

CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY, LONG BEACH

GERONTOLOGY

www.csulb.edu/gerontology



Elizabeth Arciniega, Vanessa Resendez (and mom!), Kathy Flachmeier, Veronica Yates

WELCOME TO OUR FALL 2023 NEWSLETTER

As we reflect upon a busy and successful Fall semester, we have so much to celebrate! Our students continue to make this world a better place for older adults and their families through their studies, culminating projects, internships, service learning and employment. Our faculty work hard to provide our students with everything they need to go out into the



In photo: Jen Moore, Marian Last, Premita Pradhan, Maria Carpiac, Iveris Martinez - Celebrating Premita receiving Marian Last Endowed Scholarship in Gerontology



world as leaders in gerontology and are sometimes fortunate enough to win awards for their work! Our alumni, a focus of this edition of our newsletter, wow us on a continual basis and give back to their CSULB Gerontology family in so many ways. Our community partners are invaluable to our success and we celebrate ALL of you. Enjoy this newsletter!

Mary Marshall, Justin Luuga, Maria Carpiac, Amanda Paiz, Miriam Watts

GERN PROGRAM ALUMNI

In this edition of the Gerontology Program newsletter, you may notice that we are dedicating a lot of space to our alumni. We are proud to celebrate the folks that graduated from our program and have gone on to make a mark in the world. We appreciate their willingness to give back to the program by volunteering as guest speakers, serving on thesis and project committees, mentoring current and prospective students, donating to our Gerontology Scholarship Build Fund, and sending us job opportunity and event announcements. Thank you for being an integral part of the CSULB Gerontology Family!!

JOY MILLER, MSG

My name is Patrick, and I am a student in the Master of Science in Gerontology program at CSULB. We had a wonderful and productive evening this past week in the GERN 500 Professional Gerontology course. Our Director, Dr. Maria Carpiac, invited professionals and alum of the CSULB MSG program for an event called speed-mentoring and it was quite a success. I had the honor to have Joy Miller as my one on one interview. Joy works for the first college district I enrolled in and am a volunteer employee for the North Orange County Community College District (NOCCCD). Joy works in education with older adults in different stages of dementia. As this is a community I will be completing an internship with it is a great opportunity for me to collaborate with her in the future. Joy was patient with me as I am somewhat/am an extrovert and tend to get off the subject when I am curious about things I had not planned on asking at first. I like to go with the flow. Joy was enthusiastic about what I want to achieve and emailed me after the meeting to share more ideas for my role as a future advocate for policy changes. I hope to stay in touch with Joy Miller in the future and the other Mentors that also gave of themselves to pass on their wisdom and life experience not just in Gerontology, but life (written by Patrick Hale)



Joy Miller and Patrick Hale

EMILY MCNABB, MSG

Emily is a recent graduate from the MSG program at California State University of Long Beach after obtaining her B.A. in Adaptive PE. I had the pleasure of interviewing her today. She is currently working as a P.E. Teacher with her love with both young children and older adults. Her career goals right now are to either stay working with younger children, become a geriatric social worker, or working as a funeral director. She finds that working with children right now seems suitable because kids require so much energy, but in later life she sees herself working directly with older adults to get them connected to a variety of resources. For now, she is still trying to find her particular niche, but she loves what she is doing and has a strong passion for helping others.

I asked Emily what were some things that she had learned throughout her journey in the MSG program or what was some advice that she would give to anyone wanting to go into this field. She stated that people should follow their dreams. Keep going even if people tell you otherwise. If you have a passion for working with older adults, then go for it! She went on to say that failure should not define us. It is a way for us to grow and learn as people to figure out what we want to do. If we fail, we either try again or find out that it was a good experience for us, but it might not be what makes us happy in the long-term. Life is like trial and error; we are given the opportunity to experiment! She says all these things with passion and much vigor in her eyes. I can tell she is very eager to see what life has in store for her in the years to come.

I have a lot to learn from Emily. After speaking to her, I can tell that she is very warm and kind-hearted. She is very sweet and has a beautiful smile. I also felt very connected to her because we are relatively closer in age. I appreciated her kind words of encouragement especially when I was in the midst of thinking about my own plans for the future. It was a great pleasure speaking to Emily and I hope I am able to see her again in the future.

Emily McNabb and Cindy Nguyen I wish Emily all the best of luck (written by Cindy Nguyen)

GERN PROGRAM ALUMNI

NICOLE MYATT, MSG

This is Nicole Myatt. Nicole was part of the Masters program here at Long Beach earning her MSG. Her inspiration for going into gerontology was her grandma. Nicole now serves as a long-term care ombudsman covering 200 facilities with different levels of care. An ombudsman opens cases for elder abuse and talks to facilities on the patient's behalf. Patients, families, or workers of facilities are able to file a report for elder abuse and the ombudsman would then get involved. Nicole is in the process of transitioning to the management side of her work but is currently working hands on visiting each facility. Working as a long-term care ombudsman, Nicole is able to have a great work life balance, working hard on the weekdays and getting to enjoy time with her two kids on the weekends. Before becoming an ombudsman, Nicole worked as a dietitian in a skilled nursing facility (written by Morgan Houston-Shepherd)



Morgan Houston-Shepherd and Nicole Myatt

CHRISTINE MCFADIN, MSG

I had the pleasure of interviewing Christine (Weber) McFadin. Christine works for the State of Washington. In her current position, she is in a supervisory role in a department that matches services to older adults who need support living in the community. She generously shared her gerontology journey with me. Christine has worked in a variety of areas in the field, including memory care. She discovered her love for working with older adults while working at a senior center after she finished college. After a while, she decided that she should get a Master's in Gerontology. At the time, there were not very many Gerontology programs in the US. She decided on CSULB, then packed up her VW Golf and drove across the country to pursue her dream of working with older adults.

