The Gerontological Society of America (GSA) 2010 Conference

Corina Oala (left) and Frances Devine (right) were among the students who represented UMASS Boston at the 2010 GSA Conference.

Other UMASS graduate student attendees included: Bruce Haimowitz, Caitlin Coyle, ChaeMan Lee, Deborah Gray, Hannah Lee, Jiyoung Lyu, Kimberly

The 63rd Annual Scientific Meeting of the GSA was held in lively New Orleans, LA, November 18-23, 2010. Scholars from across the world gathered at the oldest (no pun intended!) and largest aging conference in the nation.

The attendees enjoyed meeting highlights such as: symposia, posters, papers, networking, and strolling in the exhibit hall. Many students stopped at the UMB booth (see above) to meet our students and to learn about our programs. The Conference was a great way to support colleagues, network, and learn about current research in diverse subfields of gerontology. Plan to attend next year’s meeting in Boston!
Congratulations to Dr. Bing Chen!

Crowds gathered to honor Dr. Bing Chen at GSA as he was awarded with the Robert W. Kleemeier Award for outstanding research. Most of Dr. Chen’s work has been in the area of older adults’ economic security, with a focus on applying his research and expertise to policy making. Among many other wonderful roles, Dr. Chen is a GSA fellow, Professor Emeritus at UMASS Boston as well as Gerontology Institute fellow, and has throughout the years served as a delegate and consultant to the White House Conference on Aging and the White House Conference on Social Security.

Many UMASS faculty and students, as well as other guests had the honor and pleasure of celebrating Dr. Chen’s accomplishment at a private reception hosted by UMASS Boston on Saturday, November 20th at the Hilton Riverside in New Orleans. Dr. Chen was in great spirits as he worked the room, thoughtfully greeting each of his guests individually.

Dr. Ellen Bruce (photographed on the left with Dr. Chen) introduced Dr. Chen and spoke about Dr. Chen’s countless achievements throughout the years.

Dr. Chen then pleased the crowd with a wonderful speech, reminiscing about his life journey to the present day. Dr. Chen concluded his speech by thanking his many friends for their support. Everyone toasted to a wonderful role model excited to share in this special day along such a great researcher, professor, colleague, and human being.

Congratulations Dr. Chen, you are a true inspiration to us all!
GSA Student Presentations & Awards

Several UMASS Boston Gerontology PhD students presented research at GSA!

Bruce Haimowitz (above) presented his award-winning research, “Multivariate Analysis of Race and Wealth Disparities Among Older Adults”.

Lien Quach (above) presented her work titled “Relationship Between Gait Speed and the Risk of Falls in Community-Dwelling Older Adults: The Mobilize Boston Study”.

ChaeMan Lee (right) and Dr. Beth Dugan (left) presenting their study, titled “Racial and Ethnic Differences in Driving Transitions: Data from the Health and Retirement Study”. Outstanding alumni, Dr. Kelly Fitzgerald (right), was recognized for her leadership role in serving as Chair of the GSA Emerging Scholar and Professional Organization (ESPO).

November 2011 GSA will be meeting in Boston, so be sure to submit your abstract to GSA by March 15th for consideration!
Recent Accomplishments

Awards:

Dr. Yung-Ping (Bing) Chen is the 2010 winner of the Gerontological Society of America’s Robert W. Kleemeier Award for outstanding research. Chen is a fellow in the Gerontology Institute and a professor emeritus. He was the inaugural holder of the Frank J. Manning Eminent Scholar’s Chair in Gerontology from 1988–2009.

Bruce Haimowitz was selected by the department to participate in the Massachusetts Health Policy Student Forum at the state house. The annual forum was created by Brandeis University’s Heller School for Social Policy and Management in 1998, and is intended to provide graduate students in selected fields the opportunity of having “direct access to the workings of state government”. As part of the forum, students meet and discuss pressing issues with legislative and state administrative officials.

Ellen Bruce was recently elected as a member to the National Academy of Social Insurance (NASI). This is a great honor as NASI members are recognized as experts in “Social Security, Medicare and health coverage, workers’ compensation, unemployment insurance, and related social assistance and private employee benefits”. NASI members “have distinguished themselves by improving the quality of research, administration, or policymaking in one or more of these areas.” Members of NASI participate in advisory committees, study panels, conferences as well as related research.

