On July 29, 2016 Linda Boise, Ph.D., M.P.H., will retire as Outreach, Recruitment, and Education, Core (ORE Core) leader at the Layton Aging & Alzheimer’s Disease Center. Dr. Boise has served as the leader of the ORE Core since 1995 and has played a key role in connecting older adults, families, and service providers in Oregon and nationally to the research and clinical work of the Layton Center.

Through Dr. Boise’s research and education programs, she has sought to improve the quality of life and care for persons with Alzheimer’s disease and other dementias and their families. Her research interests have addressed family caregiver stress and health, primary health care for persons with dementia, older adults’ attitudes toward new technologies, and ethnic differences in beliefs and attitudes about brain donation for research. Of the many contributions Dr. Boise has made, she is especially proud of her work with geriatricians and other primary care providers to reduce the barriers to diagnosis of dementia. She has also enjoyed mentoring students in public health, nursing, and social work. “Working with students who are excited about gaining the skills and knowledge to improve the health and well-being of older adults has been one of the joys of my work at the Layton Center.”

Dr. Boise has had a long-standing and deep commitment to equity and inclusion for persons who for reasons of economics or ethnicity do not have full access to the benefits of living in America. In 2006, recognizing that the Layton Center’s education programs were not reaching persons of color, she connected with members of the African American community to begin designing Afrocentric programs to reach this population. Working with the community, Dr. Boise fostered development of a series of conferences, “Aging & Memory in the African American Community.” In 2011, the PreSERVE Coalition was formed to ensure that this work would continue to be grounded in community needs and interests. In addition to conferences held in 2012 and 2014, neighborhood listening sessions were conducted in 2013 and in 2015 a “Talk n’ Taste” series was held on the connections between heart health and brain health and ways people can maintain cognitive health. Another Talk n’ Taste series is planned for this fall. “Community partners have been essential to the success of PreSERVE’s programs,” says Dr. Boise, “I am so gratified by the interest and commitment of the PreSERVE coalition to engage elders in sharing ideas about ways to promote a healthy brain.”

In her retirement, Linda anticipates spending many hours in her garden; continuing her volunteer work with the non-profit, global organization Green Empowerment; staying connected with her friends and colleagues in the African American community; and is looking forward to getting to know her new granddaughter, Ellis Jane.

Center incoming director Dr. Allison Lindauer, has been at the Layton Center for over two years. She is a nationally-certified gerontological nurse practitioner and an assistant professor. With over 20 years experience in aging care, she provides clinical care for persons with dementia and their caregivers, conducts research on caregiving and disability, and precepts nurse practitioner students.

“Working with students who are excited about gaining the skills and knowledge to improve the health and well-being of older adults has been one of the joys of my work at the Layton Center.”

Linda Boise, Ph.D., M.P.H.
The Oregon Alzheimer Disease Center (OADC), one of 30 centers funded by the National Institute of Aging, is a core program of the Layton Aging & Alzheimer’s Disease Center. The OADC is at the forefront of a worldwide effort to discover the causes of Alzheimer’s disease, find effective treatments, and improve the quality of life for persons with Alzheimer’s disease and other forms of dementia.

Clinical trials

The Layton Aging & Alzheimer’s Disease Center currently has clinical trials for people with mild cognitive impairment, early stage Alzheimer’s disease and those without any symptoms of memory loss but are at risk for developing it. If you would like information about our current trials and research participation opportunities at the Layton Center please call our research team at 503 494-7647 or email adresearch@ohsu.edu.

Community studies

**African American Dementia and Aging Project (AADAPt).** The overall goal of the AADAPt is to improve our understanding of age related memory loss in African Americans. The number of elderly African Americans in Oregon is relatively small, consisting of only 5,282 individuals over the age of 65 in the entire state (U.S. Census 2010). Despite the small numbers, AADAPt has been highly successful. We have enrolled over 100 highly committed individuals in the study since inception 16 years ago. We maintain contact with our participants throughout the year through our educational sessions in the community, annual memory testing, home visits, and our celebratory appreciation brunch in the summer. We have also been able to share our data, as requested, with researchers from all over the United States, in order to further the discourse on cognitive memory loss and preventative measures to help maintain quality of life as one ages. For more information, please contact Tiffany Kirkpatrick at kirkpati@ohsu.edu or 503 494-2367.

**The Sharing History through Active Reminiscence and Photo-imagery (SHARP).** This study is a walking program for African Americans aged 55 or older. Participants will engage in community memory building while walking through historically Black neighborhoods in North and Northeast Portland. Participants will view images of African American community in Portland from 1940 to 2010, and engage in small-group conversation about what it was like to live and work in those communities as they walk through those communities. The study explores the role that community memory plays in promoting individual health and in sustaining motivation to remain physically active. Qualitative data have shown African Americans have a lower perceived risk of Alzheimer’s disease despite their elevated risk. Programs promoting healthy activities for healthier aging may be more effective if they are culturally meaningful to participants. If you would like to join the SHARP walking program and/or would like our staff to make a digital copy of your family images for use in the SHARP program, contact Raina Croff at croff@ohsu.edu or 503 494-2367.
There is no cure for Alzheimer’s disease and only a few drugs that alleviate its symptoms.