I enjoyed hearing about her thesis. She did a meta-analysis on the effects of exercise on people with cognitive decline. This was very interesting to me because I am looking at how exercise can be used as part of a holistic program to treat chronic pain. We also discussed the need for more gerontology education programs at all levels. There are not currently many options in Washington. The interview helped me to identify some areas in the field that need more attention.

-written by Natasha Alexsa Garcia

GERN PROGRAM ALUMNI

PREETI JAGADALE, MSG

I got the opportunity to interview Preeti Jagadale who is a physical therapist working with older adults. The first question I asked Preeti was, was gerontology always something you wanted to do? Preeti went on to explain that she is an only child and her mom is a single parent so she knew from a young age that in the future she was going to take on the role of her mothers caregiver, she also knew that she wanted to work with older adults, which in the future would benefit her when it was time to take care of her mom. Preeti got her bachelors in physical therapy at a school in India, since she wanted to work with seniors she looked for jobs all over ranging from India to Canada. She worked in outpatient hospitals but did not enjoy it as much as she enjoyed long term patient care centers.

Preeti now works at a skilled nursing facility in Massachusetts called Life Care Centers of America. Getting this job was not easy because she was educated in India it was challenging when it came to the process of the licensing exam and there were many work visa issues. Although she faced a lot of challenge Preeti feels that what she does now is so rewarding and worth all the challenges she went through. On a typical day Preeti sees 10-13 patients unless that have evaluations which in that case she would see less because the evaluations take longer. Preeti gets a lot of cases but what she sees the most are fall related cases, surgical cases like knee or hip replacements, parkinsons patients, and stroke or cardiac patients. I think it was really cool to get the opportunity to talk to Preeti and learn about all her struggles and know how rewarding it is now and I am grateful that I got to hear her story (written by Morgan Houston-Shepherd)



Preeti and her mother visiting with Dr. Carpiac and Dr. Barbara White

GERN PROGRAM ALUMNI

TINA ROTH, MSG

My interview was with Tina Roth, MHA, MSG. Tina is the Manager, of Transitions of Care for Providence Medical Foundation, St. Joseph & St. Jude. After the initial introductions, we conducted a talk like two friends and not so much that of an 'interview.' The similarities of taking hardships and changes in the types of categories we worked in have guided both of us. The main difference is Tina knew she was destined to work with older individuals. She started working in a skilled nursing internship at a young age. There was a familial relationship that guided her to choose her own path in life. I understand many life situations place us where we truly belong. My self-induced issues led me astray off and on for years before I realized where I belonged. Although her journey started at a young age she did not comprehend that she would end up more on the administrative end.

During the early stages, she learned about certification and pursued that while gaining more knowledge and then decided to pursue the MSG. Although she stated it is not what she uses for the profession today, it was also a necessity to get into the front door at many places. Before all of this though she earned her undergraduate in Psychology, which was not where she wanted to go, but was grateful as it led her to the full journey she continues on today. There have been some bumps in the road due to medical issues and I will leave it at that.

After working in administration-type positions Tina decided to go back to school to achieve the MHA. Although she had a very tough professor at one time her compassion yielded a great honor. After going through a tough period, the "tough guy" professor reached out and asked her to be the keynote speaker at Commencement for Colorado State University, Global. She commented how nervous she was because it was after losing her hair and just growing back (I kind of let the cat out of the bag). I could write more about our conversation but most of it became personal and we will stay in touch. Tina would be interested in speaking with students who are pursuing the administration side of Gerontology possibly after the Spring semester begins as she has much on her plate currently. I believe she would be a great asset as a mentor for Gerontology majors. I am going to leave this post with what she texted to me after we continued our conversation later in the day. This goes to a quote I sent her; "The Way Out is Through! To mean that almost any challenging situation is made better, ultimately, by going through it, rather than around it." Robert Frost

"The one thing I have learned is don't give up. My past was not great, but I own each of the barriers as part of who I am, and I want to push forward and help others." Tina Roth

GERN PROGRAM ALUMNI

SOFIA HODJAT, MSG

I got the opportunity to interview Sofia Hodjat who works at the Healthy Aging Center in the Long Beach Department of Health and Human Services. The first question I asked her was what was a normal day like for her at her job. She responded that a typical day for her is that she would have clients coming in asking for resources and getting connected to programs that support them. She also meets with community partners so they can discuss emerging needs for older adults in order to support them better. Another question I asked her was about what her first job was in the field of gerontology. Her first experience was working at a day camp program for older adults in Parks and Rec. One thing I learned from this interview is that there is not enough support for older adults based on the challenges Sofia has experienced at her job. One example she gave me was that there is not enough staffing in order to help all older adults and there is not enough funding.



