National Initiative to Increase Alzheimer’s Disease Research, Education, & Awareness

It is well-known that we live in an aging nation—patients 65 and older represent the fastest growing segment of the U.S. population. By the year 2030, the U.S. aging population is expected to grow to more than 70 million people. As a consequence, aging’s ‘hot topics’ have become the buzzwords of the 21st century, including ‘Alzheimer’s Disease.’ The incidence of AD is rapidly increasing, and researchers forecast that, by 2050, as many as 16 million Americans will have the disease. Effects of this phenomenon have already begun to appear, placing strains on families, the federal budget, and the health care system in general. According to the Alzheimer’s Association, Alzheimer’s disease will cost our nation up to $20 trillion over the next 40 years.

The debilitating nature of this disease, in addition to the growing AD population, has caused this issue to come to the forefront of discussion across the nation. On January 4, 2011, the National Alzheimer’s Plan Act (NAPA) was unanimously signed into law, marking the largest legislative victory for AD in many years. Through implementation of this Act, the federal government mandated the creation of a National Alzheimer’s Plan, which was officially released to the American public on May 15, 2012.

In a statement issued by the Alzheimer’s Association, it was recognized that “Despite the growing number of Americans directly affected by Alzheimer’s, there are still widespread misconceptions about the disease, and health care providers are unprepared and undertrained in how to deal with individuals with Alzheimer’s and their families. In addition, support for unpaid family caregivers is wholly inadequate.” Leading up to the landmark creation of the National Alzheimer’s Plan, 43,000 Americans participated in over 130 public input forums facilitated by the Alzheimer’s Association and its 70+ chapters, in order to summarize the major challenges citizens face from the disease. Their insight led to the identification of 10 key issues they believe the U.S. Secretary of Health and Human Services must address in the National Alzheimer’s Plan:

- A lack of public awareness
- Insufficient research funding
- Difficulties with diagnosis
- Poor dementia care
- Inadequate treatments
- Specific challenges facing diverse communities
- Specific challenges facing those with younger-onset Alzheimer’s
- Unprepared caregivers
- Ill-equipped communities
- Mounting costs

The overarching goal of the National Alzheimer’s Plan is to “both prevent future cases of Alzheimer’s disease and to better meet the needs of the millions of American families currently facing this disease.” A multifaceted plan, it addresses the Alzheimer’s Association’s 10 key AD issues of concern through 5 main objectives, designed to: 1) Prevent and effectively treat Alzheimer’s Disease by 2025; 2) Optimize care quality and efficiency; 3) Expand supports for people with Alzheimer’s disease and their families; 4) Enhance public awareness and engagement; and 5) Track progress and drive improvement. In support of the Plan, President Obama proposed an additional $100 million of the fiscal year 2013 budget be allocated to NAPA; funding is appropriated to initiatives that address AD research, public awareness,

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Virtual Home of the NJISA Fellowship

Physically located in Southern New Jersey, the NJISA houses several virtual locations for its Geriatric Fellowship Program. Those interested can find all available program information through our homepage, as well as an electronic link to the Fellowship application. If you’re a social media buff, we have Facebook, Twitter, and LinkedIn to keep you up-to-date on all NJISA/Fellowship events and programs.

- **Homepage:** http://njisa.umdnj.edu/education/fellowship/index.htm
- **Fellowship Application:** http://som.umdnj.edu/education/graduate_medical/applications.html
- **Facebook:** http://www.facebook.com/pages/NJ-Institute-for-Successful-Aging-Geriatrics-Fellowship/149600558386022
- **Twitter:** https://twitter.com/NJISAFeellowship
- **Linkedin:** http://www.linkedin.com/profile/view?id=79460924&trk=tab_pro

A Message from the Fellowship Directors...

**With regards to your particular discipline, what is the benefit of providing specialized care to the older adult?**

“Fellowship training has given me the tools to understand the specialized needs of the geriatric patients and their families. It also prepared me as a leader for the field of geriatrics.”

- Stephen M. Scheinthal, DO, FACN, Director of the Geriatric Psychiatry Fellowship

“Older adults benefit from tailored therapeutic interventions that target preservation of function in the context of normal aging physiology and their goals of care.”

- Kevin Overbeck, DO, Director of the Geriatric Family Medicine Fellowship

“The benefit of providing specialized care to the older adult leaves one with improved functionality, improved quality of life, as well as empowerment of the aging changes that occur with getting older.”

