

### INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

<b>ALZHEIMER SOCIETY OF SASKATCHEWAN DONATION</b>	2
<b>CAH TRAINEE MEMBER WINS FIRST U OF R ASOS SCHOLARSHIP</b>	3
<b>CAH MEMBERS ACHIEVE GRANTS &amp; AWARDS SUCCESS</b>	4
<b>LLC UPDATE: ELDER ABUSE AWARENESS</b>	5
<b>RESEARCH REPORT: LESLEY MCBAIN</b>	6
<b>GERONTOLOGY PROGRAM UPDATE: JONATHAN HARRIS</b>	6
<b>CAH CELEBRATES REGINA BAW WEEK</b>	7
<b>APPLY FOR U OF R GERONTOLOGY PROGRAM; ADVERTISE; CONTACT US</b>	8

### THE CAH CONTINUES TO BE AN ACTIVE PARTNER IN THE ANNUAL REGINA BRAIN AWARENESS WEEK: EARLY ONSET DEMENTIA AND CAREGIVING

On March 17, 2011, the University of Regina Centre on Aging and Health hosted its annual Regina Brain Awareness Week lecture. The event was well attended and attracted much media attention. This year's speaker, Dr. Megan O'Connell of the University of Saskatchewan Clinical Psychology Program and the Saskatchewan Rural and Remote Memory Clinic, delivered a talk about frontotemporal dementias, which can cause significant personality and behaviour changes.

Much of the lecture focused on how these atypical dementias affect both those diagnosed with dementia as well as how they influence spouses and family members, particularly in situations where informal care—unpaid caregiving—is provided. According to Dr. O'Connell, research shows that informal care has tremendous impacts on caregivers' physical and mental health.

Therefore, interventions for caregivers are crucial and can even result in better health for the caregivers and a higher standard of care for those with atypical dementias.

O'Connell also discussed the Saskatchewan Rural and Remote Memory Clinic, which provides access to important services for families living at least one hundred kilometres outside of Regina or Saskatoon. These families often struggle with the burden of travelling to major centres for consultations and appointments.



Dr. Megan O'Connell

The CAH newsletter is currently accepting submissions. Your comments, suggestions, announcements, and CAH-related news items are welcome.

Please email submissions to:

Scott J. Wilson  
CAH Administrator/  
Newsletter Editor  
scott.j.wilson@uregina.ca

(continued on page 7)

## THE ALZHEIMER SOCIETY OF SASKATCHEWAN DONATES FUNDING FOR U OF R GRADUATE STUDENT SCHOLARSHIP: AN INTERVIEW

The following questions were posed to Joanne Bracken, CEO, Alzheimer Society of Saskatchewan, in order to provide more information about the new University of Regina Alzheimer's Society of Saskatchewan Scholarship, made possible through a recent donation.

### **Why was the University of Regina an ideal fit for this scholarship?**

A key reason the Society wanted to provide scholarship funds at the University of Regina is because it houses the Centre on Aging and Health (CAH).

We have a long history of working with the CAH on educational and research activities. This relationship was formalized with the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding in December 2002. The Society and the Centre work collaboratively by exchanging information, resources and expertise to educate people about healthy aging and conditions related to aging such as Alzheimer's disease and other dementias. For example, we work in partnership to promote events like Brain Awareness Week, learning opportunities at the Centre, and the Society's Healthy Brain forums.

### **What is the significance of this scholarship and/or similar awards?**

A priority for the Alzheimer Society of Saskatchewan is funding research to find causes and cures, and to improve the lives of people who are currently living with the disease.

The Alzheimer Society's *Rising Tide: The Impact of Dementia on Canadian Society* report calls for a National Dementia Strategy. It identifies accelerated investment in all areas of dementia research, the importance of prevention and early intervention, increased use of best practices in disease prevention and management, and strengthening of Canada's dementia workforce as priorities. The work being done at the Centre on Aging and Health clearly supports these priorities.

### **What are the aims/goals of this scholarship?**

The Alzheimer Society of Saskatchewan has had many requests from our donors to support dementia research in the province. At the same time, a key priority for the Society is to significantly increase the amount of research we fund and our Board wanted to make sure we had opportunities at the University of Regina and the University of Saskatchewan to do just that.

Dr. Thomas Hadjistavropoulos is one of the leading researchers in the world in the area of pain and dementia, so we feel that supporting the work of his team is a very effective use of donor and research dollars. In addition to funding the scholarship that was awarded to Omeed Ghandehari, the Society also funds an Alzheimer Society of Canada Graduate Scholarship for Sarah Chan – another trainee member of the CAH.