Lizette chats with alum Emily McNabb



Sofia (in orange blouse) shares some knowledge!

Another thing I learned from this interview is that there are ways to overcome some of the barriers older adults face such as applying for grants in order to offer transportation for them. Social security offices can also help provide transportation for older adults in order for them to make it to their appointments on time. In addition, it is also possible for one to be part of the solution in terms of helping older adults with transportation by offering them rides to their appointments. Lastly, another thing I learned from Sofia is that Parks and Recs have places where they can work with older adults directly such as organizing field trips for them and providing classes for them (written by Lizette Soto-Hernandez)

GERN PROGRAM ALUMNI

MELISSA DILLON, MSG

I interviewed Melissa Dillon, a Corporate Director of Memory Care at SRG Senior Living. One of the first questions I asked Melissa was how the relationships with her grandparents or other older adults may have influenced her decision to work with that population for a career. Both sets of grandparents had dementia, and loved them all, but it was her experience working at Ruby's Diner and how she really only wanted to help the seniors for her customers that propelled her desire to work with older adults. We talked about how each person who enters into Gerontology has a reason why and this is important to understand. Melissa worked her way up in Assisted Living and started in Activities, then became a Memory Care Coordinator at Sunrise, and she and I had the same position, just at a different location. This was a nice connection to make with her and I also felt more connected to her because we shared the same position at Sunrise. I also asked Melissa if she worked while enrolled at school for her Masters. Just like me, she worked the entire time, which definitely gave her a full plate. I feel the same way, and it was nice to see that others could achieve this challenging endeavor, despite the delicate balancing act of time, work, and school. Melissa also knew that her career goal was to be an Executive Director at an Assisted Living Facility. I asked her if getting an MSG helped her to achieve the goal of being an ED and she said absolutely. This was interesting to learn since it is nice to see that obtaining a Masters does in fact help quite a bit in achieving professional long term goals. And by the way, I asked Melissa what her favorite job has been over time and it was an Executive Director. She loved being able to affect so many lives, for residents, staff and families alike.

In one of her first Executive Director roles, she only lasted 3 months, but she learned a lot about the type of company she wanted to work for and did not let this short time at an ALF deter her from moving on. Again, something to keep in mind as I am going through something similar now, myself. We also discussed how the culture is different at every ALF, even if the same company has a different location since the ED is really the person who helps to make that local culture as well. She also felt disconnected with residents and families at times (one of my concerns now too), and that is also why she decided to get a role of Corporate Director of Memory Care, so that she could remain connected to everybody. She also offers support to everybody on her team, and I can appreciate how this is a lofty goal but a very important one.

I also asked Melissa if there was anything that I should do in and outside of school to further my knowledge and she suggested "double dipping," If something needed to be done at work, she would try to include this as an assignment for a class. I love this idea due to how efficient it is, and besides, one looks like a "rockstar" at work (and of course at CSULB too). Melissa also suggested exploring certifications, such as from the Validation Institute and to become a PAC Trainer if I want to continue with dementia as a primary focus of my work. I love this idea, especially as it works in conjunction with career goals and school. Melissa is super motivated, a hard worker and I certainly hope to contact her in the future with any questions I may have about a continued career in gerontology (written by Debra Bein).

IS THERE A DOCTOR IN THE HOUSE? ALUMNI IN DOCTORAL PROGRAMS



The CSULB Gerontology Program is very proud of our alumni that have continued their education with doctoral studies. We interviewed several of these alum to find out more about their experiences in a doctoral program.

Participants included: Dr. Nnette A. Cáceres (with a PhD in Social Policy & Social Research), Dr. Erika Duarte (with a PhD in Gerontology), Elena Ionescu (pursuing a PhD in Social Work/Gerontology), Kiara Payne (pursuing a DSW, Social Work), Guadalupe Salgado-Shower (pursuing an EdD, Education), Dr. Nakia Thierry (with a EdD in Organizational Leadership), and Miriam Watts (pursuing a PhD in Human Development with an emphasis on Adult Cognition).

What was/is your dissertation topic?

Caceres: Quality of life of older Latinos/Hispanics

Duarte: The adjustment experience of older adults in assisted living facilities

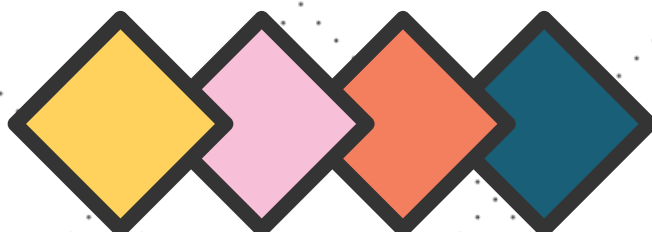
Ionescu: Dementia-Friendly Communities and Business Engagement: Navigating Stigma, Building Inclusive Environments, and Advancing Social Work Interventions for Older Adults with Dementia

Payne: Homelessness is a Policy Change: Ending homelessness in Los Angeles through policy changes to the Continuum of Care Program

Salgado-Shower: Quality of Life of Older Adults who Pursue Lifelong Learning

Thierry: Faculty Experiences and Recommendations on the Inclusion of Substance Use Prevention Curriculum into Aging-Infused Programs at 4-Year Universities

Watts: Health literacy levels in older adults that lead to negative health decisions



How did your MSG from CSULB prepare you for a doctorate program?

