



at the UNIVERSITY OF REGINA
The Newsletter

2023-2024 Centre on Aging and Health Distinguished Lecture: Ageism Unmasked

The Centre on Aging and Health was delighted to host Dr. Tracey Gendron, of Virginia Commonwealth University, at the University of Regina's University Theatre for our 18th annual 2023-2024 Distinguished Lecture on March 7, 2024. Dr. Gendron, acclaimed gerontologist and author of the book, "Ageism Unmasked: Exploring Age Bias and How to End it" delivered her captivating lecture on ageism in our society.

Chair of the Virginia Commonwealth University Department of Gerontology and director of the Virginia Center on Aging, Dr. Gendron is an internationally recognized gerontologist with nearly 30 years of



Dr. Tracey Gendron, author of "Ageism Unmasked: Exploring Age Bias and How to End it"

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experience as a grant-funded researcher.

Her compelling exploration of the forces that have shaped our understanding of aging, what it means to be old, and the personal, societal, economic and health effects of ageism and ableism was profoundly engaging and thought-provoking.

Approximately 170 people attended Dr. Gendron's lecture, in which she examined the real-world impact of age bias and explored decades of research on age discrimination, moving into



Dr. Tracey Gendron delivers the 2023-2024 Distinguished Lecture, "Ageism Unmasked"

actionable steps to overcome ageism and ableism both personally and professionally.



Dr. Tracey Gendron discusses the costs of ageism to our society

Dr. Gendron challenged audience members to rethink long-held ideas and assumptions about aging and being old with her inspiring assertion that a new image of aging is needed to disrupt ageist and ableist thought within ourselves, communities, policy and our culture, charting an inspiring way forward to create a culture built on age-inclusion.

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Following her lecture, Dr. Gendron took questions from the audience, and was available for a book signing outside the lecture theatre. Earlier in the day, Dr. Gendron also met with a group of older adults from Regina, as well as members of the University of Regina's faculty, students, and staff, participating in very engaged discussions with attendees.

Dr. Tracey Gendron's lecture is now available on the CAH YouTube channel, and can be viewed by following this link:
www.youtube.com/watch?v=FqYGmovJaj0.

The CAH thanks Dr. Gendron for delivering her excellent Distinguished Lecture.



Dr. Tracey Gendron signs copies of her book, 'Ageism Unmasked', following her Distinguished Lecture



To watch videos of the CAH Distinguished Lectures, and to learn more about our research and activities, visit the **CAH YouTube Channel** at:
www.youtube.com/@centreonagingandhealthuniv1446

POTENTIAL RESEARCH PARTICIPANTS

Members of the public who are over 65-years of age and are interested in participating in research can sign up by going to <https://research.uregina.ca/cah>, clicking on "Participate in Research," and filling out our simple web form.

The CAH hosts a directory of hundreds of potential research participants for University of Regina Research Ethics Board approved studies conducted by members, associates and trainees of the Centre on Aging and Health.

Indigenous Roots of Wellness: Restoring the Traditional Land-Human Relationship through Community Gardening

By Dr. Angela McGinnis

Indigenous ways of knowing and being contain an intrinsic connection with nature and the land. Traditionally, Indigenous peoples regarded plants and animals as our more-than-human relatives, situating them as key players in a complex, interconnected life-web that is central to holistic health. While the main pillars of “new age” gardening practices stem from pre-contact Indigenous agricultural principles, they often fail to integrate the deep cultural and relational worldviews held by many Indigenous Elders and knowledge keepers.

With the support from the Centre on Aging and Health (CAH) 2023 seed funding at the University of Regina, Dr. McGinnis and her research team have explored Indigenous ways of growing plants, understanding their gifts and life cycles, building soil structure and biodiversity, and the importance of using native plants for food and traditional medicines. This preliminary work has led to the successful application of a Saskatchewan Health Research Foundation (SHRF) 2023-2024 Truth and Action Mobilize grant, where

the community-university research team will partner with Indigenous Elders and knowledge keepers to co-create a community garden at Muscowpetung First Nation.

"The garden will represent an innovative and ethical blend of evidence-based (i.e., scientific) regenerative horticultural practices with traditional (i.e., Indigenous) ecological knowledges to support and strengthen the sacred land-human relationship for Indigenous Elders, their families, and their community."

