With the launch of the renaming of the UCLA Center on Aging to the UCLA Longevity Center this past summer, Dr. Gary Small and the leadership of the UCLA Aging and Memory Research Center (AMRC) elected to fold the research operations under the Longevity Center mantle. Now, both the laboratory staff of the former AMRC will join the staff of the UCLA Longevity Center. The team will help serve the Center’s combined educational and research missions. This new integrated organizational structure will provide the friends of the Longevity Center greater access to the latest information and research in the areas of memory health and successful aging. We look forward to the exciting innovations our researchers and staff members will develop.

The UCLA Longevity Center Research Laboratory

The UCLA Longevity Center Research Laboratory conducts cutting edge research on a variety of diagnostic tools and exploratory treatments related to brain aging and cognitive decline. Focused on the early detection of Alzheimer’s disease and related dementias, the laboratory aims to find ways to diagnose early memory impairment in hopes of inhibiting the progression of degenerative illnesses.

The laboratory has two new research studies focused on specific aging populations. In particular, researchers are currently enrolling adults with Down syndrome ages 40 and older to study the correlation between Down syndrome and Alzheimer’s disease. Staff members are also recruiting retired football players ages 35 and older to examine the effects of past traumatic brain injuries on present cognitive function.

The laboratory continues to research innovative brain imaging techniques in its biomarker detection program. This program seeks to improve current diagnostic tools used in the detection and diagnosis of dementia. Participants enrolled in this program receive MRI and PET scans and that may help clarify the source of subjective memory complaints.
Dear Friends of the UCLA Longevity Center,

Most of us want to live long and healthy lives, and one of the greatest concerns we all face is the loss of our mental abilities as we age. Every 70 seconds, another American gets Alzheimer’s disease, and by mid-century, a new case will develop every 30 seconds. Currently, 36 million people worldwide suffer from the disease. By 2050, we can expect 115 million cases of Alzheimer’s, causing unimaginable emotional distress and economic costs.

Alzheimer’s disease is one of many age-related illnesses that so far have no permanent cure to eradicate the underlying cause. Like some cancers, diabetes, high cholesterol, and hypertension, it begins in middle-age or later, worsens with time, and if left untreated, significantly diminishes one’s quality of life and shortens life expectancy.

Eventually, scientists may discover a definitive cure for Alzheimer’s disease that is as effective as an antibiotic for an infection. But for now, the most promising path is through prevention – protecting a healthy brain rather than trying to reverse already damaged neurons. The UCLA Longevity Center supports ongoing research into early detection of this devastating illness, as well as studies designed to delay the onset of symptoms. The goal is to stave off symptoms long enough so that we never experience them during our lifetime.

Although a definitive study has not yet been completed to prove that Alzheimer’s disease can be prevented, compelling scientific evidence shows that several modifiable risk factors are likely under our control. Along with my co-author Gigi Vorgan, I have written a new book that updates the latest research on Alzheimer’s prevention and presents a practical approach to living a healthy brain lifestyle for the long haul. The Semel Institute Friends will be hosting my presentation of “The Alzheimer’s Prevention Program: Keep Your Brain Healthy for the Rest of Your Life” on February 1, 2012, at 7 pm at the Deneve Auditorium at UCLA. For more information about this event, please call the 310-267-1AGE.

Given the large number of people afflicted by this disease, Alzheimer’s prevention strategies could have a considerable potential impact. Delaying symptom onset by just six months could substantially lower the prevalence of anticipated cases within the next five years.

DR. GARY SMALL
Director, UCLA Longevity Center

Anel Dzmura joined the UCLA Longevity Center administrative staff in January 2011. She formerly served as the Administrative Specialist to the Division of Geriatric Psychiatry under the leadership of Dr. Gary Small. Anel helps support all the administrative and financial needs of the Center’s many programs and services, including the stewardship of our Board of Directors.

Anel has served in a number of roles since coming to UCLA more than five years ago and has become instrumental in helping supervise Center staff and help with our many successful programs and events. Anel comes to us with a background in research, education and human resources, having worked for such organizations as UCLA’s Institute for Social Science Research, RAND Corporation, Magnolia Science Academy, and Princess Cruise Lines.

Anel graduated with a bachelor’s degree in Sociology from UCLA and continues to advance her career by participating in several professional development courses here at UCLA and elsewhere. If you have any questions or inquiries about any of the programs and services at the UCLA Longevity Center, you can reach her by email at ADzmura@mednet.ucla.edu or by calling (310) 267-1243.