Caceres: Provided knowledge on research methods and opportunity to apply for programs such as the Sally Casanova Pre-doctoral program.

Duarte [earned a Gerontology certificate]: Solidified my career interest in working with older adults

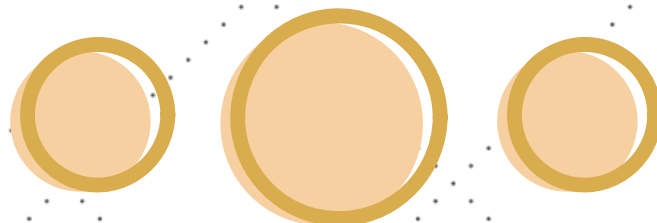
Ionescu: My time in the CSULB Master's in Gerontology program was instrumental in laying a solid foundation for my PhD studies. Research experience, conference participation, and my thesis project focused on dementia during my Master's program at CSULB has thoroughly prepared me for the demanding and meaningful work in my PhD. It has endowed me with the necessary skills, knowledge, and specialized focus to make a significant contribution to the field of dementia care and community engagement.

Payne: The MSG program prepared me with a deep understanding of aging and its associated challenges, spanning physical, mental, and social aspects. This foundation, coupled with research skills, an interdisciplinary perspective, and insights into ethical considerations and policy-making, provides a robust platform for transitioning to a Doctorate of Social Work program. The expertise gained in the MSG program, including communication, critical thinking, and hands-on experience, enriches social work perspectives, enabling a more comprehensive approach to diverse populations and multidisciplinary teams.

Salgado-Shower: The MSG helped me realize the impact lifelong learning programs have on older adults and the need for educational leaders that understand gerogogy.

Thierry: It provided me with the tools to conduct in depth, expansive research. I was able to take a deep dive into research and to conceptualize a research study from start to finish, which prepared me for my Dissertation work.

Watts: The MSG Program was a great way for me to explore my different interests in the field of aging and learn technical skills to work as a Gerontologist. The MSG program opened doors to amazing networks, allowed me to complete worthwhile research and I made lifelong friendships.



What are you doing post-doctorate/what are your post-doctorate plans?

Caceres: I am currently in the second year of my post-doctoral fellowship and actively applying to faculty positions.

Duarte: I work at SCAN health plan which is a non-profit Medicare Advantage health plan serving older adults. I plan to continue growing within the company and in the healthcare sector innovating how we can deliver best in class mental and behavioral health services to older adults. Additionally, I hope to continue researching and publishing.

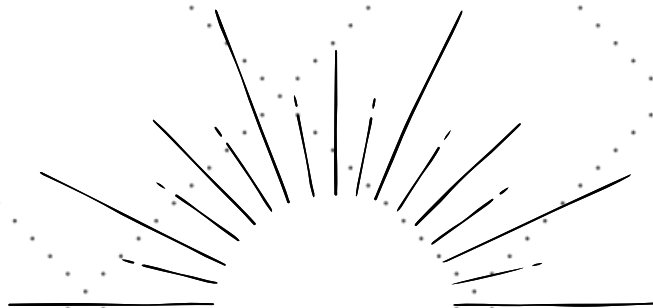
Ionescu: I am not entirely certain about my post-doctoral employment plans, primarily because I am deeply immersed in my dissertation project and it's challenging to anticipate how things will unfold. I have diligently worked to create a broad spectrum of opportunities for future employment across various sectors, including academia, government, and the for-profit industry. This effort makes me feel optimistic about the future, as if the sky's the limit.

Payne: To continue to be an advocate for homeless policy changes combining innovation and expertise from those with lived experience to reduce and end homelessness in Los Angeles. Also to create a consulting firm to teach other communities how to improve their homeless systems that promote expediting housing placement and long term housing retention.

Salgado-Shower: I would like to continue growing in the field of lifelong learning.

Thierry: Currently, I serve as the Branch Chief for Older Adult Programs at the California Department of Aging. I would like to explore transition into Education at the university level as a part of my post-doctorate plan.

Watts: Academia/Teaching/Health education/Healthcare Administration/Entrepreneurship, the sky is the limit.



What advice do you have for those considering doctoral studies?

Caceres: Seek advice from individuals who are or were in doctoral programs to get a good understanding of what a doctoral program entails. Seek out funded doctoral programs and make sure your advisor's research aligns with your interests.

Duarte: My philosophy has always been to plan with the end goal in mind. If considering a doctorate ask yourself what is your "why" in pursuing a doctorate program. Doctorate programs are not for the faint and it will require to keep that "why" at the forefront on those challenging days. Additionally, talk to people who have completed a doctorate program and ask for advice and input about their experience, most importantly ask if they would do it all over again. Education is always worth it, but not at the cost of your peace of mind. Research all options available that don't land you with outstanding student loans. Lastly, enjoy the process. It's so easy to be all about the next that you miss the journey of discovering what type of researcher you want to be.