### **Other comments:**

The Alzheimer Society of Saskatchewan is launching a major gifts program, *It's About Time – The Campaign to Cure Alzheimer's*, to raise an additional \$2.5 million over five years to find the cure for Alzheimer's disease and other dementias, and to expand programs and services across the province. Anyone who wants to learn more about the campaign or make a donation to the campaign can call the Society at 949-4141 in Regina or 1-800-263-3367 elsewhere in Saskatchewan.

### **ASOS Scholarship Information:**

The Alzheimer Society of Saskatchewan Scholarship, valued at \$5,000 annually, will be adjudicated by the University of Regina Centre on Aging and Health Scholarship Committee, which consists of representation from the Faculty of Arts, the Faculty of Kinesiology and Health Studies, and the Faculty of Social Work.

### **Applications must be received by May 31, 2011.**

For more information, including the complete terms of reference, visit <http://www.uregina.ca/gradstudies> or contact the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research at 306.337.2236.

## **CAH ATTRACTS DONATION FROM THE ALZHEIMER SOCIETY OF SASKATCHEWAN: GHANDEHARI IS THE FIRST ASOS SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENT**

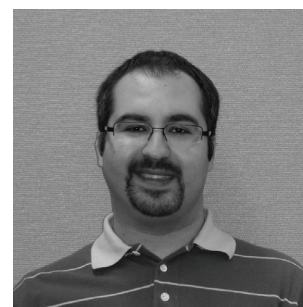
Following a rigorous adjudication process involving representatives from each participating U of R faculty, the CAH adjudicated the first Alzheimer Society of Saskatchewan Scholarship.

We are pleased to announce that Omeed Ghandehari has been awarded the first instalment of this new University of Regina graduate scholarship for research in Alzheimer's disease and related dementias. The Alzheimer Society of Saskatchewan Scholarship, made possible because of a generous donation from the Alzheimer's Society of Saskatchewan, provides a great opportunity for projects related to this extremely important area of research.

Ghandehari, a trainee member of the CAH, is in the final year of the M.A. Clinical Psychology Program at the University of Regina. His research primarily deals with improving the quality of life for older adults residing in long-term care who are experiencing dementia and/or pain. The goal of his project is to educate long-term care staff in order to enhance knowledge, attitudes, and beliefs regarding dementia and dementia-related care, particularly in terms of pain management and assessment. This happens by studying the

effects of two different types of long-term care staff education programs and assessing whether positive changes in knowledge, attitudes, and beliefs about working with dementia patients are retained over time. These changes are assessed through long-term care staff participants' responses to questionnaires over time along with the tracking of practice outcomes through pain intervention checklists. Both educational programs involve three three-hour sessions for research participants, as well as the completion of study materials.

When asked about winning the award, Omeed replied, "It truly is an honour. It's always nice to be recognized for your efforts and I am excited to be working on this project." He believes the award will go a long way in helping him complete this project successfully and that such awards are crucial to graduate student success. In addition, he said, "I would like to thank my supervisor Dr. Thomas Hadjistavropoulos, the University of Regina, and the Alzheimer Society of Saskatchewan for their support. I would also like to encourage others who are eligible to apply for this prestigious award in the upcoming years."



Mr. Omeed Ghandehari

**Apply now for the 2011/2012 CAH Small Grants Research Award!**

**Amount Available: \$1,500    Application Deadline: December 15, 2011**

**This award is intended to fund pilot projects or other work aimed to lead to the preparation of a major national application in the area of health and aging.**

**To apply, or for more information: [http://uregina.ca/hadjistt/centre\\_index.htm](http://uregina.ca/hadjistt/centre_index.htm) or [cah@uregina.ca](mailto:cah@uregina.ca) or 306.337.8477**

## CAH MEMBERS DEMONSTRATE A STELLAR RECORD OF SUCCESS IN NATIONAL AND PROVINCIAL GRANT COMPETITIONS

At the request of Dr. David Gauthier, former University of Regina VP Research, the CAH has developed a comprehensive external grants and awards lists in order to highlight the 2001-2009 accomplishments of U of R-based CAH Members. This document provides an overview of our membership's research interests, and external funding acquisition aptitude. This list only includes University of Regina members and the numbers are impressive.

Below is a chart that summarizes the findings. Please note that some members of the CAH are co-investigators on the same grants. However, in preparing this table, we ensured that each grant was only added once. As such, the figures presented herein are not inflated. The findings presented are from the following sources: Saskatchewan Health Research Foundation (SHRF), Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada (SSHRC), Canadian Institutes of Health Research (CIHR), donations, and various miscellaneous sources.