The garden will represent an innovative and ethical blend of evidence-based (i.e., scientific) regenerative horticultural practices with traditional (i.e., Indigenous) ecological knowledges to support and strengthen the sacred land-human relationship for Indigenous Elders, their families, and their community. The work will facilitate intergenerational knowledge transfer from Indigenous Elders to youth on the role of nature connectedness for mental health and holistic wellness, as well as highlight the importance of cultural ways of relating to plants, animals, and the land for environmental sustainability and climate change action.

Ayrianna Hrenyk and Mavis Oleson Win CAH Award for Innovation in Health and Wellness

The Centre on Aging and Health was delighted to present this year's CAH Award for Innovation in Health and Wellness to Ayrianna Hrenyk, Lead Coordinator, and Mavis Oleson, Developer, of Dog PAAWS (Pet Assistance and Walking Services) prior to our annual Brain Awareness Week public film screening on March 14, 2024. The award recognizes Regina-based individuals, groups, or organizations who have introduced an innovative approach to service provision, or who have conducted field research to evaluate services or programs for older adults, and nominations are adjudicated by a committee comprised of all older adults.

This year's winners, Ayrianna Hrenyk and Mavis Oleson of Dog PAAWS, have developed a very innovative and accessible service through their registered non-profit organization, which matches intergenerational community volunteers with older adult dog owners who require assistance caring for their pets. Their services are provided free of charge and supported by dedicated and caring volunteers (with criminal record checks, photo IDs, and liability insurance), who support older pet

owners to preserve their human/animal bond, which studies have shown benefits both the physical and mental health of older adults. Volunteers help by walking dogs, assisting in transportation to veterinarian and grooming appointments, basic grooming, and delivering supplies, which helps older citizens keep their beloved pets in their homes longer.



Left to right: Marj Theissen, Dr. Joan Roy, Kathy Lye (CAH Adjudication Committee) with CAH Award for Innovation in Health and Wellness winners, Ayrianna Hrenyk and Dr. Mavis Oleson (Dog PAAWS)

Ms. Candace Davis, Enrichment Coordinator at the Regina Humane Society, noted that the services offered by Dog PAAWS are of particular importance to older adults who are losing their mobility or experiencing health challenges, as it prevents them needing to surrender their animal companion and the loss of that relationship at an already difficult time in their lives. She further highlighted

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that while some older people may be less likely to reach out for support for themselves, they may be more willing to ask for support for their beloved pet. The resulting relationship that develops between a Dog PAAWS volunteer and older adult strengthens social supports, reduces isolation, and has the potential for a volunteer to identify when a senior may need more support than they currently have and guide them to an appropriate support.

The CAH congratulates Ayrianna and Mavis for their innovation and dedication to older adults in our community through the innovative services provided by Dog PAAWS.

We would also like to acknowledge our wonderful adjudication committee members – Kathy Lye, Marj Theissen and Dr. Joan Roy – for their careful consideration of each of the excellent nominations that have been received, and for their ongoing dedication to recognizing excellence in innovation in health and wellness in our community.

For more information about Dog PAAWS and their services, please contact dogpaaws@gmail.com or call 306-525-0170. To volunteer with Dog PAAWS, please email dogpaaws.volunteers@gmail.com.

NOMINATIONS ARE OPEN FOR 2024/2025 CAH AWARD FOR INNOVATION IN HEALTH AND WELLNESS

The Centre on Aging and Health 'Award for Innovation in Health and Wellness' recognizes Regina-based individuals, groups, or organizations offering health or wellness services to older adults. Services may be related to healthcare, mental health, exercise, nutrition, social participation and inclusion, and/or community support. Award recipients must have introduced an innovative approach to service provision or who have conducted field research to evaluate services or programs for older persons.

Winners will be presented with an Award certificate at a CAH public event, will be offered formal affiliation with the CAH, and will be featured in the CAH Newsletter and CAH website.

If you know of a person or organization deserving of this award, nominations may be submitted at any time until October 15, 2024 for the 2024-2025 Award.

Nominations may be submitted:

- using the Online Nomination Form (research.uregina.ca/cah > About CAH > CAH Award)
- by completing a paper or PDF nomination form (on website or email cah@uregina.ca)

For more information on eligibility, adjudication, or about how to apply, please visit <https://research.uregina.ca/cah/about-cah/innovation-in-health-wellness-award> or contact Kathryn Smart, CAH Administrator, at Kathryn.Smart@uregina.ca

Inspiring Film Screening of 'Alive Inside' Held at University for Brain Awareness Week

The Centre on Aging and Health hosted a very successful public event on March 14, 2024 for the 21st anniversary of Brain Awareness Week (BAW). Brain Awareness Week is an international educational initiative organized by the Dana Foundation to raise awareness about the importance of brain science and its critical role in helping people lead healthier, more productive lives.

