



NEWSLETTER

INSTITUTE
FOR SUCCESSFUL
LONGEVITY

FLORIDA STATE UNIVERSITY

®

Our ZOOM Initiative Using Technology to Fight Isolation — page 4



Staying normal in abnormal times with technology

As I write this on April 30, I am in day 54 of staying-at-home. It started early as a two-week self-quarantine, courtesy of developing cold symptoms a day after I returned from Fort Lauderdale for a Scientific Advisory Board meeting. At the time in early March there were few confirmed COVID-19 cases in Florida but lots of Spring Break college kids out and about, so I decided to be cautious. What I had was probably the common cold (testing was not available to me at the time). I experienced no fever, though that is not a guarantee of not having SARS-CoV-2. See the CDC web site for symptoms of those who progress to COVID-19, the lower respiratory disease associated with contracting SARS-CoV-2: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/clinical-guidance-management-patients.html>.

Whatever I had was quite contagious. My spouse, Beth, caught my cold days after my onset, was hit harder but seemed to recover more quickly. Unfortunately, the SARS-CoV-2 pandemic is still in full swing, and we are all having to adjust to the new normal, which is not much like the old normal.

Florida State University suspended face-to-face classes, offered many employees the option to work from home, a big help to parents who have had to stay home with children now that public schools are closed. Much of the city ground to a halt as a result of the general advice to practice social distancing (better termed physical distancing, staying 6 feet apart from others), which is playing havoc with the economy, not just locally but nationally. Although I had a busy travel schedule coming up, every conference, talk, and grant meeting was postponed or canceled or has moved to videoconferencing. Fortunately, because the Institute for Successful Longevity has functioned as a virtual institute since its inception, we have always made heavy use of modern computer tools such as videoconferencing and cloud storage of documents, so shifting to that mode of meeting and collaboration has been relatively painless.

For those of us in our senior years, the current situation is unsettling, given our much greater risk from COVID-19. Death rates are much higher as you move from the 60s through the 70s and beyond, in part because risk is higher for those with chronic conditions. High-risk chronic conditions such as heart disease, hypertension, cancer, diabetes, and pulmonary disease all increase strikingly with age. The double whammy of advanced age and fragility is what seems to be the reason why such a high percentage of the deaths from COVID-19 are for people in their senior years.

So, with a high percentage of the population restricting themselves to home, going out only for food and medication, how do we keep a semblance of normalcy?

Having a routine helps. Normally, my day revolves around commuting to work, tackling my email, being involved in meetings, and managing research projects in whatever time remains. I commute home in early evening and the cycle repeats throughout the normal work week. The weekends are much more loosely structured yet have their own rhythm. Now, commuting has disappeared, as have face-to-face meetings, which have moved online. So, I am in a new rhythm during the week, and my weekends are much more restricted now. The only constant from earlier times is my daily early morning 2.3-mile fast walk (30-31 minutes) in my neighborhood. It is easy to stay 6 feet away from other joggers and walkers as there are fewer of them around than before.

I've more or less adapted to working in a home environment, though I am talking to family much more than usual as I'm concerned about the health of my siblings, who are in their 60s and early 70s, and most concerned about my parents, who are in their 90s and still living independently in the community in Toronto.

FROM THE DIRECTOR



Neil Charness, Ph.D., is the William G. Chase Professor of Psychology at Florida State University and director of the Institute for Successful Longevity.

I find I'm spending more time eating meals on the screened porch at the back of the house, taking in the sight and sounds of the local wildlife in my backyard, mainly birds and squirrels that seem quite unconcerned with coronavirus. I'm listening to more music and less news. I do stay up with the CDC website, read the *New York Times* online, and visit the usual websites to keep up on technology trends that help inform my research on aging and technology use. My wife and I are getting to experience what it would be like for me to be retired and in each other's presence much of the day, probably too much, she would likely report, given that she can't visit the Senior Center (closed) or travel to regular Mahjong games with friends but has substituted online Mahjong now. We are watching a lot more streaming programming (Netflix, Amazon Prime) than usual to take our minds off things.