**External Grants and Awards 2001-2009:  
CAH Membership (University of Regina Members)**

	SHRF	SSHRC	CIHR	Donations to Support Research	Other	Totals
Principal Investigator	\$2,654,308	\$271,505	\$4,747,023		\$2,083,889	\$9,756,725
Co-Investigator	\$4,207,398	\$10,040,715	\$6,486,575		\$2,161,329	\$22,896,017
Award/Scholarship	\$67,564	\$3,500	\$991,211	\$600,000	\$2,000	\$1,664,275
Other		\$159,487	\$1,700,000		\$442,756	\$2,302,243
<b>Totals</b>	<b>\$6,929,270</b>	<b>\$10,475,207</b>	<b>\$13,924,809</b>	<b>\$600,000</b>	<b>\$4,689,974</b>	<b>\$36,619,260</b>

In total, between 2001 and 2009, CAH members secured approximately \$36.5 million dollars in external funding for significant research in their respective areas of expertise.

In addition to research funding, the document lists the variety of prestigious honours and awards in research, teaching, community service, and other important areas that CAH members have received.

Our plan is to update the list in order to demonstrate further the importance of the CAH and its members to the field of aging and health research.

For more information, or a copy of the document that includes a detailed breakdown of the findings, please contact [cah@uregina.ca](mailto:cah@uregina.ca) or 306.337.8477.

## **KNOWLEDGE IS THE BEST MEDICINE TO MAKE ELDER ABUSE ANCIENT HISTORY: LLC UPDATE**

The University of Regina Lifelong Learning Centre (LLC) has been involved in raising awareness about elder abuse for many years. Thanks to a grant from the New Horizons for Seniors program, LLC has recently been able to update training materials, hold training workshops in several Saskatchewan communities, and develop promotional materials to create even more awareness about elder abuse.

We have a dedicated group of trained presenters who speak to a wide range of community members and professionals in an effort to make elder abuse ancient history. They make regular presentations to RCMP cadets during their training in Regina and to police officers at the Saskatchewan Police College. In addition, speakers have made several presentations to seniors groups in Regina and other locations, and more recently to health professionals including all of the first year nursing students at SIAST Wascana Campus.

The Lifelong Learning Centre will be involved in World Elder Abuse Awareness Day activities to prevent the abuse of older adults in collaboration with many other organizations in Saskatchewan, across Canada and around the world. World Elder Abuse Awareness Day originated in 2002 when the International Network on the Prevention of Elder Abuse (INPEA) introduced the day to support the

Madrid Plan of Action on Aging which recognized the importance of addressing and preventing the abuse and neglect of older adults.

LLC will be hosting a presentation on 'Preventing Elder Abuse in Saskatchewan' on Thursday, June 16 at 12:00pm as part of our efforts to acknowledge World Elder Abuse Awareness Day. We will also be having another presenter training workshop that day. These events are being held at the Lifelong Learning Centre, which is located at the U of R College Avenue Campus.

If you would like to arrange a speaker, to get training to become a speaker, or to get copies of our poster and other elder abuse awareness materials please call Alison at 306.585.5766.

Article by: Kerrie Strathy, LLC Division Head

The Lifelong Learning Centre, formerly known as the Seniors Education Centre, delivers approximately 180 courses per year that are creative, intellectual and physical in nature with no prior formal education required. There are no exams and most courses have no assignments. No previous education is required. The Centre has also been involved in older adult learning initiatives across Canada, including hosting national conferences under the auspices of CATALIST: The Canadian Network for Third Age Learning which operates from the LLC. You'll find information about our programs on our website [www.uregina.ca/cce/lifelong](http://www.uregina.ca/cce/lifelong) or in our program guides.

## RESEARCH REPORT: THE EVOLUTION OF ASSISTED LIVING, PERSONAL CARE, AND LONG-TERM CARE FACILITIES IN ABORIGINAL COMMUNITIES

As the Aboriginal population ages and the number of people in need of long term care increases, it is unclear what facilities are currently available in Aboriginal communities throughout Saskatchewan. Therefore the goal of this research was to establish an inventory of facilities, including the level of care that is currently available in First Nation and Métis communities.