- Terrie Ginsberg, DO, FACOI, Director of the Geriatric Internal Medicine Fellowship

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education and outreach, and caregiver support. HRSA-funded Geriatric Education Centers, including the New Jersey Geriatric Education Center (NJGEC) located within the NJISA, were allocated ‘Supplemental Alzheimer’s Disease Funding’ for such initiatives, as part of NAPA.

Since its implementation, the National Alzheimer’s Plan has inspired medical centers, universities, and community outreach programs across the country to further recognize and address the impending AD crisis, incorporating supplementary Alzheimer’s initiatives into their standards of practice. At UMDNJ-SOM, the NJGEC/NJISA has been at the forefront of Alzheimer’s advocacy. With the supplemental AD-designated funding, the Institute has developed a comprehensive plan of its own to educate an interdisciplinary audience of medical and health professionals on the perils of this disease, effective treatment of symptoms, the latest research and clinical trials, AD biomarkers, and the new diagnostic guidelines developed by National Institute on Aging-Alzheimer’s Association Workgroups on Diagnostic Guidelines for Alzheimer’s Disease (JALZ 2011; 7(3):263-269). NJISA Fellows and Fellowship Alumni play an integral role in the development and implementation of the Institute’s AD plan: they develop AD teaching curriculum; cultivate valuable collaborative and stakeholder relationships; and provide educational trainings to local and national medical and health professionals. The NJISA is dedicated to supporting the National Alzheimer’s Plan, which marks a significant stride in heightening AD awareness nationwide, enhancing clinical advancement, and ultimately finding a cure for the disease.
Upward Strides in Geriatric Education

The Tale of a Former Fellow

Throughout his impressive career, Dr. Wayne Carlsen has always invited enriching experiences and new opportunities to help mold him into the distinguished professional he is today. In 1989, intrigued by the multifaceted clinical challenges of geriatric practice, as well as the academic challenges it affords, Dr. Carlsen chose to pursue a Geriatric Internal Medicine Fellowship with the NJISA—then Center for Aging (CFA)—at UMDNJ-SOM. However, the nature of the practice of geriatric medicine, with patients’ multiple co-morbidities and atypical disease presentations, were only one part of what drew him to geriatric medicine; the other was an opportunity to continue working with his mentor, Dr. Thomas Cavalieri—then Director of the Center for Aging.

During his geriatric fellowship, Dr. Carlsen found several aspects of the program that he could call his favorite. He recognized the value in everything he learned and, to this day, can honestly say his favorite training aspects were threefold: 1) developing clinical expertise in geriatrics; 2) learning and then applying educational techniques; and 3) gaining administrative skills. “I’ve used those [teaching and administrative] skills at least as much as I’ve used my clinical skills over the years.” In 1991, Dr. Carlsen graduated with the first proud class of UMDNJ-SOM’s Geriatric Fellowship Program.

Today, Dr. Carlsen can’t say if he would be in a different place, career-wise, had he not completed the geriatric fellowship; but he does credit geriatric medicine fellowship with allowing him to bypass “climbing of the corporate ladder”, in order to take the elevator to the top floor, so to speak. He often tells his students, “You come out of your fellowship training and you are highly sought after by people looking for clinicians, people looking for administrators, people looking for educators, as it relates to all things geriatrics.” Dr. Carlsen uses his own career path to illustrate this: he graduated from fellowship in 1991; by 1993 he was Section Head of Geriatrics at Ohio University-Heritage College of Osteopathic Medicine (OU-HCOM), and by 1998 he had established a separate Department of Geriatrics at OU-HCOM. Dr. Carlsen recognizes that it was his geriatric fellowship that provided him with the skills and confidence to step into the many roles that he has filled over the years.

Dr. Carlsen has had many notable positions at OU-HCOM, and on January 2, 2013, he was promoted from Interim Associate Dean for Clinical Education to the prestigious position of Senior Associate Dean. In this admirable role, Dr. Carlsen will be overseeing the medical students’ entire Year 1-4 curriculum, the Student Affairs Department, Admissions for the Heritage College of Osteopathic Medicine and their rural/urban/underserved programs. Dr. Carlsen is honored to be appointed to this position and looks forward to taking on this new responsibility with the University, in addition to his many other administrative roles and committees on which he serves; such includes: curriculum and exam item development; administrative management and mentorship; didactic lecturing to undergraduate medical students, interns, and residents; and participation on curriculum development committees, the Student Progress Committee, the College’s Executive Committee, to name a few.

