

**ILC USA BIENNIAL UPDATE
OCTOBER 2015 – JUNE 2017**

ILC-USA at the Robert N. Butler Columbia Aging Center

Through innovation in science, policy, and practice, the Robert N. Butler Columbia Aging Center (CAC), under the direction of Ursula M. Staudinger, PhD, seeks to develop the knowledge base necessary to inform aging-related health and social policy locally, nationally, and globally, in addition to train a new generation of thought leaders to address issues facing societies of longer lives.

The Center is the home of the International Longevity Center – USA, led by CAC Associate Director, Ruth Finkelstein, ScD, to pursue translational research, policy education, and engagement.

Research

On the research side, ILC-USA in conjunction with Axel Börsch-Supan, is leading a successful large-scale country comparison project that is investigating the effects of retirement on physical and mental health outcomes. The literature on retirement and health outcomes has been equivocal mostly due to the fact that societal conditions framing the retirement transition vary greatly across countries. Following the biopsychosocial approach pursued at the Columbia Aging Center, this effort brings together 10 of the 17 International Longevity Centers (Argentina, Czech Republic, France, Germany, Israel, Japan, Netherlands, Singapore, South Africa, United Kingdom, USA) to build a harmonized country-comparative longitudinal data set to answer the question. Early indicators of success include repeated invitations and travel funds to the international team to present its results at the Berlin Demography Forum. Its first publication is in preparation and will show that legal restrictions and financial incentives around retirement predict a sizable amount of the variance between countries in the labor-force participation rate of adults 60+.

Ruth Finkelstein is Principal Investigator on the project “Generativity in Deprived Urban Contexts? Older Adults’ Experiences in Slums in Mumbai, Nairobi, and among Haitian Immigrants in New York“ is a 2017 recipient of a generous grant from the President’s Global Innovation Fund. Her collaborators on the project are Kavita Sivaramakrishnan, Columbia Aging Center faculty member and Isabella Aboderin, Senior Research Scientist at the African Population and Health Research Center.

The Columbia Aging Center – ILC-USA continues its work with the National Council on Aging (NCOA) to evaluate the pilot of the Aging Mastery Program in more than 80 communities around the US. In December, the evaluation of the Digital Aging Mastery program was completed.

Advocacy

Directed, created and written by Senior Staff Associate, Dorian Block, "Exceeding Expectations" follows 20 people over 80 in their journey around New York City. The team spent thousands of hours and hundreds of days with our subjects to bring to light the stories of these New Yorkers. Visit www.exceedingexpectations.nyc to read their stories.

Dr. Linda Fried continues her work on the Age Friendly NYC Commission and on the Health Professions Working Group where Dr. Ruth Finkelstein is her alternate. Drs. Linda Fried and Ruth Finkelstein also continue their work on the Media Arts and Culture Working Group.

Drs. Ursula Staudinger and Ruth Finkelstein spoke as part of a panel at the United Nations Headquarters as part of the DPI/NGO Briefing on The Global Ageing Population: Impact and Implementation of Agenda 2030.

Policy

The Age Smart Employer Awards, led by the Columbia Aging Center with funding from the Alfred P. Sloan Foundation, are now in their third cycle. The Age Smart Employer Awards, under the leadership of Dr. Ruth Finkelstein, recognize employers in New York City who value the contributions of their older workers and adopt policies and practices that encourage recruitment, retention, productivity, and satisfaction for workers of all ages. By the end of the application period, we will have 100 candidates, diverse in size, neighborhood, sector, industry, and leadership. An expert selection committee, which includes Dr. Ursula Staudinger, will score the applications in the Fall. Finalists and winners will be announced at an Awards Ceremony in January 2018. Visit agesmartemployer.org to learn more.

Dr. Finkelstein is a member of the World Health Organization's Advisory Group on the Global Network of Age Friendly Communities. In this capacity, and as a reviewer of one of the chapters of WHO's World Report on Aging and Health, she attended the Consultation on the Global Strategy and Action Plan on Ageing and Health.

Training

Age Boom Academy, held annually, in June, 2016 focused on the Future of Work and Retirement, and in June, 2017 on Inequities in Health, Work and Retirement. Both were sponsored by the Alfred P. Sloan Foundation. The annual two-and-a-half day workshop brings together between 20 and 25 journalists from local and national publications from across the country along with researchers in the field of aging who are doing prevalent work on the related topics.

