



# Successful Aging

Stein Institute for Research on Aging

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ONLINE AT [HTTP://AGING.UCSD.EDU](http://AGING.UCSD.EDU)



## Seven UC San Diego Alzheimer's Researchers among World's Top 100

BY DEBRA KAIN

*UC San Diego School of Medicine boasts more "Top 100 AD Investigators" than any other institution in the world.*

Seven researchers from the University of California, San Diego School of Medicine are listed among the top 100 Alzheimer's disease investigators in the world, according to an article in the March issue of the *Journal of Alzheimer's Disease*, published by Netherlands-based IOS press. UC San Diego had more researchers on the top 100 list than any other institution in the world; a total of eleven were from UC institutions.

"I am extremely proud that so many UC San Diego School of Medicine researchers

have been recognized for their important contributions to finding treatments or a cure for this devastating disease, which impacts so many lives and so many families," said David Brenner, M.D., vice chancellor for health sciences and dean of the UC San Diego School of Medicine.

UC San Diego researchers in the top 100 include Stein-affiliated faculty members

***UC San Diego had more researchers on the top 100 list than any other institution in the world.***

Eliezer Masliah, M.D.; David P. Salmon, Ph.D.; Edward H. Koo, M.D.; and Douglas Galasko, M.D., of the department of neurosciences and the Shiley-Marcos Alzheimer's Disease Research Center; and Lawrence A. Hansen, M.D., of the departments of pathology and neurosciences. Also included in the list are two

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## FREE PUBLIC LECTURE

### MAY

#### **Gout: A Growing Public Health Problem Intimately Linked with Aging**

Robert Terkeltaub, M.D.  
*UCSD Professor of Medicine-in-Residence  
Department of Medicine  
Chief of VA Rheumatology Section*

May 20, 2009, 5:30 p.m.  
Garren Auditorium  
Basic Science Building  
University of California, San Diego

### JUNE

#### **Aging and Wellness**

Colin Depp, Ph.D.  
*UCSD Assistant Professor  
Department of Psychiatry*

June 17, 2009, 5:30 p.m.  
Garren Auditorium  
Basic Science Building  
University of California, San Diego

*Free parking is available.*

#### *Directions*

From Interstate 5 North or South:

- Exit La Jolla Village Drive West
- Right on Villa La Jolla Drive
- Left on Gilman Drive
- Left into Parking Lot 602 (first stop sign)
- From parking lot, walk toward Medical Teaching Facility (MTF)
- Right through MTF and enter Basic Science Building through glass doors
- Left down first hallway

*Please call (858) 534-6299 AT LEAST THREE WORKING DAYS IN ADVANCE to receive your free parking permit. Attendees may also purchase permits at the parking kiosk on Gilman Drive or park at the metered sites.*

*Please see page 2 for a summary of May's presentation.*

# Meet This Month's Successful Ager—Mary Saunders

BY MELANIE COLLINS

*It is fitting to highlight Mary Saunders as May's Successful Ager. Several of the most important events in Mary's life took place in May. She was born in May, she married in May, and she received both her bachelor's and master's degrees at May graduations.*



Mary Saunders

Mary describes her entry into the world this way: "I was born on Sunday, May 7, 1916, in the little town of Danbury, Connecticut, which is known for being the home of the company that created Stetson hats for men. Woodrow Wilson was serving his second term as Republican president. A three-bedroom house was selling for \$2,875, a new Ford for \$360, a dozen eggs for 38 cents, a loaf of bread for 7 cents, and a half gallon of milk for 38 cents."

Mary's parents did not have any biological children; they adopted her through the Connecticut Children's Aid Society. Mary's adoptive grandmother moved in with the family to take care of her and to help run the house while her parents worked.

Mary's mother ran a gas station and store. At that time, it was unusual for a woman—especially an African-American woman—to have her own business. Mary's father was

from the island of Barbados in the West Indies. He was hired as a shipping clerk at Travelers insurance company in Hartford, but he was rejected by other employees because he was black. The company still wanted to employ him, so they built a small office so he could work separately from the white employees.

During Mary's infant years (1917–1918) there were epidemics of whooping cough and pneumonia, and she was one of the victims. She describes her experience this way: "I was hospitalized but I was failing fast. My adoptive grandmother brought me home, along with a nurse supplied by the hospital.

