr. Neal E. Cutler to the UNCG Gerontology Program and are excited to have him as a new member. ~ Submitted by Burgin Ross burginross@triad.rr.com 336-760-9947

Delta Kappa Chapter, West Virginia University, Morgantown, WV

Delta Kappa Chapter's faculty advisor, R. Turner Goins, along with J.A. Krout of the Ithaca College Gamma Nu Chapter, recently published a new book, *Service Delivery to Rural Older Adults: Research, Policy, and Practice*. New York: Springer (2006). ~ Submitted by R. Turner Goins, Ph.D., Associate Professor, West Virginia University Health Sciences Center rgoins@hsc.wvu.edu 304-293-3129

Delta Omega Chapter, UNC Wilmington, Wilmington, NC

Delta Omega Chapter held its first initiation ceremony April 11, 2006. Our chapter's founding members proudly include four undergraduates, two graduates, and two faculty members. Officers are President Katherine Gaurino, undergraduate nursing major, Treasurer Lauren Walser, undergraduate business major, Secretary Whitney Posey, undergraduate accounting major, and Chapter Advisor Elizabeth Fugate-Whitlock, Lecturer of Gerontology in the Department of Health & Applied Human Sciences.



The chapter participated in the UNC-W 2006 *Sound Mind in a Sound Body* health fair with an information booth about nutrition and aging. Our *Let's Make a Meal* interactive table offered information and activities about the newly designed Food Pyramid, proper portion size, and nutrition needs related to aging.

Upcoming senior in the UNC-W School of Nursing, Katherine A. Guarino, received a full-tuition scholarship from the Hilda W. Fredericks Scholars Program. The scholarship is provided by donors who support quality nursing education and excellence in nursing, and is awarded to a senior student with demonstrated achievements in academia and community. Guarino, President of the Delta Omega Chapter, is currently employed in Geriatric nursing and will pursue this specialty upon graduation in May 2007. ~ Submitted by Elizabeth Fugate-Whitlock, Chapter Advisor and Managing Editor of Health Care for Women International. whitlocke@uncw.edu 910-962-7816

Epsilon Chapter, Virginia Commonwealth University, Medical College of Virginia, Richmond, VA

In 2005-2006 we enjoyed several social events -- our Spring Career Fair, "Medicare, Part D: An Alphabet Soup", "Everything about Resumes & Job Hunting" and our annual spring symposium with the VCU School of Social Work. New chapter officers are President Beverly Morgan, Vice-President Sarah Coble, Secretary Anne Fletcher, and Treasurer Bert Waters. E. Ayn Welleford, Ph.D., Gerontology Department Chairperson, is our faculty advisor. Our summer social with students, alumni and faculty facilitated successful fellowship to kick-off SPO 2006-2007 events. A new goal is participation in a Richmond area charity 5K walk/run each month. Four down with five more planned! Also, we will participate in the Alzheimer's Memory Walkathon and develop a SPO program with our department's Elder Friends' Project.

As a fun-and-fundraiser, we also are soliciting and compiling recipes for a cookbook. The theme is *recipes that have been handed down from the elders in our lives*. You may submit recipes online at typensave.com. Click Login then enter your name as you'd like it to appear in the cookbook. The group login is **spo** and the password is **cc7kg**. You'll arrive at a page to submit your recipe. In the "recipe notes" section, please write a short note about the person who handed down the recipe. If you prefer, submit your recipe on a paper form available from Sarah Coble at coblesj@vcu.edu. Recipes must be received by November 1st, 2006. Cookbooks will be available for purchase later in the fall or winter; a great Christmas gift idea! Thank you in advance for making our VCU SPO cookbook a success! ~ Submitted by Katherine A Young, Department of Gerontology, Virginia Commonwealth University youngka@vcu.edu 804-828-1565 and Beverly Morgan beverly.morgan@co.dmhmrzas.virginia.gov 804-371-0360

Epsilon Alpha Chapter at Winston-Salem State University, Winston-Salem, NC



Winston-Salem State University chartered a new chapter and installed five members on April 27th. New members are Alicia Lomack, Tenesha Moore, Sonya Parson, Marylouise Stott, and Ernestine Thompson. Ms. Lomack and Ms. Parson are May 2006 graduates receiving a BA in Gerontology. Ms. Thompson is a 2004 graduate with a BA in Gerontology and employed as a Mental Health Specialist for older adults. Ms. Moore and Ms. Stott are rising seniors in the Gerontology Program.



