



VIRGINIA POLYTECHNIC INSTITUTE  
AND STATE UNIVERSITY

## Virginia Tech's Center for Gerontology Celebrates its 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary!

The Center for Gerontology was founded in 1977-78. The Spring 2003 special issue of our newsletter highlights the many accomplishments and successes over the past quarter of a century. In this newsletter, you will find a historical account of the Center's milestones in research, instruction, and outreach.

☞ We introduce Dr. Toni C. Antonucci, Professor of Psychology at the University of Michigan, and keynote speaker of the Center's 25th Anniversary Celebration.

☞ Reflections from Dr. S. J. Ritchey, Founder, Directors Drs. William J. McAuley and Karen A. Roberto, and Acting Directors

Drs. Terri Eisler and Rosemary Blieszner, offer insights into the many milestones over the decades. Ms. Emily Oliver and Ms. Renee Chandler provide their special perspectives as the Center's only two administrative assistants.

☞ The excellent work and accomplishments of faculty, staff, and students have not gone unnoticed. You will find examples of many awards and recognitions they have achieved.

☞ Please refer to the Center's timeline of events, as it not only displays a chronological account of the Center, but it also showcases our growth and potential for future success.

## Highlights of the Center for Gerontology

The Center for Gerontology has served as the organizational unit and focal point for aging-related research, education, and outreach activities for 25 years, making it one of the oldest university research centers at Virginia Tech.

☞ 60 faculty affiliates representing 7 colleges and 27 departments/units across campus engage in gerontological research and scholarship, supervise the studies of students interested in aging, and provide information and programs to communities.

☞ The research of the Center and its faculty affiliates contributes to disease prevention and management, better health care service delivery, improved family relationships and more satisfactory approaches to caregiving, suitable housing and consumer products to meet elderly persons' needs, reduction of fraud and elder abuse, and a host of other outcomes that benefit older adults and their families.

☞ The Center's educational programs prepare researchers, educators, and other professionals who pursue careers in a variety of occupations aimed at addressing the needs of older adults and improving their quality of life.

☞ The Graduate Certificate in Gerontology, available to master's and doctoral students in any major, was designated a *Program of Merit* by the Association for Gerontology in Higher Education in 2000. More than 80 students have completed the program.

☞ Through its outreach activities, the Center provides research-based education and consultation to citizens throughout the Commonwealth of Virginia and beyond.

### Futures Board Members 2002-04

N. L. Bishop	Sallie Morgan
Robert B. Blancato	Stephen Morrisette
J. W. Burton	Fern Moschella
Jay W. DeBoer	William Murray
Patrick Finnerty	Alisa Scheiner
Dan B. Fleming	Terry A. Smith
Bill Kallio	Michael Walker
Ron Long	Carolyn Whitescarver
Marilyn Maxwell	Susan Williams

### Stakeholder's Committee 2002-04

James R. Bohland
Toni M. Calasanti
Edmund G. Henneke
Mike E. Houston
Jerome A. Niles
John Ryan
Fred P. Piercy
Joseph Rees

## The Center for Gerontology's 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration Keynote Speaker: Toni C. Antonucci

We are pleased to announce Dr. Toni C. Antonucci as the keynote speaker for the 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration's recognition ceremony on April 3 at 7:00 PM in Fralin Auditorium. The title of her address is "Aging: A Family Affair."

Dr. Antonucci, Professor of Psychology at the University of Michigan, and 2001-2002 President of The Gerontological Society of America, earned her graduate degrees from Wayne State University where she focused on developmental psychology through the life-span. Dr. Antonucci is a leader in the field of gerontology and has been dedicated to advancing the understanding of aging issues for over thirty years. She has

published over 100 articles and has received numerous grants. She has received 24 awards for her work as an outstanding scholar. Her research interests include social support networks and well-being in later life.



## The Center for Gerontology: Past, Present, and Future

Dr. S. J. Ritchey, Founder /Director 1975 – 80,  
Acting Director 1995

The idea of a Center for Gerontology originated in 1975 with James E. Montgomery, a faculty member who taught housing and gerontology in the Department of Management, Housing, and Family Development (MHFD). He regularly attended national meetings of the Gerontological Society of America and had contacts across the U.S. After some preliminary discussion in the College of Home Economics, Dean Laura J. Harper charged Montgomery and S. J. Ritchey, the Associate Dean, to move forward.



Following a tentative agreement with the Vice-President for Academic Affairs, Leslie Malpass, that the Center

should represent interested disciplines across the institution, a university-wide committee was appointed. Members of the planning committee included John Ballweg (College of Arts and Sciences), John Edwards (Sociology), William Herbert (Health and Physical Education), Harold Stubblefield (Adult Education), Ethel Grubbs (Extension), Montgomery (MHFD) and Ritchey as Chair.

The initial debate focused on the appropriate educational experience to be provided to students. The committee agreed that we should establish a Master of Gerontology degree with options in the biological, social, and behavioral sciences. Students would be required to complete a set of core courses in gerontology and do a thesis on an aging-related topic. Rough course outlines were developed, including a seminar in gerontology designed to bring all the disciplines together.

During that period in Virginia, the State Council for Higher Education, the body responsible for approving new degrees, worried about duplicating programs among the institutions. The Virginia Office for the Aging was charged with sorting out the offerings in gerontology across the colleges and universities. Ritchey and Montgomery were invited to participate in those sessions and traveled to Richmond frequently. After long debate and discussions, agreement was reached that Virginia Tech would be permitted to develop a degree program. The campus committee began to work through the details of courses, requirements,

and focus. Ritchey met with the State Council to explain and defend Virginia Tech's Letter of Intent at the same session they reviewed a similar request from Virginia Commonwealth University (VCU). Both were approved.

