

# KU Alzheimer & Memory Program NEWSLETTER

## UPCOMING EVENTS

- Alzheimer & Memory Program Seminar Series (AMSS), 4:00-5:00 PM, Landon Center on Aging, Room 200 (Last Tuesday of Each Month)
  - Tuesday, August 28, 2007**  
Karen Haring, MAT, CCC-SLP – “The Speech Pathologist’s role in managing cognitive-communication disorders associated with Alzheimer’s Disease”
  - Tuesday, September 25, 2007**  
Russ Swerdlow, MD – “Mitochondria in Alzheimer’s Disease”
  - Tuesday, October 30, 2007**  
George P Thomas, MD/PhD Candidate – “Insulin and Memory in Early Alzheimer’s Disease”
- Alzheimer & Memory Program Caregiver Support Group, 2:00-3:30 PM, Landon Center on Aging, Room 145 (Second Thursday of each Month)
  - Thursday, September 13, 2007**
- International Day for the Elderly
  - Monday, October 1, 2007**
- Alzheimer’s Association Memory Walk at Corporate Woods in Overland Park, KS
  - Saturday, October 6, 2007**  
9:00 to 11:00 a.m.

## Contact Information

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[www.kualzheimer.org](http://www.kualzheimer.org)



### New NIH Grant Awarded to KU Alzheimer and Memory Program

The KU Alzheimer and Memory Program recently received its third grant from the National Institutes of Health. The grant titled “Longitudinal Study of Cardiorespiratory Fitness in Early Alzheimer’s Disease” is sponsored by the National Institute of Aging and will fund the Brain Aging Project’s follow up evaluations for individuals with early Alzheimer’s disease. The study is focusing on how fitness levels impact the progression of Alzheimer’s disease. Dr. Jeffrey M. Burns, MD, the principal investigator of the project, says, “This is another important and exciting step for the KU Alzheimer and Memory Program for several reasons. One, of course, is the financial support but perhaps more important is that funding from the NIH serves as a validation of the importance of what we are building at KU.” Competition for federal grants is currently fierce with only the top 9 – 10% of all grant applications awarded funds.

### Down Syndrome Dementia Clinic

Down Syndrome increases the risk for Alzheimer’s disease. As many as 25% or more of individuals with Down Syndrome over the age of 35 show signs of symptoms of Alzheimer’s disease, and this percentage rises with increasing age. The Down Syndrome Dementia Clinic (DSDC) at the University of Kansas Medical Center offers a number of resources and services for individuals with Down Syndrome and memory problems.

The Down Syndrome Dementia Clinic’s main goals include to:

- Aid in the identification and treatment of Alzheimer’s disease in individuals with Down Syndrome
- Monitor the progression of cognitive decline through clinical and neurobehavioral evaluations
- Create a system of resources for patients and caregivers to understand medications and side effects
- Provide tools for coping with changes in cognitive function
- Establish the framework for conducting high-quality, innovative research projects aimed at understanding the sequence of pathologic changes in the brains of patients with Alzheimer’s disease.

Our staff includes highly trained medical professionals: board-certified neurologists, a licensed nurse practitioner, clinic nurses, research nurses, psychometricians, a pharmacist, a licensed clinical social worker, and a speech therapist for cognitive training. Patient resources are also available upon request.

The Down Syndrome Dementia Clinic is open for appointments. For more information, or to schedule an appointment, please call 913-588-6820. You may also visit our website at [www.kualzheimer.org](http://www.kualzheimer.org).

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## Studies at a Glance

Study Name	Number Enrolled	Target Enrollment	Criteria
<b>KU Brain Aging Program</b>	146	225	80-90 years of age, males with or without Alzheimer's Disease, females without memory problems
<b>ADNI: Alzheimer's Disease Neuroimaging Initiative</b>	28	--	ENROLLMENT CLOSED
<b>DHA: (Docosahexaenoic acid)</b>	12	20	50-90 years of age, with mild to moderate Alzheimer's Disease, not currently taking fish oil
<b>VALID: Valproate in Dementia</b>	15	12	ENROLLMENT CLOSED
<b>ADEPT</b>	4	10	60-90 years of age, with Alzheimer's Disease
<b>MAIN: Memory in Alzheimer's with Intranasal Insulin</b>	ENROLLING SOON	30	60-90 years of age, with or without Alzheimer's Disease
<b>Antioxidant Defense</b>	7	40	60-90 years of age, with or without Alzheimer's Disease
<b>Self-Care TALK</b>	28	96	60-90 years of age, lives with/cares for spouse/partner with dementia or Alzheimer Disease, have telephone

**IF YOU, OR ANYONE YOU KNOW, WOULD LIKE ADDITIONAL INFORMATION ABOUT ENROLLING IN ANY OF THESE STUDIES, PLEASE CALL 913-588-0555.**

## MEET THE NEW MEMBERS

### Russell Swerdlow, M.D.



*In September 2007, Russell Swerdlow, M.D. will be joining the KU Alzheimer & Memory Program.*

Dr. Swerdlow is a neurologist with specialized training in memory disorders and neurodegenerative diseases. In 1996, he helped co-found the Memory Disorders Clinic at the University of Virginia. In addition to seeing patients and participating in Alzheimer's disease clinical trials, Dr. Swerdlow directs a federally funded laboratory that studies the molecular basis of Alzheimer's disease. His research focus is on the role that the cell's mitochondria (the energy generator of the cell) play in brain aging and neurodegenerative disorders such as Alzheimer's disease. He has concentrated on this line of

laboratory research for the past 20 years. Dr. Swerdlow is very enthusiastic about joining the KU Alzheimer and Memory Program for personal and professional reasons. For almost a decade, he has been "a close friend and major fan of" Dr. Jeff Burns, the Director of the KU Alzheimer and Memory Program. Dr. Swerdlow's laboratory research program and Dr. Burns' clinical research program both study energy metabolism in aging and in Alzheimer's disease. Their combined research programs will compliment and enhance the Alzheimer's research being conducted on the KU campus.

