

# Newsletter

## 2002 ICON Award Raises \$350,000 to Support Center on Aging

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**T**his year's ICON Awards Banquet, the annual fundraising event for the UCLA Center on Aging, garnered more than \$350,000 in support of the Center's ongoing work to enhance and extend productive and healthy lives through research and education. The event drew more than 450 attendees to the Beverly Hilton Hotel in Beverly Hills last June 8 to honor the ICON Award recipients and to celebrate a year of progress at the Center.

The 2002 ICON recipients, former ABC 20/20 anchor Hugh Downs and philanthropist Robert H. Ahmanson, were selected to receive the honor because of their outstanding and ongoing contributions to society, and for personifying the Center on Aging's "Live Better, Longer" motto. Downs' career in broadcasting spans more than 60 years as a reporter, newscaster, narrator and anchor. He is an Emmy Award winner, author of nine books, and renowned lecturer. Ahmanson has long been recognized for his leadership in the finance industry, devotion to philanthropy and ongoing support of UCLA. He is the former director of H.F. Ahmanson & Co., and Home Savings & Loan of America, among other companies. His philanthropic involvement includes serving as president of the Ahmanson Foundation, honorary life trustee of the Los Angeles County Museum of Art, and trustee of the Research to Prevent Blindness Foundation in New York.

The awards ceremony was hosted by entertainer and philanthropist Art Linkletter. Among those attending were celebrities including Nanette Fabray, Shelley Fabares, Cyd

Charisse, Tony Martin, Judge Joe Wapner, DEAR ABBY, Stan Freberg and astronaut Buzz Aldrin. Tim Noonan, CEO and president of Lockton Insurance Brokers Inc., served as event chair, and Janssen Pharmaceutica Products, L.P. as presenting sponsor.

"We are pleased with the growing success of this event, since it supports the Center's ongoing activities and fuels critical research that will have an impact on the quality of life for older adults," said Dr. Gary Small, director of the UCLA Center on Aging. "We thank Mr. Downs and Mr. Ahmanson, Janssen Pharmaceutica Products, our dinner committee members, and all those who continue to support the Center."

The UCLA Center on Aging is a non-profit organization entirely supported by private and corporate donations. For more information about the event, or to learn how you can support the Center, call Helen Berman at (310) 794-0676. ❖

*[See more ICON Award photos on pages 6-7]*





## Bringing Memory Training to the Community: A Long-Term Dream Becomes Reality

I have been studying memory for many years, and the topic has always fascinated me. Memory makes our lives rich and complex, and improves our experiences as we apply our lifetime of acquired knowledge and perspectives to each new situation that we face.

It is an ironic fact of aging that memory is often diminished with the passing of years. However, research has demonstrated that memory training techniques can improve memory performance at any age. The most current information available on memory and how it can be strengthened and preserved, based on my research and that of other experts from across the nation, has now been incorporated into a memory training pilot program that will soon be offered in senior centers and other locations around Southern California.

In many ways, the realization of the “Memory Training for Older Adults in the Community” program ideally demonstrates the motto of the UCLA Center on Aging. This program will be brought to locations in the community and offered without charge, making it broadly accessible to those that cannot come to UCLA or are not able to pay for a private class. It provides us with another training venue for UCLA students who are interested in gerontology, and volunteer opportunities for older adults. And it has the potential to help thousands of seniors live better as they live longer.

Through our pilot program, we will offer three memory training courses, each eight sessions long, at two community sites, for a total of six courses over this academic year. UCLA students will participate as course leaders in order to help prepare our next generation of

specialists on aging. Older adults who are interested in aging-related issues and want a meaningful volunteer experience will also be memory trainers. Expertise for the program will come from several UCLA faculty experts including geriatric psychologist Linda Ercoli, retired educator Arline Halper, and myself. This will be an educational experience that will provide information for the enrichment of all.