During the prolonged debate in 1976-78 about degree development, the campus planning committee offered a series of programs for practitioners in gerontology. Our first effort started with an opening keynote speaker, Dr. Eleanor Schlenker from the University of Vermont, who had published a book on nutrition and aging (Dr. Schlenker later joined the VT faculty as head of Human Nutrition, Foods, and Exercise). Seminars led by Montgomery, Herbert, and Ritchey followed, then were repeated in the afternoon, giving participants an opportunity to attend two different sessions. We planned for an attendance of 50 to 60 people, but were overwhelmed with a registration of over 200. That attendance demonstrated the need for gerontology education and updating for employees of agencies working with elderly citizens.

When the campus committee proposed a degree program with three options, the university review groups raised so many questions and objections that the new Provost, John Wilson, worried that our approach was not the best. At Wilson's suggestion, we withdrew our Letter of Intent from the State Council with the idea we would develop a Certificate in Gerontology. Graduate students from any discipline in the university could earn the certificate by completing core courses as part of their graduate program. A thesis or dissertation would address an aging topic.

When Dr. Wilson balked at having a University Center with the Director reporting to the Provost, competition for the Center raised its head. Arts and Sciences argued for the Center with roots in Sociology and Psychology; Home Economics argued for the Center because that college had originated the idea, taught several courses in aging, and had the outreach through its Cooperative Extension component to work with citizens across the state. After long and contentious meetings, Wilson in 1978 assigned the Center to Home Economics with 1.5 FTEs. He named Ritchey as Director. James Montgomery, in the meantime, had left for a position at the University of Georgia.

Ritchey became Director with a 0.5 position added to his Associate Dean responsibilities. George Hughston (MHFD; had

replaced Montgomery), Martita Lopez (Psychology), Larry Mullins (Sociology), Sharan Merriam (Education), and Charles Rutherford (Biology) were given partial positions in the Center. This core group took up the challenge of moving the Certificate program forward and developing and teaching courses related to aging in their home departments. After the Certificate program was tabled by the University Council because of objections from Arts and Sciences, the group allowed the proposal to languish. We moved on to other things, including a successful 1980 Conference on Prolongation of the Life Span held at Mountain Lake that attracted participants from across the U.S.

When Ritchey became Dean of Home Economics in 1980 (name changed to Human Resources in 1982), George Hughston became Director of the Center. Courses in biology, sociology, education, and psychology were offered but the focus of the Center remained in limbo. Hughston left Tech in 1981. Terri Eisler acted as Director for a year, then she left and Rosemary Blieszner (Family and Child Development, new department split off from MHFD and later renamed Human Development) acted as Interim Director while a search for a permanent leader was mounted.

Jim McAuley became the first full-time Director in Fall, 1983. McAuley came to Virginia Tech from VCU and thus had numerous contacts in state agencies and also was well known in gerontology circles across the U.S. Soon after he arrived, he and Ritchey visited Provost David Roselle about the stalemate with the Certificate. Roselle pushed the proposal through essentially as had been proposed four years earlier. The Certificate program gained approval from the university governance system in 1985 and the first Certificate was awarded in 1986. McAuley's appointment required a full FTE, thus the partial appointments to other departments disappeared. He utilized the other 0.5 position to bring in a research associate. Unfortunately, that piece disappeared in the state budget crunch of the early 1990s.

**Dr. George Hughston (1941-1996), Director 1980 – 81**

**Dr. Terri Eisler, Acting Director 1981 – 82**

We held a conference on "You and Your Aging Parent" that was well attended and well received. We also held a series of brown-bag lunches for faculty and graduate students to discuss relevant topics in gerontology. I served on the committee that

began the planning of what is now Warm Hearth. My clearest memories, however, are of the extraordinary leadership of Dean Ritchey. His commitment to and support of the Center for Gerontology were exceptional. He has remained the standard by which I measure all other administrators.



**Dr. Rosemary Blieszner, Acting Director 1982 – 83 and 1996**

We began the Gerontology Forum speaker series, offering lectures on current topics related to aging several times each semester. Over the years, these presentations have been made by faculty, graduate students, community practitioners, and representatives of the Virginia Office for the Aging and other government agencies. Audience members have included faculty and students from Virginia Tech and Radford University, gerontology professionals from the local community,



**Dr. William J. (Jim) McAuley, Director 1983 – 1994**

I came to the Center after a period during which Rosemary Blieszner served as Acting Director. Rosemary administered the Center with great competence, and her capable leadership assured that the transition to a new Director was smooth. Initially, the Center's administrative support staff person, Emily Oliver, was shared with Dean Ritchey. It soon became clear that the Center would be too resource intensive to continue this arrangement—although while it lasted it worked quite well for both the Center and for me. Emily knew the college and the university well, and was always very supportive of the Center. It was at this point that Renee Chandler rejoined the Center as its one-person



administrative support staff member. Renee was a wonderful resource for the Center. Her humor, efficiency, organizational skills, and her occasional outbursts to the right person at just the right time, were key to any success we experienced. I never quite understood Renee's "hair issues," and I tended to be oblivious to her many hairstyle changes—until she specifically pointed them out to me.

One of the most cherished memories of my time at Virginia Tech was the early mornings when I played in the Wallace hallway with Emily's son, Chris Wikstrom. We fooled around with cars, paper airplanes, or other gadgets that I kept in my office. This was a very special start to my workday for several years. It's hard for me to believe that Chris has graduated from college and is now a teacher and coach, although I am sure that he is very good at it.

I was one of the "survivors" of the expansion of Wallace Hall. While the results are fantastic, the process was very difficult. I can still remember sitting at my desk while a worker in full protective garb was on a ladder removing asbestos from the overhead pipes. The walks across the drill field on blustery winter days are among my least favorable Virginia Tech memories, although they did help prepare me for my years in Oklahoma.

