

**U** CENTER ON AGING  
THE UNIVERSITY OF UTAH



The Center on Aging unites aging-related research, education, and clinical programs at the University of Utah. By linking its faculty and programs, the Center synergizes the growth and progress of interdisciplinary research to help people lead longer and more fulfilling lives, and supports the development of multidisciplinary clinical and training programs.

## **OVERVIEW**

### **History**

Beginning with its origination in 1972, the Center on Aging has provided educational and research programs in gerontology at the University of Utah. Its interdisciplinary gerontology education programs lead to undergraduate and graduate certificates in gerontology as well as a master's degree in Gerontology. In June 2004 its name was changed from the Gerontology Center to reflect a desire to become more comprehensive and expand the scope of its service and research activities. In 2005, the Center's organizational structure was changed to become a free-standing center to support its comprehensive and interdisciplinary institutional scope.

### **Membership**

There are more than 100 University of Utah faculty members in the Center who represent ten of its schools and colleges. Student and affiliated faculty memberships are also available. Please visit the Center's Web site for information on how to become a member.

### **Pilot Grant Program**

The Center sponsors an annual pilot grant program to promote the development of aging research at the University of Utah. The goal of this program is to encourage the development of new investigators, attract established investigators to aging research, and stimulate interdisciplinary research collaborations ultimately leading to new externally funded research.

### **Annual Research Retreat**

The Center inaugurated its now annual research retreat in 2007. Retreat activities include a welcome reception and poster session for Center faculty and trainees, oral presentations from the currently funded pilot grant recipients, and a keynote address from a prominent gerontologist. Recent keynote speakers have included Robert Kane, MD and Rosalie Kane, PhD; University of Minnesota; Jeffery Halter, MD; University of Michigan; John Wilmoth, PhD; University of California-Berkley; Timothy Smeeding, PhD; University of Wisconsin; Steven R. Counsell, MD; Indiana University; and Robyn L. Golden, MA; Rush University.

### **Support for Clinical Aging Research**

In partnership with the Utah Population Database, the Center on Aging Research Participant Registry provides a mechanism to link people in the community interested in participating in research studies to aging-related studies being conducted by the Center's faculty.

## **COMMUNITY & CLINICAL PROGRAMS**

### **Utah Commission on Aging**

Established in 2005, the Utah Commission on Aging:

- Increases understanding of Utah's older adults and their need for services and support.
- Studies and reports on how changing demographics may impact Utah's private sector, individuals and families, and state and local government.
- Identifies and recommends specific policies, procedures, and programs to address the state's changing demographics.
- Coordinates the functions of public and private entities serving Utah's older adults.



### **Utah Aging & Disability Resource Connection**

Serves Utahns with a current or projected future need for long-term care by providing information and referral options, counseling and assistance, an entry point to state and federal programs, and assistance with care transitions.



**University of Utah Health Sciences Center Geriatric Clinic**

Provides comprehensive geriatric assessment and consults within the University of Utah Health Care System. Provides training for medical students, Internal Medicine housestaff, and fellows in Geriatric Medicine.

**Caring Connections**

A hope and comfort in grief program, sponsored by the College of Nursing, offers a variety of community programs to meet the grief and bereavement needs of people experiencing loss and grief.

**Cognitive Disorders Clinic**

A multidisciplinary clinic in the Department of Neurology providing definitive diagnosis and comprehensive management of dementing diseases. The clinic offers a mini-fellowship for community physicians and training for housestaff and health professions trainees.

**Hospital Elder Life Program**

Designed to decrease the development of delirium (acute confusion), the program utilizes volunteers to provide assistance in orienting, therapeutic activities, exercising, meal assistance, and empathetic support and companionship for older hospitalized patients coping with acute illness.



*and adaptability of the bristlecone pine tree...*

## AFFILIATED RESEARCH PROGRAMS



### **Veterans Administration Salt Lake City Geriatric Research, Education, and Clinical Center**

- Basic Biomedical – Investigates the fundamental changes that lead to vascular aging, impaired immunity, depressions in the physiologic status of important organ systems, and decline in brain function.
- Applied Clinical – Evaluates exercise interventions' effect on vascular blood flow and hypertension.
- Health Services – Uses information technology to improve the delivery of veteran health care.

### **Veterans Administration Informatics, Decision Enhancement & Surveillance Center**

Builds a preeminent community of researchers who advance knowledge and improve clinical care through the development, implementation, and evaluation of computerized tools and interventions that integrate surveillance and decision support.