Memory impairment in aging adults is very common. In fact, 41 percent of those ages 50 to 59 experience some memory loss, and that number rises to 52 percent for those ages 60 to 69. We tend to forget short-term facts such as peoples’ names, important dates, appointments and meetings, where we parked, and where we set the car keys, while we will perfectly recall facts and events that happened years ago. This diminishment is at least in part due to inattention, and simple techniques can help us focus on the things we need to retain. Research has informed us that memory training programs give individuals a better sense of their memory ability, improving confidence, and objective memory performance. The measured improvement can last for years after the training is completed, and can benefit people of all ages, particularly older adults.

I am grateful for the generosity of the donors whose gifts have made this program possible, and am very proud of this innovative program. If the pilot sessions go as well as we expect, this model could be shared with other organizations around the country, giving it enormous potential for positive change in people. And improving the lives of older adults is our most important mission of all. ❖

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Gay Small".

# Spring Community Meeting Explores Housing Options for Seniors

The UCLA Center on Aging's Spring Community Meeting featured a panel discussion that presented attendees with alternative housing options for seniors who may be involved in a life transition, and offered insights into the psychological and social factors that may accompany such a transition. The meeting, titled "Housing Options - Opportunities for Change: Living Arrangements in Response to Life Transitions," was held April 18, 2002. It was presented by the UCLA Center on Aging, and sponsored by Jon and Chet Lappen.

Helen Kelley, former president of Immaculate Heart College, served as moderator for the meeting. Panelists were Susan Alexman, director of the West Hollywood Comprehensive Senior Center, and Janet Witkin, executive director of Alternative Living for the Aging.

Ms. Witkin stressed the importance of community to human health and happiness. She explained that, when dealing with stressful transitions such as a change in living situations, achieving independence through interdependence is key. Various options that involve obtaining assistance from others to achieve or maintain independence include living with roommates, cooperative housing communities, and individual apartment units within a residential complex housing other independent older adults.

Ms. Alexman reviewed the life situations that could result in a housing transition, including loss of a spouse or social network, financial concerns, changes in health, or the desire to move closer to family members. In some cases, living in a house can become a problem when maintenance becomes too physically or financially taxing, or if its location isolates one from the community or family members. Ms. Alexman reviewed several alternative living arrangements that could be of benefit to older adults:

❖ **Retirement Centers** are facilities where residents are mobile and very independent. While residents take care of themselves in their own apartments, meals and/or housekeeping services may be available. Social activities, transportation and security may also be available at some of these comprehensive centers.



*Susan Alexman, Director, West Hollywood Comprehensive Senior Center; Chet Lappen, Center on Aging Board of Trustees member and event sponsor; Helen Kelly, former president of Immaculate Heart College; Janet Witkin, Executive Director, Alternate Living for the Aging; Jon Lappen, event sponsor; and Center on Aging Director Dr. Gary Small at April 2002 Community Meeting.*

❖ **Assisted Living Facilities** provide housing, group meals, personal care, support services, and social activities to older adults in a residential setting. Some assisted living facilities provide limited health care services. Costs of such centers can run as high as \$1,000 to \$3,000 per month or more.

❖ **Residential Care Facilities** (also known as board and care homes) are smaller in scale than assisted living facilities. They provide a room rather than a separate apartment, meals, and help with daily activities, but typically do not provide medical services. Costs of these facilities tend to be lower (\$350 to \$3,000 per month), and may be covered by Supplemental Security Income (SSI).

❖ **Congregate Senior Housing** is a term describing small apartments for older adults who are independent and do not need personal care or assistance with activities of daily living. These facilities generally offer group meals in order to promote a social community feeling, and some offer various social activities as well.

❖ **Homesharing** can be a good solution for seniors who are independent but want to live with others or reduce living costs. Two or more people generally agree to share a home or apartment. Each resident usually has a private bedroom while sharing the kitchen and other living spaces. Chores and cooking may also be shared, or negotiated as partial rent payment.

