Award Winning Clinical Team at UC Irvine SeniorHealth Center

We are proud of our entire Program in Geriatrics team, but want to acknowledge team members who have recently been granted awards or recognition.

The newest and youngest member of our team, Etta Nagel, recently received an award from the Southern California Miniature Schnauzer Association as best service dog. Etta, 7 years old, and her mother/owner are faithful members of the SeniorHealth Center volunteer staff. Etta comes weekly to greet our patients in the waiting room and show off her stylish clothes.

Valerie George, PA, was recently recognized by the Orange County Alzheimer’s Association for her exceptional contributions in the field of dementia care. She was an honoree of the 2009 Visionary Women award. Valerie had the good fortune of being presented with this award by Academy and Tony award-winning actress Ellen Burstyn.

Sonia Sehgal, MD, has recently received the Gold Star Award from the UC Irvine Chapter of the Gold Humanism Honor Society for excellence in compassion, altruism, respect, empathy and service. She also received a UC Irvine School of Medicine Excellence in Teaching award.

Lisa Gibbs, MD, and Laura Mosqueda, MD, were both honored with recognition by the Orange County Medical Association and Orange Coast Magazine as “Physicians of Excellence” in Geriatric Medicine. Dr. Mosqueda was also named a “Best Doctor” by Best Doctors, Inc.

Dr. Laura Mosqueda was also honored with the 2010 American Medical Student Association’s Women in Medicine award for mentorship. She also received the UC Irvine School of Medicine Office of Educational Affairs Department Chair/Division Chief Award for Excellence for promoting student development and exemplifying the spirit of medical education.

Important Research Update: Abuse of People with Dementia by Caregivers

This project, funded by the California Department of Health Services, brought together resources from UC Irvine’s Program in Geriatrics and Institute for Brain Aging and Dementia as well as the Alzheimer’s Association of Orange County. The goal was to better understand the factors that affect the quality of caregiving for people with dementia. The study participants were people with dementia still living at home and their caregivers. One hundred forty pairs were interviewed. The researchers assessed characteristics of the caregiver (e.g., health), the patient (e.g., level of dementia), and their environment (e.g., use of outside resources) to see which of these were associated with mistreatment. The focus was on physical and psychological mistreatment as well as neglect. A multidisciplinary LEAD panel (Longitudinal, Experts, All Data) assessed presence of mistreatment based on a priori definitions of physical and psychological elder abuse and neglect by a caregiver. Continued next page...
Giving Back: the Best Gift

Wanda Eckhardt decided to celebrate her 90th birthday a little untraditionally. Wanda asked her family and friends to send a donation for the UCI Irvine SeniorHealth Center rather than sending cards and gifts. She collected all the donations and presented them to the staff at the SeniorHealth Center. “It was one of my best birthdays; giving back to those who have given me so much help, compassion and care. I really didn’t need a thing for my birthday. I hated the thought of my friends and family spending money on cards and gifts that I didn’t need when it could be used to help the Center provide more care to seniors. I was really surprised by how much was contributed ($900). My loved ones certainly made my birthday wish come true.”

For more information on how you can celebrate or remember a special person through a donation to the Program in Geriatrics, contact Susan Lozano, Program Administrator, at 714.456.7821. Thank you!

Did you know?

Patients over 50 years old can schedule appointments with the SeniorHealth Center geriatricians for primary care, or they can continue with their own primary care doctor and consult a geriatrician for specific concerns. SeniorHealth Center geriatricians are happy to work with patients and their primary care physicians to provide optimal care. To schedule an appointment at the SeniorHealth Center, please call 714.456.7007.

The findings indicate high prevalence of mistreatment of people with dementia (47%) and identified some patterns and characteristics that can alert others to the possibility that mistreatment is occurring. For more information on this study, to listen to a six-minute podcast about the study or to find a link to the article on the study published in the Journal of the American Geriatrics Society, visit our website at www.centeronelderabuse.org.


A note of thanks...

