



# Aging SUCCESSFULLY



GATEWAY GERIATRIC EDUCATION CENTER



## Join us for the 34th Annual Summer Geriatric Institute

Join us June 12th and 13th for the annual Summer Geriatric Institute. This year's event promises to continue the longstanding tradition of excellence in interprofessional geriatric education while offering a new format and several new topic areas. The 2023 event will be offered in a hybrid format. For those who wish to attend the Institute in person, the event will be held at the SLU Learning Resource Center SLU. All lectures and selected workshops will be offered virtually through zoom. A recent addition to the annual Institute has been a full-day training for those who want to learn Cognitive Stimulation Therapy (CST) facilitation. This year's CST training will be offered in a hybrid format on June 14th and will fulfill the first requirement for CST Certification for Practitioners.

New topic areas this year includes lectures on behavioral health issues for older adults and language decline in persons with dementia and workshops including a live family interview with a family experiencing dementia with reflections and insights from a team of geriatric clinicians, two interactive workshops introducing a fall prevention program, Matter of Balance, and a geriatric escape room activity. Two additional new features include lunchtime options to listen to a recorded lecture by Professor Emeritus John E. Morley on the history of geriatrics and an in-person poster session with graduate students who will share their research and clinical work.

We have asked selected Institute speakers to provide a brief introduction to their presentations starting on page three. **Follow this link to register, or see page three for more details.**



## Projects, Awards, and Recognitions

- **Professor Emeritus and former GWEP Program Director, Dr. John Morley** was honored by colleagues, Drs. Aprahamian, Merchante, and Ouslander, with a tribute, "Giant in Geriatrics: A Tribute to Professor John Edward Morley" in the *Journal of Nutrition, Health, and Aging*.
- **Andrea Vaughan, MS, CCC-SLP, BCS-S, Assistant Clinical Professor**, Department of Speech, Language, and Hearing Sciences received Saint Louis University Doisy College of Health Sciences 2022 Distinguished Teaching Award. Vaughan's current work includes funding from SPEAK OUT!® & LOUD Crowd® Program Development Grant for the Parkinson Voice Project, two language-based groups and a CST group for persons who have experienced strokes and dementia.
- **NHC Maryland Heights skilled nursing facility**, a longtime partner with SLU Geriatrics is ranked at one of the 2023 top ten nursing homes in Missouri. Dr. Angela Sanford and Susan Elliott, ANP, serve as the SLU medical team at the facility. To see the Missouri list, visit their website [HERE](#).

## GWEP-related Publications

- **Henderson-Kalb, J., Berg-Weger, M., Ramel, M., Fitzgerald, J., Hawthorne, K. & Vaughan, A.** (2022) A Student-Led Geriatric Assessment Clinic: Interprofessional education with an older adult population, *Gerontology & Geriatrics Education*, 1-12. View the online publication [HERE](#).

## GWEP-related Publications

- **Zubatsky, M., Khoo, Y., Lundy, J., Blessing, B., Berg-Weger, M., Hayden, D., & Morley, J.E.** (2022). Comparisons of Cognitive Stimulation Therapy between Community versus Hospital-Based Settings: A Multi-Site Study. *Journal of Applied Gerontology*. DOI: 10.1177/07334648221130676
- **Lach, H.W., Berg-Weger, M., Washington, S., Malmstrom, T.K., & Morley, J.E.** (2022). Fall Risks by Setting: Findings from a Geriatric Screening Program. *Journal of Applied Gerontology*. DOI: 10.1177/07334648221124912

## GWEP Team Presentations:

- **Dr. George Grossberg, MD**, delivered the 33rd Annual Lurie Psychiatric Lecture at the University of Cincinnati. His lecture was entitled: "Lifestyle Modification: An Active Treatment to Prevent/Delay Alzheimer's Disease".
- **Andrea Vaughan, MS, CCC-SLP, BCS-S**, presented "Clinical Swallowing Evaluation for the Medical Speech Language Pathologies" at the 2022 Missouri Speech and Hearing Association convention and "Advanced FEES Rating & Analysis" at the Midwestern Adult Communication Disorders Group Conference.
- **GWEP Program Director, Marla Berg-Weger, PhD, LCSW, Executive Director, Gateway Geriatric Education Center**, presented "Minimizing the Impact of Loneliness & Social Isolation on Aging" at the Montana GWEP's Optimizing Aging Now! in Billings, Montana.