However, amid the evolving saga of the first major pandemic since the 1918 influenza outbreak about a century ago, we can take some comfort from how modern technology can soften the blow of "social distancing." The Internet gives us online shopping and banking, broad communication options (email, social media, videoconferencing), and the ability to reach out to others from the comfort (confinement?) of home. Sadly, older adults are far less likely to be able to benefit from these modern conveniences.

ISL recently provided careful step-by-step instruction documents on its website to help introduce aging adults to Zoom, easy-to-use videoconferencing software that can support "face-to-face" access to family and friends (<https://isl.fsu.edu/article/isl-launches-zoom-initiative-help-older-adults-fight-social-isolation>). However, not all aging adults have easy access to the internet or to hardware platforms that support videoconferencing. So, consider reaching out and phoning your older friends and neighbors, and make that part of your routine. We will all benefit. ■

ISL awards Esther & Del Grosser Scholarship to doctoral student Ahmed Ismaeel

Ahmed Ismaeel, a doctoral student in the Department of Nutrition, Food and Exercise Sciences, has been awarded the Institute for Successful Longevity's Esther & Del Grosser Scholarship.

The scholarship provides \$750 in support of student research.

Ismaeel's major professor, Panagiotis Koutakis, assistant professor of Nutrition, Food and Exercise Sciences and director of the Clinical Skeletal Muscle Physiology and Biochemistry Laboratory, describes Ismaeel as an enthusiastic student and researcher.

"Ever since I began working with him, I have been impressed by his motivation and independence," Koutakis wrote in his nomination letter. "Ahmed is one of the most focused students I have had the pleasure of working with. The quality of his work is always beyond my expectations, and he always does more than just what is asked of him. He is reliable, dependable, and he works extremely hard on anything he does."

Ismaeel said his graduate work "is driven by my desire to apply foundational clinical knowledge to enhance the translational potential of my skeletal muscle physiology research endeavors."

Neil Charness, director of the Institute for Successful Longevity, said Ismaeel was one of a number of outstanding graduate students who sought the scholarship. "We had a strong pool of contenders," Charness said, "and that speaks to the high quality of graduate research in successful longevity taking place at Florida State University." ■



Ahmed Ismaeel is a graduate student working with Panagiotis Koutakis, assistant professor of Nutrition, Food and Exercise Sciences and director of the Clinical Skeletal Muscle Physiology and Biochemistry Laboratory.

ISL launches Zoom initiative to help older adults fight social isolation through video connections

The Institute for Successful Longevity has launched an initiative to help older adults use the Zoom video platform to stay connected with friends and family, to access learning opportunities, and to stay engaged with the community.

To assist older adults who are not familiar with the Zoom video platform, the institute offers illustrated how-to documents that take you through the steps of creating a Zoom account, joining a Zoom meeting, and scheduling meetings of your own.

“Research studies suggest that about a quarter of the U.S. older adult population suffers from loneliness, and we are concerned that this could become more widespread under the social distancing required to prevent spread of the COVID-19 virus,” said Neil Charness, director of the institute.

The Institute for Successful Longevity conducts research into how to live longer, stay active and be fully engaged in life. Drawing on the expertise of faculty in fields across the FSU campus, the institute takes a multidisciplinary approach to better explore the complexities of life as an older individual.

“ISL’s research has shown that older adults can use technology to combat social isolation,” Charness said, “so we developed our Zoom guides to help people use their computers to connect with others.”

The how-to guides are free to the public and can be viewed and downloaded here via these links. They cover:

- [How to create your Zoom account.](#)
- [How to join a Zoom meeting.](#)
- [How to schedule a Zoom meeting.](#)

The institute is also recruiting tech-savvy older adults who can assist others who have questions about the Zoom platform.

If you would like to talk to one of ISL’s Zoom mentors, send an email to ISL@fsu.edu.

The institute is sharing resources with the Tallahassee Senior Center to help its clients gain proficiency with the Zoom platform and also is working with residential communities for older adults.