“It has always been important to me to work in a field that contributes to the enhancement of human well-being and helps meet the needs of people. By finding ways of helping people live better longer, I feel the UCLA Longevity Center is doing just that. In the last few months I have been at the Center, the generosity of our donors and the commitment of the staff, center leadership, and board members have been inspirational. I feel fortunate to have the opportunity to be part of such a wonderful team.”

Anel Dzmura, Longevity Center Senior Analyst

Interested in Exploring Group Therapy?

Join UCLA’s Geriatric Psychiatry Group Therapy Sessions
Wednesdays at 12PM or 3PM
Call (310) 794-4055 for Information
*Physician Referral Required
20th Anniversary Celebration and Annual ICON Awards Gala . . . An Anniversary to Remember.
S adness is a natural part of life, but depression does not have to be a natural part of aging. Medical studies have already shown that exercise and slow movements typical of yoga and Tai Chi can help to reduce depression in seniors and improve their quality of life. To find the best ways to prevent and treat depression, researchers at UCLA are requesting participants for additional studies in this area. For people who do not qualify for these studies, they are providing resources to reduce symptoms of depression.

“Many seniors and their caregivers are faced with lots of stress, including economic downturns and multiple medical conditions. They can’t always afford expensive medical treatments,” said Helen Lavretsky, MD, a professor at UCLA who specializes in geriatric psychiatry and mind-body intervention. “I want to use everything available to promote wellness in seniors and their caregivers.”

There’s a big need for research Depressive disorders are attributed to increased illnesses, suffering, and disability and are associated with a high risk for suicide. Often drugs are prescribed, but drugs alone don’t always work. Only about 30 percent of older depressed patients fully respond to a single antidepressant drug; 30 percent have a partial response; and 30 percent don’t respond at all.

The Late-life Depression, Stress, and Wellness Program at UCLA provides state-of-the-art stress, mood, cognitive, genetic, and brain scanning assessments, as well as opportunities to volunteer for clinical studies including antidepressant and mind-body interventions. “I want to use everything available to promote wellness in seniors and their caregivers.”
newly discovered functional sodium-
dementias, and glucose metabolism using
deposits in Alzheimer's disease and related
of inflammation, pathological brain
tomography (PET) for the assessment
imaging probes for positron emission
centered on the development of molecular
My 2007 appointment as the Elizabeth
imaging, neuroscience and human disease.
and longevity in the areas of molecular
My 2007 appointment as the Elizabeth and Thomas Plott Chair in Gerontology centered on the development of molecular imaging probes for positron emission tomography (PET) for the assessment of inflammation, pathological brain deposits in Alzheimer's disease and related dementias, and glucose metabolism using newly discovered functional sodium-glucose co-transporters (SGLTs). With these probes we have investigated biochemical and pathophysiological processes in humans for the first time. Using brain diffusible markers, we created a new method for measuring the physical evidence of Alzheimer's disease by detecting the abnormal proteins that are the hallmarks of the disease in the living human brain. We also created the only available in vivo probes for detection of tau aggregates in the human brain and developed methods for measuring neuronal losses, establishing patterns of disease evolution in living subjects and a procedure for determining the therapeutic effects of experimental drugs. We also established new imaging probes as inflammatory markers and determined – also for the first time in living human subjects – the presence of alternative mechanisms of brain glucose utilization – via SGLTs – previously unrecognized. I have published more than 300 scientific papers in peer reviewed journals, receiving more than 13,500 citations. I’m the founding editor-in-chief of Molecular Imaging and Biology, which is currently the official journal of the World Molecular Imaging Congress and the World Molecular Imaging Society. Most recent honors and awards since my appointment as a Plott chair include participation as an invited speaker at the Nobel Conference in Molecular Imaging in Stockholm (2007), as the UCLA Roger Macomber Honorary Lecturer (2009), as invited speaker at the Meetings of the Minds Conference, Monaco (2010), and also receiving the ‘Achievement award in molecular imaging’ at the World Molecular Imaging Congress in Kyoto, Japan (2010) and the establishment of the “Annual Jorge R. Barrio Lecture for advances in Clinical Research” bestowed by the World Molecular Imaging Society (WMIS)(2011).