*...depicted in our logo embodies the Center's*

### **Veterans Rural Health Resource Center – Western Region**

A field office for the VHA Office of Rural Health located in Salt Lake City, Utah. Its focus is to help rural Veterans obtain improved access to health-care and healthcare services by performing pilot studies, doing analysis and policy reviews, and facilitating collaborations between the VA, other federal / state agencies and rural communities.

### **The Brain Institute**

With more than 100 faculty investigators in neuroscience-related disciplines, the University of Utah has great existing depth in neuroscience research and clinical care. Leveraging these resources and the University's renowned strengths in genetics, computer science, engineering, and imaging they have become a leader in brain research.

### **Center for Alzheimer's Care, Imaging, and Research**

Research focuses on PET imaging, advanced image analysis, neuropsychology, and clinical drug trials and translating research advances into routine clinical care. The Center is involved in the Alzheimer's Disease Cooperative Study, and is an analysis site for the Alzheimer's Disease Neuroimaging Initiative.

### **Emma Eccles Jones Nursing Research Center**

Supports the research of gerontology and nursing faculty and student investigators. The Center fosters aging research in the areas of end-of-life care, spousal bereavement, cancer symptom management, health communication, imbalance, falls, and health services research.

### **College of Health Skeletal Muscle Exercise Research Facility**

Focused on muscle, movement, and human performance; specifically how muscles adapt and how these changes help or hinder human function in daily life and across the lifespan, following injury or disease, and in sport.

### **College of Social Work W.D. Goodwill Initiatives on Aging**

Supports research covering a broad spectrum of social issues including mental health and aging, health care access, and home and community based services for older adults.



## EDUCATION & TRAINING PROGRAMS

### **Gerontology Interdisciplinary Program**

Administers educational offerings leading to the university-conferred undergraduate and graduate certificates or Master's degree in Gerontology. Certificate programs are fully available online. Programs are open to students from all disciplines, professions, and specialties.

### **Geriatric Medicine Fellowship Training Program**

Twelve-month ACGME accredited clinical fellowship in Geriatric Medicine.

### **VA Special Fellowship Program in Advanced Geriatrics**

Research training support for physician and non-physician trainees who have completed clinical geriatrics training in their specialty.

### **John A. Hartford Center of Geriatric Nursing Excellence**

Provides innovative programs to increase the number of nursing faculty prepared to teach geriatric nursing in basic, advanced practice, and nursing research educational programs.

### **College of Nursing Geriatric Nurse Leader Program**

Recruits, nurtures, and encourages nurses to choose to work or stay in geriatric health care settings and assume leadership roles, as well as enhance nursing knowledge and skills for the care of elderly adults. It offers a transcripted emphasis within the RN-BS program and a certificate option at the baccalaureate and associate degree levels.

### **College of Social Work – Social Work in Aging Emphasis**

Master's students use elective course choices and practica to deepen their knowledge and skills in preparation for a career focused on work with older persons and their families.

### **Neighbors Helping Neighbors**

Designed to link older people in need with formal aging services and informal resources within the community by creating partnerships with various community members. The program is a practicum site for social work students and nursing students completing community nursing rotations.



## **Center on Aging Executive Director**

*Mark Supiano, MD*

Professor of Internal Medicine, School of Medicine

## **Center on Aging Steering Committee**

*Norman Foster, MD*

Professor of Neurology, School of Medicine

*Robert Hill, PhD*

Professor of Educational Psychology, College of Education

*Steven Hunt, PhD*

Professor of Internal Medicine, School of Medicine

*Paul LaStayo, PhD*

Associate Professor of Physical Therapy, College of Health

*Marilyn Luptak, PhD, MSW*

Assistant Professor, College of Social Work

*Lynda Oderda, PharmD*

Assistant Professor of Pharmacotherapy, College of Pharmacy

*Ginette Pepper, PhD, RN*

Associate Dean for Research and PhD Program, Professor, College of Nursing

*Ken Smith, PhD*

Professor of Family & Consumer Studies, College of Social and Behavioral Science; Director, Utah Population Database

*Scott Wright, PhD*

Associate Professor, College of Nursing

## **Support the Center:**

Gifts to help sustain Center on Aging programs may be made to  
[www.tiny.utah.edu/supportCoA](http://www.tiny.utah.edu/supportCoA)

## **Contact the Center:**

[www.aging.utah.edu](http://www.aging.utah.edu)

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