For more information, visit isl.fsu.edu. ■

FLORIDA STATE UNIVERSITY Institute for Successful Longevity



HOW TO ZOOM — A USER’S GUIDE

How to create your Zoom account using a desktop computer

Zoom provides a way to meet with people via video on your desk computer, laptop computer, smartphone or computer tablet.

To use Zoom, you need to set up a Zoom account. Here’s how.

To get started, Launch your web browser and go to <https://zoom.us> and follow these steps.

(For more helpful How-To’s on using Zoom, feel free to visit the Getting Started page on Zoom’s website at <https://support.zoom.us/hc/en-us/categories/200101697>)

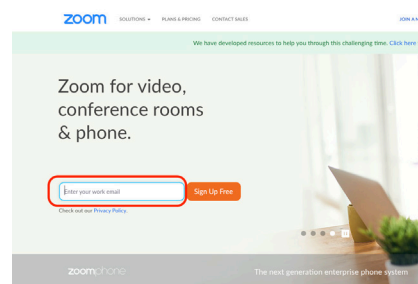
For this example, we are using an Apple desktop and the Safari web browser.

NOTE: To increase the size of type on this or other documents, hold down the Command key and click the + sign on your Apple computer keyboard (on a PC, hold down the Control key and click the + sign). To decrease the type size, hold down the Command key (or Control key, on a PC) and click the – sign.

STEP 1

Provide an email address (Zoom asks for work email, but personal email is OK).

Add your email address in the area we’ve marked in red.



One Consistent Enterprise Experience.

www.ISL.fsu.edu ISL@fsu.edu 850-644-8571



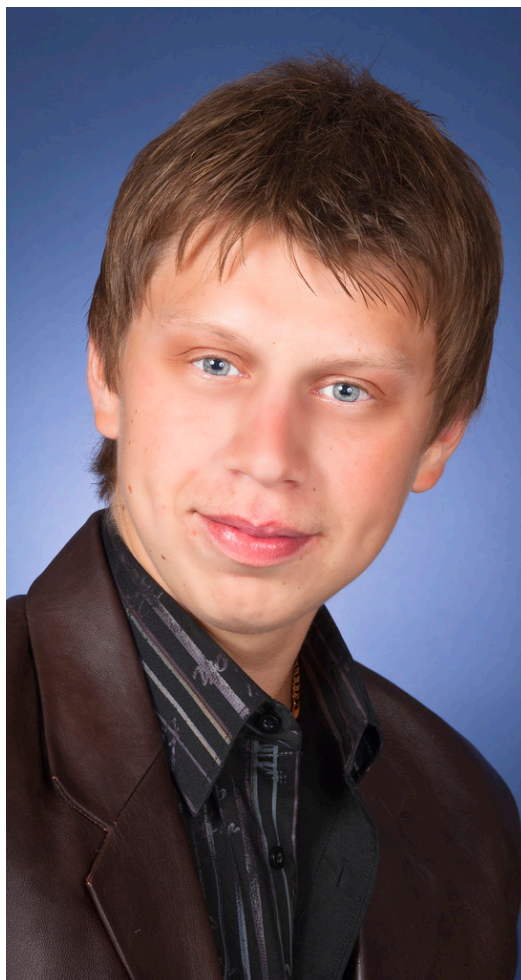
Maxim Dulebenets and Judy Delp win the 2020 ISL Planning Grants

The Institute for Successful Longevity has awarded its 2020 Planning Grants to two multidisciplinary research teams led by Maxim A. Dulebenets of the FAMU-FSU College of Engineering and Judy Delp of the College of Medicine.

Each ISL Planning Grant provides a \$15,500 award in support of research in a new direction or provides continuing support of existing research with the goal of improving the opportunity for successful longevity.

With his project, Dulebenets, an assistant professor in the Department of Civil & Environmental Engineering, will look at the driving performance of aging adults at busy urban intersections under inclement weather conditions. Joining him on the project are Hui Wang of the Department of Industrial & Manufacturing Engineering and Ren Moses and Eren E. Ozguven, both of the Department of Civil & Environmental Engineering.

