

FAMILY SCIENCE & HUMAN DEVELOPMENT

MAY 2022

The Expanding Field of Gerontology

Gerontology Minor Opens Career Doors

With 1 in 7 adults in America at age 65 or older, the field of Gerontology — the study of aging — is expanding at an alarming rate. The growth in this segment of the population creates a demand for professionals in multiple disciplines, from sociology to business to tourism.

The Family Science and Human Development Department offers an interdisciplinary minor in Gerontology that examines the social, cultural, psychological and physical aspects of aging, and challenges students to think critically about these areas.

The 18-credit program is suitable for students in most majors. Required courses focus on adult development, public policy, and families in later life, while electives explore a diversity of additional disciplines. This coursework helps students clarify their career and/or graduate school goals by understanding that a gerontology background can be applied in public, private and nonprofit settings.

Expansive career options, which will continue to increase

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FSHD Celebrates Older Americans Month

Every May, the Administration for Community Living — part of the US Department of Health and Human Services — leads the nation's observance of Older Americans Month. This year's theme, *Age My Way*, focuses on aging in place and how to enable older adults to stay in their homes and live independently in their communities for as long as possible. Just as every person is unique, so too is how they age, and there is no "right way."

This month presents an opportunity for all of us to explore the many ways older adults can remain living in and involved with their communities, playing vital roles as family members, friends, mentors, volunteers, civic leaders, employees, and more.

While *Age My Way* looks different for each person, everyone can consider these common elements as they grow older:

- Planning: Think about what you will need and want in the future, from home, medical, and community-based

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Department Chair's Message

Well here we are again, at the brink of another semester and academic year completed. For so many in our FSHD community, May is a time when we joyfully celebrate our accomplishments of a year well done.



Dr. Lyndal Khaw

As a faculty member, I have seen just how much harder our FSHD students have worked and persevered in their educational pursuits, especially in the last two years when we've been forced to adapt to new challenges and circumstances. I am especially proud of our May and August 2022 graduates - you have earned your BA degree in Family Science and Human Development! Whatever you do, take a moment to let that sink in. This is huge!

You are now ready to join your fellow alumni in the next exciting chapter of your lives. Many of you will be embarking into

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DATES TO REMEMBER

May 1

Deadline to Apply for Fall 2022 Internships

May 3-4

Reading Days - No Classes

May 12

Last Day of Spring Classes

May 16

Summer Classes Begin

May 20

Commencement

June 2

Convocation on Campus

Alumni Spotlight

Angela Zeoli

Angela Zeoli graduated from the Family Science and Human Development program in January 2021 with a concentration in Gerontology (which is now a [minor](#)), and a minor in Social Work.

Her Story: FSHD drew me in because it is truly a blend of so many different career paths all in one, and each branch has transferrable skills



that you can take with you almost anywhere. The main drawing point for me was learning about people from ages 0-99, as well as being able to observe the types of families we grow up in and how that impacts us as we navigate adulthood.

I found myself fascinated by all the Gerontology lessons in my classes, and decided to focus my studies on the underserved population of older adults. I learned about how to age successfully.

By keeping your mind and body active, you have a much better chance of aging well and staying in the best shape longer. More than anything, my studies inspired and continue to inspire me towards making a difference however I can through a helping career.

Her path: I am proudly serving as an Enrichment Coordinator at a senior living facility that offers two levels of care: Assisted Living (helping with activities of daily living while promoting independence) and Memory Care (aiding those in various stages of dementia). Alternating between both care levels, I do all the fun stuff in their days like chair exercises, memory games, arts and crafts, outings, and trivia. Most importantly, I have plenty of time built into my day to talk to the residents and spend time with them as people. I truly go to work every day feeling like I have the ability to make someone's day a little brighter.

Fun Fact: This is the exact community I fell in love with while doing the volunteer work for my Field Experiences class!