A few things were accomplished during my tenure at Virginia Tech. These include receipt of one of the last training grants funded by the Administration on Aging; development of a relationship with the local YMCA and Virginia Mountain Housing for a service-learning program; establishment of the intergenerational adult day services center on campus; signing of a memorandum of agreement by Virginia Tech, Warm Hearth Village, New River Community College, and Radford University for aging-related research and services; bringing the editorial



office of the *Journal of Applied Gerontology* to the university; establishment of the Center's Futures Board; final development and approval of the Graduate Certificate in Gerontology; drafting of a community-based long-term care administration certificate program; co-planning and co-directing the university's Elderhostel program; obtaining several state contracts for applied research as well as research support from the AARP Andrus Foundation and other funding sources; and continuation of the Gerontology Forum. I am very pleased that these accomplishments occurred while I was Director of the Center, but I cannot take credit for any of them. As a matter of fact, for each of these activities there was at least one other person, sometimes many others, who either provided absolutely essential support or, in most cases, actually took the lead in getting the job done. In some instances, these facilitators/leaders were other faculty members and in other cases they were research associates. Still other activities were heavily supported or led by graduate assistants. I will not mention any names of these deserving individuals because I may forget one or more, and I wouldn't want any deserving individual to feel slighted. The people who were truly supportive of the Center's activities while I was there know who they were. I appreciate their efforts. I certainly received more from others than I contributed while I was Center Director.

When I came to the Center, it had few positions and limited "hard" resources, but there were great expectations for productivity. I expect that it's much the same way today. However, even though positions, funding, and space are certainly important, university-based gerontology centers have always been successful because of good ideas and the hard work of a few supportive individuals, rather than solely because of large amounts of continuing resources. The future of the Center is a far more important than its past, and I look forward to observing the Center's future achievements.

#### **Dr. Karen A. Roberto, Director 1996 – present**

My knowledge of gerontology at Virginia Tech began well before I became the current Center director. I considered many of the faculty members affiliated with the Center colleagues and friends for almost my entire academic career. I remember asking Jim McAuley one year at a meeting of the Association for Gerontology in Higher Education, "Just what does a center director do?" Although I do not remember the exact details of the response, upon joining the Center the hard work and dedication of those before me was clearly evident. The Center had a strong foundation and excellent reputation from which to build.

Being Director of the Center is about facilitating collaborations – it is the work of the people involved with the Center that has made it a successful and long-lasting enterprise. The core

faculty members are very dedicated and productive individuals; they provide the internal synergy that has developed connections with the Center's 60 faculty affiliates, the many students involved with the Center each year, and our external partners who assist us with our research efforts. Renee Chandler, the Center's long-time administrative support person, also plays an integral role managing the daily operations of the Center. Typically two



steps ahead of me, she completes tasks and provides the information necessary that allows us to implement our ideas and stay out of trouble!

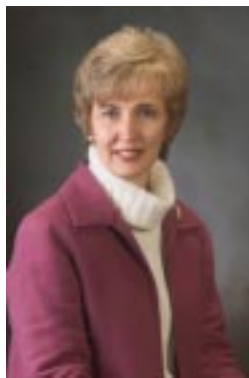
Working at the Center is also about goodwill and laughter. I have learned that chocolate attracts a lot of people – somehow the faculty, staff, and students in Wallace Hall always know when the candy bowl is full. Although grant writing and research-related activities are serious business for the Center, my most cherished memories are not the trials and tribulations of specific projects, but of the wonderful and lively experiences of working with my colleagues. For example, the regular Friday meetings of one of my early research teams that included Rosemary Blieszner and Katherine Allen raised concerns from the graduate students about the elevated voices they heard through the Center's wall. We laughed when this came to our attention; what they were hearing was not discontent, but the intensity and excitement of working through a qualitative project. We also had some interesting experiences while the Center was being renovated. Toward the end of the renovations, the new carpet was down, the walls had just been painted, and the only thing in my office was my computer, sitting on a shelf holding the final piece of information needed to complete a grant proposal. Remembering Pamela Teaster and I kneeling on the floor late into the evening making final revisions to our proposal with tears streaming down our cheeks from the smells of carpet dye and fresh paint brings a smile to my face. More recently, having to counter the quick wit of Jay Mancini as we collaborate on the Center's first project funded by the National Institute on Aging stimulates thinking on many levels. These types of experiences are reflective of the operational philosophy of the Center – have fun while working hard!

As we celebrate our past, we must look toward our future. The over age 65 segment of the population will grow at unprecedented rates. As a result of its enormous size and the vast age, racial, ethnic, and class diversity found among the aging population, our nation faces new and continuing challenges in understanding and meeting the needs of its older adults. The Center for Gerontology is uniquely positioned to address the issues facing an aging population. Our research contributes to disease prevention and management, better health care service delivery, improved family relationships and more satisfactory approaches to caregiving, suitable housing and consumer products to meet elderly persons' needs, reduction of fraud and elder abuse, and a host of other outcomes that benefit older adults and their families. Our educational programs prepare researchers, educators, and human service professionals for careers addressing the needs of older adults and improving their quality of life. Our outreach efforts provide research-based education and consultation to individuals, families, organizations, and communities throughout the Commonwealth of Virginia and beyond. It is these efforts, and those we have not yet thought of, that make us all proud to be part of the Center for Gerontology at Virginia Tech.

