

LONG ISLAND GERIATRIC EDUCATION CENTER

In July 2001, Stony Brook University Health Sciences Center was granted 5-year funding from the Health Resources Services Administration (HRSA) to establish the Long Island Geriatric Education Center (LIGEC).

Under the leadership of Dr. Suzanne Fields, the LIGEC has developed a comprehensive education program directed towards physicians, nurse practitioners, social workers, dentists, and allied health professionals in geriatric principles and practice. The multidisciplinary program includes incorporation of evidence-based medicine skills, the refinement of a geriatric core curriculum, and continuing

education programs targeted to full-time and voluntary faculty within the five health professional schools. A major focus of the GEC program is the inclusion of cultural issues in geriatrics relevant to the broad ethnic diversity of seniors on Long Island. Educational programs sponsored by the LIGEC the past two years have covered core curriculum topics for primary care faculty, a half-day Palliative Care Conference at the Northport VAMC, cosponsored by the Consortium of New York GEC's and the Downstate NY GRECC, a Stroke Update, a workshop on Workers' Compensation Issues in the Retiree, interdisciplinary conferences on the Older Driver, Obesity in the Elderly and a special retreat (cosponsored by the Koppaka Foundation and the Institute for Medicine in Contemporary Society) for students, faculty and residents on "Multicultural Aging and Advanced Directives." The last course was enthusiastically attended by over 200 trainees! The LIGEC has offered the opportunity for additional training to other School of Medicine faculty as well as generated enthusiasm for geriatric career development. Two junior faculty members within the Department of Medicine are applying this cycle for specialty-specific geriatric career development awards. A graduating geriatric medicine fellow, who will join the faculty in July, has applied for a HRSA-funded Geriatric Academic Career Award. Recently, the LIGEC was awarded a grant from the Hartford Foundation to cover Geriatric Interdisciplinary Team Training (GITT). Under the GEC leadership of Mr. Peter Kuemmel, the five schools collaborated to produce a 15-hour interdisciplinary course on geriatrics and



gerontology, which was offered for the first time this year. Topics covered included geriatric interdisciplinary team training. Dr. Lisa Strano-Paul, a faculty member within the Division of Geriatrics and General Internal Medicine who co-directed this course, is now working with the medical director of the LISVH on a pilot program to provide a longitudinal nursing home experience for medical students. Twenty-five first and second-year students have thus far signed up. They are each assigned a resident of the academic nursing home. They will follow the resident throughout their four years of medical school.

In June, LIGEC hosted a graduation ceremony where 11 LIGEC associates were awarded their certificates of completion. Graduating associates included faculty from the School of Medicine, Nursing, Dental Medicine, Social Welfare and Health Technology and Management.