Norm Greenidge
Norm Greenidge is a Senior Vice President and Managing Director of Northern Trust with responsibility for managing a wealth advisory team that provides a variety of client service activities, including wealth management, banking and trust services to affluent individuals. Prior to his current position, he was Senior Vice President within the Wealth Strategies Group in the Westwood office. He was responsible for marketing Northern’s wealth management, banking and trust services to affluent individuals, families and organizations in Southern California.

Norm earned his Bachelor of Arts degree in Marketing from Howard University in Washington, D.C.. He and his wife, Josie, reside in Westchester with their daughter. Norm is a Board Member of the 100 Black Men of Los Angeles.

Marilyn Wolk
Marilyn Stein Wolk is a native of Los Angeles and earned her B.A. from UCLA. She is a founder and participating member of a family-run pre-school in Pacific Palisades and active in the Early Childhood Education (ECE) program at Webster Elementary School in Malibu. She created and chaired the Malibu branch of the American Cancer Society, served as secretary of the Malibu Colony Homeowner’s Association and assisted with fund raisers for Brentwood School where her children attended.

In 1989 Marilyn joined Mc Morrow Associates as a legal recruiter. There she started a division of Corporate Counsel Search retained by companies such as Trust Company of the West; Big Five Sporting Goods; Westfield International; HBO; NBC; CBS; Guess; Kaiser Aluminum; Mattel, Inc.; Saban Entertainment; Sony Pictures Entertainment; Tesco Corporation;TRW and UCLA. In 1997 Marilyn started her own legal search and placement firm, Wolk Associates, which was listed in California Law Business as one of the “Headhunters Extraordinaire” in a survey of the top 20 law search firms in Northern and Southern California. After several years of successful placements, Marilyn retired from the search business. She is currently focusing on her board positions in order to contribute her leadership and organizational skills to the non-profit arena.
Jay McMahan’s incredible life came to a peaceful end on Tuesday, May 3, 2011. A native Californian, Jay began his early education at the Hollywood Military Academy in Brentwood and later at the Harvard Military Academy in North Hollywood. His sportsmanship and drive shined even then as he received Harvard’s football MVP in both his junior and senior years.

After marrying Jacqueline Logan-Jones, who would be his wife of sixty-eight years, and serving his country in the WWII Army Air Force, Jay took over McMahan’s Furniture. He grew the family business into a fifty store chain throughout the western US before partnering with Howard Lester to purchase a small kitchenware business. The pair took Williams-Sonoma public in 1983 with Jay serving as Director until 2003.

Mr. McMahan has been a generous supporter of our UCLA Longevity Center research programs, especially projects on early detection and innovative treatments of Alzheimer’s disease. His wonderful sense of humor and purpose inspired us all. We miss him terribly.

Max and Kiki moved to Los Angeles, where he completed his residency training in radiology. He then moved the family to Casablanca, Morocco, where he served in the Air Force during the Korean War. The family finally settled in the San Fernando Valley, where he became a prominent radiologist. After 30 years in private practice, he joined the UCLA Faculty at Olive Valley, where he became a prominent radiologist. After 30 years in private practice, he joined the UCLA Faculty at Olive Medical Center, where he enjoyed teaching young doctors in training for more than two decades.

Max was an avid athlete – nearly every day of the week you could see him jogging or playing tennis at Sherman Oaks Park. He also loved classical music, solving crossword puzzles, and lifelong learning. He gave generously to many charities and was a long-time supporter of the UCLA Longevity Center. We will all miss his warmth, humor and kindness.
Calendar of Events

Brain Boot Camp
An intensive, three-hour course that provides instruction from UCLA neuropsychologists.
Upcoming Classes:
January 24 | February 28 | March 20 | April 17
Cost: $300 ~ To register, call (310) 794-4055

Memory Training
An innovative four-week course that teaches practical techniques designed to improve memory.
Registration open for 2012 courses
Cost: $50 ~ To register, call (310) 794-0680

Senior Scholars
A program for older adults who wish to audit UCLA undergraduate courses on campus.
Registration Deadline: December 16th
Winter Quarter Begins: January 3rd
Cost: $150 per class ~ To register, call (310) 794-0679

UCLA Lecture Series for Caregivers
The Alzheimer's Caregiver Education and Support (ACES) lectures provide vital, up-to-date information to community members caring for a loved one affected by the disease.
Series begins January 18, 2012
Contact: (310) 267-1243

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