Just a little note to let you know how grateful my sister and I are for referring us to Geraldine Date (SeniorHealth Center Social Worker) and the SeniorHealth Center. My parents had an appointment yesterday with Dr. Tam. They thought he was absolutely wonderful and we are hopeful that my father will be back to his “self” soon. My mom has an appointment with Dr. Gibbs the first part of July. It was a blessing to find you and the community of geriatric specialists, thank you! – DN

Make a Difference

The Program in Geriatrics provides clinical care, innovative medical education and pioneering work in the study and intervention of elder mistreatment. If we’ve made a difference in your life and you’d like to support our efforts, your contribution of any amount will help us to continue this important work for seniors in Orange County and beyond. Donations can be made online (please type into www.som.uci.edu/geriatrics and then scroll down and click on “Geriatrics/SeniorHealth” or “Elder Abuse Prevention Center”), over the phone or through the mail. If there is not a donation envelope in the issue of the newsletter that you are reading, please ask anyone at the SeniorHealth Center for assistance or contact Susan Lozano at 714.456.7821. Checks can be made out to UC Irvine and mailed to the Program in Geriatrics, 101 The City Drive South, Bldg. 200, Ste. 835, Orange, CA 92868. Thank you for your support!

Mrs. Wanda Eckhardt (center) celebrates her 90th birthday with the staff of the UC Irvine SeniorHealth Center. From top left to right: Leticia Madrid; Lisa Gibbs, MD; Sonia Sehgal, MD; Geraldine Date, MSW; Baudelia Arguello, LVN; Erica Nunez; Bach Cuc “Cookie” Bui, Thuy Pham, FNP. From bottom left to right: Laura Mosqueda, MD; Esmeralda Alcala; Mrs. Wanda Eckhardt; Toney Alvarez; Chinh Le, MD

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Dear Friends:

It’s summertime, so you’re probably wondering why I’m writing about fall. Falls, that is. Falling is one of the major causes of loss of independence for older Americans. The odds of falling each year after age 65 in the United States are about one in three. While most falls do not result in overt injury, falls are still the leading cause of injury-related deaths among older adults. Many people become so afraid of falling that they won’t go out and take advantage of our lovely warm weather.

But the fact is that most falls take place in the home. The good news is that there are many things you can do to avoid falling. One is to ask your doctor for a gait and balance assessment. Another is to evaluate your home environment for potential hazards like throw rugs and electrical cords and dark cats that lie in the doorway. Medications should also be checked to see if they are causing side effects such as lightheadedness or dizziness.

At the Program in Geriatrics we are well aware of the dangers of falls. Every patient at our SeniorHealth Center is provided with a questionnaire regarding falls. Our clinicians evaluate the risk of falling and provide detailed plans to reduce our patients’ risk of taking a tumble.

For reliable, practical information on how you can reduce your risk of falling see the Center for Disease Control’s website: [www.cdc.gov/ncipc/duip/spotlite/falls.htm](http://www.cdc.gov/ncipc/duip/spotlite/falls.htm)

Make a commitment this season to take action about your risk of falls. And, in the meantime, fall in love, fall asleep, fall into line, fa-la-la-la-la, but don’t fall down.

Cheers,

Laura Mosqueda, MD, FAAFP, AGSF
Director of Geriatrics, Professor of Family Medicine, Ronald W. Reagan Endowed Chair in Geriatrics

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**New Grants Received**

The Center of Excellence on Elder Abuse and Neglect is proud to announce that it has received the following grants:

**The UniHealth Foundation.** $100,000 for support of the Elder Abuse Training Institute.

**The SCAN Foundation.** $75,000 for the development of training curricula on “Communication Skills” for Certified Nursing Assistants and Home Health Aides.

**The Multiple Sclerosis (MS) Foundation.** $300,000 for two years, to study the incidence of abuse of people with MS.

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**Four-footed friend joins SHC staff**

In February, pet therapist Becky Nagel and her dog, Etta, were welcomed to the SeniorHealth Center staff. Etta even has her own UC Irvine ID. We’re not sure how she feels about Anteaters (the UC Irvine mascot), but we know she loves our patients and they love her back!

Becky Nagel, Thuy Pham with award-winning therapy dog, Etta.

Etta visits the SeniorHealth Center weekly to greet patients and show off her stylish clothes.

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PHOTO CREDIT: Paul Kennedy
What is a Geriatrician?

Geriatricians are doctors who have completed medical school, finished a residency (three years additional study) in either family medicine or internal medicine, and then completed a one or two-year fellowship in geriatric medicine. They are experts in dealing with multiple medical problems and chronic illnesses as well as psychological and cognitive issues that are common in older adults. UC Irvine geriatricians are all fellowship trained and board certified in geriatric medicine.

UC Irvine geriatricians focus on quality of life and functional ability of their patients. They help to maximize strengths. They work closely with other healthcare providers and organizations as well as with the patient’s family to meet the specific needs of each patient.

UC Irvine geriatricians focus on quality of life and functional ability of their patients.

Dr. Chinh Le checks a patient’s blood pressure.
PHOTO CREDIT: Paul Kennedy