This pilot project was funded by the Canadian Centre for Health and Safety in Agriculture (CCHSA) located at the University of Saskatchewan. The research team was composed of CAH affiliates Dr. Lesley McBain (Lead) and Dr. Carrie Bourassa of the First Nations University of Canada, as well as Dr. Debra Morgan, Dr. Norma Stewart, Allison Cammer, and Carolyn Cyr of the University of Saskatchewan.

The purpose of project was to examine the distribution, level of care, and challenges facing Aboriginal people as they attempt to establish long-term care facilities in their rural and remote communities throughout Saskatchewan. Data for the project was provided by the Government of Saskatchewan and by First Nation and Métis communities.

Mapping the location of care homes revealed a clear lack of assisted living, personal care, and long-term care facilities particularly in northern Saskatchewan where a high proportion of the population is of Aboriginal ancestry. This often means that seniors requiring care that is more comprehensive must leave their community in order to access services. Although First Nation reserve communities have tried to address the need for more specialized long-term care homes, they have encountered significant jurisdictional challenges resulting in the closure of one facility - the Muskeg Lake Elders Care Home - in August 2010.

While funding has now ended for this project, investigation will continue into the many questions raised during the process. For example, is there a relationship between the lack of personal care homes in northern Saskatchewan, housing conditions and lower incomes experienced by people living in the region? As the cohort of Aboriginal seniors increases, finding answers to these and other related questions based on an Aboriginal perspective is important. Therefore, the first step in future research will be to gain a clearer understanding of the Aboriginal perspective towards aging.

**Dr. Lesley McBain**, a CAH member, is an Assistant Professor in the Indigenous Studies Department at First Nations University. For more information on this research, contact Dr. McBain at [lmcbain@firstnationsuniversity.ca](mailto:lmcbain@firstnationsuniversity.ca)

### U OF R MASTER'S PROGRAM IN GERONTOLOGY UPDATE

In addition to impaired cognitive function, older adults with dementia often experience profound changes in physical function that can prevent them from taking part in enjoyable activities and performing vital self-care tasks independently. Though it is believed that taking part in regular physical activity may help to slow this decline in physical function, those with dementia residing in long-term care facilities often have limited access to meaningful opportunities to be physically active.

Jonathan Harris, a student in the U of R MSc Gerontology program, working under the supervision of Dr. Shanthi Johnson, recently completed a study investigating the effect of taking part in a regular walking program on cognitive and physical function among older adults with dementia residing in a Regina long-term care facility.

Residents who agreed to participate (along with additional consent from a care-partner) were randomly assigned to take part in either a three-times weekly walking group or a once-weekly group social visit. Both the walking and social visit groups were led by trained volunteers, the majority of whom were U of R students. The social activity group was included in lieu of a true non-treatment control group to account for the inherent social activity present in the group walking program. Participants were tested at baseline, 6, and 12 weeks for cognitive function as well as functional mobility, functional endurance, and dynamic balance, three important indicators of overall physical function.

Though the relatively small sample size limits the generalizability of the study, Harris found that, in general, those in the physical activity group showed a trend toward improvement in both functional mobility and endurance, while those in the social activity group did not. Cognitive function and balance stayed relatively stable in both groups. In addition, there was a trend toward physical activity having a small effect on functional mobility from baseline to six weeks, indicating that being physically active led to improved short-term mobility. (continued on page 7)



Jonathan Harris

More information on the M.A./M.Sc. Program in Gerontology is available on the CAH Website or by contacting Dr. Darren Candow, Gerontology Program Coordinator, at [Darren.Candow@uregina.ca](mailto:Darren.Candow@uregina.ca)

**EARLY ONSET DEMENTIA AND CAREGIVING (CONTINUED)**

(continued from page 1)

The Rural and Remote Memory Clinic lessens that travel by using Telehealth video conferencing technology at six sites throughout Saskatchewan. In fact, participants could save 262-544km in travel each time they take advantage of this program. This is not only a saving in terms of cost, but in time and stress as well.

While traditional therapy involves face-to-face contact, Telehealth, over a secure broadband connection, allows caregivers an opportunity to meet, via video screens, with other caregivers as well as professionals at the Memory Clinic. In addition to helping caregivers, the program also helps with important early diagnoses of atypical dementias, provides exams and follow-up care, and runs blood tests.

Limiting the travel burden is only one benefit of this program. For caregivers who can understand that their struggle is universal, that they are not alone, these sessions are of critical significance. In fact, because of these interactions with other caregivers, O’Connell and her colleagues often limit giving advice; instead, they facilitate learning, education, and therapy. However, as O’Connell noted, she and her colleagues learn from these interventions as well because caregivers and their experiences, which are each so unique, offer much needed perspective on atypical dementias and their influence on spousal relationships. Talking about how invaluable this insight is, O’Connell said, “We learn from caregivers. They are teaching us. They become collaborators.”