New officers are: President Alicia Lomack, Secretary Tenesha Moore, and Treasurer Sonya Parson. Dr. Taylor-Jones is Gerontology Program Coordinator and a member of Sigma Phi Omega. Photographs illustrate our meaningful ceremony, "*The Beginning*", in which Dr. Cecile Yancu presents each SPO Chapter inductee with a lovely white rose. ~ Submitted by Dr. Althea Taylor-Jones, Ph.D. taylorjones@wssu.edu 336-750-3231

Eta Chapter, University of Illinois-Springfield, Springfield, IL

The Eta chapter's annual banquet meeting is October 27th where the following eight individuals will be inducted: Betsy Creamer, Carol Myers, John Allen, Ruth Bixby, Lisa Mitschelen, Jill Centko, Constance Baker, and Kate Murphy. Dr. Judy Everson, Professor Emeritus of English will be the guest speaker, reading literary passages that are symbolic of the aging process. This December, we will attend the opening of the new geriatric mental health unit at St. John's Hospital with guest speaker Dr. Thomas Perls from the New England Centenarian Project. ~ Submitted by: Dr. Carolyn Peck, Eta Chapter Advisor cpeck2@uis.edu 217-206-7577

Kappa Delta Chapter, University of Arkansas, Fayetteville, AK

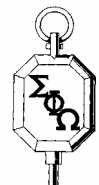
The Kappa Delta Chapter reflects a broad diversity of departmental membership this year, with eight faculty participating and 10 student members from 10 different departments within our University. The year's Chapter president is Tiffany Miller. ~ Submitted by Tiffany B. Miller tbmille@uark.edu 417-499-5622

Theta Chapter, University of Florida, Gainesville, Florida

The Theta Chapter begins our new academic year with President Katharine Sali, Vice President Crystal Allen, and Treasurer Nina Vaghaiwalla, ready to envision new ideas and ways to help the aging population. We are in the process of planning service projects involving local nursing homes. Our traditional goal has been to bring holiday events to area nursing homes. We hope to bring engaging activities and great food to many facilities during all of the major holidays of the year. As the new President, I am excited to recruit many new members. We hope to spread the word about gerontology throughout campus. It should be a great year! ~ Submitted by Katharine Sali katiesal@ufl.edu 239-671-9913

Your Chapter, Your News!

Your chapter news, pictures, and ideas are invited for each SPO newsletter. Please send articles to the Managing Editor, at acstring@uncg.edu and include your chapter name, college or university, city, state, submitter's name, email, and phone. Deadlines are September 1, December 1, & April 1.



SPO also welcomes paid advertisements! Visit <http://www.aghe.org/site/aghewebsite/section.php?id=8245> to submit ads for upcoming SPO newsletters. As further enticement, chapters in good standing may receive 50% off of one (1) advertisement in the 2006-2007 academic year! Whether sharing free news or paying for a special ad, your SPO newsletter volunteers look forward to sharing your Chapter news!



Career Reflections



We encourage SPO members to reflect on their careers,
introducing students to a myriad of opportunities!

This issue features reflections of George Fisher, Ph.D.

A Life Episode

In the mid-1980s I was teaching college gerontology classes such as: "Death and Dying" and "Caring for the Caregiver" at Nazareth College and Western Michigan University in Kalamazoo, MI. Yet I rarely envisioned that someday I would be "wearing the shoes of the caregiver." I never considered that my loved one would lose her mental faculties and I would be the one to shepherd her through her dying process.

