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April 2024 Newsletter

A Note from the Director

Dear colleagues and friends,

As we approach the end of the academic year, I am delighted to bring you the latest updates from the Center.

This week, I'm traveling to Washington, D.C., representing CSU as an OVPR Government Relations Faculty Ambassador. I plan to engage with key stakeholders, such as the U.S. Senate Special Committee on Aging and the National Institute on Aging. I am eager to showcase CSU's extensive expertise in aging research and to advocate passionately for our university on this national stage.

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Since I became the director in 2019, we've made significant progress and believe that the next 2-5 years will be a significant opportunity to 'level up' in these areas. If you have thoughts on how we can effectively collaborate and include you, your research program and trainees, please don't hesitate to reach out: Nicole.Ehrhart@colostate.edu.

I also want to take a moment to acknowledge the outstanding achievements of our affiliated faculty and students in the 2023-2024 academic year. Recently, at the [College of Health and Human Sciences All College Awards](#), faculty and students, such as Jain Kwon, Tiffany Weir, Manfred Diehl, Cali McEntee, and CHA Student Ambassador Rachel Washburn were celebrated for their exceptional contributions. Additionally, faculty affiliates Jeffrey Wilusz, Josiane Broussard, and Greg Ebel received well-deserved recognition through the Provost and CSU Board of Governors awards.

Be sure to browse the rest of this newsletter for updates on [new publications](#), student accomplishments, and [upcoming events](#) in the field of aging, including opportunities with the Veterinary Teaching Hospital's [Neurology Clinical Trials team](#) and the College of Health and Human Sciences' Movement Neuroscience and Rehabilitation Lab. I encourage you to explore their offerings and consider participating in these valuable research endeavors.

Warmest regards,



Nicole Ehrhart

Healthy Aging Blog

[Enhancing healthcare communication for LGBT+ inclusivity](#)

Rachel Washburn, CHA Student Ambassador

[The argument for prioritizing mental health as you age](#)

Brooke Zarecki, CHA Student Ambassador

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Aging News



How patient-led research could speed up medical innovation

via *Science News*

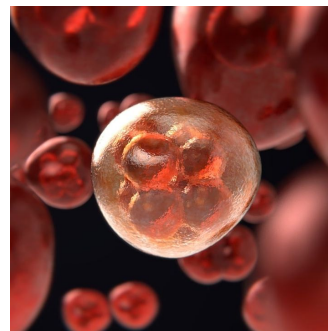
[read more >>](#)



Online conversations show potential cognitive benefit for socially isolated older adults

via *The National Institute on Aging*

[read more >>](#)



Cancer-vaccine trials give reasons for optimism

via *Nature*

[read more >>](#)

News from the Center



How to Combat Inflammaging, the Aging Side Effect No One Talks About

You may not be able to turn back the clock, but there are things you can do to minimize chronic inflammation at you age.

BY [ARRICCA ELIN SANSONE](#) PUBLISHED: APR 7, 2024

CHA Director Nicole Ehrhart was recently quoted in an article by *Good Housekeeping* on the effects of inflammation and aging. Check it out [here](#).

Health and Exercise Science Student Capstones

This semester, CHA collaborated with Scott Burley, Ph.D. and students in HES 455: Health Promotion Programming on their capstone projects. These senior Health and Exercise Science students developed targeted health interventions aimed at raising awareness among college students about the impact of their current health behaviors on well-being in later life. Read more below for details about each group's project.



Dreaming Ahead

Lily Hancock, Emma Van Auker, Griffin Vander Waerdt, Tanner Menu, and Eliseo Pereyra

Informed by Associate Professor Josiane Broussard's research on sleep and circadian rhythm, the Dreaming Ahead project describes how sleep habits affect Alzheimer's disease risk. The group's intervention intends to enhance the sleep routines of engineering students by sharing research findings and sleep maintenance tips with CSU engineering clubs and posting educational flyers around campus.

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Student Resources

Julia Pinner, Tatum Flack, Allison Beecher, Sebastian Mahan, and Reed Jordan

This intervention aimed to increase accessibility and visibility to student health resources on campus by curating over 40 resources covering nutrition, mental health, exercise, alcohol and drug use, and sleep habits. These student resources have been added to the Center for Healthy Aging's [Resources](#) webpage.

Tech Skills for Older Adults

Tech Skills for Older Adults

Offered by CSU's Center for Healthy Aging, *Tech Skills for Older Adults* is a free age-friendly technology education platform composed of video tutorials and printable guides to help older adults learn more about their smartphones and tablets.