#### **Ms. Emily A. Oliver, Administrative Assistant 1978 – 80 and 1983 – 85**

When Dr. Ritchey was appointed as Director of the Center in 1978, I was his administrative assistant. So, I became the support staff for the Center also. Of course, it seemed that any time Dr. Ritchey's name was associated with any group, I became the

support staff for it! When Dr. Ritchey became Dean in 1980, Dr. Hughston was named Director of the Center and the staff duties



were moved to his support staff who was Renee Chandler. At that point, I thought my days with gerontology were ended. Never think something like that at Tech! When Dr. McAuley was appointed as the full-time director in 1983, the Center was relocated from a small office building on Jackson Street to Wallace Hall. Although there was a position allocated for a director, there was no staff position allocated. This was the point when they decided to try to kill the Dean's secretary by having her work

for both the Dean and the Center Director. I'm sure Dr. McAuley was frustrated more than once when his work had to be put to the "back burner" because the Dean's work had to be done first – but what could he say? He didn't dare say his work was more important than the Dean's and to do it first!! My son and I will always treasure the friendship that developed with Dr. McAuley during these years. I loved working for both Dean Ritchey and Dr. McAuley, but it was a heavy load that would only increase as the Center continued to grow. I worked for the Center until 1985 when we were finally given a staff position for it, which we offered to Renee Chandler. Do you get the feeling that Renee and I are just really possessive when it involves the Center?

**Ms. Renee Rutledge Chandler, Administrative Assistant  
1980-83 and 1985-present**

I began working at the Center for Gerontology in 1980. (I began working in MHFD in 1976—a mere child). At that time the Center for Gerontology and the Center for Family Services were housed in the same location (downtown Blacksburg on Jackson Street). Neither Center had a clerical person—so I was reassigned to work for both Centers until 1983. From 1980-1983 I worked for three directors (Drs. George Hughston, Terri Eisler, and Rosemary Blieszner) When Dr. William J. McAuley was named Director of the Center his office was relocated back to Wallace Hall where he shared a secretary (Emily) with Dean S. J. Ritchey.

I remember viewing the Warm Hearth Retirement Village blue-

prints with Drs. Hughston and Eisler. I was told at that time that the Center for Gerontology would have office space at Warm Hearth. During this time the Center for Gerontology also sponsored a Conference, "You and Your Aging Parent," and I remember typing (no computer) – the conference proceedings and the materials for that conference. The first ElderHostel was held on campus during this time and faculty from other departments on campus taught the classes.

In 1985 the Center for Gerontology was given a full-time clerical position. I interviewed with Dr. McAuley for the position and he called me that afternoon to offer me the job. I was so excited and thus began my own "aging" with the Center. Dr. McAuley left in 1994 and for two years the Center's fate was questioned. However, the Center was well respected on campus, throughout the state, and nationally—so I knew we would be okay. In 1996 a national search went out for a new Director—but I had already picked her)—Dr. Karen A. Roberto. This was the first time that my boss was younger than I was.



I have worked for every Director that has been with the Center for Gerontology (including Dr. Ritchey, when he served as interim). I have watched the Center grow tremendously over the last two decades. I have been called at home from the campus police stating that we

had a "burning smell" in one of our rooms—a popcorn incident; another time the fire alarm went off and a fire truck arrived at a Board meeting dinner (another cooking incident). Recently, I was named assistant building fire warden (wonder why?), several times water has poured from above flooding the Center, and I won't even go into the building renovation incidents (but we have pictures). I have been here so long that Graduate Certificate students graduate and obtain faculty positions at other universities, and a few have returned to Virginia Tech as teaching, research, and Extension faculty.

I have enjoyed working with all the students and faculty and hope to continue for years! I wish the Center for Gerontology a Happy 25<sup>th</sup> and I hope to be around for the 50<sup>th</sup> (keep up the aging research –now I need it).

## Past Members of the Center for Gerontology Futures Board

Peter C. Clendenin  
Ann Cook  
Ken Davis  
Joy Duke  
Larry Edwards  
Pat Ekdahl  
Laura Feldman  
Wilda Ferguson  
Heywood Fralin  
Anne Glass  
Rajiv Jain

Cindi Bowling Jones  
Aubrey Knight  
Bruce Kozlowski  
Jane Kusiak  
Peggy Lavery  
Sandy Levin  
Richard Lindsay  
Bill Lukard  
Janet Lynch  
Randy Marshall  
Ann Y. McGee

Joan Munford  
Margie Munnely  
Michael Osorio  
Deborah Petrine  
Martha Pulley  
Honorable Ford Quillen  
Fred Sachs  
John Sankey  
Cathy Saunders  
Ray Sorrell  
Thelma Bland Watson

# Center for Gerontology Faculty Affiliates

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## *Administration*

Vice President for Development:  
Elizabeth A. Flanagan  
Associate Provost for Outreach:  
John E. Dooley

## *Agriculture and Life Sciences*

Animal & Poultry Sciences:  
Edward J. Smith  
Dairy Science: Katharine Knowlton  
Entomology: Jeffrey R. Bloomquist  
Horticulture: Diane Relf  
Human Nutrition, Foods, and Exercise:  
Raga M. Bakhit  
Ruby H. Cox  
William G. Herbert  
Mike E. Houston  
Jennifer Leiferman  
Sharon Nickols-Richardson  
Kathleen Poole  
Kathleen M. Stadler  
Jay H. Williams

## *Architecture and Urban Studies*

Interior Design: Joan Dickinson  
Joan H. McLain-Klark  
Public Administration and Policy:  
Larkin Dudley  
Susan T. Gooden  
Urban Affairs and Planning:  
James R. Bohland

## *Arts and Sciences*

Chemistry: Neal Castagnoli Jr.  
Humanities: Doris T. Zallen  
Psychology: Martha A. Bell  
Helen Crawford  
David W. Harrison  
Sociology: Toni M. Calasanti  
John Ryan

## *Business*

Accounting and Information Systems:  
Steven D. Sheetz  
James A. Yardley  
Hospitality and Tourism Management:  
Muzaffer Uysal

## *Engineering*

Engineering Science and Mechanics:  
Michael L. Madigan  
Industrial and Systems Engineering:  
Kari L. Babski-Reeves  
Thurman E. Lockhart  
Tonya L. Smith-Jackson  
Eileen M. Van Aken  
Mechanical Engineering: Michael J. Furey

