



GERONTOLOGY *Fall 2017, Volume 9*

Department of Family and Consumer Sciences

Inside the Newsletter

- Thesis Mentor Program
- Quality Matters
- Palliative Care Conference
- Aging on Social Media
- CALA Conference
- Volunteerism
- Featured Student
- Applying my Masters in Gerontology Education: Application Research
- Recent Graduates
- At GAPHS we do what we love and we love what we do: Semester in review!

Thesis Mentor Program

By: Dr. Maria Claver

The CSULB Gerontology Program believes that alumni should be a treasured resource. Indeed, our alumni are valued and reconnecting with them has become a front-and-center focus this academic year. While we are not yet ready to provide details about the development of the CSULB Gerontology Program Alumni Network (stay tuned...), we would like to publicly acknowledge several alumni that have volunteered to give back to current Masters students by serving as a Thesis/Directed Project mentor. Mentors serve as an extra source of encouragement, guidance and support for students navigating the journey of conducting research and writing a quality thesis or directed project. Special thanks goes to Miriam Henan, who sparked the idea for this program, and to the following alumni for serving as Thesis/Directed Project Mentors: Elaine Chen, Marjorie Coronel, Gail Francis, Jordan Grissom, Pam Mokler, Martha Mowatt, Rachel Price, Ellen Wong.

Now would also be a good time to show our appreciation for alumni that have supported our Masters students by serving on Thesis/Directed Project Committees. A tremendous thank you goes to: Elizabeth Dobson, Erika Duarte, John Fay, Casey Goeller, and Elena Ionescu.

Quality Matters
By: Casey Goeller

Quality Matters is an international organization dedicated to providing quality assurance for online education in higher education, K-12, course publishers, and online corporate training. It began at the University of Maryland in 2003 when a group of faculty members applied for a FIPSE grant from the U.S. Department of Education. This organization is now completely independent and has more than 1,300 colleges and universities as subscribers, and over 60,000 members worldwide. In order to ensure quality, a comprehensive rubric was developed to determine whether or not online courses met the standards of the rubric. This rubric has a total of 51 Standards of which eight are Essential Standards. Interestingly, these Standards are not graded as “pass” or “fail,” but rather as “Met” or “Not Met.” This illustrates the culture of continuous improvement of courses espoused by QM. Each course that is reviewed has a three-member team that independently reviews the course. The team is made up of a peer reviewer, a subject matter expert, and a master reviewer. It is a majority rules grading schema. I became a peer reviewer about six years ago, and a master reviewer about three years ago, and have had the opportunity to review and certify a number of courses from around the country. Recently, I completed a course on facilitating the QM Rubric for potential peer reviewers, and will most likely teach this course in the Spring for the CSU. All of this is relevant as distance learning continues to grow at a high rate, and many administrators are including online education in their long-term planning. The experience for me has been remarkably significant as I continue to learn how to teach in this environment.