Ionescu: Surround yourself with people you aspire to emulate. The guidance of amazing mentors can greatly empower your approach to life; this leads to my first piece of advice: Have mentors! Cultivate a unique relationship with them and openly discuss your dreams and fears. They can help you focus on opportunities rather than obstacles. The journey through a PhD can sometimes feel lonely. Make sure your spouse, friends, and family are there to support you, even if they don't fully understand the pressure it involves. Once you embark on a PhD program, there will be many other pieces of advice to consider, but it's important to take it one step at a time. After all, a PhD is a marathon, not a sprint!

Payne: Considering a doctorate requires clarity on personal motivations and thorough research into prospective programs. It's essential to understand the time and financial commitments involved, connect with current students for insights, and choose an advisor who aligns with your interests. Cultivate resilience for inevitable challenges, maintain a balanced life, stay updated in your field, and network extensively. Remember, a doctorate opens doors beyond academia, so be open to diverse career paths and value the comprehensive skills and knowledge you'll acquire. Lastly, embarking on a doctoral journey is both challenging and rewarding. Celebrate small victories along the way and remember that the skills and knowledge you gain will benefit you in myriad ways throughout your life.

Salgado-Shower: Take your time looking for programs and mentors. Make sure your goals and values align with the institution you are trying to be a part of.

Thierry: Take the leap and believe in yourself and your abilities. Trust the process and most importantly, trust yourself.

Watts: Take your time in choosing a university and program so you can choose wisely. Once in the program, know that it takes a village, loved ones need to be involved to understand, uplift and support you. Make sure you have 4 years to dedicate to yourself both time wise and financially and PRAY 🙏! You can do this!!!

Congratulations Graduates

Megan Darden, MSG

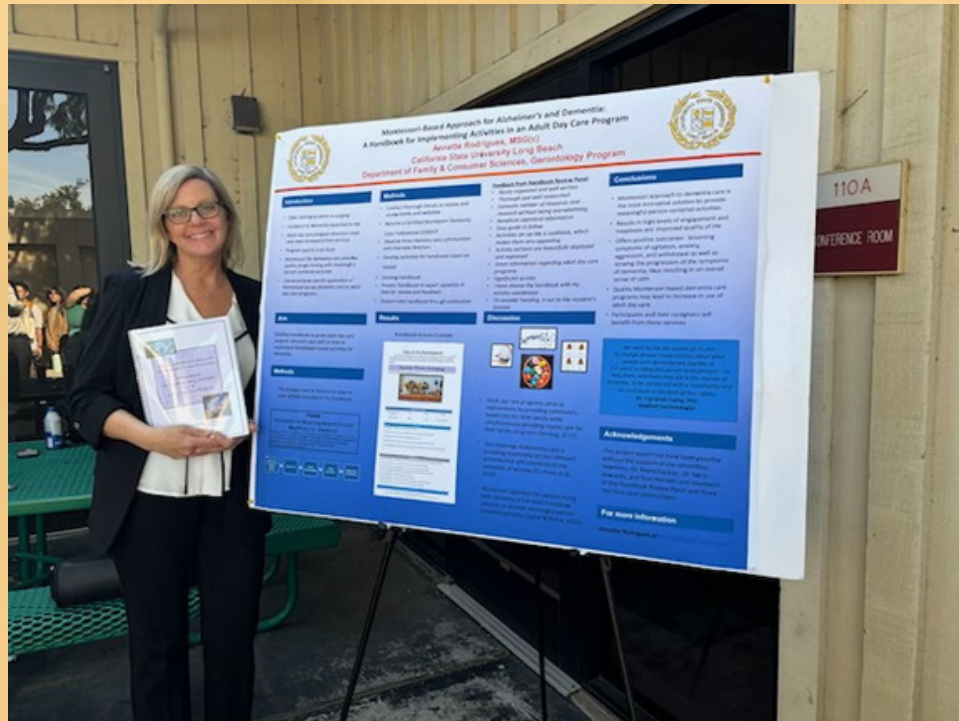


Directed Project
LONG BEACH
HEALTHY AGING
RESOURCE
GUIDE FOR
OLDER AFRICAN
AMERICANS

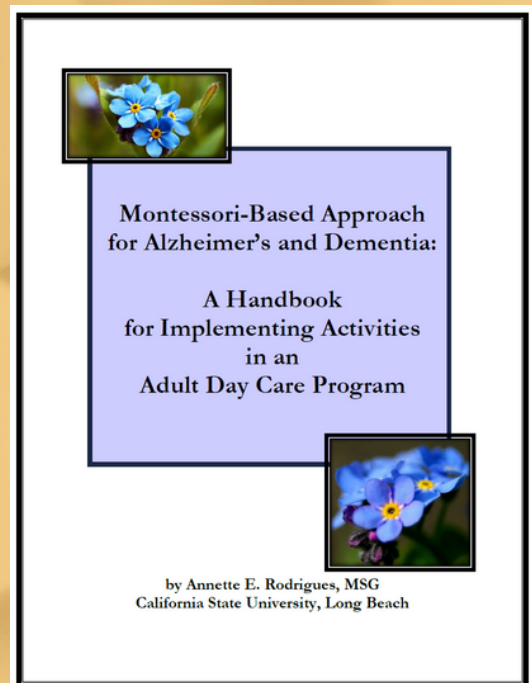


Congratulations Graduates

Annette Rodrigues, MSG



Directed Project
*Montessori-Based
Approach for Alzheimer's
and Dementia: A
Handbook for
Implementing Activities in
an Adult Day Care
Program*



