Dear colleagues,

This year marked the 40th anniversary of the Pepper Institute on Aging and Public Policy, a time for reflecting on our past and charting our future course. To commemorate this milestone, we hosted an event – “A Celebration of Claude Pepper’s Legacy” – featuring Senator Bob Graham as keynote speaker. The event was an ideal way to celebrate the legacy of our nation’s most prominent and effective advocate for older Americans, as it brought together nearly two hundred campus leaders and key representatives from aging organizations across the state.

Another highlight was the start of “Aging Today” -- a weekly radio segment on WFSU that highlights critical aging-related trends, issues, and policies. Written by Pepper associates, affiliates, and students, along with research faculty at the Claude Pepper Center, “Aging Today” reaches over 30,000 listeners in our area.

But our central focus is our research -- and we did lots of it! Our faculty associates wrote dozens of papers (many of them with our graduate students), received funding from state and national sources to support their work, and gave presentations at numerous venues for academic and broader audiences. This year also marked the receipt of two Fulbright Senior Scholar awards by Pepper associates. Miles Taylor will head to Canada to teach and conduct research comparing its health inequalities with those in the U.S. I’ll travel to Italy, where I’ll conduct research on older Italians’ caregiving networks.

Also accomplishing a lot were the two organizations supported by the Pepper Institute, the Safe Mobility for Life Coalition and the Osher Lifelong Learning Institute (OLLI) at FSU. In addition to shipping out hundreds of information packets, the Safe Mobility for Life Coalition made numerous presentations across the state. OLLI offered wide-ranging courses in fall, spring, and summer, providing educational experiences to more than 1,000 older adults in Tallahassee and the surrounding area.

I hope you enjoy reading more about our activities – and that they further spark your curiosity about our aging society!

Best,

Anne Barrett

Director, Pepper Institute on Aging and Public Policy
Three entities at FSU owe their origin to Senator Claude Pepper, our nation’s leading advocate for older Americans – the Pepper Institute on Aging and Public Policy, the Claude Pepper Center, and the Claude Pepper Foundation. “A Celebration of Claude Pepper’s Legacy” featuring Senator Bob Graham as keynote speaker, was held on October 12, 2017. The event commemorated the 40th anniversary of two events in Senator Pepper’s contribution to older Americans’ lives and FSU’s role in furthering his legacy.

In 1977, Claude Pepper – a U.S. Representative from Florida with more than 30 years of experience in state and national politics – became chair of the newly-created House Select Committee on Aging. It proved to be a springboard that vaulted Senator Pepper into his role as the nation’s leading advocate for older Americans. From that beginning, for the next 12 years in the House of Representatives, he staunchly defended the two social programs so essential to older Americans, then and now – Medicare and Social Security.

In the 1980s, the Center, under the leadership of Dean Marie Cowart, took the first steps of what would become a longstanding relationship with the Claude Pepper Foundation. Senator Pepper gifted his papers, correspondence, and memorabilia to Florida State University and worked to establish three Pepper entities that now share the Pepper building and work to further his legacy.

Our work today strives to carry forward Pepper’s legacy of improving the lives of older Americans. In the years since Senator Pepper’s momentous achievements and the establishment of the Institute, the Center, and the Foundation, the need for research and advocacy has only increased. We believe in our mission, and we are proud – and honored – to work towards Senator Pepper’s vision for the nation’s older adults: that they be secure, free from want, and vital and respected citizens.
The Pepper Institute on Aging and Public Policy and the Claude Pepper Center, along with support from the College of Social Sciences and Public Policy and the Osher Lifelong Learning Institute (OLLI) at FSU, began sponsoring weekly Aging Today segments on 88.9, WFSU-FM. The one-minute segments discuss research on the possibilities and challenges of an aging society.

How many people plan for their transition from driving?

What is lifelong learning?

Who was Claude Pepper?

What is the Older Americans Act?

Can we count on having Social Security in the future?

Why do women tend to outlive men?

How much does assisted living cost?

How has life expectancy changed over time?

Archives: pepperinstitute.fsu.edu/aging-today
On July 28 in the wee hours of the morning, the seven-year battle by Republicans to repeal and replace Obamacare ended with a whimper when three Republican senators defected to vote against a so-called “skinny bill.” Many pundits attributed the failure of “repeal and replace” to the lack of presidential leadership and to divisions between moderates and conservatives. Sure, those issues mattered, but what led to the Republicans’ downfall was their failure to recognize how much the winds had shifted.