Institute for Palliative Care

NATIONAL SYMPOSIUM 2017

for Academic Palliative Care Education and Research

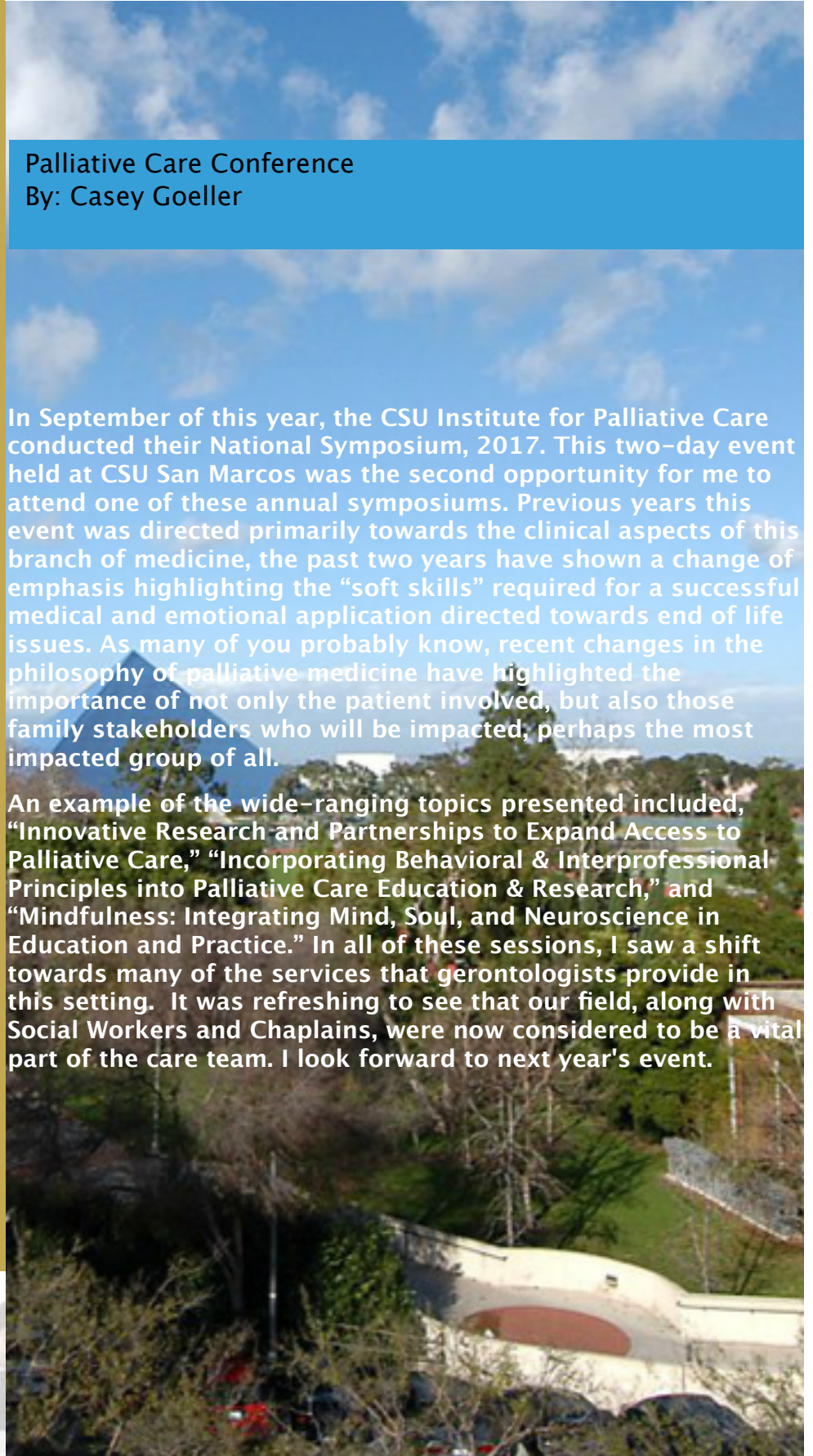
Palliative Care Conference
By: Casey Goeller

In September of this year, the CSU Institute for Palliative Care conducted their National Symposium, 2017. This two-day event held at CSU San Marcos was the second opportunity for me to attend one of these annual symposiums. Previous years this event was directed primarily towards the clinical aspects of this branch of medicine, the past two years have shown a change of emphasis highlighting the “soft skills” required for a successful medical and emotional application directed towards end of life issues. As many of you probably know, recent changes in the philosophy of palliative medicine have highlighted the importance of not only the patient involved, but also those family stakeholders who will be impacted; perhaps the most impacted group of all.

An example of the wide-ranging topics presented included, “Innovative Research and Partnerships to Expand Access to Palliative Care,” “Incorporating Behavioral & Interprofessional Principles into Palliative Care Education & Research,” and “Mindfulness: Integrating Mind, Soul, and Neuroscience in Education and Practice.” In all of these sessions, I saw a shift towards many of the services that gerontologists provide in this setting. It was refreshing to see that our field, along with Social Workers and Chaplains, were now considered to be a vital part of the care team. I look forward to next year's event.