New treatments can only come about by increasing and accelerating research.

Without new treatments by 2050, the number of people age 65 and older with AD may nearly triple from 5.1 million to a 13.8 million.

Become part of a local network of citizens to accelerate innovation in Alzheimer’s care and treatment through research.

Join ACTNOW! today.

With ACTNOW! the Layton Aging and Alzheimer’s Disease Center at OHSU is gathering a Northwest community of patients, researchers, care-givers and anyone with an interest in Alzheimer’s research. ACTNOW! members are kept up -to-date on current Alzheimer’s research, advocacy for research and participation in local studies.

Visit the ACTNOW! website to join.

www.alzactnow.org

ACTNOW! is funded by the National Institute on Aging | OHSU IRB # 11606 | PI: Dr. Bayard Lyons
Oregon Health & Science University’s aim to deliver quality medical care for persons with Alzheimer’s disease is, and will increasingly be, one of the most challenging responsibilities for physicians. An estimated 5.3 million Americans currently suffer from Alzheimer’s disease.

By the year 2050, this number is estimated to be 13.8 million (2016 Alzheimer’s Disease Facts & Figures, published by the Alzheimer’s Association). In communities across the U.S., services available to persons with dementia and their families may include a confusing array of options such as assisted living, foster care, retirement homes, home care, care management services, respite care, day care as well as educational and support programs for families. Yet, doctors in training generally spend little or no time learning about these options.

Medical educators are now recognizing how important it is for doctors to know not only how to diagnose and medically treat illness but also to understand the larger social world that patients live in. In the recognition of this broader role, OHSU has embarked on a transformation of its Undergraduate Medical Education curriculum. The goals of the new curriculum are, as reported by Mark Richardson, M.D., M.B.A., dean of the OHSU School of Medicine, “to prepare healthcare professionals for the changing health care delivery and discovery environments, and to do so in ways that continue placing emphasis on self-directed and also include life-long and inter-professional education.”

The new curriculum has provided the opportunity for the Layton Aging & Alzheimer’s Disease Center to educate future doctors about community health and social care. During four two-week “intersessions” sandwiched between academic terms, 2nd year students will receive intensive experiences learning about four topics: cognitive impairment, cancer, infectious disease and pain. During the cognitive impairment intersession, students will learn about a range of conditions that may affect brain function and memory including Alzheimer’s disease and other variants of dementia, and they will have the opportunity to learn about community resources available to serve them.

During the first intersession held in March 2016, students visited the Alzheimer’s Association and gained a perspective on Alzheimer’s disease as a global and public health concern and an appreciation for the key role of the Association in serving patients and families. Following this session, the students divided into four groups visiting different types of care facilities: Providence ElderPlace Laurelhurst Day Center, Providence ElderPlace Glendover Residential Care and Day Center, Emerson House Memory Care Residential Center, and Cedar Sinai Park Adult Day Services Center. The students also were introduced to the Aging & Disability Resource Center (ADRC) a one-stop resource center that is available throughout the country and that can help families find services tailored to their particular needs. Doctors cannot know about all the community services available for their patients but seeing a sampling of service options and knowing that there are ADRCs to help families in need will go a long way towards improving their ability to provide support needed by persons with dementia and their families.
Alzheimer’s and the brain game challenge

Kate Mincks, B.A.
Research Assistant
at the Layton Aging & Alzheimer’s Disease Center

The efficacy of brain games has come under scrutiny in the wake of a recent two million dollar settlement between the Federal Trade Commission (FTC) and Lumos Labs, parent company of the “Lumosity” program.

While the brain game industry makes billions in revenue, substantive evidence to validate these games’ effectiveness for preventing dementia remains to be seen. Lumos Labs’ heavily promoted claims that individuals who used its software could delay age-related cognitive decline and protect themselves against dementia, mild cognitive impairment, and Alzheimer’s disease was unfounded. In a statement by Jessica Rich, Director of the FTC’s Bureau of Consumer Protection, “Lumosity preyed on consumers’ fears about age-related cognitive decline, suggesting its games could stave off memory loss, dementia, and even Alzheimer’s disease, but Lumosity simply did not have the science to back up its ads” (2016; FTC press release).

The question of whether or not brain-training games can, in fact, enhance cognition and prevent dementia is a contentious one. There is current dissent among cognitive scientists. A consensus statement, signed by 75 scientists and issued by the Berlin Max Planck Institute for Human Development and the Stanford Center on Longevity, concluded that claims of preventing cognitive decline by using brain games is not backed by any compelling scientific evidence. But many cognitive training scientists argue that cognition can be strengthened by certain interventions, and further research is necessary. John Harrison of Metis Cognition states, “Given the lack of clear evidence one way or the other, it seems to me that agnosticism is the appropriate position. However, the risk of rejecting the possibility that training works is that we might be throwing away one of the possible tools in our armamentarium for dealing with dementia” (see Jan 2016 Alzforum article).

