

CSULB Gerontology Program



OLLI Members Support a Day @ the Beach

On Saturday, April 13, 2024, several OLLI members supported the FCS Open House to welcome admitted students as part of CSULB's Day at the Beach. Their positive energy and impressive talent livened the halls of the FCS building. Gerontology Minor students and volunteers, Cindy Nguyen and Marina Atef, learned some favorites of the Baby Boomer generation and Dr. Carpiac was an unofficial back up singer from the audience (sorry... not sorry).

THANK YOU to the Play It Again Jam group!



DreamCatchers fulfills a dream for Jay, who spent a day at the zoo and made friends with some giraffes.

DreamCatchers

Jay is an Army Vietnam Vet and loves nature and the outdoors. He really just wanted to experience wildlife and feed a giraffe up close and personal! We sponsored a 2-hour private tour for him and his wife and 4 family members (2 hospice workers paid their own admission). We're so proud of our students, faculty, alum, and community that raised money to make this happen!

Congratulations **AWARD WINNERS**

CHHS Outstanding Project & FCS Outstanding Project

Annette Rodrigues, MSG

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

FCS Outstanding Thesis

Kathleen Flachmeier, MSG

*Repartnering After Loss: Gender Differences in Older
Adults*

Graduate Dean's List

Nicole Lunde, MSG

Graduate Student Honors

Carly Huston, MSG

Congratulations

AWARD WINNERS

Outstanding Student Citation

These Gerontology Minor students achieved impressive GPAs and graduated in Fall 2023, Winter 2024 and Spring 2024.

Maeve Allen, Psychology

Marina Atef, Psychology

Carmina Barraza, Psychology

Ann Greenwood, Geography

Emily Klemm, Speech Language Pathology

Hanna Lee, HSC Community Health Education

Mark Carlos Muro, Social Work

Cindy Nguyen, Psychology

Michelle Ono, Nursing

Daisy Santos, Recreation Therapy

Angeline Suerte Felipe, Nursing

Grace Yacoubian, Nursing

Vicky Yao, Nursing

Congratulations

AWARD WINNERS

Department of Family & Consumer Sciences Awards Gerontology Program

*These Gerontology Minor students will be recognized at the FCS
Graduation Celebration at the end of May 2024*

Academic Excellence Award

Maeve Allen, Psychology
Thamia Bui, Kinesiology-Exercise Science
Carmina Barraza, Psychology
Mark Carlos Muro, Social Work
Emily Klemm, Speech Language Pathology
Hanna Lee, HSC Community Health Education
Grace Yacoubian, Nursing

Outstanding Student Award

Marina Atef, Psychology
Belen Contreras-Navarro
Ashlyn Sngiem, Human Development

Leadership & Service Award

Cindy Nguyen, Psychology

Congratulations

SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENTS

c

California Association of Family & Consumer Sciences (CA-AFCS)

Cindy Nguyen, Gerontology Minor
Premita Pradhan, MSG(c)
Katrina Watson, Gerontology Minor

Marian Last Endowed Scholarship in Gerontology

Lizette Hernandez-Soto, MSG(c)