QUALITY MATTERS
PROGRAM

QM



Aging on Social Media

By: Cynthia Schlesinger

I don't think I'm alone in saying that when I get a moment, I log into Instagram or Facebook to see what my friends and family are up to. I scroll through pictures of grandbabies I'll never have (my daughters have decided children are not in their future), and pictures of cute puppies and the sprinkling of political banter. And although I do enjoy seeing travel photos from all my friends, I am also interested in following the events happening in the aging world around me.

One great site I like to follow on social media is <https://seniorplanet.org> whose motto is "Aging with Attitude." There are feature articles, a resource toolbox that includes tech tips for seniors, and much more. As I grow older, I find myself thinking about my future, my health, and what my living arrangements will be 20 years from now. One article that I found particularly interesting is [The Village Community Model](#), which combines aging in place with interdependent living. As the outspoken and demanding Baby Boomer consumer ages (that's me!), we will most likely see options for senior living evolve. Follow this nonprofit on Facebook for classroom resources as well.

Another of my favorite sites on Facebook is www.nextavenue.org whose mission is to meet the needs and unleash the potential of older Americans through the power of media. They strive to deliver daily content of vital ideas, context and perspectives on issues that matter most as we age. Topics include Health & Well-Being, Work & Purpose, Caregiving, Money and the stories are not only motivating and inspiring, but are also changing lives. Now that I am of an age where I find myself taking care of my older parents, I read the articles for me, however, I find myself pulling material that I can use for class assignments. Check out their great article on [Avoiding Holiday Stress](#) to read about eight ways to lessen stress for the holidays. Reducing our stress at any time of the year can certainly help us age successfully.



CALA Conference

By: Lauren Gelgur

This year, I was awarded a scholarship to attend the California Assisted Living Association (CALA) conference in Rancho Mirage, California. The conference was held at the beginning of November. It was a three-day event in which I had the opportunity to attend various educational presentations as well as social events. Also, during the conference I had the opportunity to meet with various representatives from retirement communities throughout the nation. Perhaps the most rewarding experience for me was having the opportunity to meet with executives and share my passion for working with older adults. Many of the executives have been in the industry for years and were excellent at providing insight into what the future looks like for older adults. Overall, the conference was a rewarding and enriching experience. I would highly recommend that all students apply and register for this conference! It not only is an educational experience, but it also helps students to understand what career path would be suited for them.

Volunteerism

By: Debra Bein

What's a person to do when she's trying to find herself professionally and look for a new career? The answer is to be a volunteer and volunteer as much as you can. This is exactly how I developed a passion for working with older adults. I've volunteered at day care facilities for people with dementia, Assisted Living and Memory Care Centers, and I recently started volunteering with LA County to learn the skills needed in assisting seniors on their journey to mental wellness. All of my work thus far has led me to diverse and fulfilling experiences dealing with older adults.

My internship in hospice began in January and I chose to do this type of experience since it would be quite different from my current background in working with elders. I actually had enough hours from volunteering over the years and I could have used those hours in lieu of an internship. However, choosing a new learning experience was the more rewarding option. The best part about all of these volunteer opportunities is that it has allowed me to find both professional and personal growth.

Prior to enrolling at CSULB in the Gerontology post-baccalaureate program, I began spending a few hours a week at Alzheimer's Family Center, a daycare facility for those with cognitive impairment. A year after becoming a leader in the Activities department, I was asked to teach a class to mildly cognitive impaired individuals. Teaching this class has really allowed me to understand dementia patients as I never had before, in such a meaningful way. I was beginning to feel that I had finally found my new passion and it was my diligence as a volunteer that led to greater responsibilities.

One of my favorite volunteer assignments is with the LA County Mental Health Department. Every week I visit two women over the age of 60, as a friendly visitor. I have an opportunity to understand seniors through a mental health lens, which is so important when working with this population. The loneliness, depression, and lack of self-worth these women display has helped me understand what so many elderly live with every day.

This year I received two awards for volunteering at Alzheimer's Family Center. In April of this year, I was given The President's Volunteer Service Award from President Obama, for volunteering over 100 hours in 2016. A couple of months after this distinctive honor, I was awarded Volunteer of The Quarter based on my dedication and time to the Center. Without all of these volunteer hours, I wouldn't have been able to reignite a professional passion in me that I hadn't felt in some time.