Her Thoughts: There's no need to be afraid to work with the older adult population. Stereotypes about grumpy, combative adults, or the possibility of working with anyone with severe memory loss, tend to scare many people away. No matter which residents I am with, I am always thanked simply for being there. They are so appreciative that we care for them and invest in their quality of life. They are especially happy to see a young person that cares about them in a society that tends to cast people aside as they retire. Every day by the time I clock out, I have genuinely had a good laugh about something, a dance party, a big ol' hug, or the feeling I have made someone smile.

There are so many opportunities in the field of Gerontology that are worth pursuing with room to grow, and there is SUCH a hunger for young people in these positions right now! The FSHD program prepares you beautifully to face them head-on with confidence. ■

Social Justice Initiatives

Social Justice Concept

The FSHD Social Justice Advisory Board is hoping to increase understanding of our efforts by defining a different social justice concept in each newsletter. For May, in conjunction with Older Americans Month, our term is:

Ageism

Ageism refers to two concepts:

- a socially constructed way of thinking about older persons based on negative attitudes and stereotypes about aging
- a tendency to structure society based on an assumption that everyone is young, thereby failing to respond appropriately to the real needs of older persons

Source: [Ontario Human Rights Commission](#)



Helpful Resources

The Board is happy to share these links to resources related to the study of aging:

- [Information on Aging](#) - World Health Organization
- [Exploring Careers in Aging](#) - American Psychological Association
- [Careers In Aging](#) - Gerontological Society of America
- [Reframing Aging Initiative](#) - Gerontological Society of America
- [Aging in Montclair](#)
- [Lifelong Montclair](#)

Share Your Thoughts

Remember to use our virtual feedback form as an anonymous way to share feedback and/or suggestions related to the FSHD community's social justice work. The form can be found here:

https://montclair.co1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_3JHboG6J8W0DO4J

Be empathetic. Be compassionate. Be kind. Be you! ■

2022 FSHD Scholarship Recipients



KATHARINE B. HALL SCHOLARSHIPS

Wilfredo Flores-Bruno

A student representative on the FSHD Social Justice Advisory Board, Wilfredo aspires to be a social worker. He co-founded MSU's Mexican American Student Association, and is a member of Phi Sigma Pi National Honor Fraternity.

Ismat Abbas

As a PhD candidate at the dissertation stage of her program, Ismat is acquiring data analysis tools that she hopes to apply to a broad range of fields.



LOIS J. GUTHRIE SCHOLARSHIP

Marlena Mangano

Marlena volunteered as a peer mentor with MSU's Mentor Collective program, and is a valued employee in the MSU Catering Department. With a goal of becoming a family therapist, she plans to pursue her master's degree in Clinical Mental Health.



DORIS RUSLINK SCHOLARSHIPS

Sydney Jenkinson

On a path to become a Certified Child Life Specialist, Sydney volunteers in the Ben Samuels Children's Center and the Child Life/Creative Arts department at Cooperman Barnabas Medical Center. She is an MSU peer mentor and a grief "buddy" for children in Kate's Club.

Emma Schiavello

Emma serves on the executive board of the Montclair Unified Sports Team and volunteers at Special Olympics events. A future teacher, she plans to pursue her master's degree to teach students with disabilities.



DALILA REID SCHOLARSHIP

Jennifer Garcia

Jen is pursuing a career in speech-language pathology. She volunteers with the Montclair Student Council on Family Relations and is a research assistant in the FSHD Department. She enjoyed her field work in FSHD 315 so much that she continued volunteering in that position throughout the following summer! ■

Chair's Message

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wonderful, fulfilling positions in helping careers that you have so diligently trained for all these years, meeting family and children's needs and providing community solutions in so many innovative and meaningful ways.

Some of you will no doubt continue your higher education pursuits in various programs across the country. Some of you are ready to take a break from school, perhaps to actively prioritize the many other important things in life, like spending time with family and loved ones, traveling, and expanding your worldview.

Whichever path you choose next, always remember the path that got you here, and those who were there to help, guide, and support you along the way. It is the journey you've taken and the journeys ahead - not just the destination - that matter, and I hope you know that your FSHD family will be here rooting for your continued success every step of the way.