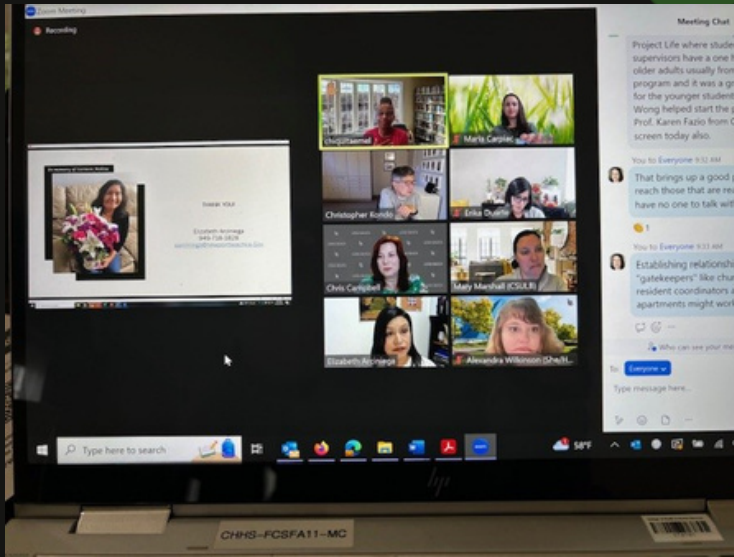
Phi Beta Kappa Honor Society

Kiara Chavez, Gerontology Minor



Phi Beta Kappa is the oldest and most prestigious academic honor society in the United States. The Rho Chapter of California was established at California State University, Long Beach in 1977. CSULB is one of only three in the California State University system to be granted a Phi Beta Kappa chapter. Fewer than 40 students were invited to join in 2024, including Gerontology Minor, Kiara Chavez.

Conference Presentations: MSG Students Share Their Research



On April 25, 2024, Elizabeth Arciniega, MSG shared research about her thesis, an evaluation of the CSULB Friendly Caller Program, for the California Council on Gerontology & Geriatrics Research Showcase. Over 30 people attended her virtual presentation, featuring Lecturer Alexandra Wilkinson, MSG.

On April 13, 2024, Kathleen Flachmeier, MPH, MSG presented a poster about her thesis at the California Association of Family & Consumer Sciences Conference in San Francisco, CA.

FAMILY & CONSUMER SCIENCES
Creating Healthy Sustainable Futures

**REPARTNERING AFTER LOSS
GENDER DIFFERENCES IN OLDER ADULTS**

Kathleen Flachmeier, MPA, MSG Candidate California State University, Long Beach

INTRODUCTION

- As couples age, the death of one of the partners is an expected yet devastating occurrence. **That death changes the future in a moment**
- Suddenly they are alone, striving to cope with a life they had not planned for
- How older people cope may be reflected in their desire, or lack of desire, to repartner
- Is the desire to repartner gender specific?
- Relationships and living arrangements are being redefined in older widowed adults

METHODS

- Data collection via four focus groups on Zoom platform
- Recruitment through an online community for widowed people (Soaring Spirits International)
- Subjects solicited via snowball method through foundation's administration
- Secondary recruitment for male participants through LinkedIn. All were eliminated as potential scammers.
- 31 participants: Widows/widowers 60+ and heterosexual
 - 45 women ages 60 and 69
 - 7 women aged 70 and older
 - 3 men ages 60 and 69
 - 1 man 70 or older
- Widows to widowers ratio reflects general population

RESULTS – Changing Attitudes in Conflict with Current Literature

Men suffer from loneliness while women are all right with being alone: Women spoke of being lonely, while men spoke of being alone

Women gain new-found freedom and independence while men struggle to assume a "feminine" role: Women did not express a feeling of independence, and men did not feel feminized

Loss of social acceptance in a couple-centric society is gender neutral: Women in both focus groups discussed the loss of social acceptance by their coupled friends. Men also reflected on similar experiences but expressed different reasons

Women build new identities while men seek to regain theirs: Women discussed the impact of their loss of identity and efforts to build a new identity (life). Men felt no impact on their identity.

Repartnering relationships - Men want someone to come home to while women want someone to go out with: Of the 13 women in the focus groups, all but two preferred cohabitation or remarriage. Five women in the 70+ group preferred remarriage. The other two preferred living apart together. The 60-69 group was equally divided between cohabitation and remarriage. Two did not want to remarry to keep their husband's last name. One cited legal reasons. Half the men preferred cohabitation, but not remarriage, the others preferred living apart together

PARTICIPANT COMMENTS

Who am I without my partner? I've lost half of my whole. My partner's friends turned their backs on me

Suddenly women see you as a threat. They think you're going to steal their man.

I don't want to be a nurse or a purse

I will take my husband's name with me to my grave.

There is a very big difference between being alone and being lonely. I'm okay being alone.