# Meeting the Mental Health Needs of Older Adults



## Nirmala Dhar, LCSW, ACSW

Did you know that suicide deaths are highest for older adults, specifically older men? That the majority of older adults who died by suicide saw their primary care provider one month before dying by suicide? Binge drinking is one of the fastest growing trends for older adults? Fear of falling after a fall is a common anxiety disorder? Hearing loss is a risk factor for depression and dementia? One in ten older adults are victims of elder abuse?

This presentation will provide an exploration of mental health in older adults, including: demographic shifts and prevalence of mental health issues, clinical focus and principles of best practice, knowledge of assessment and screening tools, and evidence based best practices.

**Presenter:** Nirmala Dhar, LCSW, ACSW, Older Adult Behavioral Health Services Coordinator. licensed clinical social worker with a Masters degree from the Brown School of Social Work, Washington University and Bombay University, India. She has 36 years of experience in behavioral health in the public sector in Missouri, New Jersey, and Oregon. As a senior policy analyst and the Older Adult Behavioral Health Services Coordinator for Oregon Health Authority's Health Systems Division, she is the Project Director for the Older Adult Behavioral Health Initiative and PASRR Level II (SMI) Coordinator. She worked for Clackamas County Behavioral Health for 18 years, 10 years as the County geriatric mental health specialist. She brings her strong social work and faith values to her work



animated by anti-oppressive practice and the dignity and respect for all who we serve. Her career focuses on the values of social justice and equity with a passionate focus on disability justice as it pertains to individuals with serious mental illness and all its intersections. Her current equity interests extend to individuals with complex care needs, promoting cross sector collaboration and challenging silos to genuinely improve the lives of individuals with complex needs, and those who are most challenged and marginalized as an equity imperative. She provides training and enjoys coaching and mentoring new clinicians. Professional interest and teaching/coaching include positive aging, health ethics, social justice, workforce development, quality improvement, health metrics, mental health and the law and health transformation.

## Summer Geriatric Institute registration

**Follow this link** to sign up for our 34th annual Geriatric Summer Institute. We are looking forward to another educational, fantastic year of this program.

- **June 12th and 13th:** Caring for Older Adults and Families
  - 7:45am-5:00pm
  - Offered virtually or in-person
- **June 14th:** Cognitive Stimulation Therapy facilitator training
  - 8:00am-4:00pm
  - Offered virtually or in-person



# Cognitive-Communicative Decline: Supporting Language in Older Adults



## Andrea Vaughan, MS, CCC-SLP, BCS-S

Communication can be defined as the process of exchanging information and ideas. The ability to communicate effectively is important at any age, but it is vital for older adults to convey thoughts and opinions as well as concerns to healthcare professionals. Language is an integral component of communication and is one of several neurocognitive domains. When impaired, it is often the most noticeable and frustrating element of cognitive-communicative decline. It is often minimized by other cognitive deficits like memory or executive functioning. Often well-intentioned caregivers or healthcare professionals cannot provide the patient with enough time to fully realize their thoughts verbally, leaving the patient feeling discouraged and misunderstood. This presentation will discuss the language-based communication changes in older adults or deficits in patients with dementia and strategies to improve their communication skills. It will review the components of language and provide examples of language deficit characteristics. Specific treatment strategies

and cueing for language deficits in older adults or patients with dementia to improve overall communication will be presented.

**Presenter:** Andrea Vaughan, MS, CCC-SLP, BCS-S, Assistant Clinical Professor, Saint Louis University Department of Speech, Language, and Hearing Sciences.



Andrea received Bachelor and Master of Science degrees in Speech-Language Pathology at Southern Illinois University in Carbondale and is board certified in Swallowing and Swallowing Disorders. She has extensive experience in medical speech-language pathology in the Saint Louis area in outpatient, skilled nursing, and acute care facilities. She teaches multiple academic medical speech-language pathology courses and clinically trains graduate students in the evaluation and treatment of acquired swallowing and communication disorders in medically complex patients. She has specific experience treating patients with Parkinson's disease, dementia, stroke, head and neck cancer, and older adults.