Additional information on housing options for older adults is available on the U.S. Administration on Aging website at:

[www.aoa.dhhs.gov/aoa/eldractn/retrlivg.html](http://www.aoa.dhhs.gov/aoa/eldractn/retrlivg.html)

or on the AARP website at:

[www.aarp.org/confacts/housing/housingoptions/html](http://www.aarp.org/confacts/housing/housingoptions/html) ❖

# News From the Center

## Teach For America Program Recognizes Mentor Contributions

Retired educators who serve as mentors to new teachers throughout the Los Angeles area through the Center on Aging's Teach For America mentor program were recognized at an event held May 14 at the UCLA Faculty Center. At the event, 32 retired teachers were saluted for sharing their time and the benefit of their experience with 37 new teachers.

Mimi Perloff, president of the Center on Aging's Board of Trustees, presented certificates of recognition to the 32 mentors. Anne Tubridy, a volunteer mentor who served as chair of the Mentor Advisory Committee for 2001-02, received special recognition. Ms Tubridy presented her fellow mentors with gifts of chocolate as a token of her appreciation for their efforts.

The event was rounded out with a presentation by Dr. James Birren, associate director of the Center on Aging. Dr. Birren spoke about using the gift of long life, and the importance of staying active throughout life.



*Mimi Perloff, President, Center on Aging Board of Trustees and Anne Tubridy, Chair, Mentor Advisory Committee, at Teach for America Recognition Event, May 2002*

## Students, Faculty and Community Meet at Research Conference on Aging

More than 175 researchers, students and community members came together at the UCLA Faculty Center to learn about the latest findings and ongoing work in the field of aging science at the seventh annual Research Conference on Aging. The program, presented by the UCLA Center on Aging and the UCLA Multicampus Program in Geriatric



*Board of Trustees members Art Linkletter, Matthew Solomon and Tricia Grey at the 7th annual UCLA Research Conference on Aging poster session.*

Medicine and Gerontology, was co-sponsored by Janssen Pharmaceutica Products L.P. and Forest Pharmaceuticals.

A record number of 55 scientific posters were featured at the conference, covering work in the areas of basic science, clinical medicine, social science, health services, and education. Posters were presented in an hour-long session, which included enthusiastic discussion between presenters and members of the audience.

In addition to the scientific poster session, seven speakers presented new research now underway at UCLA in fields spanning pathology, medicine, neurology, neurogenetics, social welfare, and public policy. The keynote speaker of the conference was Dr. Lester Breslow, who presented an address titled "Research on Health of the Aging - A Public Health Perspective."

"The Center's annual research conference has become a tradition here at UCLA," said Dr. Gary Small, director. "It gives us an opportunity to support and feature researchers doing work in scientific fields related to aging, while we promote community education. It was very rewarding to see such a large turnout from both the scientific community and the public."

## Dr. Gary Small Featured at Book and Author Luncheon

Center on Aging director Dr. Gary Small discussed his new book, *The Memory Bible*, at a luncheon held on September 18 at the Four Seasons Hotel. Dr. Small discussed current research on memory and how to improve mental performance. He talked about the impact of food, medicine, exercise, alcohol, stress and other lifestyle choices on the aging of the brain. In addition, Dr. Small demonstrated some of the exercises that can be used to remember names, location of objects, and other



*“The Memory Bible” by Dr. Gary Small, M.D.*

common memory concerns that people experience.

Roberta Haft, Chair of the Book and Author Luncheon and Center on Aging Board of Trustee member, reported that more than 200 people attended the event. Guests responded enthusiastically to Dr. Small’s talk, enjoyed a beautiful lunch, and received an autographed copy of his book.



***HAPPY 90TH BIRTHDAY, ART LINKLETTER!***

*Lois and Art Linkletter with Dr. S. Jerome Tamkin celebrate Mr. Linkletter's 90th birthday.*

## **Welcome Jean Friedman to the Center Board of Trustees**

**J**ean Friedman has joined the board of trustees of the UCLA Center on Aging. Ms. Friedman holds a masters’ degree in education from Harvard University and a BA from CSU Northridge. She has done advanced study in Jewish studies, radio/TV/film, theater arts, and social work.