DISCUSSION - Further studies needed


- Expand the demographics to include LGBTQ+ relationships
- Expand the demographics to include all minorities
- Additional studies to focus on the issues of men in their widowhood through the masculine lens, not in opposition to widows
- Other studies using a larger, more diverse pool of widows and widowers
- Future studies could also seek to explore the similarities and differences in older adults who were widowed and those who were divorced in later life

Exploration of gender differences in the desire to repartner may contribute to better understanding of those dealing with these issues, socially and professionally.


ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Dr. Maria Cepeda, Advisor/Chair, Gerontology Program, CSULB
Soaring Spirits International (no one should grieve alone)

In memory of Greg Flachmeier



Contact Information:
Kathleen Flachmeier
kathleen.flachmeier01@student.csulb.edu



Respite Program for Older Adults with Memory-related Challenges @ Leisure World, Seal Beach

This past semester (Spring 2024), the Center for Successful Aging embarked on a collaborative effort with Alzheimer's Orange County (AlzOC) to offer a community-based Respite Program for persons with dementia at Leisure World Seal Beach.

The program is being staffed by CSULB students, giving them the opportunity to increase their knowledge and skills in dementia-care and working with older adults. Students are on site at Leisure World twice a week. Their participation in the Respite Program contributes to the social engagement, stimulation, and overall well-being of the residents living at Leisure World while also offering respite for their caregivers. Overall, the Respite Program aims to equip the future workforce with the knowledge and skills necessary to effectively engage and assist older adults with dementia.

During their participation in the Respite Program, student interns complete training on communication techniques and tools for working with persons with dementia. They create and implement activities for the participants and assist the AlzOC Memory Support Team by conducting in-home assessments of residents living at Leisure World. Through this program, student interns learn how to interact with individuals living with dementia in a compassionate, respectful, and effective manner.

This past Spring semester, the Center hosted three outstanding interns! Among them were two Health Science majors and a Psychology major with a minor in gerontology. These interns demonstrated dedication and a willingness to learn and, as a result, each grew in their confidence and ability to work with persons living with dementia. Thus, gaining knowledge and experience that will serve them well in their future careers. In fact, Cindy Nguyen, who is minoring in gerontology, was recently hired by AlzOC to recruit participants and train future interns for the program!

This collaboration reflects the commitment to developing the personal and professional growth of students at CSULB in working with older adults. This program serves as a platform for interns to improve their communication and care skills, cultivate empathy, and nurture their creativity through direct engagement with older adults living with memory-related challenges. The Center looks forward to the continued success of the Respite Program and collaborating with future interns to develop a workforce that provides support to aging populations.

If you are interested in a Fall internship opportunity, please email: CHHS-Aging@csulb.edu

Center for Successful Aging Alzheimer's OC

By Cindy Nguyen

01

MY INTERNSHIP

- Adult day care **respite program** for persons with dementia
- Facilitate leisure events, **social-focused activities**, and community-building projects



02

LEARNING OBJ'S

- Assisting in **creating** or **planning** at least 1 physical or social activity for dementia program participants in the respite program
- **Implement** appropriate communication strategies and respectful body language while working with a person with Dementia to ensure happiness and wellbeing
- **Interact** with at least 2 program participants per session to better understand their unique personality and interests

03

ELEVATOR PITCH

My name is **Cindy Nguyen** and I work as a direct care worker at Alzheimer's Oc in Seal Beach which creates **meaningful opportunities** for social connectedness for people with dementia. My efforts within the ADP program has allowed me to communicate, adapt, and enrich my knowledge of people with dementia. Throughout my **experiences**, it has encouraged my passion to perform advocacy work in dire communities, neighborhoods, and facilities for this untended aging population. I've always loved working with older adults and I believe in continuing this type of **important work** in the future.