Looking at two major studies with different conclusions, the challenges of determining the efficacy of brain games remains evident. The Advanced Cognitive Training for Independent and Vital Elderly (ACTIVE) study, funded by the National Institutes of Health, concluded that computerized brain training can provide long-lasting cognitive benefits in healthy seniors in the areas of memory, reasoning, and processing speed. “However, standard tests of function conducted by the researchers showed no difference in functional abilities among the [experimental and control] groups” (2014; NIH press release). The Brain Test Britain study, sponsored by the British Broadcasting Company, found that computer-based brain training games do not benefit people of a wide variety of ages beyond improved skill at playing said games and that these benefits do not translate to other brain functions.

Brain-training games appear to have the potential to give us short-term benefits in some specific areas. Unfortunately, evidence that these games can prevent cognitive decline and provide lasting, significant improvements in how we function in our everyday lives remains inconclusive.
Nutrition, Alzheimer’s, and the healthy brain

Dr. Lynne Shinto, N.D., M.P.H.

Dr. Shinto is a naturopathic physician who maintains a clinical practice at OHSU and has studied the effects of Fish Oils alone and combined with Lipoic Acid on brain function for over 10 years.

There is growing evidence that brain health is founded on a healthy diet. The brain is rich in blood vessels; it contains 400 miles of them, and it consumes 20 percent of the body’s total oxygen and 10 percent of its total glucose (sugar). Vascular risk factors such as high blood pressure, type 2 diabetes, smoking, cardiovascular disease, being overweight, and physical inactivity can increase your chances of developing Alzheimer’s disease (AD). If you have three or more of these risk factors you have a 3.5 times greater possibility of developing AD than someone who has none of these. Maintaining a healthy diet can play an important role in improving your cardiovascular health, reducing risk and increasing brain health. But what should we eat and why?

There are studies that show that healthy diets, like the Mediterranean diet, which are high in whole grains, vegetables, fruit, nuts, and seafood tend to be heart-healthy by decreasing blood cholesterol and high blood pressure. In contrast, diets that are high in trans-fats or hydrogenated oils, which are found in many processed foods and baked goods, should be avoided in your diet because they do not promote cardiovascular and brain health. Adhering to healthy eating, such as with the Mediterranean diet, may help decrease your risk of AD because it contains good brain fats/fatty acids and negates many of the vascular risk factors of AD. Additionally, a healthy diet contains many of the vitamins and minerals necessary for brain health, including vitamins B, C, E, and D. But should healthy brain nutrition include nutritional supplements?

Nutritional supplements, unlike drugs, are not regulated by the Food and Drug Administration. The effectiveness of any one supplement to prevent AD has not been firmly proven by research studies. In fact, most are still being researched. Because of the promise of its contribution to cardiovascular health, omega-3 fatty acid supplements are currently being explored in a study at Oregon Health & Science University (OHSU).

Because your brain contains a high amount of omega-3 fatty acids, commonly found in fish and seafood, researchers are particularly interested in their mechanism and potential role in brain health. With aging, these fatty acids may decrease, so keeping healthy levels of them in your brain may prevent or delay cognitive decline and AD. Researchers at OHSU are conducting a unique clinical trial funded by the National Institutes of Health that is evaluating omega-3 fatty acids for the vascular component of cognitive decline in people 75 years and older who do not have AD or dementia, but are at risk because of their age and low blood levels of omega-3 fatty acids. The study is the first of its kind that will evaluate whether enriching the diet with omega-3 fatty acid supplementation can maintain brain wellness and decrease the risk of Alzheimer’s disease.
The C. Rex and Ruth H. Layton Aging and Alzheimer’s Disease Center is dedicated to the study and treatment of Alzheimer’s disease and other dementias. Your support helps fund state-of-the-art patient care, research and education. Our gift planning team is here to assist you in harnessing the potential of wills, trusts, real estate, stocks and other assets to change lives for the better.

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Save the dates for these Alzheimer’s Association Events

Walk to End Alzheimer’s
SUNDAY Sept. 11
PORTLAND INTERNATIONAL RACEWAY

McGinty Conference on Alzheimer’s
THURSDAY Nov. 10
OREGON CONVENTION CENTER

The C. Rex & Ruth H. Layton Aging & Alzheimer's Disease Center
The Layton Aging & Alzheimer's Disease Center is one of 30 NIH Alzheimer's Disease Centers in the United States and the only one of its kind in Oregon. Our center is recognized as a national leader in dementia care and research, and is committed to serving the needs of people throughout the Northwest.

The Layton Center is part of the OHSU Brain Institute (OBI). OBI is a national leader in neuroscience patient care, research and education.

Jeffrey Kaye, M.D.
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