Ms. Friedman has professional experience in real estate development, and fine art sales. She currently volunteers her time with many organizations including the Jewish Federation Council’s Council on Jewish Life, and Commission on Jewish Arts and Culture. She is a founder and board member of the Streisand Center for Cultural Arts at UCLA. ❖

*By Jacquie Michels*

## **IN MEMORIAM**

### **Irving Cooper**

Irving Cooper passed away in March 2002 following a battle with cancer. He was a Board of Trustee member since 1994, most recently serving as Secretary. Irv served in World War II aboard an aircraft carrier. After the war he started a manufacturing company. Other business projects included building a Florida retirement community and the organization of the first free standing dialysis center.

Mr. Cooper was a dedicated friend of the Center on Aging. Over the years he has supported pilot research programs, introduced the Center to speakers interested in a variety of health topics; and most recently, he and his wife Helga, established The Helga and Irving Cooper Postdoctoral Training in Aging Program.

His wife of 30 years, Helga, three children and seven grandchildren survive him.

### **Toni Michels**

Board of Trustee member Toni Michels died suddenly on February 8. She has been a Board member since 1999. Toni held a Certificate in Gerontology and a MSW from USC. Most recently (since 1973) she had a private practice, and from 1974-1980 was the Director of Mental Health Services, California Medical Group Health Plan.

Toni was a vital and bright woman who was especially interested in the Center's memory training in the community program, and in assisting the Center to increase its donor base.

Services were held on February 10. She leaves a son and daughter-in-law and their two children, as well as a daughter.

# Sixth Annual ICON Awards Raise \$350,000



The UCLA Center on Aging is privileged to have the following corporations provide generous support.

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*Top left: ICON honorees Robert H. Ahmanson (left) and Hugh Downs (right) with ICON event chair Timothy Noonan (center).*

*Top Right: Left to right: Gail Oppenheimer, Cyd Charisse, Tony Martin, Gerald Oppenheimer and Dr. Gerald S. Levey, Dean, Geffen School of Medicine at UCLA.*

*Bottom left: Nanette Fabray, Dr. Howard House*

*Bottom right: Art Linkletter, Center on Aging director Dr. Gary Small, Juli Hutner.*

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## Calendar of Events

### "Memory Training Techniques: Never forget names and faces again"

Gary W. Small, M.D., Director, UCLA Center on Aging  
Wednesday, November 6, 2 p.m.  
Skirball Cultural Center  
2701 North Sepulveda Boulevard, Los Angeles

### "Lifestyle Choices to Maximize Memory: Healthy brain diet, stress reduction and other lifestyle strategies"

Gary W. Small, M.D., Director, UCLA Center on Aging  
Wednesday, February 12, 2003, 2 p.m.  
Skirball Cultural Center

### "Individualizing a Memory Fitness Program: Making memory work for you"

Gary W. Small, M.D., Director, UCLA Center on Aging  
Saturday, May 3, 2003, 10 a.m.  
Auditorium, Neuropsychiatric Institute  
760 Westwood Plaza

### Annual ICON Award Event

Saturday, June 7, 2003  
Beverly Hilton Hotel

### 8th Annual Research Conference on Aging

June 2003 - date to be announced  
UCLA Faculty Center

*Contact the UCLA Center on Aging for information (310) 794-0676 or [www.aging.ucla.edu](http://www.aging.ucla.edu)*

## Ten Tips for Healthy Aging

*from the National Institute on Aging*

- ❖ Eat a balanced diet, including five helpings of fruits and vegetables a day.
- ❖ Exercise regularly (check with a doctor before starting an exercise program).
- ❖ Get regular health check-ups.
- ❖ Don't smoke (it's never too late to quit).
- ❖ Practice safety habits at home to prevent falls and fractures. Always wear your seatbelt in a car.
- ❖ Stay in contact with family and friends. Stay active through work, play, and community.
- ❖ Avoid overexposure to the sun and the cold.
- ❖ If you drink, moderation is the key. When you drink, let someone else drive.
- ❖ Keep personal and financial records in order to simplify budgeting and investing. Plan long-term housing and money needs.
- ❖ Keep a positive attitude toward life. Do things that make you happy.

