I would like to express my gratitude to the Center on Health, Aging, and Disability (CHAD) staff, the CHAD Senior Faculty Committee, the CHART Steering Committee, the Age-Friendly Steering Committee, and all who worked with CHAD throughout the year.

We continue to support the innovative research, education, and public engagement missions of AHS. After a pandemic hiatus, our travel grant program returned this year and is available to faculty and academic professionals. I am thrilled to announce that we awarded two pilot grants this year, and that previous recipients continue to obtain external funding based on data generated from these awards.

In 2021, our grants staff supported 98 external grant submissions with AHS investigators as the lead PI. I am pleased to say that close to half of these submissions turned into funded awards for more than $11 million in external funding.

Our first CHAD research theme, Collaborations in Health, Aging, Research, and Technology (CHART), continues to yield impressive interdisciplinary projects funded by external sponsors. We look forward to growing CHAD with the addition of a second research theme in the upcoming year—stay tuned.

In October 2021 we celebrated the dedication of the new The McKechnie Family Living in Interactive Future Environments (LIFE) Home. There are many exciting and innovative research projects currently underway at the McKechnie Family LIFE Home.

Our team looks forward to continuing to support all the groundbreaking and exciting work happening in AHS this coming year.

YOURS IN SCIENCE,

Jeff Woods

Jeff Woods
Director, Center on Health, Aging, and Disability
Associate Dean for Research, College of Applied Health Sciences
Mottier Family Professor, Kinesiology and Community Health
Pilot Grants

Since 2010, CHAD has awarded $860,000 to AHS researchers for pilot research. Our talented faculty have leveraged these initial pilot projects into larger externally funded projects funded by federal, foundation, and corporate sponsors. We are pleased to report that for every $1 CHAD has awarded in pilot grants over the past 12 years, $16 of external research funding has returned to our campus as a result.

2022 RECIPIENTS

Hyojung Kang
ASSISTANT PROFESSOR, KCH
Geospatial Variability of Illicit Opioid Use and Disparities in Treatment Resources

Alicia Kraay
ASSISTANT PROFESSOR, KCH
Population heterogeneity and behavior change drive risk of COVID-19, norovirus, and rotavirus transmission

Travel Grants

CHAD annually provides travel funding for faculty and academic professionals to present their research across the globe.

2021-22 saw many researchers returning to in-person conferences to present their work, and CHAD was there to support them.
This spring we celebrated the 6th anniversary of the founding of Age-Friendly Champaign-Urbana and successfully completed a cycle of improvement. A highlight of the past year for Age-Friendly was the introduction of our regular column in Central Illinois Business Magazine. The column in this bi-monthly publication allows us to reach a new audience of community business leaders, older adults, and adult children of older adults.
Upcoming this year will be the development of the CHART Panel of Elders, through which we will obtain guidance about research initiatives directly from older adults. Our goal is to design technology to support successful aging with older adults, and not for them.

CHART: Collaborations in Health, Aging, Research, & Technology

RECENT CHART HIGHLIGHTS

Alyssa Stanfield

A highlight this year for CHART was the addition of Alyssa Stanfield to our team as CHART Coordinator. Alyssa has been working closely with CHART Director Wendy Rogers, getting actively engaged with the Champaign-Urbana community as well as making connections across campus to implement initiatives related to being an Age-Friendly University.

We were actively engaged in planning the Chittenden Symposium in April and held our CHART Steering Committee Meeting in May.

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COMMUNITY OUTREACH

CHART regularly interacts with community members and groups interested in supporting older adults and aging services professionals.

This year, we participated in events with the Senior Task Force and Champaign County Committee on Aging.

We were particularly pleased to sponsor the food at the Fall Social and work on pollinator crafts with older adults in the spring.

Committee on Aging of Champaign County

In June, CHART hosted a table at the CoA Summer Senior Event and had the opportunity to talk to attendees about the exciting research with older adults on our campus.
CHART sponsored the student-run group Sage, a social entrepreneur group focused on reducing social isolation by connecting older adults in the community with UIUC students through storytelling. CHART, with Sage, will present a poster at the GSA 2022 annual conference titled "Connecting Generations and Preserving Lived Experiences: An Illinois Age-Friendly Initiative."

In November 2021, CHART and Purdue University collaborated on a poster titled “Starts and Stops: Strategizing an Age-Friendly University Commitment During a Pandemic.” The two universities showed their successes and future plans that had to be put on hold due to the Covid-19 pandemic. Wendy Rogers presented on “Enhancing Collaborations between our Age-Friendly Community and University Initiatives” and discussed successful AFU activities and how activities fit into the 10 AFU principals.