The two, I was told, argued daily as to what was best for me. Their love and arguments brought through a skinny, bald-headed, half-alive little one." For several years thereafter, Mary's grandmother described

*Love has many definitions.*

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## Free Public Lecture

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### Gout: A Growing Public Health Problem Intimately Linked with Aging

Gout is a disorder caused by the deposits of crystals in joints, soft tissues, and kidneys. The crystals are derived from uric acid, the end product of DNA breakdown. Acute gouty arthritis results when the crystals intensely activate inflammation and pain in the joint. In the last few decades, gout has increased significantly in the U.S., as well as in many other countries, especially in patients over the age of sixty-five and even more so in patients over seventy-five. This change has been in lockstep with changes in diet and lifestyle and in the frequency of conditions linked with elevation in serum uric acid, such as chronic kidney disease, high blood

pressure, metabolic syndrome and diabetes, congestive heart failure, and the frequent medical need for diuretics and low-dose aspirin to treat patients with these conditions. Aging individuals need to be better informed about preventing and treating gout. Dr. Terkeltaub's presentation will discuss what we have recently learned about preventing and managing gout, established and new medications, and diet and lifestyle choices.

### Biography

Robert A. Terkeltaub, M.D., is the chief of rheumatology at the VA San Diego Medical Center and a professor of medicine and an associate division director at the University of California, San Diego. He received his medical degree at McGill University in Montreal, Canada, and completed residency and training programs at Montreal General



Dr. Robert A. Terkeltaub

Hospital in clinical rheumatology and internal medicine. Dr. Terkeltaub's research has concentrated principally on clinical aspects of gout, chondrocalcinosis,

and osteoarthritis, and in basic research on inflammation and skeletal biology and the interfaces between the two in the skeleton and in soft tissues such as the artery. He is a section editor of *Current Rheumatology Reports*, regularly serves on National Institutes of Health and Arthritis National Research Foundation study sections, and has been the recipient of numerous teaching awards at UCSD.

## It's Not Just Furniture

BY NATASHA JOSEFOWITZ PH.D.

*Just about the time my mother died, my daughter finished building her house. She and her husband worked full-time and had three children at home. With no time to shop for furniture, she was delighted when I suggested I ship my mother's living room, dining room, and bedroom furniture to her.*



*Natasha Josefowitz, Ph.D.*

As serendipity would have it, that same daughter had just finished remodeling a small summer cottage by a lake when we moved from our large five-

bedroom house to a much smaller two-bedroom apartment in a retirement community. Sure enough, she was again thrilled to get the furniture from the living room, dining room, and bedrooms. That furniture had come all the way from a chalet in the Swiss Alps that we owned many years ago and was mostly heavy, dark-oak peasant style from the 1600 and 1700s, none of which would fit into our new small rooms overlooking the ocean. We needed to redecorate with rattan and pastels, but my daughter's country cottage was a perfect setting for the old Swiss pieces.

What I find most remarkable is that whenever I visit my daughter in her townhome, I feel that I am back in my mother's house,



with the furniture arranged the way it was when I was a child. The memories of these years are embedded in the deep armchairs, the boys I dated in high school have left their marks on the sofa, and the musical events still resonate around the four chairs with needlepoint pillows made by my mother and my aunt, where they sat playing bridge while waiting for the war to end.

As émigrés in 1939, my parents had lost everything, so this furniture was their new start in the New World. When my three grandchildren sit and sleep in this same furniture, there is an unbroken thread from my parents to me to my children and grandchildren. The same is true of my furniture from the Swiss chalet, where I used to rest after a day of skiing; today the kids—now the age I was then—come in to rest from a day of swimming.

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## Honor Roll of Stein Institute for Research on Aging Contributors

We would like to express our deep appreciation for all those listed, as well as the anonymous donors, who chose to provide support to the Sam and Rose Stein Institute for Research on Aging during the months of March through mid-April 2009.

### Save a tree—sign up to receive your Stein Institute's *Successful Aging* newsletter electronically

In keeping with UCSD's efforts to become a green campus, the Stein Institute for Research on Aging will reduce paper usage by distributing the newsletter electronically to as many of our readers as possible. If you would like to receive the newsletter via e-mail rather than receiving a paper copy, please visit the newsletter sign-up page on our Web site at <http://aging.ucsd.edu/newslettersubscription.php> or send us an e-mail at [steininstitute@ucsd.edu](mailto:steininstitute@ucsd.edu) and include your postal address as well as your e-mail address to ensure that you do not receive duplicate copies. Please be assured that your information will not be shared with any other institution.