04

SOFT SKILLS

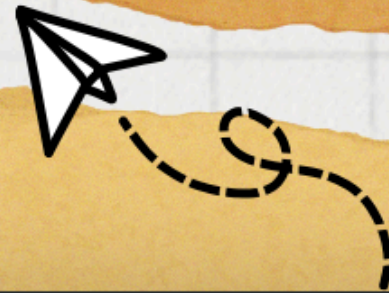
Improved:

1. Leadership
2. Commitment

Work On:

1. Tolerance to Stress
2. Life Balance

Thank you! <3



A Day in the Life of a Professional Caregiver

I work as a professional caregiver for an agency that specializes in the private sector of homecare. The agency that I am currently employed with hires professional caregivers to work any schedule they choose available twenty-four hours seven days a week. Currently, I am on a three-month assignment that entails an elderly person who resides with family. My client requires assistance when everyone is away at work. As a professional caregiver my task and assignments depend on the clients' needs. I work four to five days a week, up to nine hours a day. My workday starts as early as 7am and ends by 4pm. I start the day by opening the blinds and brewing a pot of coffee. Prepare medication for the day and a hot meal when my client is ready to start her day. Once my client is up, I assist with grooming and run through our schedule which is quite routine. If my client has appointments, we have breakfast and prepare to leave for the day until we return to prepare lunch. After my client has lunch, I wash the dishes empty all trash in the home as well as complete any chores and prepare to play board games until it is time to leave for the day. If the weather permits, we will take a walk and do light exercise prescribed by the physical therapist. Sometimes I will walk her dogs before leaving for the day and prepare a lite snack of fruit. Working as a professional caregiver requires patience, compassion, empathy, good organization, and time management skills.

Thank you to Gerontology Minor, Justina Jones, for sharing her experiences.



Advocacy in Action



One of our candidates for MSG represented us well in Washington DC in April and in Sacramento on May 7th of 2024 for the Alzheimer's Association Southern California concerning multiple legislation about Alzheimer's and related dementia(s).

Everyone can rise above their circumstances and achieve success if they are dedicated to and passionate about what they do. -
Nelson Mandela

Creative

classroom assignments

"50 Years Young" by Elizabeth Beck



What's My Age Again?



Kaitlyn Maglaque

PARTNERSHIPS

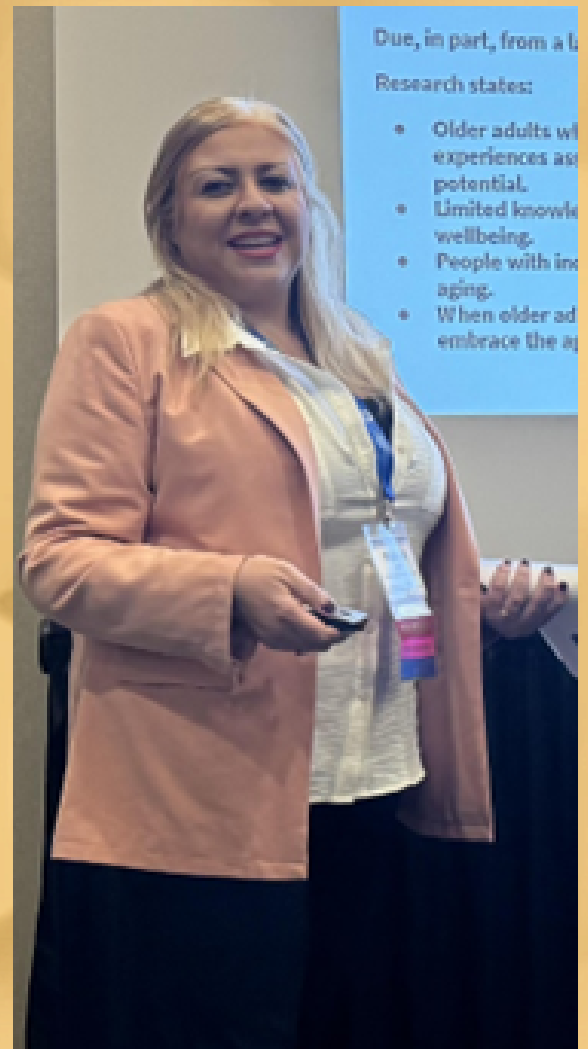


The Gerontology Program is proud of its continued partnership with Vivante Living in support of the Vitality Program. Students (Ashlyn Sngiem, Natasha Alexa Garcia and Cindy Nguyen) attended the Winter Wonderland Event to provide brain healthy activities and information. Dr. Marshall, Dr. Carpiac, and Lecturer Ionescu, in collaboration with Vivante staff, have submitted a program evaluation manuscript about the first phase of the Vitality Program and plan to submit a second manuscript in August 2024.