## POST-BACCALAUREATE CERTIFICATE: GERONTOLOGY

Emphasizing competencies in  
interprofessional care of older adults,  
highlights include:

- Fifteen credit hours, including interprofessional and experiential opportunities.
- Designed for dietitians, nutritionists, health care workers, occupational and physical therapists, speech-language pathologists, nurses, social workers, and more.
- Courses focus on foundational, interactional, and contextual competencies



## Contact Dr. Wallace

- **Dr. Cara Wallace:** Associate Professor, Saint Louis University School of Social Work. Contact here at [cara.wallace@slu.edu](mailto:cara.wallace@slu.edu)

## Learn More

- [Click here to visit our website.](#)





# Addressing the Fear of Falling for Older Adults



## Debbie Blessing, B.S., A.T. Still University GWEP Coordinator

The Centers for Disease Control (CDC) reports that the health-related costs of falls for adults over the age of 65 is more than \$50 billion annually with Medicare and Medicaid bearing the majority of the costs. Often a fall occurs due to multiple contributing factors such as low blood pressure, sensory declines including hearing and vision, frailty, environmental factors, and the fear of falling. There are a number of interventions available in the clinical and community-based settings to reduce falls. One such intervention is A Matter of Balance.

**A Matter of Balance** is an evidence-based program that recognizes that the fear of falling is often associated with reduced physical activity, decreased quality of life, depression, and increased frailty. The program is designed to reduce the fear of falling and increase physical activity through an 8-week program that focuses on group discussion, problem-solving, skill building, and exercise training. Learn more about the intervention, how it is implemented in the community, and take part in the exercise portion of

the program that can be done from a seated or standing position.

**Presenter:** Debbie Blessing, B.S., A.T. Still University GWEP Coordinator. Debbie holds Bachelor of Science degrees in Psychology from Buena Vista University and



Communications from Missouri State University. She worked 20 years for the Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services, Division of Senior and Disability Services as an Adult Protective Service investigator and supervisor. For eight years, she has been the Geriatric Workforce Enhancement Program (GWEP) project coordinator for A.T. Still University Area Health Education Centers (ATSU) Program where she facilitates group and individual Cognitive Stimulation Therapy in a variety of settings. She is the primary developer and coordinator for the individual cognitive stimulation therapy (iCST) elective course for ATSU medical students and health professions students. She is also a master trainer for the evidence-based program A Matter of Balance.

## GROWING STRONGER

# TOGETHER

A STRENGTH TRAINING PROGRAM FOR OLDER ADULTS



### GET TRAINED

- Connect with American Physical Therapy Association Board Certified Geriatric Clinical Specialist in Physical Therapy, Jill and Kelly, to explore in person or virtual training, including training Toolkit and videos. Contact [jill.fitzgerald@health.slu.edu](mailto:jill.fitzgerald@health.slu.edu) to begin your training journey!

### WHAT WE DO

- **Educate** Program Leaders to help them successfully implement and maintain the Growing Stronger Program.
- **Facilitate** the implementation of the Growing Stronger Program in community centers and any other place where older adults come together.
- **Improve** the health and well-being of older adults by increasing access to structured, safe, and effective strength training programs.

## Contact us to Learn More

- **Kelly Hawthorne**, PT, DPT, GCS, CEEAA, Saint Louis University
- **Jill FitzGerald**, PT, DPT, GCS, CSCS, CEEAA, Saint Louis University



# Live Family Interview



## Max Zubatsky, PhD, LMFT

Throughout the years, mental health-focused conferences have included family therapy sessions and interviews in front of a live audience. This narrative experience allows a leading figure in the field to demonstrate their specific therapy approach to a complex family case. The therapist and their reflecting team process the case from different angles and offer insights for the audience to absorb. While this approach was a highlight at many regional and national conferences, the reflecting team talks have not been incorporated in recent years due to both time constraints and the format of recent conferences. Recently, there has been a strong push to bring back open perspectives of illness and disability at conferences. To practice in the family systems framework, the wisdom of the family “comes from the family themselves.” Thus, our committee has explored ways to honor the voices of families navigating through illness, while providing several professional perspectives that help enrich the conversation.

**At this year’s Summer Geriatric Institute**, we will host our first ever live family interview. This setup will be a combination of a professional reflecting team and brief family interview in front of conference attendees. The interview will highlight a family who is providing care for an older adult family member, taking the group through the stages of caregiving, communication patterns, and challenges that were experienced. A facilitator will conduct a brief assessment to get more information and perspectives of the family navigating through a older loved one’s illness. A reflecting team of four will

identify strengths in the family unit and recommendations to help members cope through their journey. The reflecting team panel will consist of a Mental Health Professional, an Occupational Therapist, a Nurse Practitioner, and a Geriatrician. The audience will then share their reflections on the entire reflecting team experience. We hope that many of you at the conference can attend this innovative session.