## Successful Ager

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her as “fragile.” But by third grade she was fully recovered and became very active in sports and other activities.

Mary enjoyed school even though there was strict discipline in the classroom. For example, she recalls her fourth grade teacher: “She seemed to us little folks to be a huge lady with a no-nonsense disposition. She taught fractions. During arithmetic if you did not know your fractions, you got your knuckles cracked, and then you stayed after school to learn the fractions!” Mary was a good student throughout school. When she graduated from East Hartford High School in 1933, she was one of the graduation speakers.

Throughout her adolescence, Mary was a member of the Girl Reserves, which was a popular program similar to the Girls Scouts and was sponsored by the Ann Street YWCA in Hartford.

Mary had a great deal of responsibility at home and at her mother’s gas station store, especially after her grandmother passed away. When Mary was thirteen years old, her mother (who was fifty-six at the time) had a stroke and was in the hospital for nearly a year. She never fully recovered from the stroke. Mary took care of her for the next eleven years.

After her mother’s death, Mary’s circumstances changed dramatically and she needed a place to live and a new job. She rented a room at the Ann Street YWCA and got a job at the switchboard. She was the first African-American to have a job in the front of the building, where she was the

first contact with the public. This showed a progressive attitude toward racial issues at the Ann Street YWCA that was not yet apparent most other places, even at other YWCAs.

Some of Mary’s coworkers were highly educated women in professional positions as social workers and administrators. They encouraged Mary to further her education. She was accepted to St. Joseph’s College in West Hartford, and she worked to pay her way through school. She graduated with a bachelor’s degree in sociology.

Mary was living in New York City when she met James Edward Saunders, a U.S. customs officer and a very kind and interesting man. They met weekly, talked endlessly, and took long walks along the Hudson River. Mary and James fell deeply in love and married on May 17, 1953.

Mary describes subsequent events this way: “Our happiness was short-lived. Five months after the wedding, Jimmy suffered a massive stroke. Doctors gave no hope for his recovery. This was indeed the saddest part of my life. I called upon God and prayed and prayed. He comforted me by giving me hope and assurance that Jimmy would live. True, he lived as a total invalid without speech or locomotion, but he was with me for eleven and a half years. We recaptured our lives: I found a job in civil service; he received an early pension. We spent summers in the country with all our medical equipment. We took long walks in his extended wheelchair from the East River to the Hudson River. We went to parades,

enjoyed our anniversaries, and often attended church together.”

Mary worked as a social investigator for the public welfare department in New York City. She took advantage of an opportunity to get an advanced degree through her department’s two-year work scholarship program. She completed her master’s degree in social work from Columbia

University School of Social Work approximately a year after Jimmy’s death.

After retiring in 1981, Mary traveled, practiced photography, and expanded her

reading about black history and culture. She gave lectures on black history at churches and elementary schools.

Mary has participated in and witnessed many historic events in her lifetime. She knew Eleanor Roosevelt, who was close to a family that Mary spent a great deal of time with and who also donated some of her time to the girls at the YWCA where Mary worked. She also knew Marian Anderson through her church and heard her sing at services several times. And Mary participated in the civil rights movement; one of her most memorable experiences occurred on August 28, 1963, when she joined hundreds of thousands of people in the March on Washington and heard Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. give his famous “I Have a Dream” speech on the steps of the Lincoln Memorial.

Although Mary does not know if she has any biological siblings, she considers several

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*I was on my own and had challenges, but I learned to make my way in the world.*

## Research Participants Needed

Dr. Colin Depp, Stein Institute for Research on Aging faculty member and researcher at UC San Diego, is seeking participants at least sixty years of age to take part in a study to understand the daily experiences, activities, and associated emotions in older adults. Using a diary method known as the Day Reconstruction Method, participants will be asked to recall the previous day’s events and answer a series of questions about their experiences that day. The majority of the assessment is self-administered and can be completed at home. If you are interested in participating or have additional questions, please call Ashley Cain at (858) 822-7485.