Faculty Achievements

Congratulations to Miriam Watts for a successful Keynote presentation at the Southern Gerontological Society (SGS) annual conference in Greenville, South Carolina in April. Miriam was asked to present her research on low Health Literacy levels within the older adult population in healthcare settings. This topic is a passion of Miriam's, and she was honored to present her research to 250 esteemed gerontologists in all fields.



Faculty Achievements

Ionescu, E., Jump, V., Nowlin, M., & Ortiz, G. (2024). Fostering livable and dementia-friendly environments for people living with dementia aging independently at home. American Society on Aging, 70th Annual Conference, March 25-28, 2024, San Francisco, CA. Workshop.

Ionescu, E. & Nowlin, M. (2024). Bridging the digital divide: Enhancing aging and disability services through user-friendly technological solutions. American Society on Aging, 70th Annual Conference, March 25-28, 2024, San Francisco, CA. Poster.

Ionescu, E., Jump, V., Nowlin, M., & Ortiz, G. (2024). Community-driven solutions for home-based aging with dementia: A journey of adaptation, challenges, and insights. Social Sciences Association, 103rd Annual Meeting, New Orleans, LA. Presentation.

Acquati, C., **Ionescu, E.**, Goltz, H.H., Wittman, D.A., LaMarca-Lyon, A., & Roth, M. (2024). The moderating role of dyadic coping in the relationship between distress and health-related quality of life among young women with breast cancer: A cross-sectional study. Society for Social Work and Research, 28th Annual Conference, January 10-14, Washington D.C. Presentation.

Faculty Achievements

In addition to **Elena Ionescu**'s amazing publication record this year (see prior page), she won two awards!

Graduate College of Social Work, University of Houston: Child & Family Center for Innovative Research and American Society on Aging. 2024 Graduate Student Research Award. On Aging 2024 Conference, March 25-28, 2024, San Francisco, CA.

Casey Goeller, Gerontology Lecturer, had a busy and fruitful academic year. He accomplished the following:

- Created the online version of Gern 200 & GERN/CAFF 490: Goodbye Google, Hello AI
- Created and administered a BeachXP course for faculty teaching incoming freshmen to increase retention and create a sense of belonging.
- Received Ukleja Center grant to create a module on the ethics of using AI in higher education courses.
- Attended the National Undergraduate Research Conference in Long Beach where his student presented

Faculty Achievements

(Casey's Achievements continued)

- Attended the University Honors thesis presentations where former student presented her work
- Successfully completed CSU course on AI in the classroom
- Panel member, CSULB Symposium on AI and the Metaverse
- Participated as a subject in the documentary, The Longevity Dairies



ITLC LILLY CONFERENCE
INNOVATIVE STRATEGIES TO
ADVANCE STUDENT LEARNING

Presentation:

**Enhancing Inclusion and Lifelong Learning by
Applying Age-Friendly Principles in the Classroom**

Mary Marshall
& Maria Carpiac


Todd Zakrajsek, PHD
Conference Director

San Diego, California
January 4th-6th, 2024

Happy Summer!

The 2023-2024 academic year was challenging, rewarding, inspiring, and productive. Congratulations to not only the graduates, but to all of the students that worked so hard to achieve their goals. THANK YOU to the campus and greater community for your support.

We invite you to help us make another step toward our goal of establishing an endowed scholarship in Gerontology. We are a little more than halfway to our goal of raising \$25,000.

Please join this effort
No gift is too small (or large!)

Visit www.csulb.edu/gerontology