I have learned that not only is volunteering good for my soul, but it is good for the soul of the person I am dedicating my time to as well. If I can touch the heart of a dementia patient for that brief moment, then I have done something really formidable by donating my time. Volunteering offers an invaluable experience by working directly with seniors in our community and I would encourage all students to find a couple of hours a week to do the same.



Pictured above is Debra Bein receiving an award.

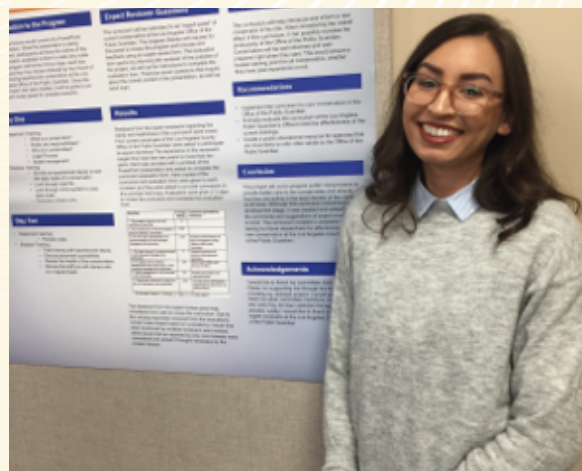
Featured Student

By: Desirae Gamboa

My name is Desirae Gamboa, and I am finishing my Master's Degree in Gerontology this semester, December 2017. I currently hold the position of Deputy Public Conservator/Administrator II. I have worked at the Office of the Public Guardian for two years, and am currently the assigned deputy for sixty-three conservatees. I manage older adults' health decisions, financial decisions, and everything in between. I am a probate conservator, so most of my clients are older adults, or an adult with an incapacitating medical condition. I started this job after I had finished the majority of my classes for the gerontology master's program. I had no knowledge what a conservator was or what they did. In the past two years of my experience, I have come to learn a lot, which inspired me towards the topic of my directed project.

The Office of the Public Guardian is used as a last resort for adults who have no family or friends to assist them in managing their medical or financial decisions. Public Guardian is an amazing resource for these vulnerable adults. Although we provide great services, we do not have a very strong positive public perception. There is often criticism that Public Guardian lets their clients' fall through the cracks' or they mismanage the money of their conservatees. When I hear these criticisms, I am very protective of the Public Guardian, but I find these criticisms to sometimes be true. This is not something that is done intentionally, but from what I see, there is a lack of resources and training available at the Office of the Public Guardian. There is a high turnover rate; the majority of employees come in with no knowledge of conservatorship, and sometimes no experience with older adults. Although I hear that our generation is constantly moving from job to job, I feel that with better introductory training, people would feel more comfortable with their position of a public conservator, and in turn, do a better job making decisions for their conservatees.

As a conservator, we are trusted to make very important decisions regarding a person's health and finances. I consent for something as small as a flu shot, to something as major as amputations of major extremities. When it comes to finances, we are in charge of marshaling all of the client's monies, benefits, and property. It is common for our office to sell a client's home when they are no longer able to safely live at home. From the duties just listed, it is obvious that this job is very serious and requires a lot of training to ensure smart decisions are being made. Although there is already training provided and required by the Office of the Public Guardian, my directed project encourages more introductory trainings that help new employees learn the basics of what a conservator is and what they do. My project proposed two eight-hour days where new conservators are able to sit through classroom training, followed by shadow training with an experienced deputy to observe what was earlier presented to them. From my experience, I feel that by covering the basic information of conservatorship, new employees will be better prepared for all of the training that is ahead.



Pictured to the right is Desirae Gamboa at the Fall graduate student poster session.

