Careers in Aging Week 2013 Highlights

Careers in Aging Week exists to increase the awareness and viability of gerontology-related vocational opportunities. It is sponsored every April by GSA and its educational branch, the Association for Gerontology in Higher Education (AGHE). Support also is provided by the Hartford Geriatric Social Work Initiative, which GSA administers. Universities and colleges participate by hosting events at their schools or in their communities. These activities may include guest speakers, career fairs, poster sessions, video presentations, panel discussions, and receptions.

GSA and AGHE would like to thank the participating organizations and commend the imaginative ways they promoted gerontology on their campuses. The examples below highlight just some of the events held across the country.

The Kansas State University Center on Aging hosted its Second Annual Amazing Careers in Aging Race. Inspired by the hit show “The Amazing Race,” six teams of students from various majors across campus competed in mental and physical challenges sponsored by four local aging-related businesses.

St. Catherine University’s events, organized by a team of social work, occupational therapy, and physical therapy faculty and students, were held both on campus and online. The week started with a lunch poster session about research, practice, and teaching in the field of aging. For example, social work students presented their clinical master’s degree research projects, while occupational therapy students presented a service learning project on home modifications. The virtual component consisted of short videos produced by physical therapy faculty showing interviews with representatives of various health professions about their work with older adults.

The St. Cloud State University Gerontology Program organized an open house gathering for students, faculty, and community partners; inducted new members into the Beta Zeta Chapter of Sigma Phi Omega, the national academic honors and professional society in gerontology; and co-sponsored a campus-wide presentation on advance care planning. Additionally, students hosted an informational kiosk in the student center throughout the week to promote careers in aging.

Washington University in St. Louis, St. Louis University, and the University of Missouri-St. Louis formed a citywide collaboration that sponsored several activities: a panel discussion on the transition from college to aging career; a site visit to Hidden Lake, a continuing care retirement community; a breakfast panel discussion with service providers in the aging community; and a film screening of “The Best Exotic Marigold Hotel” followed by a discussion panel.

The University of Iowa Aging Studies Program — in collaboration with colleagues at Iowa State University, The University of Northern Iowa, and the Des Moines Area Community College — developed and delivered a five-part webinar series targeted at community college and university students in Iowa. The series highlighted careers in nursing, social policy, speech and language therapy, residential setting management, and social work. Recordings of the webinars are available at www.uiowa.edu/~socialwk/agingstudies.

The University of Nevada, Reno Gerontology Academic Program and the Sanford Center for Aging, in collaboration with Associated Students for Gerontology, hosted four events, attracting more than 90 students. Thematically titled “How I Met My Career,” a festival of films celebrated older adults while challenging stereotypes about growing older; two roundtable sessions with 14 professionals and a panel of 5 graduates from the Gerontology Academic Program talked with students about their careers in gerontology, and an art show displayed paintings by local artists with Alzheimer’s disease.

Congratulations to the Recipients of the 2013 Careers in Aging Week Awards!

Visit www.careersinaging.com for more information!

“With the support of the Careers in Aging Week Award, we were able to reach a much wider audience, form interdisciplinary relationships across careers in aging, and educate participants on gerontology. Thank you once again for your support!”

— Steven Mudroch, Medical College of Wisconsin

Save the date for next year’s Careers in Aging Week: April 6 to 12, 2014

GSA Innovation Fund