## *Human Sciences and Education*

Apparel, Housing, and Resources Management:  
Julia Beamish  
Kate Carroll  
JoAnn M. Emmel  
Rosemary C. Goss  
Celia Hayhoe  
Irene Leech  
Sherry Schofield-Tomschin  
Education Leadership and Policy Studies:  
Jean B. Crockett  
Kusum Singh  
Family and Consumer Sciences:  
Eleanor D. Schlenker  
Human Development: Katherine R. Allen  
Rosemary Blieszner  
April L. Few  
Alison Galway  
Tammy Henderson  
Shannon E. Jarrott  
Jay A. Mancini  
Fred Piercy  
Michelle Stevenson  
Andrew Stremmel  
Teaching and Learning: Charles L. Baffi  
Kerry J. Redican  
Douglas R. Southard

## *Veterinary Medicine*

Biomedical Science and Pathobiology:  
Bradley G. Klein  
John C. Lee  
Small Animal Clinical: H. Marie Suthers-McCabe

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## Highlights of Funding Sources for Center Grants

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### **National, State, and Federal**

AARP Andrus Foundation  
Administration on Aging  
American Public Welfare Association  
Association for Gerontology in Higher Education  
The Borchard Foundation  
National Institute on Aging  
U.S. Department of Agriculture  
U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development  
Virginia Association for Adult and Continuing Education  
Virginia Association of Area Agencies on Aging  
Virginia Association of Physician Assistants

Virginia Department for the Aging  
Virginia Department of Medical Assistance Services  
Virginia Department of Social Services

### **Virginia Tech**

AHNR-IT  
ASPIRES  
Center for Innovation in Learning  
Hatch  
University Office of International Programs  
ReachOUT Grant

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# Highlights of Recent Achievements and Honors

## Center Faculty, Staff, and Affiliates

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### External Awards and Honors

Karen A. Roberto was one of 20 women scholars selected to participate in a two-day think-tank sponsored by Wellesley College's Center for Research on Women. The purpose of the meeting was to develop a research agenda to address the issues and concerns of older women, 1997

Katherine R. Allen received the Osborne Award for Excellence in Teaching from the National Council on Family Relations, 1997

Rosemary Goss was named to an Endowed Professorship in Residential Property Management, 1997

Muzaffer Uysal received a plaque of appreciation from the National Tourism Foundation for his services to the Foundation's educational goals of enhancing the group travel and tourism industry and its educational activities, 1997

Renee Chandler received the Outstanding Achievement Award by the Alpha Gamma Chapter of Epsilon Sigma Phi, 1997

Karen A. Roberto received the Outstanding Educator Award from the Virginia Association on Aging, 1998

Rosemary Blieszner was named Distinguished Teacher by the Association of Gerontology in Higher Education, 1998

Laura Wojcik was selected to attend the National Institute of Health (National Institute on Aging-Brookdale Foundation) Summer Institute on Aging Research, 1998

Rosemary Blieszner received the Outstanding Educator Award from the Virginia Association on Aging, 1999

Pamela B. Teaster was selected to serve on the Governor's Advisory Board, Virginia Public Guardianship and Conservator Advisory Board, 1999-00

Katherine Allen was selected to attend the Summer Institute for Women in Higher Education Administration at Bryn Mawr College, 1999-00

Ann A. Hertzler was honored by the American Dietetic Association for her significant contributions to the dietetics profession, 1999-00

Tammy Henderson was selected to attend the Summer Workshop, Introducing Public Policy Issues in Aging into the Curriculum, at the Center for Policy Research, Maxwell School of Citizenship and Public Affairs, Syracuse University, 2000

Shannon Jarrott became the program evaluator for the Mark Taper Intergenerational Program, Los Angeles, CA, 1999-00

Sharon Nickols-Richardson became Director of the newly established Bone Metabolism, Osteoporosis, and Nutrition Evaluation (BONE) Laboratory's, 1999-00

Daniel J. Schneck was named the W.S. White Chair for Innovation in Engineering Education, 1999-00

Laura Wojcik was named the Young Faculty Award Winner at the 19th Annual Southern Biomedical Engineering Conference, 1999-00

Rosemary Blieszner was named the Petersen Visiting Professor of Family and Aging at Oregon State University, 2000

Pamela B. Teaster was named visiting faculty of the Albert Schweitzer Institute in Prague, Czech Republic, 2000

Shannon Jarrott was selected as a trainee for the NIA Summer Institute on Aging Research, 2000

Rosemary Blieszner was awarded the Alumni Recognition Award, College of Health and Human Development, The Pennsylvania State University, 2000

Neal Castagnoli received the Outstanding Virginia Scientist of the Year Award, 2000

Karen A. Roberto's book, *Relationships Between Women in Later Life*, was selected for inclusion on the 2001 "Women's Studies Core Lists" compiled by members of the Women's Studies Section of the Association of College and Research Libraries, 2001

Jay A. Mancini received the Distinguished Alumni Award from the College of Human Environmental Sciences at the University of North Carolina-Greensboro, 2002

Muzaffer Uysal was cited in the *Journal of Hospitality and Tourism Education* as one of the top educators in his field, 2002

Jay A. Mancini received the Outstanding Educator Award from the Virginia Association on Aging, 2002

### Virginia Tech Awards and Honors

Katherine R. Allen was awarded the Virginia Tech W. E. Wine Award, 1995

Rosemary Blieszner received the Alumni Award for Teaching Excellence, 1998

Renee Chandler received the College of Human Resources and Education Staff Award, 1999

Jeffery Bloomquist received the Gamma Sigma Delta Research Award of Merit, 1999

Neal Castagnoli, Jr., was awarded the Virginia Tech Alumni Award for Excellence in Research, 2000