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The McKechnie Family LIFE Home held its dedication ceremony on October 7, 2021. Dean Cheryl Hanley-Maxwell, Chancellor Robert J. Jones, and Director Wendy Rogers gave welcoming remarks. The McKechnie family and Arthur D. Fisk were recognized for their donations and also gave remarks. The ceremony was followed by a reception and tour of the facility.

DEDICATION CEREMONY

McKechnie Family LIFE Home

RESEARCH EXAMPLES

FIREPLACE

The Fireside Exploration Project
- A study on enrichment seeking in midlife and older adulthood

This research project developed an experiment within an in-home environment to test the potential for technologies such as fireplaces and voice assistants to support well-being in midlife and older adulthood.

Faculty members:
Prof. Shannon T. Mejía, College of Applied Health Sciences; Prof. Jessie Chin, School of Information Sciences

Funding source:
Napoleon Fireplaces

SOFT ROBOTS

Soft and Dexterous Service Robot Configurations to Support Healthcare at Home for Older Adults

This research project investigated user perceptions and attitudes towards a novel soft robot for telehealth and gathered robot design requirements for use cases such as remote home health checkups.

Faculty members & collaborators:
Prof. Girish Krishnan, Grainger College of Engineering; Dr. Ryan Reck, OSF Healthcare; Prof. Wendy Rogers, College of Applied Health Sciences

Funding source:
Jump Applied Research through Community Health through Engineering and Simulation (ARCHES) Grant from OSF HealthCare

WAYFINDING

Wayfinding Assistance for Persons with Visual Impairment via Mobile Robotics

This research study explored the needs and barriers to navigating indoor environments for persons with visual impairments and used these assessments to inform design of robots for wayfinding.

Faculty members:
Prof. Katherine Driggs-Campbell, Grainger College of Engineering; Prof. Wendy Rogers, College of Applied Health Sciences

Funding source:
Illinois Campus Research Board
Thank you to all the people who work hard to support the work of CHAD throughout the entire year.

CHAD SENIOR FACULTY COMMITTEE 2021-2022

Toni Liechty (RST), Chair
Raksha Mudar (SHS)
Nick Burd (KCH)

AGE-FRIENDLY STEERING COMMITTEE

Evan Alvarez, Planning and Outreach Manager, Champaign-Urbana Mass Transit District
Amy Brown, Division Manager Advocacy & Prevention, Illinois Department on Aging
Lynne Barnes, Interim CEO, CRIS Healthy Aging
Linda Coleman, Past Chair, Board of Directors, Osher Lifelong Learning Institute
Chris Diana, Realtor, Twin City Realty, representing the City of Urbana
Joan Dixon, Retired CEO & President, Community Foundation of East Central Illinois
Nicole Dowling, CEO at CRIS Rural Mass Transit District.
Marianne Downey, Retired from University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign
Mimi Hutchinson, Human Services Transportation Coordinator, Champaign County Regional Planning Commission

CHART STEERING COMMITTEE

Amy Brown, Division Manager, Advocacy and Prevention Services, Office of Adult Protective Services, Illinois Dept. on Aging
Chelsey Byers-Gerstenecker, Family and Consumer Sciences Educator, Illinois Extension
Tanya Gallagher, Professor Emeritus, Department of Speech and Hearing Science
Kathleen Holden, Associate Chancellor Emeritus, University of Illinois
Raksha Mudar, Associate Professor, Speech and Hearing Sciences
Deb Reardanz, President and CEO, Clark-Lindsey Village
Andiara Schwingel, Associate Professor, Kinesiology and Community Health

CHAD ANNUAL REPORT

13 / 14 PEOPLE

DIRECTOR

Laura Rice

ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR

Jeff Woods

GRANT PROPOSAL SPECIALIST

Heidi Krahling

ASSISTANT DIRECTOR FOR STRATEGIC INITIATIVES AND RESEARCH RELATIONS

Alyssa Stanfield

ASSISTANT DIRECTOR

Wendy Bartlo

ASSISTANT DIRECTOR OF RESEARCH, McKECHNIE FAMILY LIFE HOME

Harshal Mahajan

William Stewart, Professor, Recreation Sport and Tourism
Abigail Wooldridge, Assistant Professor, Industrial and Enterprise Systems Engineering
Wendy Bartlo, Assistant Director for Strategic Initiatives and Research Relations, Center on Health, Aging, and Disability (ex-officio)
Laura Rice, Associate Director, Center on Health, Aging, and Disability (ex-officio)
Jeff Woods, Director, Center on Health, Aging, and Disability (ex-officio)