Congratulations Graduates

Carly Huston, MSG



Thesis:

Effectiveness of a multicomponent activities program among older adults with mild cognitive impairment in an assisted living community

Congratulations Graduates

Gerontology Minor

Aidee Calderon

I am graduating with a major in Human Development, a minor in Gerontology and will continue to try and work my way up at the Veterinary Specialty and E.R. I am working in. I will be returning in the fall to take classes through our "open university". I have some pre-requisite courses that need to be fulfilled in order to apply for Graduate school in Veterinary Medicine. It will take some time and sacrifices, but I feel ready and determined. I also plan to continue to visit my hospice patient and his wife as I have grown very fond of them, they are a very sweet family, and it was through my internship that I found how much I enjoy being a volunteer for Hospice patients.

Belen Contreras Navarro

After graduation, I plan to apply to a program that offers Ultrasound Technician courses. My goal is to become and Ultrasound Tech. and focuses mainly on pregnancies. I just think is incredible how our body is able to grow a human. I want to be that person and help mothers have the best pregnancy.

Congratulations Graduates

Gerontology Minor

Emily Klemm

Upon graduating summa cum laude from Cal State this Fall with her B.A. in Speech-Language Pathology and a minor in Gerontology, she will be eagerly awaiting admissions decisions from the Doctor of Audiology graduate school programs to which she has applied throughout the semester. In the meantime, she plans to enter the field as an audiology assistant this spring before embarking on her grad school journey this coming Fall of 2024. Additionally, she intends to spend at least one month traveling solo outside of the country (locations to be determined) before starting grad school.

She says: I have thoroughly enjoyed my time here in Long Beach and will forever hold the uttermost love and respect for this city, as well as for all the friends and professors I have been so fortunate to connect with along my journey. I would like to extend honorable mentions to Dr. Mary Marshall of the Gerontology department, as well as Dr. Margaret Vento-Wilson and Dr. Edward Garcia of the SLP department. Congratulations to everyone graduating, and I wish nothing but the best for our futures. Go Beach!!

Cynthia Larios

After graduating this semester, my plans are to become a Health Educator while I continue my education to pursue my dream of becoming a Registered Nurse. During this semester I had the privilege to work alongside amazing mentors at the Health Aging Center in Long Beach in which I gained experience, knowledge and communication skills in servicing the elderly.

Hannah Lee

Miyu (Michelle) Ono

My post-graduation plan is to work as a nurse for a full year before entering a master's program for nursing.

Congratulations Graduates

Gerontology Minor

Ashlyn Sngiem

My name is Ashlyn Sngiem, after successfully earning my Bachelor of Arts in Human Development with a Minor in Gerontology from CSULB, I am eager to embark on a meaningful career path that combines my passion for understanding human development with a focus on the well-being of seniors. My immediate goal is to contribute to the field of behavioral health by joining a reputable non-profit organization, CMWC in Long Beach, where I can specialize in supporting seniors grappling with PTSD.

Driven by a commitment to enhancing the quality of life for older adults, I plan to immerse myself in the dynamic challenges and rewards of working in a behavioral health clinic. I aim to employ my academic knowledge and empathetic understanding to create tailored interventions that address the unique needs of seniors dealing with PTSD.

Looking ahead, I aspire to continue my professional growth and deepen my impact on the lives of seniors. With this in mind, I am dedicated to pursuing a Doctorate in Occupational Therapy (OT) program by mid-2024. This advanced education will equip me with the comprehensive skills necessary to provide holistic and individualized care, fostering independence and well-being among seniors facing physical, mental, and emotional challenges.

By seamlessly blending my background in Human Development and Gerontology with specialized training in occupational therapy, I am poised to make a significant contribution to the evolving field of senior care. I am excited about the prospect of combining academic rigor with hands-on experience to create positive and lasting change in the lives of the elderly.

Lizbeth Valencia

My plan after graduation are to continue my education & Pursue my master's in social work in order to help individuals work through challenges they face in life.



Gerontology Club Continues to Raise Funds to Fight Alzheimer's Disease

The Gerontology Club participated in the Alzheimer's Walk this Fall, continuing its support for this important cause. Graduate student, Patrick Hale, shared the photos above of his experience. During the 2022-2023 academic year, the Gerontology Club raised over \$1500 for Alzheimer's research by participating in two Alzheimer's Walks.

The Gerontology Club is made up of three components: a student chapter of the Gerontological Society of America, Sigma Phi Omega National Gerontology Honor Society, and DreamCatchers. We welcome undergraduate and graduate students from all majors/disciplines.

COMING SOON

Starting in Fall 2024, undergraduate majors in Consumer Affairs can earn the Masters of Science in Gerontology in just one extra year (5 years total).

Contact Dr. Carpiac (Maria.Carpiac@csulb.edu) for more information.



JOIN THE GERONTOLOGY CLUB!

