

Nobel Laureate Visits UVA

On January 28, 2005, Dr. Eric Kandel, a member of the faculty of Columbia University's Center for Neurobiology and Behavior, will present a lecture titled "Toward a Molecular Biology of Memory and Age-Related Memory Disorders" in the Old Cabell Hall Auditorium at 3:30pm. Kandel will discuss the research leading to his 2000 Nobel Prize in Physiology or Medicine. Dr. Kandel's research was recently highlighted in *Newsweek's* cover story (December 6, 2004).

Dr. Kandel's prize-winning research occurred when he investigated the memory process at the biochemical level and succeeded in identifying the individual nerve cells responsible for specific behaviors. Using the nervous system of the aplysia, a sea slug, as his model, Kandel discovered that modifications in synaptic function are crucial to learning and memory. Since similar

Pilot Grants Awarded

The Institute on Aging has recently awarded funding to four pilot research projects selected by its advisory board. Dr. Majd Alwan of the Medical Automation Research Center will assess alternative non-invasive methods of detecting pressure ulcers in persons with high melanin concentrations. Dr. James Bennett, Jr. in the Department of Neurology has received support to investigate the feasibility of mitochondrial gene replacement therapy as a specific treatment for two major degenerative conditions of aging: neurodegeneration in the brain and myopathy of the cardiac muscle.

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biochemical processes also exist in more complex animals, Kandel's findings have stimulated research in the development of drugs with the ability to reduce the forgetfulness that comes with increased age in humans.

This lecture is part of the Nobel Lecture Series at the University of Virginia and is sponsored by the Institute on Aging and the Office of the Vice President for Research and Graduate Studies at the University of Virginia.

Dr. Jack Knight-Scott in the Department of Biomedical Engineering aims to test a new method for separating the contributions of cerebral spinal fluid (CSF) and brain tissue water in the human brain. Finally, Dr. Jeffrey Smith in the Department of Biochemistry and Molecular Genetics aims to utilize a simple yeast model of calorie restriction to rapidly identify novel longevity genes and genetic pathways that contribute to the beneficial life span effects of this dietary regimen.

Available Funding for Community-Based Research

The Institute on Aging at the University of Virginia and the Jefferson Area Board for Aging (JABA) announce the availability of funding for student assistance with collaborative, community-based research in the field of aging. Student stipends of up to \$3,000 will be awarded for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2005. Interested University of Virginia faculty members should submit a one-page application that includes (1) a brief narrative describing the proposed research project; (2) the identification of the community partners and the role they will play in conducting the research and utilizing the research findings; and (3) a description of the amount and type of student assistance requested and how that

assistance will support the project. Proposals will be evaluated on originality of the proposed research activities; clarity of objectives; practical relevance for community needs; degree of collaboration; and identification of concrete deliverables and their potential use. Applications should be submitted electronically to uvaging@virginia.edu by January 28, 2005. For more information about this funding opportunity, contact Lora Hamp, Assistant Director of the Institute on Aging at lhamp@virginia.edu or 434-882-1612. She welcomes inquiries regarding this initiative.

Dishman to Speak at UVA

Eric Dishman, Principal Engineer and Senior Research Scientist at Intel Corporation, will speak at UVA on February 3 at 11 a.m. in the Jordan Hall Conference Center Auditorium. For the past 12 years, his work has focused on home healthcare, e-health, and aging-in-place technologies, first for Microsoft co-founder, Paul Allen, and now for Intel Corporation. Mr. Dishman is a nationally known speaker on the topics of aging and home health care technologies, and he serves as an advisor to numerous companies, universities, and Congressional members on assistive technologies, telemedicine, and home healthcare.

Mr. Dishman currently directs several consumer-oriented healthcare efforts at Intel, including the

"Proactive Health" research lab to develop home health technologies for seniors and their families who are struggling with cognitive decline, cancer, and cardiovascular disease. In partnership with the American Association of Homes and Services for the Aging, Eric founded the Center for Aging Services Technologies, a cross-industry working group that is driving technology R&D to help seniors to live long and live well no matter where they choose to live.

