

CCGG Annual Conference 2008
Gerontology and Geriatrics: Critical Components of California's Workforce

In a paper presented to a meeting attended by most of the CEOs from major international corporations, Herbert E. Meyer, who served in the Reagan Administration in a variety of Intelligence Agency capacities, discussed four major transformations that are shaping politics, economics, and world events. One of these transformations is the changing demographics of the United States and the world. While the aging of the population may have "scary" implications, said Mr. Meyer, it also represents enormous opportunities for new products and services focused on this population. This opens up unique opportunities never before available in our history. He admonished the CEOs to become attuned to where the action is. Business needs customers. Go where the customers are.

This was reflected in the theme of the annual Conference of the California Council on Gerontology and Geriatrics (CCGG) held April 18, 2008 at the Doubletree Hotel in Sacramento, California. In CCGG's continuing effort to advocate for a workforce that addresses issues related aging, we designed the program to assist the 142 attendees, including educators, legislators, funding agencies, students, and gerontology and geriatrics professionals to create and expand career paths that use their knowledge and skills to the benefit of California's aging population.

Student scholarships were generously contributed by AARP California, Agencies and Programs on Aging of Long Beach, the Archstone Foundation, the California Geriatrics Society, Long Beach CARES and the City of Long Beach Department of Health and Human Services, On Lok Lifeways, and the University of Southern California Leonard Davis School of Gerontology.

Highlights of the Conference included:

A pre-conference premiere showing of the FoxSearchlight documentary film, *Young at Heart*, tracing several months in the lives of a group of dynamic older adults as they prepared for a concert of contemporary music by the likes of Jimi Hendrix, Coldplay, and Sonic Youth.

A book signing following a presentation by C. Joanne Grabinski who summarized and expanded on her 2007 publication: *101 Careers in Gerontology*. Presentation of a unique career trajectory by Trina Saucedo, a licensed general contractor and Certified Aging in Place Specialist as well as the owner of "Let's Keep You in Your Home".

A review of the legislative process by Rosalie Gilford, followed by a legislative update on AB 2543 (Berg). Panelists included the former Director of the California Department of Aging and current Legislative Chair of CCGG, Dixon Arnett; Allison Ruff, Principal Consultant, California State Assembly; and Senior Assembly Member, California Senior Legislature, Shirley Krohn. The bill proposes loan forgiveness for selected licensed professions for a commitment to work with older adults.

A walking tour of the Mobile Generational Resource Center of the Silicon Valley Council on Aging which showcases the latest aging-in-place technologies, on-site work-life seminars, caregiver educational materials, and elder care planning support.

A lively presentation by Mary Furlong, a leading authority on the baby boom generation, one of the "Top 25 Women Entrepreneurs" (*Fortune Small Business*), one of *Time* magazine's "Digital 50" and founder of SeniorNet and Third Age Media; and Lorraine Larson, Director of Marketing and Communication at the Silicon Valley COA and a leading social entrepreneur. They discussed opportunities and the skills needed to develop unique businesses to serve the aging population.

A presentation by Jolene Fassbinder, Executive Director CCGG on how to "gerontologize" a resume and a career by drawing on personal and professional strengths to create employment opportunities.

An introduction of the Student Ambassador Program, developed by the CCGG Board Southern California Student Representative Caroline Cicero as a way for students to energize their campuses in support of gerontology, geriatrics, and CCGG.

A special thanks go to the Annual Meeting Planning Committee: Maria Bratly, Elisa Chavez, Lorie Eber, Jolene Fassbinder, Moira Fordyce, Rosalie Gilford, Nancy Hikoyda, Cheryl Osborne, Diane Patterson, Mark Robinson, Sam Shimomura, Ronena Summers, Debra Sheets, Barbara White and consultant Carol Howle.