**Facilitator:** Max Zubatsky, PhD, LMFT. Dr. Zubatsky is an Associate Professor and Director, Medical Family Therapy Program in Family and Community Medicine



at Saint Louis University and serves as the GWEP Associate Director. He is a Licensed Marriage and Family Therapist and state approved Supervisor. Dr. Zubatsky received his doctorate in Marriage and Family Therapy from the University of Minnesota and post-doctoral fellowship from the Chicago Center for Family Health in Medical Family Therapy. Dr. Zubatsky’s research and clinical interests include caregiving, geriatrics, integrated behavioral health, residency education and provider wellness. He has published over 20 articles, media briefs, and book chapters in the mental health field. He is the founding Director of The Aging and Memory Clinic at Saint Louis University, a specialty clinic that offers comprehensive services to older adults with dementia and their families.

## Dementia Across the Continuum

Exploring Best Practices in Every Setting

Workshop brought to you by:



4/28  
2023

• [Click here to sign up for the workshop](#)

# Association for Aging with Developmental Disabilities



## Association for Aging with Developmental Disabilities

**As a direct service provider, AADD supports more than 200 adults with developmental disabilities** (i.e. autism spectrum disorder, cerebral palsy, and epilepsy), with an emphasis on those age 50 years and older, across three Missouri counties in the St. Louis area to maintain their independence and to be active members of their communities.

In addition to being a Medicaid Waiver provider for the MO Department of Mental Health, AADD receives funding to provide a variety of other services including but not limited to Group and Individual Retirement Support, Supported Living, Circle of Friends, Social Clubs, and Challenges Unlimited. In 2019 with funding from the St. Louis Senior Fund, AADD was one of two GWEP partners to be the first to offer Circle of Friends. Beyond their direct service role, AADD is committed to educating self-advocates and professionals on a range of issues and needs associated with aging with developmental disabilities, as well as the latest research on promising practices in supporting this population. AADD has planned and hosted an annual professional conference for the past 30 years.

Garnering interest both nationally and internationally, the intent of this two-day conference is to bring together professionals from aging and developmental disability fields to share best practices. AADD has also forged longstanding partnerships with several academic institutions, including SLU-GEC, the University of Missouri-Kansas City Institute for Human Development (a University Center on Excellence on Developmental Disability), and the Washington

University School of Medicine Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities Research Center. The 32nd Annual Aging with Developmental Disabilities Conference will take place on **May 15-16, 2023 at the St. Charles Convention Center.**



**For more information about AADD, contact [info@agingwithdd.com](mailto:info@agingwithdd.com) or 314-647-8100.**



## Congratulations to our partner, Pamela J. Merkle

**In 2022, Association for Aging with Developmental Disabilities Executive Director, Pamela J. Merkle,** was nominated for and selected as the awardee of the 2022 Harvey A. and Dorismae Hacker Friedman Award for Excellence in Service to Older Adults by the Friedman Center for Aging at Washington University.



# Summer 2023 Course: Interprofessional Perspectives in Geriatric Care



## About the Course

**Interprofessional Perspectives in Geriatric Care** is a Graduate level course. Upper level undergraduate students may request approval from instructors to enroll.

### Online

- Monday, June 5 from 5:30 – 8:30 PM
- Thursday, June 22 from 5:30–8:30 PM
- Monday, June 26 from 5:30 – 8:30 PM

### Online or In-Person Activity Requirements

- **Monday, June 12 from 8 AM – 5 PM:** 34th SLU Summer Geriatric Institute:
- **Tuesday, June 13 from 8 AM – 5 PM:** 34th SLU Summer Geriatric Institute
- **Wednesday, June 14 from 8 AM – 5 PM:** Cognitive Stimulation Therapy Facilitator Certificate Training

## Contact Us

For more information or any questions, contact Claire Rubemeyer, MSW, LCSW [claire.rubemeyer@slu.edu](mailto:claire.rubemeyer@slu.edu)

**Students will additionally choose one of the following:**

- **Wednesday, June 7 from 8 AM – 5 PM:** Dementia Webinar through University of North Dakota (online only)
- **Thursday, June 15 from 8 AM – 5 PM:** VOYCE Annual Conference (in person only)

**After participating in this course, students will:**

- Appreciate the basic and changing demographic profile and needs of America's older adults, including those from diverse cultural backgrounds
- Understand the various ways professionals communicate and collaborate to accomplish the best results for their shared clients, with special attention to the role you play on the interdisciplinary team
- Examine the ethical considerations of working with professionals outside your area of discipline and the importance of developing community partnerships
- Gain information on trends in research and practice in geriatric assessment and interventions

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**Previous issues of Aging Successfully may be viewed on our website, [aging.slu.edu](http://aging.slu.edu).**

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