

**Gerontological Health Section
Leadership Conference Call
February 15, 2008**

Attendees: Nancy Miller; Jan Warren-Findlow; Steven Wallace; Bob Burke; Gerry Eggert; Daniel Meng; Susan Miller; Irena Katz; Kathy Sykes; Rachel Seymour; Pat Alt; Sarita Bhalotra; Lene Levy-Storms; Cindy Bryant; Marcia Ory; Ashley Love; Allan Goldman; Jim Swan; Keith Elder

I. Welcome and introduction:

Nancy Miller opened the meeting and welcomed all.

II. Minutes from 11/4 and 11/6/07:

The following changes were discussed: on 11/6 under “other business” we didn’t follow up with the Nation’s Health. On 11/4, under Item III, Caryn Etkin’s name is incorrectly spelled. With these changes, the minutes were approved unanimously.

III. Update on Aging Forum:

Kathy reported that the APHA has sunset Task Forces and is moving toward development of Forums that cross Sections. Kathy and Ruth Palumbo are working on an Aging Form and there are approximately 100 individuals interested so far. The plan is to move ahead to educate public health officials, etc. about aging related issues. Marcia asked if Kathy could send around the Aging Forum proposal when it is in more final form. Gerry suggested that we get a list of potential members for this forum from other sections, so that we could recruit them to join ours, too. Pediatric Care and Gerontological Health have already supported the formation of the Aging Forum, with Food & Nutrition and others on the way.

IV. Membership:

We asked for a list of members of committees. We are planning to organize member activities over the coming year. We are considering a members’ survey (the last surveys were in ~ ‘95 and 2002). Daniel indicated that he’s happy to lead a survey, but welcomes suggestions. Daniel is familiarizing himself with the materials on previous surveys, and could do a new survey. The APHA official Section membership count is done in August, so we need to aim for action on membership recruitment and retention before then, especially to attract new members, etc. Can we require that presenters in GHS sections become GHS members? Gerry indicated that the key issue is membership retention for all APHA sections. A large number of individuals join APHA each year in order to present, and then discontinue their membership. We do lose fewer student members than APHA overall (GHS about 1/2, APHA around 2/3). Jim Swan suggested that we invite, but not require, presenters to join the section. There is actually more overall loss from APHA than section switching. We need to touch those who aren’t leaving. Perhaps “segment” the market -- students, general public health people, academics, new members? Do we need subgroups? A new members’ “meet and greet”? One way to get students more involved would be through mentoring for career development, etc. All suggestions for membership recruitment and retention should be sent to Daniel or Nancy before GHS March membership committee conference call.

V. Election Status:

Susan reported that there were nine self-nominations, mostly individuals relatively new to GHS (only one was not relatively new to the Section). Only one nomination for Governing Council was received. Susan is working on a ballot. There was a question about continuity. It might not be as important if the person has experience on the Governing Council. We need to be clearer about what Section Councilors do; maybe they could be subcommittee chairs? Nancy discussed the need for a role for those individuals not elected. Susan will be getting more information and will get back to the Executive Committee with recommendations for the ballot.

VI. Newsletter:

Nancy reported for Steve Alpert. There were several people who indicated interest in being editor-elect. Steve will talk with them, have each of them do part of the newsletter between now and Fall and then decide who to suggest as Editor(s). Steve is seeking more articles; subeditors could target issue areas. He mentioned a colleague with an article about gerontological education in Mexico. The Section will hear in June about RRF support for student awards and this could be a featured article.

We discussed whether to include those who've dropped out of the section in the last three years in the email newsletter list. How would we identify them? We might through APHA. Some sections also send tailored letters to new members. But that's more a membership issue.

VII. Website/listserv:

Steve Wallace has moved the website from UCLA, and it is up on APHA's site now. There is a committee to review and plan it. Currently, you have to go through many screens to access it. At present there are two listservs, one at UCLA with about 1,000 people, and a second at APHA with only current members. Is there a time when we'd only want the APHA list? Should we purge nonmembers of the section from the APHA list? The committee is also working to make the listserv more attractive.