This lecture is sponsored by the Institute on Aging at the University of Virginia and is free and open to the public.

Does Childhood IQ Predict Late-Life Functioning?

Dr. Ian Deary, professor of psychology at the University of Edinburgh, will speak at UVA at 3:30 p.m. on March 18, 2005 in the Old Medical School Auditorium. Dr. Deary will discuss the predictive value of childhood IQs on functioning late in life. Dr. Deary's current research takes advantage of the fact that every Scottish schoolchild born in 1921 who attended school on the 1st of June, 1932, took The Moray House Test, a test of mental ability. 87,498 children participated in this intelligence testing, called the 'Scottish Mental Survey' (SMS) of 1932. The researchers then began searching for men and women still living in Scotland who took part in the SMS of 1932 so that these individuals could be retested using the same mental ability test they took in 1932.

For the first time, information could be collected about mental abilities in both early and late life.

Factors that are being considered in Dr. Deary's research on cognitive aging include health, employment, level of education and genetic factors. Common assumptions about growing older are that memory deteriorates, and that people generally slow down in their thinking. Until now, however, there has been no way to discover what a person's ability levels were as a child, before they or others began to notice the effects of aging.

This lecture is part of the Distinguished Speaker Series sponsored by the Institute on Aging.

Second Aging 101 Series to Begin in March

The Institute on Aging will sponsor its second community lecture series, Aging 101, beginning in March. The series is targeted toward the general public and will describe current University of Virginia research related to aging. All lectures will be held at the Holiday Inn (1901 Emmet Street) from 7 to 8:30 p.m., and will be followed by a reception where the speakers will answer individual questions. On March 8, Dr. Glenn Gaesser and Dr. Arthur Weltman will speak about the benefits of exercise. On March 22, Dr. Majd Alwan and Dr. John Lach will describe the technologies being developed at the University to assess and track the health of older adults. Finally, on April 5, Professor Thomas Hafemeister and Professor Thomas White will discuss elder law issues.

Exercise Symposium Scheduled for April

An exercise symposium "Research on Exercise and Healthy Aging" will be held at the University of Virginia on April 26. Guest speakers include Dr. Steven Blair of the Cooper Institute, who will speak about the importance of physical activity and cardiorespiratory fitness in aging, Dr. William Evans, of the University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences, who will speak about sarcopenia, which is the decrease in muscle mass and strength due to the aging process, and Dr. Edward McAuley, of the University of Illinois, Champaign, who will discuss physical activity and aging. This conference will be held in the Jordan Hall Auditorium.

Available Grant Opportunities

The Virginia Center on Aging at Virginia Commonwealth University is accepting grant applications through April 1, 2005 for the Alzheimer's & Related Diseases Research Award Fund. Awards are limited to \$25,000 each and restricted to research projects only, exclusive of training grants, conferences, or similar educational programs. Applicants must be affiliated with colleges or universities, research institutions or other not-for-profit organizations located in Virginia. A non-binding letter of intent with tentative title, non-technical abstract, and a 4-5 sentence description of the project in common, everyday language for press release purposes is requested by March 3, 2005. Applications will be accepted through April 1 and applicants will be notified by June 22. The funding period begins July 1, 2005 and project must be completed by June 30, 2006.

Application forms, guidelines and further information may be obtained on the World Wide Web (<http://www.vcu.edu/vcoa/arraf.htm>) or by contacting the Alzheimer's & Related Diseases Research Award Fund, Virginia Center on Aging, Virginia Commonwealth University, P.O. Box 980229, Richmond, Virginia 23298-0229, (804) 828-1525.

Call for Distinguished Speakers

The University of Virginia Institute on Aging is soliciting nominations for its Distinguished Speakers Series for the next academic year. Nominees should have outstanding scientific reputations, have the ability to speak about their work to a broad interdisciplinary audience, and be willing to provide informal consultation with researchers at UVa. Funds are available for the speaker's expenses, an honorarium, a reception following the talk, and publicity. Please submit nominations and a brief summary of the nominee's background to: uvaging@virginia.edu