On behalf of our faculty, staff, and student body, congratulations to our FSHD graduates, the Class of 2022! Do us a favor and please find ways to stay in touch with us. One easy way is to follow us on social media:



To our returning students, we look forward to welcoming you back again in the Fall, but until then, have a restful and peaceful summer break!

Take care,
Dr. Khaw

Gerontology Minor

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for the foreseeable future, include positions such as these:

Audiologists diagnose and treat hearing and balance disorders related to the ears. Working in hospitals and clinics, they often specialize in balance, implants, hearing aids, and other auditory processing issues.

Home Health Aides assist older residents in their homes with daily tasks like bathing, cooking, driving, and household chores. They monitor physical and mental health, teach clients to care for themselves, and help family members care for loved ones in safe, appropriate ways.

Patient Advocates coordinate communication between patients, family members, medical offices, and insurance companies to ensure that patients receive the best possible services. They identify care problems, help patients choose doctors and obtain referrals, explain policies and treatment options, and even accompany patients to appointments.

Geriatric Social Workers work closely with medical and health professionals such as psychiatrists, therapists, physicians, and nurses to improve aging clients' lives. They help clients cope with illnesses, manage mental health conditions, and reduce daily stress caused by personal, social, and environmental challenges.

Death Doulas are non-medical professionals who provide essential emotional support, physical assistance and spiritual guidance during the end-of-life experience. They provide families with insight into the physiology of death, and help them gather important documentation.

Speech Pathologists and Therapists who work with the older population help patients regain or improve their speech, correct speech irregularities, or understand verbal communication from others. They usually work in healthcare facilities and meet with patients directly for individual speech therapy sessions.

Registered Nurses who specialize in geriatrics work to improve physical ailments associated with aging, as well as mental conditions such as Alzheimer's and dementia. They hold general nursing degrees and might have advanced degrees or certification in geriatric nursing. Their work environments include hospitals, nursing homes, retirement communities, and assisted living facilities.

Fitness Instructors trained to work specifically with older adults lead personalized training and group classes to help clients meet health goals, feel youthful again, lose or gain weight, build strength and increase stamina. They focus on motivation, behavioral change, nutrition, and physical training.

For additional information about the Gerontology minor, contact Dr. Ashley Ermer at ErmerA@montclair.edu, visit our [website](#), or scan this code. ■



Older Americans Month

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services to community activities that interest you.

- **Engagement:** Remain involved and contribute to your community through work, volunteer, and/or civic participation opportunities.
- **Access:** Make home improvements and modifications, use assistive technologies, and customize supports to help you better age in place.
- **Connection:** Maintain social activities and relationships to combat social isolation and stay connected to your community.

Diverse communities have proven to be strong communities. Everyone benefits when older adults remain active and involved for as long as possible. ■



FSD Career Corner

With a degree in Family Science and Human Development, you can become a...

Nursing Home Administrator

Nursing Home Administrators are responsible for all patient care, finances, and business decisions in their facility. They manage the day-to-day operations of the facility, maintaining compliance with state and federal regulations.

Nursing Home Administrators coordinate with clinical staff to ensure residents' individual care plans are being followed, but do very little clinical work themselves. They interact regularly with the residents, families and staff.

Due to the nature of their business, Nursing Home Administrators often work more than forty hours per week, and may be on-call on nights, weekends and holidays. ■

Student Group Focuses on Mental Health

The Montclair Student Council on Family Relations (MSCFR) sponsored two on-campus events to raise awareness about mental health issues and support the MSU community as part of National Mental Health Month.

Therapy Dogs

MSCFR's initiative to promote mental health awareness included inviting therapy dogs to campus, and enabling students and employees to unwind from the stress of the semester by petting the calm, furry animals. Judging by their smiles, everyone who stopped by thoroughly enjoyed the opportunity to relax and soak up some puppy love! The dogs were provided by [Creature Comfort Pet Therapy](#), a non-profit organization dedicated to enhancing people's lives and increasing awareness of the benefits of pet therapy.

If you missed them, therapy dogs will visit again on May 4.