Delp, professor of biomedical sciences, will look at whether a combined intervention of muscle stretching and creatine supplementation leads to improved muscle function in older adults with peripheral artery disease. In the study, Delp will work with Lynn Panton of the Department of Nutrition, Food and Exercise Sciences in the College of Human Sciences and Colm Connolly, assistant in research in the College of Medicine. Postdoctoral Fellow Jacob Caldwell will also take part in the study.



Maxim A. Dulebenets is an assistant professor in the Department of Civil & Environmental Engineering of the FAMU-FSU College of Engineering; Judy Delp is professor of biomedical sciences in FSU's College of Medicine. Both are Faculty Affiliates of the Institute for Successful Longevity.

"We want to congratulate Dr. Dulebenets and Dr. Delp on their successful applications, and we wish them success with their projects," said Neil Charness, director of the Institute for Successful Longevity. "ISL's Planning Grants are designed to promote collaboration among FSU research faculty, so we are pleased to support these multidisciplinary efforts and we hope the data collected in these projects lead to federal funding for continued study in the future." ■

ISL Faculty Affiliate Antonio Terracciano named Fulbright Scholar, will do research in Finland

Dr. Antonio Terracciano, a researcher in FSU's College of Medicine and a Faculty Affiliate of the Institute for Successful Longevity, has been named a Fulbright Scholar.

With the prestigious award, he will collaborate with researchers at the Gerontology Research Center and Faculty of Sport and Health Sciences at the University of Jyväskylä in Finland.

The project aims to understand more about how personality, physical activity and cognitive training together influence people's health as they age. For example, as physical activity goes down, what is the influence on cognitive decline and how might that increase the risk for dementia?

His colleagues in Finland "have more expertise on the role of physical activity; they are very strong in that aspect," Terracciano said. "I contribute more on the personality and decline of cognitive skills aspect. The proposed project will help identify who is at greater risk and who will benefit the most from interventions that foster active and healthy aging."

The Fulbright, considered the world's largest and most diverse international exchange program, was created in 1946 as a way of increasing mutual understanding between the people of the United States and those of other countries. The 12-person selection board, appointed by the president and funded by Congress, stated Dr. Terracciano's award was "a reflection of your leadership and contributions toward society."

Dr. Terracciano will travel to Finland to live, study, conduct research, and teach at the University of Jyväskylä for five months once the U.S. State Department lifts its COVID-19 moratorium. ■



With his Fulbright, Antonio Terracciano will travel to Finland for five months' work with a research team at the University of Jyväskylä.

FSU Faculty Awards go to five ISL Faculty Affiliates

Faculty Affiliates of the Institute for Successful Longevity were well represented among those receiving Faculty Awards for 2020 from President John Thrasher and Provost Sally McRorie.

Honors went to:

DISTINGUISHED RESEARCH PROFESSOR AWARD — Debra A. Fadool, Department of Biological Science, College of Arts and Sciences.

DISTINGUISHED TEACHER AWARD — Michael Ormsbee, Department of Nutrition, Food and Exercise Sciences, College of Human Sciences.

DEVELOPING SCHOLAR AWARD — Dawn Carr, Department of Sociology, College of Social Sciences and Public Policy.

UNDERGRADUATE TEACHING AWARD — Elizabeth Madden, School of Communication Science and Disorders, College of Communication & Information.

INNOVATION IN TEACHING AWARD — Diana Williams, Department of Psychology, College of Arts and Sciences. ■

ISL Faculty Affiliates awarded promotions

A number of the Institute for Successful Longevity's Faculty Affiliates recently have been promoted by their departments, schools and colleges.

Angelina Sutin has been promoted to full professor, a tenured position, in the College of Medicine.

Sutin earned her Ph.D. in Psychology at the University of California, Davis, and did a postdoc at the National Institute on Aging before joining FSU's College of Medicine. Her work takes an intergenerational lifespan approach to address how psychological factors contribute to health and well-being.