Applying My Masters in Gerontology Education: Application Research

By: Lisa Lares

After graduating from CSULB with a Masters in Gerontology I decided to continue my education and get a PhD in Social Policy and Social Research. Call me a nerd or a book worm, both may be true, but it is very rewarding to be able to apply the education from our program in "real life." Sometimes as a student we listen to our lectures, read our texts, take our exams and then we are left at the crossroads to ponder so now what? Application, Application, Application!!! Regardless of what agency or field of Gerontology you choose to work in, your knowledge is going to enrich your experience and equip you to better serve the aging population. One of the Theories that we revisit many times in our program is Erickson's stages of development. Specifically, we look at the last stage of ego integrity versus ego despair. I know, I know...you are you have heard it 100 times. But I wanted to offer you some insight in how theory application works in field research.

Theoretical Framework

My area of research is working with older adults who have been incarcerated for a majority of their life and are either out due to new compassionate release legislation or because their time has been served, and good behavior has awarded them release. My question is; can older adults who have been incarcerated most of their life achieve ego integrity? The purpose of my study is to investigate whether incarcerated older adults progress through the life span of development of Erickson's stages of development as traditionally specified in the theory. Specifically, this study will explore if older adults who have been incarcerated for most of their adulthood years will obtain ego integrity or ego despair in the same fashion as older adults in the population by analyzing the crises and achievements in Generativity versus Stagnation, stage 7 of development. In addition, this study will investigate not only if Erickson's theory is applicable to this marginalized population, but if this population is able to achieve integrity in their final stages of life and by what nontraditional means allowed them access to reach a state of integrity when possibly facing death behind bars, estrangement from family, and nontraditional prison work roles. Furthermore, if older incarcerated individuals do reach a state of integrity what mental and physical health implications are noteworthy in comparison to those in a state of despair.

Why is this important?

The growing older adult inmate population is an imperative concern for social sciences. Amongst the older population, the growing demographic of elderly prisoners continues to rise exponentially. "...by 2020, California will see a projected increase in its elderly inmate population of more than 200%. Other authors have estimated that by 2020, older inmates will represent 21% to 33% of the U.S. prison population (Chaneles, 1987; Durham, 1194; Neeley, Addison, & Craig-Moreland, 1997)" (Rikard & Rosenberg, p. 151, 2007). The state and federal prison systems are not equipped to service this aging demographic surge of older adults. These individuals are not only overlooked by the prison system, but also many times are forgotten by their loved ones on the outside. "Older prisoners are being neglected by a system that leaves them vulnerable and unable to cope with the physical and psychological demands imposed by life behind bars. Prisoners over the age of 60 also tend to be socially isolated" (Allen, 2003). Once released from prison older adults are faced with many challenges of the changed social environment, it is like returning to a new world that has left them behind. It is important to understand how these older adults cope in prison and to understand their needs once released.

Cost of Care

By better serving this population there is a beneficial economical component that is important for public policy. "In a global climate sensitized to human rights concerns and budgetary constraints, the continued neglect of older prisoners has high human, social, and economic costs (Wilson & Barboza, 2010). Warehousing older adults in prison is costly because of their chronic and serious physical and mental illnesses (American Civil Liberties Union [ACLU], 2012). In fact, estimates suggest that incarcerated older adults cost up to five times more than their younger counterparts (ACLU, 2012). **Part 1**

Continuation of Article by Lisa Lares

We argue that more compassionate protection and guardianship care for criminal justice involving older adults and their right for caregiver support when needed is warranted (UN, 2011)" (Maschi, et. al., p. 552, 2012). Public policy needs to be revised regarding benefits older adults receive such, as Medicare and Medicaid due to much needed health care costs that are absorbed by tax payers for federal and state prisons.

"HRW (2012) reported that United States correctional systems bear the health care costs for aging prisoners and are excluded from receiving Medicare and Medicaid funding for prisoners when they are treated in the community. This financial factor may influence aging prisoners' ability to receive appropriate community health care referrals, including access to appropriate medications, when needed (Williams & Abradles, 2010). Additionally, in countries such as the United States, financial benefits, such as Social Security or supplemental income, are suspended for persons serving time in prison (Social Security Administration, 2010)" (Maschi, et. al., p. 552, 2012).