- **Professional networking opportunities**
- **Social and philanthropy events**
- **Support older adults in the community**
- **Academic support and connections**

mary.marshall@csulb.edu
@csulb_geroclub

Crochet Club

AT GOLD STAR MANOR

The Crochet Club at American Gold Star Manor was started by Rita and Louisa, Recreation Therapy students at CSULB in 2022. Since then, various other students have come from time to time to assist. The club is still popular, although the club has morphed into more of a yarn craft club. Some participants crochet, some traditionally knit, and some loom knit. Other types of yarn crafts may eventually also be part of the club. The main thing is that everyone has fun, is able to socialize, learn something new, and make friends.

Rita and Louisa started with the idea of teaching participants the basics of crocheting and providing a space where residents could come together to learn or improve a skill, work on fine motor movements, work on memory, and socialize. They quickly realized that participants wanted to make things aside from crochet squares and scarves. Since the early days of the club, they have learned to make hats, headbands, and amigurumi figures (Amigurumi is a Japanese craft of crocheting small stuffed toys, such as animals, play food, or dolls). One day, one of the residents came with a knitting loom and was able to make a hat in one club session. Everyone was so impressed that they all wanted to learn.

American Gold Star Manor (AGSM) provides all of the supplies; yarn, crochet hooks, knitting needles, other necessary equipment, the Recreation Hall and, most importantly, snacks 😊. Students (and some club members) provide the instruction.

What do members talk about: The better question is, What don't they talk about? The members have become close and they talk about all kinds of subjects. They talk of family and friends, health-related things, gossip around the Manor, and food. They help each other make various projects and learn from one another.

Louisa's favorite moment: I can't speak for other students, but my personal favorite moments are when residents learn something new and their faces light up, when residents finish a project and show it proudly to anyone around, when residents help and encourage each other, and (as corny as it sounds) each and every Wednesday when residents show up! Also, during Winter break last year, no students were able to come on Wednesdays; so the residents decided to keep the club going and met at one of the residents' apartments.



Financial Counseling Project

CONSUMER AFFAIRS SERVICE LEARNING

A Reflection by CAFF students Jasmine Lopez and Stephanie Montalban

As part of our class project for CAFF 426, we had to conduct financial counseling sessions that included assisting someone within the community regarding: budgeting, saving goals, credit & debit management, and consumer protection. In order to find a client, Professor Cho from the Department of Consumer Affairs informed us about reaching out to The Osher Lifelong Learning Institute (OLLI). OLLI members were very amicable and delightful people. Rebecca, the OLLI office administrator, gave us the opportunity to communicate our services of financial counseling to their members, where we met our client. With the guidance of Professor Cho, we conducted two sessions, one in order to grasp the client's knowledge and practice of managing their finances, and a second to provide them with an analysis. The analysis included presenting our client with revisions and adjustments to her budget, formatted a plan to achieve their goals, and provided resources that catered to the client's needs. Partnering up with OLLI and their members was a great experience overall. We are considerably grateful for the opportunity given to us, where we learned very much and were able to grow professionally.

Framework: Financial Well - Being

	Present	Future
Security	Budget daily expenses to be able to pay for necessities.	Having savings for retirement, while affording her monthly mortgage.
Freedom of Choice	Enjoy going out to eat and entertainments.	To be able to travel yearly and visit family.

Image courtesy of Jazmine Lopez & Stephanie Mantalban

Creativity in the Classroom

LECTURER JESSE ARCHER, MSG ASSIGNS COMIC STRIP

The class: Gerontology 400

The assignment: Create a comic strip based on a reading about the rise of companion AI robots to address loneliness.

The winner: Jessica Aguirre



RCFE Certification

ANNETTE RODRIGUES' JOURNEY

This fall semester, I completed the coursework to become an RCFE (Residential Care Facility for the Elderly) Certified Administrator. As part of the state-required 80-hour RCFE training, I completed 20 self-directed online hours prior to 60 hours of livestreaming on Zoom. I chose to take the course through Community Care Options (CCO), an Initial Certification Training Program (ICTP) Vendor. Community Care Options covered the required core of knowledge topics including Laws, Regulations, Policies & Procedural Standards, Business Operations, Management and Supervision of Staff, Psychosocial Needs of the Elderly, Physical Needs for Elderly Persons, Community and Support Services, Medication Management, Resident Admission, Retention, & Assessment Procedures, Managing AD & Related Dementias, Nonpharmacologic Approaches, Person-centered Approaches, Managing the Physical Environment, Maintenance & Housekeeping, Resident's Rights, Cultural Competency to the Aging LGBT Community, Postural Supports, Restricted Health Conditions, and Hospice. Additionally, CCO prepared us for the exam focusing on the Title 22 Manual of Policies and Procedures for RCFE Administrators. After completing the training, I signed up to take the exam and I was excited to pass on my first effort. As soon as I passed the exam, I sent my application form and fingerprint clearance to Community Care Licensing to be processed.

I am so glad that I took this opportunity this semester to become an RCFE Certified Administrator. The experience was so valuable. It was great meeting like-minded people and learning about core of knowledge topics and Title 22. I believe that becoming an RCFE Certified Administrator of a memory care community would allow me to put all of my skills and unique perspective—having once been a family member of a resident in memory care—to good use. I feel this way because of my education in gerontology, my experience caring for my mother who had Alzheimer's, and my past 15+ years of administrative work experience.