VIII. Students:

How shall we select a student liaison for APHA, and keep them involved? Nancy asked for all suggestions to be sent to her.

IX. Annual Meeting:

A. Abstracts:

Jan asked for an extension of a week on the deadline. (We had ~140, and moved it up to 205). It looks as if we'll have about the same amount of space as last year. There have been two offers for special sessions on disability and poverty with Donna Wright. Some proposals may go in the special sessions. We could accept more (WHAT?). We usually have two special sessions, one with NCPSSM and one on international long term care. The Section should be able to accommodate about 160 presenters at most. The number of actual sessions GHS has is still unclear. The sessions will probably include 10 presenters at a time in posters or roundtables, and five in a paper session. Could we do a whole session on long term care in Japan? The reviews are due back by the end of March (3/28). By then, we should have some idea about space, and have more information on late-breakers, too.

To gain additional sessions, we need to show Donna why GHS needs more sessions. Ideally some topics cross sections, and can be used to accommodate additional abstracts.

This is the 30th anniversary of the section. If people want to propose other special sessions they should contact Jan or Nancy.

There was a question about the review process. This was discussed in the November business meetings. There was some concern that some sessions had papers that lacked a gerontology/aging focus. Jan, Rachel and Ashley are working toward a better reviewer-topic match. They do look at the range of scores in making the final decision to accept or reject any given abstract.

B. Research Awards:

Nancy reported for Caryn Etkin. All the awards have chairs and reviewers.

Later in the meeting, we returned to the topic of research awards. Should it be limited to the winner, and not the runners-up, honorable mention, etc? Does honorable mention not properly recognize the winner?

C. Archstone Awards:

An ad has been placed for Archstone nominees and abstracts were also accepted. All research awards are developed through abstracts. Next year we will likely move the Archstone selection to abstract submission, as well.

D. Local Arrangements & Booth: There is nothing to report yet. We need to find someone closer than Steve if possible to assist with local arrangements. There are five section members with San Diego addresses, and we will start by asking them. We are also checking out who can coordinate the booth for the meeting.

E. Other suggestions related to the Awards and Awards session:

To more clearly recognize award recipients, we need a sentence about selected awardees; we could ask them for a mini-abstract. One problem with having awardees speak is that some people read their entire paper (we stopped this process about five years ago).

Are winners all section members? They have to belong to APHA, but not necessarily the section. We've given student winners GHS membership for the following year. Perhaps we should do that for all awardees?

We've been doing fewer presentations at the Awards Session as we have recognized more award recipients. Should we go back to having speakers at the awards session, rather than just presenting awards? Could we have a "leadership" speaker?

Someone asked whether we could recognize award recipients at the reception? Would that free up a session for scientific papers? It's a draw to have the auction during the reception.

The awards committee will take all these suggestions and work out the Awards Session. Please send other thoughts to Nancy or Jan.

X. Policy Committee:

The committee is seeking volunteers and initiatives. One area under consideration is “death with dignity” initiatives. Not many were submitted under women’s health last year (11).

XI. Healthy People 2020:

Steve Wallace will distribute a link to Healthy People 2020. Input is needed and sought. Regional meetings are being scheduled.

XII. APHA leadership appointments:

Nancy needs indications of interest by the end of March. She will send them along then.

XIII. Budget and development activities:

Gerry reported that we need more support for the reception and endowments. The RRF grant for student research awards expires this year. We applied for ten more years, with awards to bachelors, masters, and Ph.D. students and a fund to support meeting attendance. Half of the students who have won awards from GHS stayed in APHA, in comparison with only 1/3 of students in APHA overall.

We proposed to RRF to raise \$7,500 per year toward an endowment, half to be raised from the auction and half from member contributions.

The meeting was adjourned.