Please visit the CAH website at [http://uregina.ca/hadjistt/centre\\_index.htm](http://uregina.ca/hadjistt/centre_index.htm) for information on previous BAW Events and upcoming CAH public events.



**Megan O’Connell & Thomas Hadjistavropoulos**

**BRAIN AWARENESS WEEK FACTS**

*Brain Awareness Week is an international event initiated and coordinated by the Dana Foundation whose objective is to form collaborations between schools, post-secondary institutions, hospitals, and other organizations.*

*The 2011 edition ran from March 14-20 and marked the 16th year of celebration. With 750 events taking place in 52 countries, this was one of the most successful campaigns to date.*

*Through these collaborations, the foundation hopes to achieve 3 goals: 1) inform the community about the importance of brain research, 2) provide knowledge and information required to make health-related decisions, and 3) to provide inspiration for future researchers and professionals.*

*In Regina, Brain Awareness Week is in its 9th year. Past events have included museum exhibitions, film screenings, public lectures, public displays, workshops and other events.*

**U OF R MASTER’S PROGRAM IN GERONTOLOGY UPDATE (CONTINUED)**

Harris, who recently returned from presenting this work at the International Conference of Alzheimer’s Disease International in Toronto, ON, says that a trial with a similar design but larger sample size may address some of the questions left unanswered by his study. Harris also says that conducting the study was meaningful on a personal level: “Having the opportunity to learn from individuals with dementia and seeing our dedicated volunteers engage with the residents on a daily basis was truly rewarding.”

**Jonathan Harris is Graduate Student in the University of Regina M.A./M.Sc. Program in Gerontology. He is working with Shanthi Johnson, PhD., RD on this project. Correspondence about this research may be sent to [harris7j@uregina.ca](mailto:harris7j@uregina.ca).**

**CAH Membership**

Interested in joining the CAH?

Complete the application form available online at the CAH website.

For more information, please contact [cah@uregina.ca](mailto:cah@uregina.ca)

University  
of Regina

Centre on Aging & Health

Regina, Saskatchewan, Canada

S4S 0A2

Phone: 306.337.8477

Fax: 306.337.3204

E-mail: [cah@uregina.ca](mailto:cah@uregina.ca)

[http://uregina.ca/hadjist/centre\\_index.htm](http://uregina.ca/hadjist/centre_index.htm)

### Apply for the University of Regina M.A./M.Sc. Program in Gerontology

The University of Regina offers an exciting inter-disciplinary research-oriented graduate degree program in gerontology. Students with health professional degrees (e.g., nursing, physical therapy), or undergraduate degrees in disciplines such as kinesiology, psychology, social work, health studies, gerontology, sociology, and biology are encouraged to apply for the 2012 fall semester. The program, coordinated by the University of Regina's Centre on Aging and Health, involves the collaboration of the Faculty of Arts, the Faculty of Kinesiology and Health Studies and the Faculty of Social Work. Students can work towards an MA or an MSc degree depending on the nature of their thesis research. The program aims to provide research training and specialized gerontology knowledge to health professionals and students wishing to pursue doctoral studies and research careers. The program emphasizes both the physiological and psychosocial aspects of aging.

**Admission Requirements:** Applicants must have a 4-year undergraduate degree in areas such as kinesiology, psychology, social work, health studies, sociology, biology, or a health professional degree (e.g., medicine, nursing, social work). The deadline for applications is March 31st.

To download our detailed brochure visit: [http://uregina.ca/hadjist/centre\\_index.html](http://uregina.ca/hadjist/centre_index.html) or contact:

Dr. Darren G. Candow, Gerontology Program Coordinator at 306.585.4906 or [Darren.Candow@uregina.ca](mailto:Darren.Candow@uregina.ca)

### Advertise in the CAH Newsletter

The CAH Newsletter charges a small fee for advertisements intended to recruit research participants (for research approved by the University of Regina Research Ethics Board). Similarly, we will accept advertisements of interest to seniors.

In addition, we charge a fee for corporate (non University of Regina) advertising.

All ads will be subject to approval by the CAH Administrator.

#### University of Regina Unit and Researcher Rates:

Full Page: \$100 Half Page: \$50 Quarter Page: \$35

#### Corporate Rates:

Full Page: \$150 Half Page: \$100 Quarter Page: \$85

Contact 306.337.8477 for more information.