Professor Sutin's lab currently focuses on the role of personality traits in cognitive aging and risk of Alzheimer's disease and related dementias.



Angelina Sutin



Lucinda J. Graven

In addition to being a Faculty Affiliate of the Institute for Successful Longevity, Sutin also is an Affiliate of the Pepper Institute on Aging and Public Policy.

Lucinda J. Graven of FSU's College of Nursing has been promoted to associate professor with tenure. Graven earned her Ph.D. from the University of Alabama at Birmingham in 2014. At FSU, she conducts research in heart failure patients and their caregivers.

Her current research focuses on the development and testing of coping interventions to improve physiological and psychological health and well-being in these populations. She has expertise in cardiovascular health, social problem-solving, social support, and community-based interventions. Graven also conducts research related to heart failure symptom science and instrument development.

Zhe He of the School of Information has been promoted to associate professor with tenure.

He, who obtained his Ph.D. in Computer Science from the New Jersey Institute of Technology, holds a courtesy appointment with the Department of Behavioral Sciences and Social Medicine in the College of Medicine. He conducts research in biomedical and health informatics, clinical research informatics, data mining, knowledge representation, and big data analytics.

The overarching goal of He's research is to improve population health and advance biomedical research through the collection, analysis, and application of electronic health data from heterogeneous sources. He is the Informatics Lead of the FSU-UF Clinical and Translational Science Award and the Lead of the Method Core of the Center for Translational Behavioral Science.



Zhe He

Russell B. Clayton has been promoted to associate professor with tenure in the College of Communication & Information. Clayton is the founding director of the Cognition and Emotion Lab in FSU's School of Communication. He earned his Ph.D. from the University of Missouri in 2015.



Russell B. Clayton

Clayton has recently been named an Emerging Scholar by the Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication. As one of only four Emerging Scholars selected, he will be recognized and presented the award at the AEJMC annual conference in San Francisco in August.

Clayton's research uses peripheral psychophysiological measures (e.g., cardiovascular, electrodermal, pupillary, electromyographic) to examine audiences' cognitive and emotional processing of mediated content. The bulk of his research examines cue-reactivity and defensive reactivity (fight-or-flight) responses to persuasive health communication messages. He also is interested in the effect that internal processing (e.g., counterarguments, social comparisons) has on audiences' cognitive processing of media messages. ■

ISL BROWN BAGS



Thomas G. Broussard Jr., Ph.D., explains in the March 10 ISL Brown Bag Session how stroke can cause aphasia, a loss of language skills, and how those skills can be relearned. In his Brown Bag presentation, Broussard drew on his personal experience with stroke and language difficulties.

Broussard was an associate dean at Brandeis University when he suffered his stroke in 2011. Now, he travels the country encouraging other stroke victims to work to regain their word skills. Each semester, ISL holds Brown Bag sessions featuring ISL Faculty Affiliates or, as in Broussard's case, experts from the community.

International doctoral student studies with ISL experts

For the spring semester of 2020, the Institute for Successful Longevity sponsored a graduate student from Nuevo Laredo, Mexico, who is researching longevity for a doctorate in nursing sciences.

Carolina Benavides-Guerrero, who has a master's degree in nursing sciences from the Universidad Autonoma de Nuevo Leon, works as a teacher and social-service supervisor at the Universidad Autonoma de Tamaulipas.



Carolina Benavides-Guerrero is a doctoral student from Mexico studying older adults and their use of technology.

"I have been working with the older adult population for nine years in various activities and research studies," Benavides-Guerrero said. "I am currently focused on the issue of aging and communications technology, especially mobile devices, to enable the Mexican elderly to use them practically and effectively to facilitate their daily life activities and social integration."

Benavides-Guerrero came to the Institute for Successful Longevity to work with Neil Charness, the institute's director and an expert in the field of aging and technology.

"I am very grateful for the hospitality and knowledge shared by Dr. Charness and the doctors and graduate students I had the pleasure to meet," Benavides-Guerrero said. ■