Publications and Reports:


Recent Accomplishments (Continued)

Publications and Reports (cont’d):


**Grants:**

Associate Professor **Edward Alan Miller** (Principal Investigator) received funding from the Commonwealth Fund for a project entitled “Increasing Consumer Involvement in Medicaid Nursing Home Reimbursement.” Funds total $49,995 for the period of November 1, 2010-October 31, 2011.
**Recent Accomplishments (Continued)**

**Presentations and Workshops:**


Recent Accomplishments (Continued)

**Presentations and Workshops (cont’d):**

**Other Accomplishments:**
Dr. **Eddie Miller** was asked to serve as a panel chair for “National Policy Issues and Aging II,” Annual Meeting of the Gerontological Society of America, New Orleans, LA, Nov. 19-23, 2010. Additionally, Dr. Miller was asked to inform the development of pay-for-performance in Washington State’s Medicaid nursing home reimbursement system to help spur quality improvement among the State’s nursing facilities.

**Eilon Caspi**, recent alumnus, is temporarily working as a consultant in a special care unit for elders with memory loss in Tzahalon Geriatric center, Jaffa, Israel. The unit is to be dedicated to elders in the earlier stages of Alzheimer’s disease or dementia. Eilon is assisting the interdisciplinary team with the professional aspect of the reopening process of the renovated unit. Specifically, Eilon & the team have developed and started to deliver a 12-hour, comprehensive orientation training curriculum for the direct care staff. They have also worked on broadening the scope and strengthening the quality of the activity programming offered to the residents, and are in the process of developing a comprehensive admission and discharge criteria for the unit in hopes that the composition of residents in the unit will remain relatively homogenous.

**Helen Miltiades**, PhD alumnae, was recently promoted to Associate Professor and also had a sabbatical approved to study pet and human relationships.

This past fall, graduate **Laney Bruner-Canhoto**, accepted a position as the Director of Performance Improvement for Disability and Community Services at the University of Massachusetts Medical School. Laney is also continuing her appointment as Assistant Professor, Family Medicine and Community Health, at UMass Medical School.

**Nancy Cronin**, a June 2010 graduate of the Gerontology MAS program is happy to inform us that on Feb. 7, 2011 she will be starting a new job in the field of Aging Services. Nancy will be working for the town of New Milford, CT at the Senior Center as a Senior Services Counselor. There, she will provide information to seniors and their families regarding the various programs and services available in the community, assist them with the application process for programs and services, as well as advocate for them when needed services aren't being provided.

**Suzanne Herzberg**, PhD alumnae, is starting a business called Aging Care Transitions and will be accepting clients as of May 1, 2011. Suzanne will be working with older adults and their families to find the most appropriate facilities for their short-term rehab, long-term care, or assisted living needs. At this time, Suzanne is focusing on the Providence area, but hopes to expand in the future.
The Gerontology Institute Colloquium Speaker Series welcomed Dr. Derek M. Isaacowitz on November 15th, 2010. Dr. Isaacowitz is an Associate Professor of Psychology and of the Volen National Center for Complex Systems at Brandeis University. His presentation was titled: “How Positive Are Older Adults?” I had the pleasure of interviewing Dr. Isaacowitz in order to get better acquainted with his background, current work, and research interests.

**Corina Oala:** How is it that you became interested in gerontology as well as other related research interests?

**Dr. Isaacowitz:** It can all be attributed to my undergraduate adviser, Dr. Laura Carstensen -- she introduced me to the study of aging and immersed me in questions related to emotion and aging; I am still fascinated by those questions today!

**CO:** What can you share with us about your previous work?

**Dr. I.:** As you saw in my talk, my overarching interest is in understanding the mechanisms that allow older adults to (sometimes) successfully regulate how they feel despite changes in their physical and cognitive functioning, not to mention in other areas of their lives as well.

**CO:** What advice do you have for today’s gerontology graduate students? Is there anything you wish someone had told you while you were in graduate school?

**Dr. I.:** My best advice is to keep in mind that the older adult brings with them to old age many decades of experience living, managing their environment, and regulating how they feel -- so any gerontologist needs to integrate the lifespan context into any research they do on older adults.

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**Editorials**

We welcome contributions to GeroNews and encourage you to submit opinion pieces and letters to the editor in one of the following ways:

1.) Leave typed items in the GeroNews mailbox located in the Gerontology Institute mailbox on the 3rd floor of Wheatley. Please type contributions; handwritten letters will not be accepted.