Andrew Stremmel was awarded the Virginia Tech W. E. Wine Award, 2000

Susan Gooden received the Teaching Excellence Award from the College of Architecture and Urban Studies, 2001

Rosemary Blieszner was named Alumni Distinguished Professor, 2002

Toni Calasanti was awarded the Center for Gerontology Faculty Affiliate Research Award, 2002

Thurmon E. Lockhart was awarded the Center for Gerontology Faculty Affiliate Research Award, 2002

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# Center for Gerontology Awards and Scholarships

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## Outstanding Gerontology Student Award

### Undergraduates:

Cynthia M. Stewart, 1983-84  
Joe Karbowski, 1984-85  
Lynne M. Hadley, 1985-86  
Carolyn Whitescarver, 1986-87  
Kathy J. Ribbens, 1988-89

### Graduates:

Raeann R. Hamon, 1984-85  
Raeann R. Hamon, 1985-86  
Mina P. Willis, 1986-87  
Jan L. McGilliard, 1986-87

## S. J. Ritchey Endowed Scholarship

Lisa M. Artale, 2001  
David B. Sprouse, 2001  
Vicki C. Martin, 2002

## Peggy Lavery Research and Professional Development Award

Donna K. Dawson, 1999  
Lisa M. Artale, 2000  
Sara E. Kretzer, 2001  
Susan L. Nester, 2001  
Denise Love-Norris, 2002  
Emily Maples, 2002

## Futures Board Scholarship

Jeremy Yorgason, 2002

## Student Achievements and Honors

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Raeann R. Hamon, Gerontological Society of America  
Student Organization Chair, 1987

Raeann R. Hamon, Phi Upsilon Omicron  
Diamond Anniversary Fellowship, 1987

Anne P. Glass, Southern Gerontological Society, Student  
Paper Award, 1990

Will Hubbard, American Society on Aging, Dychtwald  
Student Award, 1992

Marsha Carolan, Southern Gerontological Society,  
Student Paper Award, 1993

Phyllis Greenberg, Virginia Association on Aging, Board  
of Directors Student Representative, 1993-94

Pamela B. Teaster, Southern Gerontological Society, Student  
Paper Award, 1994

Pamela B. Teaster, Gerontological Society of America,  
Student Organization Chair, 1994

Paula Usita, Association for Gerontology in Higher  
Education/AARP Andrus Foundation Fellowship, 1995

Raeann Hamon, VT College of Human Resources  
Outstanding Alumna, 1996

Kathleen Piercy, National Council on Family Relations  
Research and Theory Section, Student Paper Award,  
1996

Vicki Martin, Virginia Association on Aging, Outstanding  
Student in Gerontology Award, 1997

Paula Usita, National Institute on Aging Minority Disser-  
tation Grant, 1997

Karen Wilcox, National Council on Family Relations,  
Student of the Year Award, 1997

Alan Willard, Fahs-Beck Fund for Research and  
Experimentation Dissertation Grant, 1997

Cara Bailey, Virginia Association on Aging, Outstanding  
Doctoral Student in Gerontology Award, 1998

Jennifer Scanlon, Virginia Association on Aging, Out-  
standing Master's Student Award, 1998

Donna Dawson, Southern Gerontological Society's  
Board of Directors Student Representative, 1999

Joel Kroft, Residential Property Management  
Advisory Board Thesis Award, 1999

Benjamas Kutintara, Southern Gerontological  
Society Student Paper Award, 1999

Kathleen Piercy, College of Human Resources and  
Education Outstanding Alumna, 2001

Janel Wilcox, Urban Affairs and Planning Graduate  
Research Grant, 2001

Mary Beth McClung, AARP Andrus Foundation  
Research in Financial Gerontology Undergraduate  
Scholarship, 2001

Alicia Z. Almada, AARP Andrus Foundation  
Doctoral Leadership Development Program Scholar-  
ship, 2002

Christine A. Fruhauf, Southern Gerontological Society  
Student Paper Third Place Award, 2002

Christina Gigliotti, Virginia Association on Aging,  
Outstanding Master's Student Award, 2002

Melissa Gladwell & Christina Gigliotti, American Association  
of Family and Consumer Sciences, Paolucci Award, 2002

Benjamas Kutintara, American Association of Housing  
Educators, Outstanding Graduate Paper Tessie  
Agan Award, 2002

Jeremy Yorgason, Virginia Association on Aging,  
Outstanding Doctoral Student Award, 2002

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## Center Involvement in Undergraduate Education: Project Home Repair

Before “service-learning” existed at Virginia Tech, the Center for Gerontology took part in sponsoring a hands-on learning experience that introduced students to Appalachian culture while providing assistance to low-income elders who genuinely benefited from the students’ help. Begun in 1985, the Project Home Repair Field Experience was a joint venture of the Center when Jim McAuley was Director, the YMCA at Virginia Tech under the leadership of Barbara Michelsen, and Virginia Mountain Housing Inc. (now, Community Housing Partners).

A 3-credit Project Home Repair Field Experience course was conceived as the best way to inform students of the social issues and underlying poverty and aging problems in Appalachia. It was cross-listed in seven departments, with leadership provided by key faculty in each area: Family and Child (now Human) Development (Rosemary Blieszner), Geography (Robert Morrill), Health Education



(Elizabeth Howe), Housing (Rosemary Goss), Humanities/Appalachian Studies (Jean Speer), Sociology (Alan Bayer and Mark Wardell), and Urban Affairs and Planning (Jim Bohland). In addition, local commu-

nity leaders such as Maxine Waller (Ivanhoe Civic League) and representatives of the coal miners union were frequent guest speakers. Sometimes local artist Joni Pienkowski came to display and discuss her “Melissa” paintings of a local old woman. The term often concluded with a blue grass concert by Jack Hinshelwood and his band, complete with clogging in the classroom.

