

Grant adds financial balance to researchers' study on aging

■ **FUNDS:** Volunteers needed for research in equilibrium changes

By Jennifer Schmitt
Higher Education Reporter

An associate professor of exercise and movement science received a one-year grant of \$35,000 from the American Federation of Aging to pursue the study of balance changes throughout life.

Jody L. Jensen's recent grant will be used in conjunction with a grant previously awarded to professor Marjorie Woollacott by the National Institute of Aging, which is a part of the National Institute of Health. The earlier grant of almost \$1 million is for five years.

Accidental falls are the number one cause of death among older people, Jensen said. Understanding why a person's sense of balance changes during his or her lifetime can improve the quality of life for all



JENSEN

older people and cut health-care costs, she said.

For instance, comedian George Burns, who just turned 100 years old, lost his balance and fell in his bathroom in 1994. Actor Jimmy Stewart, 87, tripped over a plant and fell last December.

"Think of a typical situation in Oregon," Jensen said. "You walk out of a class, and your foot slips. Will you fall, or will you adjust your balance?" Everyday experiences challenge our balance, she said. It can be as simple as walking down the sidewalk, thinking that the ground is level and then catching your foot on a raised brick.

"We are looking at how people at various ages control balance and threats to bal-

ance," Jensen said.

The study focuses on the challenges to the balance in older people, but includes researching the reactions of young adults to changes in balance and comparing that to the reactions of older people to the same challenges in balance.

"We're looking for volunteers between the ages of 18-35 and 65 or older," Jensen said.

Using a hydraulically-powered platform, volunteers are tested to see how they respond to sudden shifts in the floor.

This test stimulates the reactions that occur in situations where balance is challenged (e.g. standing on a bus when it jerks forward or slipping on ice).

Researchers monitor muscle reactions and changes in the brain that occur when balance is threatened.

"We want to know what the brain and mechanical contributions are," Woollacott said. "We are trying to find out how they

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— Jody L. Jensen
Grant recipient

can be separated and how big of a role each plays in maintaining balance."

The information gathered will be important to clinicians and people who create exercise programs. Understanding the way muscles work in maintaining balance may lead to discoveries that enable people who rely on walkers or wheelchairs to walk independently.

For information on how to volunteer for the study, call the Motor Control Lab at 346-0275.

OUR COUNTRY'S GOOD

by Timberlake Wertenbaker

Set in a penal colony in 1789 Australia, this powerful play is filled with humor, warmth, and insight—it is a moving and affirmative tribute to the transforming power of drama.

A Robinson Theatre Production
8:00 P.M.
January 26, 27, 1996
February 1, 2, 3, 9, 10, 1996
Head Start benefit performance
Sunday February 4, 1996

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Does a free lunch sound good?

If so, local professionals will treat you to lunch on *February 22*

at 12:00 at the *Eugene Hilton* to answer any questions you have about careers after college. Applications are available in 123 Agate Hall and are due February 12. For more information call the SAA Office at 346-2107 or look for our table in the EMU February 5th, 6th & 7th.

Take a Duck to Lunch

You can't always get what you want
But if you try sometimes
You just might find
You get what you need

— Rolling Stones

Not all students trek overseas to explore exchange program

■ **TRAVEL:** Opportunities abound without threat of out-of-state tuition

By Jennifer Schmitt
Higher Education Reporter

When students think about a student-exchange program, visions of France, Germany and other foreign countries usually come to mind. But students don't have to leave the country to be part of a student-exchange program.

University students have the opportunity to study at a different U.S. college as part of the National Student Exchange Program.

In the past year alone, almost 3,000 students across the nation spent up to one year attending college in another state without having to pay out-of-state tuition.

In the United States, 130 campuses participate in the program.

Currently, 56 students from across the country are on exchange at the University.

Students who are chosen to be part of the program meet with academic advisors to set up class schedules that are compatible with their "home" campuses.

Many students don't know that the program exists and don't realize the great opportunities that are available, said Amy Jahnke, a junior on exchange from the University of Wisconsin-Green Bay.

"It's a great chance to see other states and colleges without having to pay out-of-state tuition," Jahnke said. "I thought that I might want to live out here, and this gave me the chance to check it out without having to just pick up and move."

While the benefits of the program are numerous, students face many challenges in their year at school.

"I am used to semesters that are from the end of August until the middle of December," said Douglas Barry, a junior exchange student from the University of Northern Iowa. "The terms here seem so rushed. It's like the term just started, and it's already time for mid-terms."

Students sometimes face unexpected changes in their classes.

"I had an upper-division class that was supposed to be in English, but they changed it so that it was offered in Spanish," said Robin Weber, a University student who attended the Inter-American University of Puerto Rico-San German. "I had wanted to learn more Spanish, but it was hard having the class all in Spanish."

Students interested in the National Exchange Program can pick up applications at the Academic Student Advising office after Feb. 1.

U of O Student Health Center Health Education Workshops — Winter 1996

• The following workshops are FREE to registered students •

Smoking Cessation NOTE: New Dates

An educational support group for those wanting to quit smoking and for those who have already quit. Emphasis will be placed on recent findings, overcoming perceived barriers, and dealing with relapse.

Mondays, 3:00-4:00 p.m. • February 5th, 12th, 19th and 26th
Medical Library, Student Health Center

Weight Management & Body Image

Issues such as weight management, body image, eating disorders, and the benefits of keeping a journal, setting goals, and changing behaviors will be addressed.

Wednesdays 4:00-5:00 p.m. • February 7th, 14th, 21st, and 28th
Medical Library, Student Health Center

Cooking Low Fat Foods

Integrate healthy meals and low-fat foods into everyday life.

Thursdays, 4:00-5:30 p.m. • February 1st, 8th, and 15th
Cafeteria, Student Health Center

Parent Education Series

Calling all student parents! Learn how to communicate and resolve conflicts effectively, cook healthily, and manage time and stress. Child care will be provided.

Fridays, 6:30-8:00 p.m. • February 16th, 23rd, and March 1st
East Campus

Sleep and Dreams

Discover healthy sleeping habits and how to interpret your dreams.

Thursdays, 4:00-5:00 p.m. • February 8th, 15th, 22nd, and 29th
Medical Library, Student Health Center



UO Student Health Center
Health Education Program

Call the Health Education Office at 346-4456 to pre-register for any of these workshops.

Prosecutors drop charges against sleep-deprived tractor-trailer driver

UPPER MARLBORO, Md. (AP) — In a case that questions the limit of driver responsibility, prosecutors on Tuesday dropped manslaughter charges against a tractor-trailer driver diagnosed with a sleep disorder after a fatal crash.

Doctors say Raymond Glenn Holsopple, 46, suffers from severe obstructed sleep apnea, which could have prevented him from staying awake when his truck slammed into a van and killed four people in Prince George's County, Md., last April 25.

The disorder, diagnosed by

specialists at the University of Pittsburgh following the crash, obstructs breathing and makes it impossible for the sufferer to get a good night's sleep. Doctors said the disorder can induce brief "micro sleeps," which may explain why Holsopple was able to negotiate a turn and apply the brakes before hitting the van, which had stopped for a red light.

"He had as little control over it as if he had undiagnosed epilepsy or if he suffered a heart attack behind the wheel," said Kenneth Plotkin, a neurologist at Georgetown Medical Center.

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