View the website at col.st/l8TgD
OR scan the QR code with your camera app





Columbine Health Systems
Center for Healthy Aging
COLORADO STATE UNIVERSITY



Featured topics and apps on the *Tech Skills for Older Adults* website:

- Navigating buttons and main screens of the smart phone.
- Reading library eBooks and audiobooks with the Libby app.
- Listening to music with the Spotify app.
- Frequently used icons used in technology.
- Texting with smartphones.
- Clipping coupons with the Kroger and Safeway apps.

This semester, CHA Student Ambassador Rachel Washburn launched the [Tech Skills for Older Adults](#) website, an age-friendly technology education platform composed of step-by-step video tutorials and printable guides to help older adults learn more about their smartphones and tablets. Do browse the website and share this valuable resource with those in your network!

A step-by-step guide for navigating to the Tech Skills website is available for community/senior centers, independent living facilities, and long-term care facilities.

Please email Rachel.Washburn@colostate.edu for details.



living healthy longer is back!

Season 4 of *living healthy longer* premiered on March 13 with a recap of our President's Day panel discussion: '[Should there be age limits for politicians?](#)' If you're curious about the influence of age on political leadership, this discussion provides perspectives from anti-ageism, journalism, and political science to inform your decision-making at the ballot box.

This month, Dr. Greg Gahm – a geriatrician, corporate medical director for Vivage Senior Living, and an associate professor of clinical medicine at CU Anschutz – joined the podcast to discuss the [Shifting Dynamics of Long-Term Care](#). And, our episode with CHA affiliate faculty member Meara Faw, Ph.D., premiered this week, exploring the [complexities of caregiving](#), including statistics on its prevalence, the challenges faced by care partners, and the unique needs they encounter.

Stream the show today on [Apple](#), [Spotify](#), or [Amazon](#). Please do subscribe, rate, and leave a review — it helps us find more listeners!

[Find *living healthy longer* wherever you like to listen:](#)

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FEEDBACK FORM

1. Your response will help our host plan future episodes.

Center Events

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MOVING THROUGH PARKINSON'S

HEALTHY AGING
THROUGH THE
ART OF DANCE

Healthy Hydration, Lymph, and Elimination: A Webinar with Heidi Huser Hackler

Wednesday, April 24

2:15-3:30 p.m.

Hybrid: CSU's Center for Healthy Aging or Zoom

Continue to celebrate Parkinson's Awareness Month by learning about holistic approaches to health with Heidi Hauser Hackler, a functional wellness and nutrition coach, Reiki master, and author.

RSVP

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**Aging Naturally: Understanding How Spending Time in Nature
Affects Older Adults' Health and Well-Being**

Wednesday, May 15, 4:30-6 p.m.

CSU's Center for Healthy Aging

Join [Nature and Health Northern Colorado](#) and CSU's Center for Healthy Aging as we hear Sharde Johnson, manager of WCNR's [Restoring Attention and Affect in Nature Lab](#), present the results of a recent nature, aging and virtual reality study! Please do forward this invite to interested colleagues and friends.

Description: The global population of adults ages 65 and older is growing faster than in the past. Considering that this demographic faces an increased risk of developing

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and creative interventions need to continue to be developed and tested. In this presentation, Johnson discusses a recent study by researchers at Colorado State University and collaborating universities that examines the effects of real-world and virtual reality nature on older and younger adults' cognition, stress, and mood. Results offer insights about using nature-based interventions to support health and well-being. After the talk, there will be facilitated discussion about nature and aging.

RSVP

Still Me Live well as you age

June 4
10:00 am - 12:00 noon
Drake Centre | 802 W. Drake Rd. | Ft. Collins

Please join us for our FREE seminar.

Four amazing guest speakers will share the latest research and tips on how to stay socially and cognitively engaged. They'll also offer nutritional and exercise recommendations to maintain or improve your overall physical and brain health.

REGISTER



Rebecca Chopp, PhD



Deana Davalos, PhD



Dr. Maggie Thompson,
PT, DPT, FAAOMPT



Amber Webb, MA

Faculty News

Awards and Achievements

Congratulations to CHA-affiliated faculty and students who were recognized at the 2023-2024 [College of Health and Human Sciences All College Awards Ceremony](#) and [Celebrate! Colorado State Awards](#). Honorees are nominated by their peers and selected by

Tenure-Track Faculty Teaching Excellence Award

Jain Kwon, Design and Merchandising



Kwon's pedagogical approach breathes life into creative and critical thought, underscoring the pivotal role of design in society. She teaches courses such as Capstone Studio – Interior Architecture and Design, Evidence-Based Design Theory and Practice, Interior Design Programming, Participatory Design / Service Learning, and Research Methods.