Students were assigned to teams that worked on weekends to perform home repairs for individuals or families in

the region. The repairs included fixing roofs and porches, building new outhouses, painting inside and outside, chopping and stacking wood, clearing brush, and making a safe pathway to a spring across the field, which was the only source of running water for some homes. Students also toured coal mining towns on “View from the Mountains” weekends sponsored by the Y and spent spring break working on construction projects in Ivanhoe. Student evaluations of the course were always enthusiastic, often pointing out the value of the “real life experiences” offered and the knowledge and insights imparted by the community speakers.

When Virginia Mountain Housing abandoned its local volunteer component, it became difficult to incorporate the home repair element into the class. The field experience turned to collection of oral histories of local residents, taken by the students under Jean Speer’s supervision. Eventually the faculty decided that the course should become a regular part of the Appalachian Studies curriculum. By 1992, “Appalachian Communities” had passed through the university governance process, received approval, and was taught under the leadership of Betty Fine in the Appalachian Studies program. It has been taught each spring since then, and more recently, incorporated service-learning assignments in local communities in collaboration with the Virginia Tech Service-Learning Center.

In 1990, the Center for Gerontology nominated the Y at Virginia Tech for the Virginia Association on Aging’s Outstanding Community Organization Award, and the Y was selected as the recipient. This award was presented in recognition of the contributions of the Y programs to senior citizens in southwest Virginia and to the education of students, who would take the knowledge, insights, and appreciation of Appalachian culture with them wherever they went after graduation. It was a fitting tribute to a long and very productive collaboration between the Center and a significant student/community organization.

### A Quarter-Century of Change in Gerontology

Indicators	1978	2003
U.S. Population		
adults, 65 and older	29.3 million	36.1 million
adults, 85 and older	2.04 million	4.72 million
median age	30 years	42 years
ages of baby boomers	14-32 years	39-57 years
National Institute on Aging		
age	4 years	29 years
grants funded	\$37.1 million	\$891.3 million
Gerontological Society of America		
age	33 years	58 years
Journal of Gerontology	1 journal, 959 pages	4 journals, 2,129 pages
Southern Gerontological Society		
age	0	24 years
Journal of Applied Gerontology	vol. 1, (1982), 160 pages	vol. 22, (2002), 511 pages

# Graduate Certificate in Gerontology Recipients

## *Doctoral Degree*

Center for Public Administration and Policy:  
 Ruth Ann Bruer, 1990  
 Pamela Booth Teaster, 1997

Biochemistry & Nutrition:  
 Zheng-Xian Liu, 1994

Education: Charlene Freeman-Coker, 1991

Environmental Design and Planning:  
 Anne P. Glass, 1990

[Family and Child] Human Development:  
 Raeann K. Hamon, 1986  
 Monica Anne Janas, 1988  
 Mina P. Grossman, 1990  
 Marcia Porter Safewright, 1990  
 Rhoda H. Rojiani, 1993  
 Harriet H. Duncan, 1993  
 Warren Clark, 1994  
 Yeon Kyung Chee, 1995  
 Mala Mwanjiwa NyaManda, 1995  
 Janet L. Ramsey, 1995  
 Kathleen Piercy, 1996  
 Marsha T. Carolan, 1996  
 Phyllis Greenberg, 1997  
 Paula Usita, 1997  
 Karen L. Wilcox, 1997  
 Nancy Poe Wingfield, 1997  
 M. Alison Galway, 1998  
 Althea Taylor Jones, 1998  
 Alan C. Taylor, 1998  
 G. Alan Willard, 1998  
 Lori E. Weeks, 1998  
 Donna K. Dawson, 2000  
 Linda Sue Creech, 2002

Housing, Interior Design, and Resource Management/Near Environments:  
 Oh-Jung Kwon, 1991  
 Elizabeth Victoria Rylan, 1996  
 Sandra G. Reynolds, 1997  
 Benjamas Kutintara, 2001

Human Nutrition, Foods, and Exercise:  
 Donna S. Ferrandino, 1995

Psychology: Kim Gordon Ragsdale, 1991  
 Melissa Kitner-Triolo, 2000

## *Master's Degree*

Clothing & Textiles:  
 Earline R. Jeannes, 1995

Education:  
 Crosby A. Houston, 1990  
 Cheryl A. Lawhorne, 1993  
 Mark Alan DeMasters, 1995  
 Kristine Garren Winstead, 1995  
 Stephanie L. Snow, 1996  
 Cathy Thompson, 1998

[Family and Child] Human Development:  
 Beverly Bass Hines, 1988  
 Jan McGilliard, 1989  
 Mary McDonald Harmon, 1991  
 Elizabeth H. Spencer, 1993  
 A. Dawn Hensley-Buzzell, 1995  
 Won-Kyung Yang, 1995  
 Cecile Diane Cachaper, 1997  
 Julieta Holguin, 1997  
 Wayne Alton Judkins, 1999  
 M. Sean Campbell, 1999  
 Jennifer Margaret Scanlon, 1999  
 Tsofit Gozali, 2001  
 Sara Kretzer, 2001

Housing Interior Design and Resource Management/Near Environments:  
 Joan I. Dickinson, 1994  
 Laquita Dawn Barnes, 1996

Human Nutrition, Foods, and Exercise:  
 Karma M. Rabon-Stith, 1997  
 Leslie Faye Hagy, 1998  
 Carolyn Anderson Weiglein, 1998

Landscape Architecture:  
 Leslie Gignoux Fritz, 1989  
 Kenneth Hall, 1989

Urban and Regional Planning:  
 Janel Wilcox, 2001

## *Post-Baccalaureate*

Administration of Community Based Services for Older Adults:  
 Dianne C. Rhody-Scott, 2000  
 Tracy Lees, 2001  
 Joy Herbert-Acherman, 2002