# News Briefs

## Study Shows Need for Geriatric Training in Trauma Centers

According to a recent study, medical treatment for traumatic injuries in older adults may be complicated by other age-related medical conditions that are not always considered during treatment or when planning extended care options. Creating interdisciplinary trauma teams may improve identification and management of complex and overlapping health problems in older adults.

The study, led by Dr. Therese S. Richmond and colleagues from the University of Pennsylvania School of Nursing and Applied Research Services in Atlanta, was published in the *Journal of the American Geriatrics Society*.

The researchers analyzed trauma center data collected in Pennsylvania over a 10-year period. They concluded that the standard injury severity score currently used by doctors does not account for the many health problems that older adults may experience following a traumatic injury. They suggest that a geriatric consultation service be integrated into the staffs of trauma teams across the country to help improve outcomes and the quality of life for older patients in the years following their injuries.

## Ginkgo Biloba? Maybe You Should Forget It

A new study suggests that ginkgo biloba, the dietary supplement that claims to improve memory and mental function with regular use, may not be a wonder herb after all.

A new study, published in the *Journal of the American Medical Association*, included 230 people over age 60 who had no signs of memory impairment. The results showed that the ginkgo biloba supplements did no more to improve the memory than placebo pills over a six-week period.

According to Dr. Paul Solomon of Williams College in Massachusetts, his study involved the same type of rigorous controls required by the FDA in standard drug testing, although supplements are not currently FDA-regulated. Early studies of ginkgo that suggested it improved memory and mental function in only four weeks had methodological flaws, according to the researchers. The findings of these early studies helped turn the supplement into a multi-million dollar industry.

Critics of the news study suggest it does not address whether larger doses taken over a longer period of time would be more effective, or whether the supplement aids those who have mild dementia or memory impairment.

## What are Antioxidants, and Do You Need to Take Them?

Should you add antioxidants to your daily supplement list? According to the National Institute on Aging, antioxidants are natural substances readily available in many fruits and vegetables, especially those with dark or bright colors, and some are produced by the body. Because they help neutralize harmful oxygen free radicals, they are a healthy part of your diet.

Antioxidants may help prevent some of the damage caused by free radicals as we age. They may also help prevent certain diseases such as cancer, cataracts, and heart disease. However, most experts agree that it is a good idea to increase antioxidant levels, either by eating five servings a day of fresh fruits and vegetables, or else taking supplement pills, in order to increase your antioxidant levels, or both.

## Testosterone Levels Linked to Higher Cognitive Function in Older Men

Naturally occurring levels of testosterone are associated with better mental function in older men, according to a study published in the *Journal of the American Geriatrics Society*. The study was conducted by researchers at UCSF and San Francisco VA Medical Center.

The researchers measured both cognitive function and sex hormone levels of approximately 300 men with a mean age of 73. They found that men with higher levels of testosterone had better scores on three cognitive function tests, and were less likely to have cognitive impairment. The finding supports their initial theory that higher levels of naturally occurring forms of testosterone help prevent cognitive decline as men age.

### The UCLA Center On Aging Newsletter

Phone: (310) 794-0676

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

Director Dr. Gary W. Small

Executive Editor Helen Berman

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# Tributes

FEBRUARY – JUNE 2002

The Center on Aging Tribute Fund provides a meaningful opportunity to honor or remember a family member, friend, associate or other special person. Tribute cards are promptly sent to your designated recipient and will be noted in our newsletter. Your tax deductible contribution provides the Center with resources to fund educational and research programs.

**Happy 60th Anniversary to  
Mr. and Mrs. Leo Dozoretz**  
*Kiki and Max Small*

**Happy 75th Birthday to  
Barbara Rothchild**  
*Ruth and Cecil Greenwold*

**Happy 80th Birthday to  
Elaine Dozoretz**  
*Kiki and Max Small*

**Happy Birthday to Tricia Grey**  
*Helen Berman*  
*Syd Whalley*

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**In Memory of the residents  
who recently passed away  
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