Over 100 people attended our public film screening of 'Alive Inside', a Sundance Audience Award-Winning documentary by filmmaker Michael Rossato-Bennett, about the inspiring effects of music on people



Film Screening of 'Alive Inside'



The CAH Director leads a live Q & A with expert Dr. Jessica Strong (University of P.E.I.)

experiencing severe dementia. The film is a joyous cinematic exploration about the effect that listening to music has on people with dementia, and its ability to revitalize people and reawaken their sense of self and wonder, where prescription medicine falls short.

Following the film screening, Dr. Jessica Strong, an expert in this topic joined the audience live from the University of Prince Edward Island to discuss research in this area and to answer questions from the audience. The event was a tremendous success, with every seat in the theatre full. To learn more about Brain Awareness Week, visit www.dana.org/brain-awareness-week/.

CAH Director To Be Honoured

It was recently announced that the CAH Director, Dr. Thomas Hadjistavropoulos, will be inducted into the Saskatchewan Order of Merit on June 19 2024 as recognition of his contributions to aging research and the well being of older adults.

It was also announced that he is the 2024 recipient of the D.O. Hebb Award for Distinguished Contributions to Psychology as a Science from the Canadian Psychological Association (to be awarded on June 22, 2024).

Join the U of R's Centre on Aging and Health

Researchers investigating health and aging, as well as health professionals with an interest in aging, are invited to apply for Centre on Aging and Health (CAH) membership. Members are part of a growing network of aging and health researchers, professionals, and trainees. In addition, the CAH can facilitate dissemination of member research to the public through our newsletter, our website, via Twitter, and other means.

CAH researchers are conducting world-class research on aging. Many CAH members work with research clusters that currently focus on Aging and Long-Term Care, Aging and Women's Health, Biological Basis of Age-Related Brain Disorders, Indigenous Perspectives on Life and Holistic Health, Musculoskeletal Health and Mobility,

and Pain in Old Age.

Members may access the CAH Directory of Potential Research Participants, which includes potential participants for University of Regina Research Ethics Board-approved studies. People who are over 65 years of age and are interested in participating in research can sign up by going to <https://research.uregina.ca/cah>, selecting "Participate in Research", and completing our simple Participant Sign-Up Form.

Members also receive information on relevant conferences, scholarships, grants, and a variety of other aging and health-specific news and events, including those hosted and sponsored by the CAH.

CAH Newsletter Accepting Submissions

Your announcements, member updates, research updates, and CAH-related news items are welcome. Please email submissions to: Kathryn Smart, CAH Administrator at Kathryn.Smart@uregina.ca

JOIN THE CENTRE ON AGING AND HEALTH

Applying is quick and easy.

Apply on our website: <https://research.uregina.ca/cah>
and click on "Become a Member."

APPLY FOR THE M.A./M.SC. AGING STUDIES PROGRAM

**“Seniors make up the fastest growing age group...
By 2051, about one in four Canadians is expected to
be 65 or over.”**

– *Statistics Canada*

- Exciting inter-disciplinary, research-oriented graduate degree program.
- Provides research training and specialized gerontology knowledge to health professionals and students.
- Emphasizes both the physiological and psychosocial aspects of aging.
- The collaboration of the Faculty of Arts, the Faculty of Kinesiology and Health Studies and the Faculty of Social Work and coordinated by the University of Regina’s Centre on Aging and Health.

Admission Requirements:

4-year undergraduate degree in areas such as, nursing, kinesiology, psychology, social work, health studies, sociology, biology, or a health professional degree.

Applications Due: March 31st, 2025
(for Fall 2025 Admissions)

For More Information:

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Apply now for the 2024/2025 CAH Small Grants Research Award!

Amount Available: \$1,500 Application Deadline:
December 15, 2024

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:
<https://research.uregina.ca/cah/about-cah/cah-grants-programs/>
or cah@uregina.ca or 306.337.8477

Advertise in the CAH Newsletter

University of Regina Unit & Researcher Rates (per page):

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

Corporate Rates (per page):

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

Contact CAH Administrator at: 306.337.8477
or cah@uregina.ca for more information.

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