Additionally, in my role as a gerontologist, I will be able to use the knowledge I gained from this experience to provide better care and resources to older adults. Therefore, I recommend obtaining this certification as a part of one's preparation for a career in gerontology.

If you are interested in learning more:

Community Care Options

<https://www.communitycareoptions.com>

Department of Social Services Administrator Certification

https://www.cdss.ca.gov/infosource/cclid_acs

Internship: Hospice

AIDEE CALDERON

If you asked me what my hospice internship would be like when my mentor was helping me look for a family who wanted their loved one to have volunteer visits, I'd tell you I had no idea. As someone who considered themselves to be a big introvert, I was full of anxiety the very first time I showed up to a patient's home.

During my internship I have had 2 hospice patients. I have learned about other individuals: the emotional and physical tolls of being a caregiver and forgetting to care for yourself, the radical life changes that are occurring when loved ones transition to hospice care, the financial strains that families may go through, and the active decline of a human being.

I have to be honest and share that hospice was not something that I had ever given thought to, for my family and me; the only option when someone grows ill and continually declines is continuous medical intervention. As I spend more time with my current hospice patient and their family, I continue to learn that hospice care is a fair and humane choice when there is a terminal diagnosis. The main and most important goal is to keep the patient comfortable and as pain free as possible. To my surprise, those who look forward to my visit the most are the caregivers and/or family members in the home. Family and/or caregivers can spend the whole visit sharing their emotional distress, stories of their loved ones, or some days just sitting side by side watching their favorite TV show.

If hospice care and the families that I have visited have taught me anything, it is that if you have a loved one that is being cared for, check up on their caregivers and/or those who also live in the home with the patient. Very few times do we ask them if they are okay, if they have been able to take a day for themselves to continue to care for their hospice patient, or do we remind them of how important they are. I did not know that by the end of this experience I would have grown so fond of strangers and hold them so dear to my heart, as I hope I am to them.

Service Learning @ the Beach

INSTRUCTOR WILKINSON'S STUDENTS PARTNER WITH
THE OSHER LIFELONG LEARNING INSTITUTE

This semester, three gerontology students and two political science students participated in their Service-Learning assignment at the Osher Lifelong Learning Institute (OLLI) on campus. The students enrolled in Alexandra Wilkinson's Gern 400 class have the option of seven service-learning sites overall and are assigned based on interest and background. The five students worked together to develop seven presentations for the free OLLI event titled Lunch and Learn on Wednesdays from 12 to 1:30 pm. Presentations included the role of animals in our lives, the history of holidays, loneliness, and free and low-cost activities around LA and OC Counties, among others. The students loved the experience and were very thankful to be a part of it while earning class credit. The event was intergenerational programming at its finest. Both OLLI members and the students learned new information about various topics while working on intergenerational communication skills. As an instructor of three of the students, I am beyond proud of all the students who participated in the seven-week program. I am looking forward to next semester and the next set of students.

If you are interested in OLLI find more info here: <https://www.csulb.edu/college-of-health-human-services/osher-lifelong-learning-institute>



FACULTY ACHIEVEMENTS

DR. MARY MARSHALL AWARDED OUTSTANDING PROFESSOR HONOR



Dr. Marshall received the Purdue University Center on Aging and the Life Course 2023 Outstanding Professor Award. This award recognizes exceptional teaching and mentoring of emerging scholars in aging and acknowledges significant contributions to pedagogy at the university level.

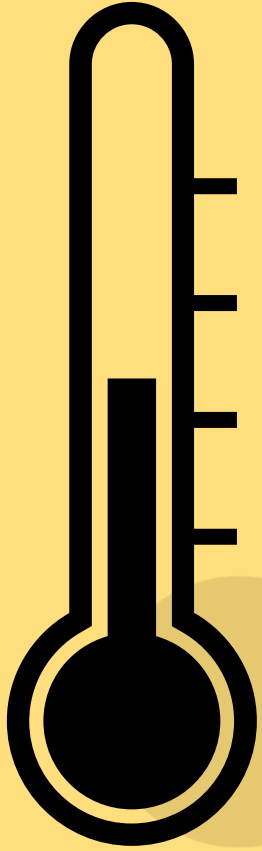
DR. CARPIAC RECEIVES INNOVATIVE TEACHING AWARD

Cognella Academic Publishing presented one of two first place 2023 Cognella Innovation in Teaching Awards for Family Science in partnership with the National Council for Family Relations to Dr. Carpiac in September 2023.

From Cognella: Our judging panel was incredibly impressed by your development of the course Women and Aging: Lessons from the Golden Girls. We truly believe this course is shining light on an area of family studies that often gets overlooked, gerontology and the study of aging. You are doing exceptional work in fostering interest in this area of study with the younger generation through the use of popular culture (very innovative!). And what I personally wouldn't give to have had the opportunity to sit in on that intergenerational panel featuring women from their 20s through 60s. Your passion for teaching and preparing your students to succeed is beyond admirable, and we are so happy to acknowledge your fantastic work.

ALEXANDRA WILKINSON APPOINTED TO UNIVERSITY COMMITTEE

As a testament to her dedication to improving student learning, Alexandra was appointed to the CSULB Graduation Writing Assessment Requirement (GWAR) Committee. Her appointment was approved by the Academic Senate and is for a one-year term.



'tis the season

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