## World's Top 100

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former chairs of the department of neurosciences who were Stein-affiliated faculty members: Leon Thal, M.D., who passed away in 2007, and Robert Katzman, M.D., who passed away in 2008.

Aaron A. Sorensen of Switzerland-based Collexis Holdings Inc. conducted the first-ever objective analysis of Alzheimer's disease research. His analysis focused on three areas of measurement: total citations, total publications, and the H-index, which quantifiably measures a scientist's or group's productivity and the impact of that research.

For example, researcher Eliezer Masliah was ranked twelfth on the list of "most prolific" investigators for the period January 1, 1985

through April 21, 2008, with a total of 324 published papers. He also ranked thirteenth in "most-cited authors" with 18,636 scientific citations for his work with nerve tissue proteins, and seventh for the total impact of that research.

UC San Diego's Shiley-Marcos Alzheimer's Disease Research Center conducts a wide variety of research studies dedicated to understanding the causes, clinical features, and treatments for Alzheimer's disease and related memory disorders. Its goal is to discover ways to prevent and ultimately eradicate this disease. The center is also one of thirty-five university medical centers nationwide designated to carry out clinical trials coordinated by the Alzheimer's Disease Cooperative Study, created by the National Institute on Aging and headquartered at UC San Diego.



## PUBLIC LECTURE SERIES

### Lectures air on

Cox Digital Ch. 135  
Time Warner Digital Ch. 135  
(throughout San Diego)  
Time Warner North County Ch. 18  
AT&T UVerse, Ch. 99  
UHF (no cable) Ch. 35

### Research on Aging: Goals and Challenges of Palliative Care

Palliative care aims to prevent and relieve suffering and promote quality of life at every stage of life through patient and family care, education, research, and advocacy. Join Frank D. Ferris, M.D., as he presents information on defining elements of past and modern illness and various ideas of suffering. The general concepts of palliative care as well as its future goals will be addressed.

May 19 11:00 a.m.  
May 20 2:00 a.m.  
May 21 5:00 a.m.  
May 22 8:00 a.m.  
May 23 3:00 p.m.  
May 24 7:00 a.m.  
May 28 9:00 p.m.  
May 29 11:00 p.m.  
May 31 5:00 p.m.  
June 2 7:00 p.m.

### Research on Aging: Mantram Repetition, a Portable Stress Buster

We are all looking for ways to reduce our stress. Would you believe repeating a word or phrase could do the trick? Join Jill Bormann, Ph.D., as she explains mantram repetition and her research showing this is an effective portable stress buster that can be easily used to calm the body and mind. *Mantram* is the Sanskrit term for a short, sacred word or phrase that is repeated silently in the mind to reduce stress.

May 14 9:00 p.m.  
May 15 10:00 p.m.  
May 17 5:00 p.m.  
May 19 7:00 p.m.

To purchase a video copy of a specific lecture seen on TV, please visit <http://ucsd.tv/sira> or call (800) 742-5117.

For additional information on viewing past lectures online or for any other questions, please visit our Web site at <http://sira.ucsd.edu> or call (858) 534-6299. You may also view past lectures on Stein's new YouTube channel: <http://www.youtube.com/SteinUCSD>.

## 2009 Public Lecture Series

We would like to invite you to attend our 2009 Public Lecture Series. This series allows affiliated faculty members of the Stein institute for Research on Aging, other scientists from the UCSD School of Medicine, and individuals from surrounding academic and research institutions to present the latest findings in their respective fields of expertise and to share their present work with the general community. All of these lectures focus on topics related to healthy aging or age-related diseases. The lectures are held in the Garren Auditorium on the UCSD School of Medicine Campus from 5:30 to 6:30 p.m. and will also be on Stein's new YouTube channel: <http://www.youtube.com/SteinUCSD>. If you have any questions, contact us at (858) 534-6299.

**May 20**

**Robert Terkeltaub, M.D.**

"Gout: A Growing Public Health Problem Intimately Linked with Aging"

**June 17**

**Colin Depp, Ph.D.**

"Aging and Wellness"

**July 15**

**Charles von Gunton, M.D.**

"The Future of Palliative Medicine"

**August 19**

**William Kremen, Ph.D.**

TBA

**September 16**

**J. Kellogg Parsons, M.D.**

"Prostate Cancer: Research Update"

**October 21**

**Elizabeth Barrett-Connor, M.D.**

"Women's Health from A-Z"

**November 18**

**Michael Albo, M.D.**

"Urinary Incontinence"

## Did You Know?

In the 2008 *U.S. News & World Report* rankings, the UC San Diego School of Medicine was **5th** among the nation's public schools of medicine.