## Current Graduate Certificate Students

## Sigma Phi Omega National Honor Society, Beta Sigma Chapter Presidents

Alicia Z. Almada	Denise Love-Norris
Cara L. Bailey	Rashida Madraswala
Brandy Bratton	Emily Maples Stumb
Lisa Artale Bross	Vicky Martin
Nancy Brossoie	Anandi Nagarajan
Suellen Evarold	Susan L. Nester
Krista Geller	Amy Powell
Christina Gigliotti	Rania Shlien-Dellinger
Amid Gilkes	Jeannette Steeves
Melissa Gladwell	Dawn Viers-Yaun
Joel Kroft	



1995	Paula M. Usita
1996	Lori E. Weeks
1997	Gina Brown
1998	Donna K. Dawson
1999	Lisa M. Artale
2000	Susan L. Nester
2002	Christine A. Fruhauf

# Center for Gerontology Timeline

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## 1978-1979

- 1978: Center for Gerontology established
- 1979: Multidisciplinary curricular development

## 1980-1989

- 1980: Conference on Prolongation of the Life Span
- 1981: Consultation with Warm Hearth Retirement Village began
- 1982: Gerontology Forum speaker series established  
Conference on "You and Your Aging Parent"
- 1983: 1<sup>st</sup> full-time Director appointed, Dr. William J. McAuley  
Statewide Conference on Hospice
- 1984: Virginia Tech Gerontology Association established  
1<sup>st</sup> externally funded research project, "Coordinated Career Preparation Targeting the Rural Elderly," U.S. Administration on Aging, 16 months
- 1985: Graduate Certificate in Gerontology approved by University Council
- 1986: 1<sup>st</sup> Graduate Certificate in Gerontology awarded  
Project Home Repair Field Experience course established in conjunction with the Y at Virginia Tech and Virginia Mountain Housing, Inc.  
1<sup>st</sup> Extension Specialist in Aging appointed, Dr. Janette K. Newhouse
- 1987: Center serves as a case study site for the Association for Gerontology in Higher Education research project on university gerontology centers
- 1988: Strategic Planning Retreat held at Mountain Lake
- 1989: "Aged Wisdom" newsletter series established

## 1990-1999

- 1990: Commonwealth Aging Survey initiated, a 4-year project funded by the Agricultural Experiment Station
- 1991: Charlene Freeman-Coker appointed Extension Specialist in Gerontology
- 1992: Appalachian Communities course syllabus approved
- 1993: Futures Board Charter approved
- 1994: William J. McAuley appointed Editor of *Journal of Applied Gerontology* for 2 years  
Memorandum of Agreement adopted between Warm Hearth, Inc. and Virginia Tech, Radford University, and New River Community College
- 1995: Beta Sigma Chapter of Sigma Phi Omega National Gerontological Honor Society established
- 1996: Karen A. Roberto appointed as Director  
Anne P. Glass 1<sup>st</sup> Graduate Certificate in Gerontology alumna to join Futures Board
- 1997: 1<sup>st</sup> Annual Recognition Ceremony for recipients of the Graduate Certificate in Gerontology  
Survey of all Graduate Certificate in Gerontology alumni conducted  
Pamela B. Teaster appointed Extension Specialist in Gerontology; 1<sup>st</sup> Graduate Certificate in Gerontology alumna to join the VT faculty
- 1998: 1<sup>st</sup> Visiting Scholar in Residence, Dr. Laurie Buys, Queensland University of Technology, Carsedine, Queensland, Australia  
Debut of original play about elder abuse, written by Pamela B. Teaster and Joy Duke
- 1999: Collaboration on a semester-long charette related to designing facilities for older adults with the VT Design Consortium, University Honors Program, and Colleges of Agriculture and Life Sciences, Arts and Sciences, and Human Resources and Education

## 2000-2003

- 2000: Graduate Certificate in Gerontology is the second program in the U.S. to be designated a Program of Merit by the Association for Gerontology in Higher Education
  - 2001: 1<sup>st</sup> fall orientation for Graduate Certificate in Gerontology students
  - 2002: Michelle L. Stevenson appointed Extension Specialist in Gerontology  
1<sup>st</sup> National Institute on Aging grant
  - 2003: Dr. Joan I. Dickinson was the 1<sup>st</sup> Graduate Certificate in Gerontology alumna to serve as faculty advisor to a currently enrolled Certificate Student, Rashida Madraswala  
Center for Gerontology 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary
-

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ASSISTANT PROFESSOR & EXTENSION  
SPECIALIST, GERONTOLOGY

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## Acknowledgements

### 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration Committee

Rosemary Blieszner, Chair  
Toni Calasanti  
Renee Chandler  
Susan Gooden  
Thurman Lockhart  
Sharon Nichols-Richardson

### Video Production

Dr. Edward A. Fox and students from CS 4624,  
Multimedia, Hypertext and Information Access:  
Peter Campanola  
Brian Loewen  
Matthew Parrott  
Tyler Roberts  
Mariah Tarrant

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T. Truman Capone, Director  
Allison Hayes, Intern & Designer

### Print Services

Linda Painter  
Rocky Price

## Special Request

In recognition of 25 years of service to Virginia Tech, the Commonwealth of Virginia, and the profession of gerontology;

In honor of founding faculty, directors,  
Futures Board members, and faculty affiliates;  
In celebration of over 80 recipients of the  
Graduate Certificate in Gerontology  
and thousands of undergraduate students taught by  
faculty affiliates across the campus;  
In support of gerontology education and research  
for years to come...

**We have established a special Center for Gerontology  
25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Fund.**

Please make a contribution now to help support ongoing  
gerontology programs such as graduate student scholarships,  
research, and professional travel;  
faculty research and professional development;  
and special projects and publications.

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