

## Article 1: Newsletter

On April 21, 2004 the Gerontology Program at UNC held an educational presentation in Denver on “**The New Medicare: Practice and Policy Implications for Service Providers.**”

The event was attended by a variety of professionals and students interested in issues of aging, including practitioners from home health care, public and non-profit senior services, long term residential care, Alzheimer’s Associations, assisted living centers, community colleges and universities, AARP, insurance companies, advocacy groups, senior centers, hospitals, hospice, legal services, developmental disability programs, and case and care management. Approximately 45 people participated in this event, and evaluations collected following the meeting reported that the presentations and discussions were very helpful in giving those in attendance an opportunity to learn details about the Medicare changes.

UNC Gerontology professor Dr. Susan Collins kicked off the meeting by announcing that this was the first activity of what will be an ongoing mission; to promote collaboration, research, and education in the field of aging by providing professional development opportunities for those who work with older adults in both private and non-profit sectors, and by promoting and strengthening professional identity for those working with older adults.

Bob Pierce from The Colorado Division of Insurance State Health Insurance Assistance Program (SHIP) and Gloria Baca with the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services, each presented a great program on how the new Medicare prescription drug insurance card will work, and how recently passed legislation will change the Medicare program in 2006.

In addition to attending the presentation, UNC gerontology professors **Mark Adams** and **Susan Collins** both served on the committee to plan the event, along with other leaders in the aging network, including **Jane Barnes**, Manager of Senior Programs, St. Anthony’s Hospitals; **Eva Jewell**, Director, Weld County Area Agency on Aging; **Linda Piper**, retired director, Weld County Area Agency on Aging and affiliate gerontology faculty at UNC; **Mindy Rickert**, general manager of The Bridge Assisted Living at Life Care Center of Greeley ; **Courtney Tucker**, Aging Services Program Specialist with the Administration on Aging, Denver; and **Dr. Robbyn Wacker**, Associate Dean, College of Health and Human Sciences, and Professor of Gerontology at UNC. Eva, Mindy and Courtney are also graduates of the UNC Gerontology Master’s Program!

The Gerontology Program thanks our other sponsors of this presentation: The U.S. Administration on Aging, St. Anthony Hospitals, Denver; the Colorado Division of Insurance, and the Region VIII Rehabilitation Continuing Education Program (RCEP) at UNC. We also give special thanks to **Jude Printz**, Training Coordinator at Region VIII RCEP and other students attending from the RCEP program for their help in planning

what turned out to be an informative presentation, and a great opportunity to network with other professionals in the aging field.

## **Article 2: Newsletter**

### **Grandparents Raising Grandchildren Conference**

Several UNC gerontology students attended the Weld County *Grandparents Raising Grandchildren* conference, organized by the Weld County Area Agency on Aging, and held at the Evans Sr. Center on April 29, 2004. Undergraduate student Erika Johnson was a volunteer for the conference and Graduate student Gavan Abe assisted UNC gerontology professor Susan Collins in presenting a preliminary report from a survey conducted by the university, on the experiences of Weld County grandparents who have joined the growing ranks of those who are raising their grandchildren.

The conference was a great opportunity for grandparents to meet and share their experiences and wisdom about being a parent to grandchildren, and about finding and using available resources in the community that can help. Dr. Collins' presentation was of great interest to conference attendees, who found that they had much in common with the grandparents who participated in the study.