Scholarly Excellence Award

Tiffany Weir, Food Science and Human Nutrition



Weir has established herself as an international expert and leader on the gut microbiome. Her 84 publications in prestigious journals, and citations topping 7,000, demonstrate the importance and innovation of her work.

Superior Faculty Service Award
Manfred Diehl, Human Development and Family Studies



Diehl's tenure at CSU since 2006 is marked by impactful research, pivotal contributions to HDFS degree programs, and extensive service to the university, college, and profession. He was named a University Distinguished Professor in 2017.

Outstanding Graduate Student Award
Cali McEntee, Health and Exercise Science



In Tom LaRocca's Healthspan Biology Laboratory, McEntee's innovative research delves into unraveling the mechanisms of neurodegeneration, particularly in age-related diseases like Alzheimer's.

Outstanding Senior Award
Rachel Washburn, Health and Exercise Science



Washburn's passion for the science of human aging has led her to pursue a gerontology minor, focus her honors thesis on promoting healthy aging, and play a crucial role as a research assistant on a federally funded initiative that supports grandparents raising grandchildren. She has also served as an inaugural CHA student ambassador since August 2023.

CSU Board of Governors Excellence in Graduate Education Award Jeffrey Wilusz, Ph.D., Microbiology, Immunology & Pathology



In nearly 21 years, Wilusz has taught, mentored, and positively impacted nearly every type of student at the university, ranging from undergraduate to graduate to professional students in various programs, through resident and online instruction.



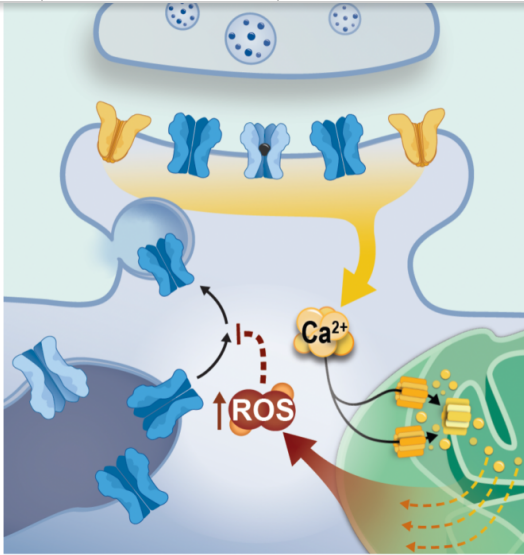
Broussard has secured multiple grants to support her research on the effects of sleep and circadian disruption on human health, exploring their impact on cellular function and the potential for timing adjustments in behaviors, like food intake and exercise, to mitigate diabetic risk associated with chronic sleep disturbances.

Oliver P. Pennock Distinguished Service Award
Greg Ebel, Sc.D., Microbiology, Immunology, and Pathology



The Ebel Lab specializes in studying arboviruses such as West Nile, dengue, and Zika viruses, with the goal of reducing the impact of these infections. The lab is engaged in local health initiatives to lessen the impact of West Nile virus in Fort Collins and nearby areas, and contributes to regional efforts through the CDC-funded Rockies and High Plains Vector-Borne Diseases Center.

Publications



glutamate receptors to synapses

A new study from the lab of [Fred Hoerndli](#), associate professor in the Department of Biomedical Sciences, looks at how neurons regulate synaptic mitochondria and vice versa. By studying the synaptic mitochondria and glutamate receptor exocytosis in roundworms, researchers found that mitochondria can regulate the function of synapses, where brain cells communicate. This is done via production of highly reactive chemicals, called reactive oxygen species, by mitochondria in response to the calcium that occurs when synapses are activated.

There is more research to be done to refine this model, but this study opens doors to new questions. The lab plans to continue studying this signaling in more detail to identify the key proteins involved. They also hope to address how the function, shape, and location of single synaptic mitochondria impacts neuronal communication using computational modeling.

Learn more by reading the [study](#) or [SOURCE article](#).

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Adaptive yoga versus low-impact exercise for adults with chronic acquired brain injury: A pilot randomized control trial protocol

Last November, Assistant Professor Jaclyn Stephens (Health and Exercise Science) and Professor Arlene Schmid (Occupational Therapy) concluded their research project funded by the Boettcher Foundation. This project involved the collection of behavioral, cognitive, and neurophysiological data from adults with chronic brain injury before and after eight weeks of exercise classes occurring in the Center. The findings of this project were published in *[Frontiers in Human Neuroscience](#)*, with more manuscripts planned, along with presentations at events including:

- CHHS Research Day: March 5, 2024.
- Health and Exercise Science Seminar: March 29, 2024.
- Rocky Mountain American Society of Biomechanics Annual Meeting: April 5, 2024.