Mindfulness and Stress Reduction

MSCFR also hosted a session about Dialectical Behavior Therapy (DBT) presented by MSU alumna Breann Oppici. Attendees learned strategies for coping with stress, living in the moment, regulating emotions, and strengthening personal relationships. Oppici, a DBT therapist and licensed social worker, works as an adult psychiatric clinician at [High Focus Centers](#), an outpatient mental health center in Paramus, NJ. ■

OUR ACHIEVEMENTS

FSHD Faculty & Staff

Dr. Miriam Linver and Dr. Jennifer Brown Urban received a \$150,000 grant for the Institute for Research on Youth Thriving and Evaluation (RYTE) from the Kern Family Foundation, which supports initiatives with long-term systemic impact.

Dr. Sara Goldstein was honored as a recipient of the CEHS Distinction Award from MSU's College of Education and Human Services.

Dr. Lyndal Khaw, a native of Malaysia, became a naturalized US citizen.



FSHD and Campus Show Support for Ukraine

Members of the MSU community — including faculty and staff from the FSHD Department — gathered at the Amphitheater to support Ukraine and denounce the humanitarian crisis created by Russia's attack on the self-governed nation. At this time, more than 5.1 million civilians have fled and become refugees in neighboring countries, while another 7 million have evacuated to other parts of Ukraine. Civilians who remained and were under Russian occupation have been murdered, tortured, raped and bombed, including children.



Olena Nesteruk speaks at the rally.

FSHD Associate Professor Olena Nesteruk, a native of Ukraine, helped organize the rally. Many of her family members fled while others are displaced within the country. She emphasized that "Ukraine is a sovereign nation with its own language, identity, and cultural traditions that are separate from Russia." She likened peaceful Ukrainians to bees, saying they "work hard and won't sting unless you threaten them." After Russia's invasion, "The whole country turned into the beehive ... fighting for their survival, prepared to die for the sake of the hive."

Accentuating the humanitarian disaster, she declared, "If Russia stops fighting, there will be no more war. If Ukraine stops fighting, there will be no more Ukraine." ■



The MSU community shows its support for Ukraine.

Campus Happenings

Friday Night Fire Pit

May 6, 2022

7:00—9:00 pm

Hang out with your friends around the fire pit at the Rec Center's back patio while enjoying free s'mores and hot cocoa. Lawn games, hammocks, and other items will be available free via Equipment Checkout. No registration, just bring your valid MSU student ID.



Wipeout

May 9, 2022

7:00—9:00 pm

Here's your chance to take the Wipeout Challenge! Just show up at the Rec Center Pool with your MSU Student ID. If you've got the stamina, you could win one of the top prizes! ■

Memorial Day Remembrance



***"Our nation owes a debt
to its fallen heroes
that we can never fully repay,
but we can
honor their sacrifice."***

- Barack Obama

Job Hunting?

Prepare for your job search by attending career workshops at the CEHS Student Success Center. These free programs require [registration](#) and are held in University Hall 3102.

Interview Skills

May 2, 2022

3:00—4:00 pm

This workshop will explain how to prepare for an interview and what to expect once you are there. You'll learn how to respond to commonly asked interview questions, as well as behavioral interview questions using the STAR technique.

Resume Writing

May 3, 2022

12:00—1:00 pm

Your resume is a potential employer's first impression of you. Make it stand out! Learn how to write and format your resume, tailoring it to fit each position for which you are applying. This workshop is helpful whether you are looking to write your first resume or want to improve your existing one. ■

Webinar: Master's in Educational Leadership

Tuesday, May 24, 2022

4:00 - 5:15 PM

The practice-driven Educational Leadership master's program develops visionary school leaders by blending a strong theoretical foundation with research and authentic work within schools. The program enables students to develop principles of moral leadership and cultivate a democratic vision for schools and learning. Learn more at this informative webinar. Register [here](#). ■

Family Science & Human Development

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[Visit the FSHD Website](#)

Dr. Lyndal Khaw, Chair

Lisa Mills, Newsletter Editor