In the 1980s, my wife completed her masters program and all but one course in a doctoral program, when she unexpectedly announced she was leaving her program. No convincing would make her change her decision – it was final. In hindsight, I now feel she realized she was in the early stages of Alzheimer's. Always an outgoing, alert, vibrant, meticulous, and gracious woman with an excellent memory and an unending enthusiasm for life, as her mind deteriorated these qualities left also. She became increasingly argumentative, agitated and apathetic. Occasionally she was her old vibrant self yet less and less so over time. Examined and tested again and again, the diagnosis was consistent – Alzheimer's. Eventually, we moved to a CCRC where I knew appropriate care would be available. She passed before me and left a ninety-one year old widower whose future plans were completely in disarray.

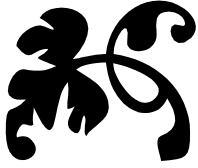
For over sixty years I was part of a couple. Suddenly alone, I wondered where to go from here. How to pick up the pieces and start anew? I considered moving to a college town and again becoming a student. I needed a reason to get up in the morning, to keep my mind agile and active. A friend came to my rescue, suggesting a number of research projects that would profit from my background and skills. This is what I needed. I could remain near friends and continue to contribute to society, with good reason to arise each new day.

I share my story with you because lessons learned at 91 may help you achieve Sigma Phi Omega's motto of "Excellence in gerontology" in your roles as student, teacher and as an individual. Here they are:

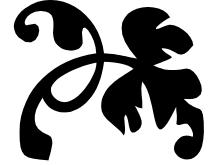
- All of us are susceptible to severe and abrupt health changes over which we have only limited control. It is incumbent on all of us to "plan for the worst and hope for the best".
- In times of need, it helps to know the fundamentals of caregiving, including the caregiver taking care of him/herself, mentally and physically. Make arrangements for respite care. Caregiving is no easy task.
- Take time to clearly think through your decisions. Talk ideas over with your family and friends. Don't be afraid to ask for advice and to listen. Remember, you are not omnipotent.
- Soon after crises pass you ascertain your genuine friends and learn to cherish them. They will be your lifesavers, even when you are 91.
- Finally, don't be afraid to take chances. I did and am pleased that even now at age 91, I am contributing to a growing gerontology program.
- One last insight. Regardless of age, always be willing to accept new challenges. They enrich your life and the lives of those around you!

Submitted by George Fisher, Ph.D., 2300 Portage St. Apt. 221, Kalamazoo, MI 49001. 269-553-4963.

The George and Beatrice Goldman Fisher Gerontology Prize at UNCG grants two annual awards, \$1000 for the best UNCG dissertation and \$500 for the best UNCG masters thesis or project for work which "best advances improvement in the quality of life of the elderly."



Thank You!



Sigma Phi Omega thanks the following members for their recent generous financial contributions to the organization:

Linda M. Breyspraak
Victoria Burden
Meldrena K. Chapin
Jeffrey A. Chesky
Joseph Cimini
Kathleen B. Curry
Carl Dyer
Elizabeth Ann Flournoy
Nicol Frusteri
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Bette Wigand
Carole A. Wilson
Barbara Winard
Robert P. Wollert

Sigma Phi Omega *President's Award*

The SPO President's Award was initiated in 2005 to recognize outstanding SPO student presentation submissions at the annual AGHE meeting. The SPO President's Award is funded solely by donations from SPO members and other interested parties.

We would like for the SPO President's Award to be offered for years to come and appreciate your generous donation toward recognizing outstanding, 'up-and-coming' students in gerontology. We need your support!

We recommend a \$25 donation in recognition of SPO's 25th anniversary, but gladly accept any amount. To contribute to this worthwhile cause, mail your check made *payable to* Sigma Phi Omega to: Sigma Phi Omega, 1030 15th Street NW, Suite 240, Washington, DC 20005.

Sigma Phi Omega thanks the following members for their recent contributions to the President's Award.

James Peacock • *Nancy DiLoreto*

Meet SPO Officers & Staff for 2006-2007

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Bits & Pieces from the Editor:

“A New Vision of Aging: Helping Older Adults Make Healthier Choices,” a March 2006 article by the Center for the Advancement of Health, provides community-based program information that can be used for program development, policy makers, students, professors and the press. This valuable new tool may be downloaded at www.cfah.org/programs/aging.cfm.