“Instead of engaging in the politics of destruction, Republicans should work with Democrats to repair problems in the private insurance market and to actually serve the public that elected them.”
The Florida State University Policy Pub series is sponsored by the FSU College of Social Sciences & Public Policy. Policy Pub is a recurring series of brief, plain-language talks given by faculty of the college on public policy issues that affect everyone. The talks take place in a relaxed social atmosphere in the bar area of Backwoods Bistro in Tallahassee, FL. Sessions are open to the public, and well attended. Two of Pepper Institute’s Associates were featured during the 2017-2018 academic year.

**ANNE BARRETT**
Ageism in an Aging Society: Why It Persists, Why We Should Care
November 14, 2018

**DAVID W. RASMUSSEN**
The Long-term Consequences of Economic Inequality
March 20, 2018
“Most of us would agree that every life stage has its pluses and minuses. But our culture tends to overemphasize the pluses of early stages and the minuses of later ones. This distinction is drawn more clearly for women than men. Women learn early on that the later stages—indeed, the second half of the average woman’s lifespan—is a "dreaded" time of life.

Some of the research I have conducted over my two decades as a sociologist of aging (and an aging sociologist!) challenges this negative view of women’s experiences in later life and begins to scratch the surface to reveal the positives.

One of the most consistent findings of our study was the lower anxiety of older women, compared with middle-aged and younger women. This finding is encouraging news that counters our culture’s gloomy view of women’s later years. However, it also reveals the consequences of a negative view of aging for younger women, as it erodes their psychological well-being decades before they reach later life.”

“The challenge for aging individuals and aging societies is to balance these perspectives, to acknowledge the losses and gains we face in every life stage and to develop opportunities for each of us to thrive in each of life’s changing moments.”
Pepper Associate Dawn Carr and Affiliate Natalie Sachs-Ericsson received a $50,000 grant at the International Association of Gerontology and Geriatrics World Congress in San Francisco. The grant, provided by the Gerontological Society of America (GSA) in collaboration with Mars Petcare and the WALTHAM Centre for Pet Nutrition, will allow the researchers to tap into data on human-animal interaction collected as part of the Health and Retirement Survey, a long-term study of more than 20,000 individuals 50 years old or older.

“In our study, we will give particular attention to whether a pet is beneficial to those who are socially isolated and have suffered a loss such as the death of a spouse.”
The Pepper Institute on Aging and Public Policy along with the Claude Pepper Center and Foundation presented a talk in Broad Auditorium featuring Dr. Stephen M. Golant.

Dr. Golant has been researching the housing, mobility, transportation, and long-term care needs of the older adult population for most of his academic career. He is a fellow of the Gerontological Society of America (GSA) and a Fulbright Senior Scholar award recipient. Golant is also the recipient of the Richard M. Kalish award from the GSA in recognition of his insightful and innovative publications on aging and life development in the behavioral and social sciences.
A multidisciplinary team comprised of Pepper Institute Director, Anne Barrett, Pepper Affiliate Eren Ozguven, and graduate students Rachel Douglas, Clayton Gumber, and Ayberk Kocatepe, researched Florida’s need for more pet-friendly shelters, especially for older adults.

The researchers examined the most densely populated area of Florida, Miami-Dade County, and found that Miami-Dade is not fully equipped to handle the sheltering of pets during an emergency. They chose to look at the population of older adults, as this group is especially vulnerable when it comes to evacuation preparedness.

The project was supported by the U.S. Department of Transportation and administered by the Center for Accessibility and Safety for an Aging Population (ASAP) at FSU, Florida A&M University and University of North Florida. Several news outlets, including WTXL-TV in Tallahassee, covered the team’s research findings.

34 percent of people over age 65 have pets and that access to pet-friendly shelters is limited. There are 38 counties in Florida without pet-friendly shelters.
Two Pepper Associates will travel during the 2018-2019 school year to teach and conduct research thanks to grants from the Fulbright Scholar Program.

Pepper Institute Director, Anne Barrett will conduct research at the University of Trento in Italy. Barrett has frequently taught through FSU’s Florence, Italy academic program during summers over the past eight years, and will now conduct research focusing on how Italy’s rapidly aging population—now among the oldest in the world—has affected the networks providing paid and unpaid care to older Italians.

Pepper Associate Miles Taylor has received a grant to teach and perform research at McGill University in Montreal Canada. She will work with a colleague to investigate why health inequality develops over a person’s lifetime, based on education and income in Canada. The data will help to compare trends between the U.S. and Canada.
When it comes to aging well, or aging “successfully,” research suggests that those who enjoy the best health and well-being in old age avoid getting chronic illnesses, maintain high cognitive and physical functioning, and stay engaged in life. One reason that staying actively engaged, such as in activities like volunteering, is beneficial is that these sorts of activities usually involve interacting with others in ways that are meaningful and productive, which creates a sense of social connectedness.