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GENE TECHNOLOGIES FOR ANIMAL HEALTH



*an interactive, student-led night to
discuss laboratory research, such as
CRISPR technology*

MAY 1

6-7 PM: poster presentations
7-9 PM: interactive science activities
8-9 PM: science trivia



Avogadro's Number
605 S Mason St Fort Collins, CO 80524



In this upcoming Science on Tap event, MIP 401 students will present posters showcasing their CRISPR research projects conducted in collaboration with global animal health company Zoetis. These students were paired with an older adult community member for biweekly conversations about CRISPR in a project that tests how STEM outcomes are altered through intergenerational learning.

Research Studies Currently Enrolling



Canine volunteers needed for two CSU studies on cognitive function in dogs

by Brooke Zarecki, CHA Student Ambassador

Advancements in modern medicine have allowed both humans and canines to live longer. However, a longer lifespan has led to a greater percentage of dogs suffering from cognitive decline. This creates an urgency to find treatments and has led CSU researchers in veterinary medicine to design experiments aimed at reducing the progression of cognitive dysfunction in dogs. Two ongoing trials studying canine cognitive dysfunction are in need of canine volunteers: BioRAD and the TRAC Study.

[Full details on SOURCE.](#)

Interested in helping further this research? Please contact Breonna Kusick or Bridgit Patten, clinical trials research associate, at csuneurotrials@colostate.edu or call (970) 297-4405.

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Do you or someone you know have **MEMORY CONCERNS**? OR
Would you like to know how aging changes cognition and mobility?

We invite you to participate in the **I-DRIVE** study that examines how changes in
movement and cognition affect driving and walking mobility.

Why Participate?

Driving is a part of our everyday life. Your participation will **help advance research on promoting safe driving** after neurodegenerative conditions such as mild cognitive impairment, dementia, and Alzheimer's disease.



Who can participate?

- 60- 85 years old adults who have **memory concerns, cognitive impairments, dementia, or Alzheimer's Disease**
- 60- 85 years old **healthy adults**.
- Have a current driver's license
- Have sufficient English language ability to understand the study procedures/ instructions.

* Additional screening will take place to determine study eligibility at the first visit.

What is involved?

One to two sessions of

- Cognitive screening
- Motor assessment
- Walking and Balance assessment
- Driving in state-of-the-art driving simulator
- Driving your car with a sensor for 12 months (optional)
- Blood Draw (optional)

Benefits of participation

- Free assessment of driving and fall risk, and cognitive status
- Monetary compensation of up to \$100.00

**CONNECT WITH US
TO PARTICIPATE OR
FIND OUT ABOUT
THE
I-DRIVE STUDY
970-491-7663
mnrlab@colostate.edu**



HEALTH AND EXERCISE SCIENCE
COLORADO STATE UNIVERSITY



Approved: May 09, 2023 10:11 AM

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Enrolling Now!

Paid Research Study

Play a series of digital games as part of a research study on brain health. Receive a \$40 gift card per session.



Apply Now

Scan the QR Code, or
Call 888-874-1847



Visit braincheck.com/study for more details and to apply.



At the BRAiN lab at CSU we carry out cutting-edge research on **healthy** brain aging supported by the National Institutes of Aging and the Alzheimer's Association. Volunteer to help us combat dementia! If you are **male 51-55 or 71-80 years old** and willing to undergo 1-hour brain MRI, sign up by:

- Scanning the code or
- On our website: <https://col.st/ne19A>
- Call 970-631-2946
- Email: sammu@rams.colostate.edu
- We will contact you to check if you are eligible. You can earn **\$100** for completing the full study. Our studies are approved by CSU ethical committee.



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Now recruiting!
The Center has launched its
Healthy Aging Research Registry.

The registry is comprised of people who want to be contacted about studies on aging and age-related conditions. The information collected in the registry will be stored in a secure database and access to your contact information will be limited to Center for Healthy Aging leaders. CSU researchers who are performing studies that align with your interests will be given your contact information and may contact you to gauge your interest and eligibility in their study. You can then choose whether or not you would like to participate.

Interested?

Join the registry online.

Questions?