ProfessorJournal.com is a free email resource provided by educators for educators, tailored specifically to your discipline. Free weekly emails summarize selected articles from this week's WSJ in 16 business disciplines, with questions for class discussion from *The Wall Street Journal*. Sign up at www.ProfessorJournal.com

Interested in healthy aging and evidence-based programming? Jump to NCOA's Center for Healthy Aging website at www.healthyingprograms.org for access to resources, manuals, toolkits, and website links on healthy aging.

Boomers are the topic at www.genpolicy.com. Explore the most recent topics presented by Harvard University's Generations Policy Initiative. This is a great resource for information on boomers beyond North America and may provoke interesting class discussions.

Are professional meetings stressful because small talk leaves you feeling even smaller? Positive impressions last longer than business cards, so learning the art of networking is important. Consider reading Debra Fine's book *“The Fine Art of Small Talk,”* to gain networking skills. www.DebraFine.com

~ Submitted by Janice Wassel, Ph.D., SPO Newsletter Editor, UNCG Gerontology Program Director and Co-Director of the dual degree M.S. Gerontology/MBA jiwassel@uncg.edu 336-256-1020

Aging is Good Business:

Residential Choices and the
Boomers Coming of Age

Wednesday, April 11, 2007
The University of North Carolina at Greensboro

Innovative choices for residential living styles of “Boomers Coming of Age” are topics for the 2nd annual Aging is Good Business Summit. UNCG invites professionals in gerontology, lifestyle product design, housing, furnishings, interior design, building, architecture, leisure and entertainment, human resources, marketing, financial planning, health and eldercare, city/county planning, and service professionals engaging in the expanding aging marketplace to participate as supporters, exhibitors, advertisers, and attendees at our annual summit. <http://www.uncg.edu/gro/agingisgoodbusiness.html>
(Paid Advertisement)

This newsletter is published as a membership benefit of Sigma Phi Omega (SPO) with a circulation of 1,600. SPO offices are located at 1030 15th Street NW, Suite 240, Washington, DC, 20005. Faculty, faculty advisors and students are encouraged to submit news, meeting reports, club activities or studies underway to the SPO Newsletter Managing Editor Ann Stringfield acstring@uncg.edu by **September 1, December 1, and April 1.**

~ ~ *Coming Attractions* ~ ~

October 5-6, 2006 Nittany Lion Inn, Penn State, PA

"Caring and Exchange Within and Across Generations", Penn State's 14th annual Symposium on Family Issues. Contact: Carolyn Scott at (814)863-6806 or <mailto:css7@psu.edu> or visit <http://www.pop.psu.edu/events/symposium/2006.htm>.

October 15-17, 2006 L'Enfant Plaza Hotel, Washington, DC

The Third National Medicare Congress. For more information, please visit www.MedicareCongress.com.

October 23-24, 2006 Bethesda, MD

"Understanding and Reducing Health Disparities: Contributions from the Behavioral and Social Sciences," a special NIH Conference, will be held October 23-24, 2006, in Bethesda, MD. The conference will focus on three broad areas of action influencing health disparities: policy, prevention and healthcare. Contact: ablesr@mail.nih.gov or sheurtin@mail.nih.gov.

November 11, 2006 Chicago Hilton Hotel, Chicago, Illinois

Pivotal Research in Cardiology in the Elderly (PRICE) RICE-IV: Electrophysiology and Heart Rhythm Disorders in the Elderly: Mechanisms and Management, hosted by Society of Geriatric Cardiology, co-sponsored by Heart Rhythm Society. www.sqcard.org

November 16-20, 2006 Dallas, TX

59th Annual Scientific Meeting of The Gerontological Society of America.
geron@geron.org

December 5-6, 2006 The Renaissance Hotel, Washington, DC

"Choices for Independence: National Leadership Summit", held by the U.S Administration on Aging. www.aoa.gov