Research conducted on campus offers **medical advancements and breakthrough treatments**, such as advanced stem cell research that could cure a variety of diseases and studies finding that sun exposure and vitamin D levels may play a role in the risk of type 1 diabetes in children.

Private support from the Larry L. Hillblom Foundation, created through a bequest from the late DHL co-founder, will serve as a catalyst for research in the new **Division of Geriatrics** at the UC San Diego School of Medicine to better understand the process of aging and discover new ways of minimizing its effects.

Established by generous donors in 1979, the **Moore's UCSD Cancer Center** is the region's only National Cancer Institute-designated Comprehensive Cancer Center. The Cancer Center's mission is to translate promising scientific discoveries into new and better options for the prevention, diagnosis, and treatment of cancer.

## Successful Ager

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people to be her sisters and brothers. Her best friend, Constance, was one of those people. They met when they were both residents of the Ann Street YWCA in Connecticut and remained friends until Constance passed away. Constance had a grandson, Charles, whom she looked after like a son. Before Constance died, she asked Mary to take care of him. So, after Constance died, Mary moved to California, where Charles was in elementary school. Although Mary never formally adopted Charles, he became her grandson in every other way and is still an integral part of her life. After Mary began volunteering at Charles's school in order to be involved in his education, the school asked her to visit the homes of truant children to encourage them to return to school. This became a paid position, and Mary's second career was born. She also found and coached high school students who had the aptitude for college but lacked the knowledge and resources to prepare for it.

Since retiring from the school, Mary has continued to educate others about black history and culture and to learn about other cultures. She joined the Jewish Family Service College Avenue Older Adult Center in San Diego, where she takes exercise and writing classes and meets friends for lunch three times a week. As she spent time there and learned more about Jewish history and culture, she became excited about the idea of sharing her knowledge of black history

with the members. In February 2006, Mary gave a lecture as part of the center's Black History Month celebration, and since then she has given other talks and has written book reviews on the subject for the center.

Despite many experiences of discrimination (for example, being forced to eat in a restaurant kitchen when all her white friends ate in the main part of the restaurant), Mary has a very positive view of the world. "The first twelve years of my life were beautiful because I had my mother and grandmother and people who really loved me. After that, I was on my own and had challenges, but I learned to make my way in the world. And all my life people have been so lovely and kind to me."

Mary has been managing diabetes for the past thirty years. In the same way that she doesn't think of herself or anyone else as

*I don't worry about things; I let God take care of them.*

being defined by race or color, she never thinks of herself as someone with an illness. She does what her doctor tells her to

do to take care of herself and she doesn't dwell on the negative aspects of having diabetes.

Mary believes in education, hard work, and saving money, and she teaches these values to children. Her religion guides her and gives her the ability to bypass worry: "I am God's servant; He makes everything possible" and "I don't worry about things; I let God take care of them."

Mary also believes in love. In her words, "Love has many definitions." This is quite evident in the way Mary lives her life.

## Do You Know Someone Who Is a Great Example of Successful Aging?

Each month we feature examples of successful aging within our local community. We welcome your nominations. If you know of someone eighty-five years or older who you feel is an example of successful aging, please contact Jody DeLaPena-Murphy at (858) 822-1132 or [jodelapena@ucsd.edu](mailto:jodelapena@ucsd.edu) with the name and contact information of the person you would like to nominate, along with a brief description of why you feel he or she is successfully aging. From these nominations, we will select some of these individuals to be interviewed, and their responses will be included in future editions of the newsletter.