Publications (selected)

- Bowen, C.E., Skirbekk, V. (2016). Old age expectations are related to how long people want to live. *Ageing and Society*
- Calvo, E, Madero-Cabib, I., Staudinger UM. (2017). Retirement Sequences of Older Americans: Moderately Destandardized and Highly Stratified Across Gender, Class, and Race. *Gerontologist*. doi: 10.1093/geront/gnx052
- Skirbekk, V. et al. (2016). Religious Affiliation Among Older Age Groups Worldwide: Estimates for 2010 and Projections Until 2050. *The Journals of Gerontology Series B: Psychological Sciences and Social Sciences*.
- Staudinger, U. M., Finkelstein, R., Calvo, E., and Sivaramakrishnan, K. (2016). A global view on the effects of work on health in later life. *The Gerontologist*, 56(S2), S281-S292.

- Weiss, D. (2016). On the Inevitability of Aging: Essentialist Beliefs Moderate the Impact of Negative Age Stereotypes on Older Adults' Memory Performance and Physiological Reactivity. *The Journals of Gerontology Series B: Psychological Sciences and Social Sciences*. doi:10.1093/geronb/gbw087
- Weiss, D., & Weiss, M. (2016). The interplay of subjective social status and essentialist beliefs about aging on cortisol responses to challenge in older adults. *Psychophysiology*
- Weiss, D., Job, V., Mathias, M., Grah, S., & Freund A.M. (2016). The end is (not) near: Aging, essentialism, and future time perspective. *Developmental Psychology*
- Weiss, D., Sczesny, S., & Freund, A.M. (2016). Wanting to get more or protecting one's assets: age-differential effects of gain versus loss perceptions on the willingness to engage in collective action. *Journals of Gerontology, Series B: Psychological Sciences and Social Sciences*, 2, 254-264. doi:10.1093/geronb/gbu098
- Williamson, JB., Fang, L., Calvo, C. (2017) Rural pension reform in China: A critical analysis. *Journal of Aging Studies*. 41, 67-74.

Media

- Research presented at the 2017 Age Boom Academy featured in "Top Tips to Switch Careers From the Founders of The Muse" on PBS Next Avenue.
<http://www.nextavenue.org/switch-careers-the-muse/>
- Ruth Finkelstein and Kavita Sivaramakrishnan cited for their project about generativity in deprived urban contexts for older adults in Mumbai, Nairobi, and New York.
<http://www.newsindiatimes.com/columbia-university-faculty-awarded-innovation-grants>
- Ursula Staudinger on appreciating the benefits of working, cited in the New Zealand Herald.
http://www.nzherald.co.nz/lifestyle/news/article.cfm?c_id=6&objectid=11853914
- Faculty member Vegard Skirbekk's work shows that when it comes to global health care dollars, older adults are left out in the cold.
<http://www.npr.org/sections/goatsandsoda/2017/05/09/527453473/old-people-get-very-little-health-care-in-the-developing-world>
- As a way to combat age stereotypes and ageism, Faculty member, David Weiss, carries out research to better understand our own negative feelings about growing old which in turn drive ageism. Professor Weiss is cited in this Digiday piece.
<https://digiday.com/marketing/reclaiming-word-old-fashion-fighting-ageism/>
- Center director Ursula M. Staudinger comments of older adults' desire to return to work once retired and to find new paths.
<http://www.heraldtribune.com/opinion/20170406/silverberg-encore-careers-can-provide-reciprocal-benefits>
- Faculty member, Dean Linda Fried, cites the role of volunteering and paid work in the production of better physical and mental health in Chris Farrell's NYT piece.
https://www.nytimes.com/2017/03/03/business/retirement/working-longer-may-benefit-your-health.html?_r=0
- Faculty member Vegard Skirbekk, PhD, discusses his findings that one in six people would rather die young than be alive in their 80s

<http://www.dailymail.co.uk/health/article-3757757/How-long-want-live-One-six-people-die-young-alive-80s.html>

- Research by Claudia Niemann, Ursula Staudinger et al. on exercise-induced changes in basal ganglia volume and cognition in older adults is cited in this Guardian piece.

https://www.theguardian.com/education/2016/jun/18/how-physical-exercise-makes-your-brain-work-better?CMP=share_btn_link

- The Wall Street Journal talks to Associate Director Dr. Ruth Finkelstein about senior mobility concerns in New York City.

<http://aging.columbia.edu/sites/default/files/160401%20WSJ%20Article%20Finkelstein.pdf>