But, even though feeling lonely means that we feel disconnected from others, can engaging in activities that help build a strong sense of connectedness with others be the antidote when it comes to a time when loneliness persists?

**We found that individuals who started volunteering after they became widowed, and engaged in at least two hours per week, experienced no greater loneliness than their continuously married counterparts.**
Pepper Director Anne Barrett addressed the spring luncheon of the Association of Retired Faculty on May 3. Dr. Barrett spoke on the history of the Pepper Institute and the Safe Mobility for Life Coalition.
Pepper Associate Neil Charness recognized PhD graduate Dustin Souders as FSU's 2017 University Transportation Center Student of the Year at the fourth annual Transportation Day, presented by FSU's University Transportation Center for Accessibility and Safety for an Aging Population (UTC-ASAP). He is doing a Postdoctoral Fellowship at the Purdue University Center for Connected and Automated Transportation and Purdue Policy Research Institute.

Graduate student Stephanie Ureña received the 2017-2018 Claude and Mildred Pepper Dissertation Fellowship awarded by Pepper Institute and the Claude Pepper Center. Her research uses the Health and Retirement Study to examine the health trajectories of Veterans.
CONGRATULATIONS, GRADUATES!

- **Dr. Katherine Glasgow (Advisor: Anne Barrett)** - Care Receipt and Care Provision in Parent-Child Relationships: Their Association with Older Adults Mental Health

- **Dr. Clayton Gumber (Advisor: Anne Barrett)** - The Effects of Paid Work on Health in Later Life: Variation by Socioeconomic Status

- **Dr. Noah Webb (Advisor: Amy Burdette)** - Racial and Ethnic Trends in Vaccination Coverage Among Adolescents
OLLI – short for the Osher Lifelong Learning Institute – is a network of programs that partner with universities such as Florida State. OLLI at FSU is a scholarly and exciting program of classes targeted to mature adults who want to learn in a stress-free environment where there are no tests and no homework: Learning for the fun of learning!

OLLI “Study Abroad” Travelers
Explore Spain & Portugal

OLLI members reported 4,336 hours of volunteer time, valued at more than $107,000 for 2017

430 books were collected for the annual OLLI Holiday Book Drive

OLLI’s New Officers, Harriett Waas, John Kilgore, and Cindy Foster were installed at OLLI’s annual picnic.
Since 2009, the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) through the Safe Mobility for Life Program in the State Traffic Engineering and Operations Office has been partnering with the Pepper Institute on Aging and Public Policy at FSU to facilitate a statewide coalition to address the specific needs of Florida’s aging road users.

Tips on How to Use Transportation Options in Florida.

Safe Mobility teamed up with the UF College of Public Health and Health Professions’ Institute for Mobility, Activity, and Participation to launch FindARideFlorida.org, a new and improved resource to help older adults find transportation options throughout Florida.

CarFit is an educational program that offers older adults the opportunity to check how well their personal vehicles "fit" them.
Faculty Associates’ Research Activities

Publications


Kaskie, B., Carr, D. C., & Ewen, H. H. Defining doctoral gerontologists: Who are they and how are they contributing to the field of gerontology? *Gerontology and Geriatrics Education.* Doi: 0.1080/02701960.2017.1311880


Contracts and Grants

2017 – 2018
Project Title: “The Great Gun Divide: Faculty Attitudes toward Concealed and Open Carry on College Campuses.” Funding Source: COFRS, FSU. Total award: $14,000.

2017 – 2019

2018 - 2019

2018 - 2019
Project Title: “Racial Differences in the Effects of Family Caregiving on Cognitive, Functional, and Psychological Health: A Pilot Study?” Principal Investigator: Dawn Carr. Funding Source: Center for Research and Creative Activity, Florida State University. Total award: $13,000).

2017-2019

2017 – 2021
Project Title: “One Bridge at a Time: Bridging the Digital Divide for the Well-Being of Aging Populations through Smart and Connected Communities.” Principal Investigator: Eren Erman Ozuven’ Co-Investigator: Walter R. Boot. Funding Source: National Science Foundation Total award: $116,090.

2017 – 2018
Safe Mobility for Life Coalition. Funding Source: Florida Department of Transportation. Barrett, A. Total award: $229,000.