The economic implications for this population need immediate attention being the social problem will only continue to escalate due to the aging statistics of the older prison population. "Health and social care costs associated with incarceration are growing in large part due to the aging inmate population. High medical expenditures for institutional care are common, especially those associated with serious illness, disabilities, or terminal illnesses (UNODC, 2009). In the United States, these costs represent approximately 10% of the total direct prison costs of care for those incarcerated; average cost of care for the average prisoner is approximately \$5,500, for prisoners aged 55 to 59, the costs double (\$11,000) and are 8 times higher for prisoners aged 80 and older (\$40,000; HRW, 2012)" (Maschi, et. al., p. 552, 2012). Prison policy makers need to take this costly population into consideration and stop assessing all prisoners with one template. Policy reform will not only benefit the ailments these older adults face but will help reduce costs to tax payers.

Research shows that older adults who are in a state of integrity have less mental health disparities which is directly linked to physical health indicators. An Ericksonian framework may serve as a theoretical guide for policy makers to reform and implement programs specifically geared towards prison work roles, prison family roles and prison health care that will benefit the institution as a whole.

So you see...you practice what you learn...so pay attention and take notes...and then go into the world and make a difference!

Recent Graduates

We congratulate our newest graduates from the Masters in Gerontology Program!

Three students completed the MS Gerontology in Summer 2017:

Paige Garner completed a thesis titled, "The Effect of Changed Behaviors of Frontotemporal Dementia on The Stress Level of Informal Caregivers."

Wendy Lozano completed a directed project titled, "Development of An Educational Program for a Certificate of Achievement in Gerontology for El Camino Community College."

Elizabeth Morgan Nadeau completed a thesis titled, "Baby Boomer Generation's Knowledge of Alzheimer's Disease."

One student completed the MS Gerontology in Fall 2017. Desirae Gamboa completed a directed project titled, "Gerontological Curriculum for Active Public Conservators."

We also congratulate the students that graduated in Summer 2017 and Fall 2017 with a Gerontology Certificate or a Gerontology Minor.

At GAHPS we do what we love and love what we do: Semester in review!

By: Elena Ionescu

Fall 2017 semester was, once again, busy for the Sigma Phi Omega Delta Eta Chapter. At CSULB, we believe that a sense of belonging helps students to express themselves as leaders. Therefore, this semester our agenda comprised monthly meetings, workshops, study sessions, community outreach activities, retreats, and research.

We kicked off the fall semester with the organization's general meeting, in which the semestrial agenda was presented to our members offering the needed tools for a strong leadership within our community. As Gero lovers, during the awareness month for Alzheimer's, we joined the fight to end Alzheimer's in Orange County, CA, meeting our fundraising goal of \$250 to support the cause. Then, during the month of giving, we volunteered for Meals on Wheels, Long Beach to deliver a difference to our vulnerable elders who are homebound due to illness, age or disabilities.

Besides joining causes for which we strongly believed we could make a difference, we found a fun way to encourage and develop leadership and friendship from the inside-out. Activities such as the overnight "friendsgiving" retreat in SoCal or attending campus events (e.g. CSULB Homecoming) helped our members to connect and engage in dialogues surrounding leadership in the gerontological field.

Moreover, throughout the semester, opportunities to meet important legislators such as the Mayor of Long Beach, Robert Garcia or Congressman Lou Correa, were given to our students. These opportunities offered our students the possibility of addressing important topics and discussing strategic planning/solutions for our aging community.

As our semester-in-review comes to an end, there is one more event we are yet to deliver. While wrapping up this semester, we chose to celebrate our hard work with a coming-together dinner event. We believe that an evening of toasting our chapter is an opportunity to network with our peers, a chance to support our community, and an event that will strengthen our members' relationships.

As a closing note, we would like to thank you for being part of our GAHPS family! We wouldn't have been able to accomplish all we have done this semester without you. We are appreciative for all of the received support that helps us to pass the torch of leadership on to the next generation.

Happy Holidays,
SPO Delta Eta Chapter Directory Team:
Alexandra Wilkinson, President
Lauren Gelgur, Vice President
Samanta Hernandez, Secretary
Mahsa Ehteshambrojerdi, Public Outreach
Anne Lam, Treasurer
Frances Ginder, Consultant
Elena Ionescu, Faculty Adviser



Huntington Beach Alzheimer's Walk