2.) Opinion pieces and letters may be submitted by email to: Corina.Oala001@umb.edu

*All submissions may be edited for clarity, style, size, and content.*
On December 6th, 2010 Dr. Zhanlian Feng came to campus for the Gerontology Institute Colloquium Speaker Series. Dr. Feng is an Assistant Professor of Community Health Center for Gerontology and Health Care Research at the Warren Alpert Medical School at Brown University. His presentation was titled: “The Emergence of Institutional Care in China”. I had the wonderful opportunity to interview Dr. Feng after his presentation to find out a bit more about his background, involvement, and interest in gerontology.

**Corina Oala:** How did you get involved in the field of gerontology?

**Dr. Feng:** I attended Graduate School for Sociology with a focus in Demography. I was interested in general aging issues and my thesis was completely related to older adults. I am intrigued by how people are cared for in this culture and also analyzing how it compares and applies to my own country, China.

**CO:** What more can you tell us about the work that you do?

**Dr. F:** Most of my research is around Long-Term Care (LTC). Around the time I graduated, I began my career by working as research staff for the Center of Gerontology at Brown. I then became familiar with US data on LTC issues and started understanding the history and evolution of LTC and nursing homes in the US including racial disparities in care and nursing home cultures. I applied for a grant 2 years ago and have been working on LTC issues in the US and China and applying what is learned in the US to China.

**CO:** Do you have any advice for current graduate students?

**Dr. F.:** If I had to start all over again, I would consider your program and pursue a doctorate in Gerontology. As a graduate student it’s important to learn the basics about how to write a publishable journal article and effectively conduct a literature review. Also, if possible, take the opportunity to work on projects with your professors and lead a paper, or more, before graduating.
Interesting Resources

If you find the time for outside reading and learning, here are a couple of different resources for you to enjoy - recommended by our faculty and guest speakers!

For those of you interested in grant writing, a highly praised and well received book which can help develop, improve, or perfect your proposal writing skills is “Getting Funded: The Complete Guide to Writing Grant Proposals” (4th Edition) authored by Hall & Howlett (2003). Highlights of the book include idea development, selection of funding sources, step-by-step proposal construction, proposal presentation, as well as preparation strategies beneficial for securing future funding.

Readers interested in aging among Asian Americans may be interested in “Asian American elders in the twenty-first century: Key indicators of well-being” by Mui & Shibusawa (2008). This book covers a wide variety of topics from family to health to culture and uses two data sets: the US Census as well as the special survey of older Asians in NYC to address the above mentioned issues.

Activities and Announcements

~ Upcoming Activities ~

The next *Sigma Phi Omega Induction Ceremony* will be held on
Monday, **April 25th, 2011** from **12-3PM**.
Michael Dukakis will be the guest speaker.

~ Upcoming Conferences ~

**AGHE's Annual Meeting**
AGHE's 37th Annual Meeting and Educational Leadership Conference
“Living the Old Age We Imagine: Higher Education in an Aging Society”
Hilton Hotel, Cincinnati Netherland Plaza
Cincinnati, Ohio
March 17-20, 2011

**American Society on Aging**
Annual Conference of the American Society on Aging
Hilton Hotel, San Francisco Union Square
April 26-30, 2011
San Francisco, CA

**Massachusetts Gerontology Association**
Heller School for Social Policy & Management @ Brandeis University
May 5, 2011
Waltham, MA

**Attention Honor Society Members!**
The time has come to renew your SPO memberships.
To do so, please visit:
or please email Corina.Oala001@umb.edu if you would prefer a paper renewal form.
## Academic Calendar

### Spring Semester 2011
- **January 24**: Classes Begin
- **January 31**: Add/Drop Ends
- **February 21**: Presidents Day (Holiday)
- **March 13-20**: Spring Break
- **March 21**: Classes Resume
- **March 21**: Mid Semester
- **April 4**: Fall '11 Registration Begins
- **April 7**: Pass/Fail Deadline
- **April 7**: Course Withdraw Deadline
- **April 18**: Patriots Day (Holiday)
- **May 11**: Classes End
- **May 12 - 15**: Study Period
- **May 16 - 20**: Final Exam Period
- **May 30**: Memorial Day (Holiday)
- **June 3**: Commencement

### Summer Session 2011
- **May 31–July 13**: Summer Session #1
- **June 17**: Bunker Hill Day (Holiday)
- **July 4**: Independence Day (Holiday)
- **July 18—August 25**: Summer Session #2