CHAResearchRegistry@colostate.edu
970-495-2528

Funding Opportunities

The National Institutes of Health invites applications for the funding opportunity [Feasibility Trials of the NIH Music-based interventions Toolkit for Brain Disorders of Aging](#). These early phase clinical trials will generate evidence supporting the validity of the NIH MBI Toolkit's guiding principles as well as the necessary pilot data to design a subsequence clinical efficacy and effectiveness study (or pragmatic clinical trial) using music based interventions in the context of brain disorders of aging, including but not limited to Alzheimer's disease and Alzheimer's disease-related dementias, Parkinson's disease, and stroke. **Letter of intent due May 20. Award amount: Up to \$450,000.**

The National Institutes of Health requests applicants for the [Stephen I. Katz Early Stage](#)

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no preliminary data exist. The proposed project must be related to the programmatic interests of one or more of the participating NIH institutes and centers based on their scientific missions. **Application deadline: May 29. Application budgets are not limited, but should reflect the actual needs of the proposed project.**

Community Happenings



Larimer County Office on Aging Community Fair

Wed., May 1

12:30-4 p.m.

The Ranch Events Complex

Come and see us! Next month, CHA will have a booth at the LCOA Community Fair on May 1. Whether you're an older adult or a caregiver, this FREE event is your one-stop-shop to discover all the amazing resources, programs, and services available to you right here in our community. Visit larimer.gov/seniors for the details.

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Become a counselor for **Camp Kesem** **@ CSU**

AUGUST 6-9, 2024

Kesem is a non-profit organization providing year round service for children whose parents have or have had cancer. As a chapter at CSU, we spend the school year fundraising and planning for camp (aka the best week of your life). Camp is an escape for these children to bond with those who have similar experiences.

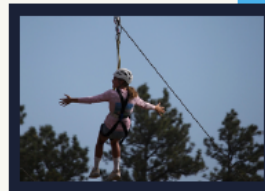
120 HOURS OF VOLUNTEER WORK

- Hands on experience with children 6-18
- Teamwork and conflict management
- Gain valuable Communication skills
- The most meaningful week you'll have in the mountains
- Trainings are provided by our coordinator board

APPLY NOW @ KESEM.FORCE.COM

Follow us on Instagram @kesemcsu

Instructions on how to apply here:
https://docs.google.com/document/d/1rZ_OsSV5MkkSOEcRXIzdxdB8J0wt8FPljJWGuau-No/edit



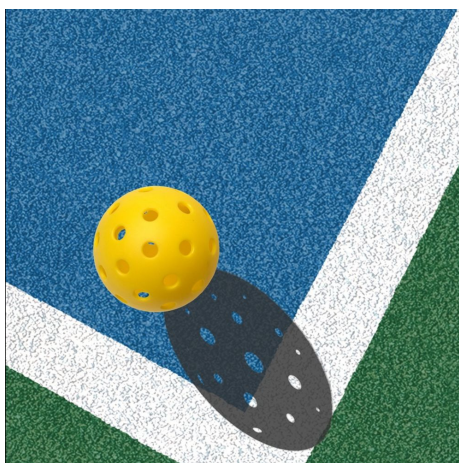
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biannual Friends and Family days, ongoing birthday cards, and a free week of summer camp in August, made possible through fundraising efforts. Located in Elbert, C.O., camp offers an enriching experience filled with exciting activities such as zip-lining and tie-dying. Here, children find solace and build lasting connections, providing a welcome break from the challenges they may face at home.

Interested community members are invited to apply to be a camp counselor. CSU students have the additional opportunity to apply for various club officer roles, such as finance, event planning, social media management, leadership, and more.

Learn how to be a camp counselor [at this link](#).

And visit the [CSU Kasem newsletter signup](#), [Instagram](#), or [Facebook](#)!



PAFC Doubles Pickleball Classic

Saturday, May 4
8 a.m.

NOCO Sports Center

Join Partnership for Age-Friendly Communities and community members in an intergenerational pickleball event. Teams of mixed generations and genders are welcome. Each team will play at least six games. Team registration is \$85.

[Register here](#)

PARKINSON ASSOCIATION OF THE ROCKIES

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED!

SUNDAY, JUNE 9TH
7:00-1:00
SANDSTONE RANCH,
LONGMONT CO

WANT TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE?

- Set up
- Tear down
- Help with registration
- Direct people to stations
- Run errands the day of the event
- Cheer on participants!

BREAKFAST & LUNCH PROVIDED

SIGN UP HERE

Or Contact Kristi Martin at 303.632.8063
kmartin@parkinsonrockies.org

Parkinson's Vitality 5K

Sunday, June 9
7 a.m.-1 p.m.

Sandstone Ranch in Longmont

Make a difference by volunteering with the Parkinson's Association of the Rockies to help with the 2024 Parkinson's Vitality 5K! If you have any questions about the walk or volunteering, email Kristi Martin at kmartin@parkinsonrockies.org.

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