## OASIS Intergenerational Programs

*At OASIS you can learn, develop your talents, connect with others who share your interests, stay healthy, and make a positive impact in the lives of others. OASIS also engages people in meaningful community service with children through Intergenerational Tutoring and Active Generations.*

Through Intergenerational Tutoring, OASIS places adults in kindergarten through third-grade classrooms to help children enhance their reading and language skills. Tutors are trained and placed in a school of their choice in San Diego, Chula Vista, El Cajon, La Mesa/Spring Valley, or National City. Tutors volunteer approximately one hour a week, working one-on-one with a child. No teaching experience is necessary and free books, teaching materials, and journals are provided. The next tutor-training sessions will be in August and September. For more

information, contact Roxanne Prine at (619) 296-2594 or e-mail [oisistutor@yahoo.com](mailto:oisistutor@yahoo.com).

The Active Generations volunteer team fights childhood obesity in our communities. Over the past three decades, obesity rates in the U.S. have more than tripled among children ages six to eleven years old. Active Generations is a weekly intergenerational nutrition and physical activity program that introduces children in third through fifth grades to fun using teams of volunteers ages fifty and older who offer sessions on healthier lifestyles. Volunteers lead games and exercises, prepare and share healthy snacks, and educate children about food choices. For more information, contact Kim Haedrich at (619) 574-0674 or e-mail [activegenerations\\_sd@yahoo.com](mailto:activegenerations_sd@yahoo.com).

## Furniture

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I have so many memories of spending holidays with my growing family and their friends, with a wood fire burning, the snow falling, country bread and cheese, and my German shepherd—now long dead—lying by my side. Even if your children say they don't want that old chest of drawers or that rocking chair with the worn armrests, put it in storage until they are old enough (you may have to wait a decade or two)

***Pieces of furniture are not just inanimate objects; they are where families get together.***

to appreciate the link that binds families together.

Pieces of furniture are not just inanimate objects; they are where families get together. They are the hosts of clan gatherings, the silent witnesses to conversations.

They heard the laughter and the tears and have held babies and grandparents in cushioned arms. So, keep some of your furniture for the generations to come so they, too, can participate

in the memories and stories evoked by the old wood and faded cloth.

## The UC San Diego Legacy Society and the Sam and Rose Stein Institute for Research on Aging

The UC San Diego Legacy Society recognizes individuals who provide support for the Sam and Rose Stein Institute for Research on Aging at UC San Diego through planned gifts. Membership belongs to those who have made a deferred gift to UCSD through one or more of the following methods:

- Provision in a will or revocable trust
- Life income gift (charitable gift annuity, pooled income fund, charitable remainder trust or charitable lead trust)
- Retirement plan beneficiary designation
- Life insurance policy beneficiary designation
- Life estate gift (remainder interest in real property)

To become a member of the Legacy Society, simply notify the UCSD Office of Planned Giving of your intentions. Staff can provide sample bequest language for inclusion in your will or trust, or otherwise assist you with a plan that meets your philanthropic and financial goals. With careful planning, it is possible to reduce or eliminate income and transfer taxes while turning appreciated assets into income for yourself or others.

For more information and to request a free copy of *Your UC San Diego Guide to Giving*, please contact Geoff Graham at (858) 534-2249. Also, visit our Web site at <http://www.plannedgiving.ucsd.edu>.

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Please write to us if you no longer wish to receive  
future fundraising requests to support the Stein  
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# Living Today for a Better Tomorrow

OLDER AMERICANS MONTH MAY 2009

Older Americans Month was established in 1963. At that time, only 17 million living Americans had reached their sixty-fifth birthdays, about a third of older Americans lived in poverty, and there were few programs to meet their needs. Interest in older Americans and their concerns was growing, however, and in 1963, President John F. Kennedy's meeting with the National Council of Senior Citizens served as a prelude to designating May as Senior Citizens Month. In 1980, President Jimmy Carter renamed it Older Americans Month, and it has become a tradition that is celebrated across the country through ceremonies, events, fairs, and other activities. For more information on Older Americans Month, please visit the Department of Health and Human Services Administration on Aging Web site at <http://www.aoa.gov>.

For clinical trials at UCSD: <http://health.ucsd.edu/clinicaltrials/>

Many of our readers have expressed interest in receiving our newsletter electronically. If you would like to receive the newsletter via e-mail rather than receiving a paper copy, please visit the **newsletter sign-up page** on our Web site at <http://sira.ucsd.edu/newslettersubscription.php> or send us an e-mail at [steininstitute@ucsd.edu](mailto:steininstitute@ucsd.edu). Please include your postal address as well as your e-mail address. Your information will not be shared with any other institution.

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