Outside of his work at OU-HCOM, Dr. Carlsen has also held progressively more prominent roles with the National Board of Osteopathic Medical Examiners (NBOME). Dr. Cavalieri encouraged him to become an Item Writer while he was a fellow, and he has continued his work with the organization since then. Most recently, Dr. Carlsen was named to a two year term as Vice-Chair of the Board of Directors for the NBOME, effective 12/2011-12/2013. Subsequently, following his Vice-Chair term, Dr. Carlsen will serve as Chair of the NBOME Board of Directors for the following 2 years. Dr. Carlsen also currently serves on the NBOME Finance Committee; as Chair of the Liaison Committee; Chair of the Nominating Committee; and sits on the Executive Committee. “I travel roughly 8-10 times a year to represent NBOME in a variety of medical meetings, medical education meetings, and medical regulatory meetings, in addition to attending the usual committee meetings, board meetings, etc.”

On this same note, when asked to describe the proudest accomplishment of his career, Dr. Carlsen states that it is actually still to come. In December 2013, when he is appointed Chair of the Board of Directors for the NBOME, is when Dr. Carlsen says he will have reached the pinnacle of his career. To be named the head of the governance of the entire organization is a momentous honor and responsibility for Dr. Carlsen to achieve, after a lifetime of hard work, dedication, and passion, in which he has infused into every aspect of his career since graduating from his geriatric fellowship.

In the end, Dr. Carlsen says it’s not really about the job; it’s about making the most out of the opportunity. His work at OU-HCOM, along with the knowledge gained during his geriatric fellowship, has really afforded Dr. Carlsen the ability to reinvent himself every few years—to take new directions; work on something new; develop special projects; etc. He notes, “And that’s really the best part of my job, it doesn’t stay the same for long.”

Moving forward, Dr. Carlsen offers his insight for physicians entering a geriatric fellowship today: “Be ready for your career in geriatrics to be a lot more than simply caring for the aging American,” he states. “You will be pulled in so many different and interesting directions that it’ll just unfold in front of you. It’s really surprising where you can go and how fast you can get there.”
The NJISA Fellows’ Year-End Review

Each year, the NJISA is proud to recognize the many notable accomplishments of its former and current geriatric fellows. Once again it has been a remarkable year for the program, citing many personal and professional achievements among the fellows, past and present.

- Wayne R. Carlse, DO (Class of '91, Geriatric Internal Medicine) was named Vice-Chair of the Board of Directors for NBOME (effective 12/2011-12/2013) for two years. Subsequently, Dr. Carlse will serve as Chair of the Board for the following 2 years.
- In May 2012, Christian White, DO (Class of ‘12, Geriatric Psychiatry) was awarded 1st place at the Eastern Pennsylvania Geriatrics Society’s Annual Fellow Research Night, for his presentation: “A Comparison of Nursing Home Staff who use a Person-Centered Perspective to Those who use a Standard Paradigm Perspective on Related Stress”.
- Kevin Overbeck, DO (Class of ‘06, Geriatric Family Medicine) was appointed as a Costin Scholar of the Costin Institute for Osteopathic Medical Educators; Dr. Overbeck was also inducted into the Gold Humanism Honor Society for “excellence in clinical care, leadership, compassion & dedication to service.”
- Stephen Scheinthal, DO (Class of ‘97, Geriatric Psychiatry) was appointed Chair of the American Osteopathic Association Bureau of Osteopathic Specialists (BOS), as selected by the AOA President.
- Hima Bindu Parchuri, DO (Class of ‘10, Geriatric Family Medicine) was awarded her Certificate of Added Qualifications (CAQ) in Geriatric Medicine from the American Board of Family Medicine (ABFM).
- Stephen Scheinthal, DO (Class of ‘97) was chosen as a 2012 “Top Doc in Geriatric Psychiatry”, and Kevin Overbeck, DO (Class of ‘06) was chosen as a 2012 “Top Doc in Geriatrics”, both awarded by South Jersey Magazine
- Congratulations to Christian White, DO (Class of ‘12, Geriatric Psychiatry) and his wife, Amy White, who proudly welcomed their first child, Jackson Joseph White, in May 2012.
- On July 28, 2012, Martin DeSan, DO (Class of ‘11, Geriatric Psychiatry), was married to Nicole Karczewski in Philadelphia, PA.

Have you heard about the recent triumph of a former fellow that is not listed here? Let us know, and we will include it in the next issue!
The NJISA wishes to stay connected with all its past fellows.