Along with Dr. Burns and the rest of the KU Alzheimer's disease clinic and research team, Dr. Swerdlow is looking forward to building a nationally recognized center for Alzheimer's disease care and research. In September, Dr. Swerdlow will officially join KUMC as a professor in the departments of Neurology and Molecular and Integrative Physiology.

### Diane Cunningham



*Diane Cunningham is the Research Administrative Assistant for the KU Alzheimer and Memory Program.*

#### **Biographical Sketch**

Diane is a native and life-long resident of Overland Park, Kansas. Diane graduated from Johnson County Community College with an Associates of Arts Degree. She has thirty years

of experience as an administrative assistant in a variety of settings including education and programs for youth ministry.

#### **Research Summary**

Diane plays a key roll in our department's operation from answering patient and family phone calls to scheduling research study visits for the studies being conducted by the KU Alzheimer and Memory Program. She is the key element in coordinating the activities of the physicians and staff of our program.

## New Research Study at KUMC: Intranasal Insulin in Early AD



George P. Thomas,  
MD/PhD candidate.

We are pleased to announce a new study, Memory in Early Alzheimer's with Intranasal Insulin (MAIN). Several recent studies have suggested that insulin improves memory in Alzheimer's patients. George Thomas, Jr., a Graduate Research

Assistant and MD-PhD student in the Department of Neurology, is working with Dr. Jeff Burns to design and conduct the Intranasal Insulin study. This study will look at the effects of insulin on brain function using nasal insulin spray and functional MRI scanning. A functional MRI scan is similar to a MRI scan but it is able to show how and where the insulin works in the brain. This unique program will enroll 20 subjects with early Alzheimer's disease and 10 subjects without Alzheimer's disease. Participants will have two functional MRI scans, one with insulin and one without. Please contact Pat Laubinger at 913-588-0685 for more information or to participate.

## Become a Friend of the Alzheimer & Memory Program

Join us in our new endeavor to build support for continuing research efforts in the treatment of Alzheimer's disease. Your tax-deductible financial contribution will enable you to become a "Friend of the KU Alzheimer & Memory Program" and provide continuing support for Alzheimer's research at the University of Kansas.

Donations can be mailed to:  
**KU Endowment  
ALZHEIMER & MEMORY PROGRAM  
3901 Rainbow Boulevard  
MS 3012  
Kansas City, KS 66160**

All checks should be made out to:  
**"KU Endowment - ALZHEIMER &  
MEMORY PROGRAM"**

All donors will receive a receipt from KU Endowment for tax deduction purposes.

If you would like additional information, please contact Dr. Jeff Burns or Stephanie Grinage at KU Endowment at 913-588-5552.

## KU Alzheimer & Memory Program to Participate in Memory Walk!

The KU Alzheimer & Memory Program has put together a local team to help support the local Heart of America Alzheimer Association Chapter.

The KU Alzheimer & Memory Program team will walk for the 250,000 individuals, family members, and caregivers in the Heart of America 66-county bi-state region suffering from the effects of this disease.

The Alzheimer Association's Heart of America Chapter is hosting this annual Memory Walk on Saturday, October 6, at Corporate Woods in Overland Park, KS. Walkers can choose from a 1 or 3 mile walk. Please join us in our walk. To join the KU Alzheimer & Memory Program Memory Walk Team, please visit <http://kansascitymw.kintera.org/kualzheimer> and click "Join our Team."

**WE'RE ON THE  
MOVE  
TO END ALZHEIMER'S**



## Alzheimer's Association International Conference on Prevention of Dementia!

The Alzheimer's Association International Conference on Prevention of Dementia was held on June 9-12th 2007 in Washington, D.C. at the Marriott Wardman Park Hotel. This conference is a multidisciplinary forum to bring together professionals from the fields of bench research, drug discovery, medicine, care and public policy. Over 1,000 dementia experts from around the world came together June 2007 to address the global health crisis of Alzheimer's Disease.

George P. Thomas, a MD/PhD candidate, and member of the Alzheimer & Memory Program, attended the conference. Mr. Thomas presented results from the Brain Aging Project examining the relationship between physical fitness and brain structure. These results suggest that there are differences in the relationship between brain health and fitness in normal aging and early AD.

The Alzheimer's Association Prevention Conference draws together researchers working on all aspects of Alzheimer's disease. Mr. Thomas commented about the conference, "It was a great opportunity to communicate with other researchers, and to learn about the many different facets of dementia in general. The size of this conference reflects to the monumental efforts worldwide to better understand Alzheimer's disease."

The next Alzheimer's Association International Conference on Dementia and Prevention will be June 3-6th 2009 in Washington, D.C.

## Alzheimer Disease Exercise Program Trial (ADEPT) Making Headlines!

KU Alzheimer & Memory Program's Dr. Heather Anderson has gained local media attention for her Alzheimer Disease Exercise Program Trial (ADEPT). On May 11th, 2007, ADEPT was featured on Fox 4 News in a story titled, "Study: Exercise Could Slow Alzheimer's Progression." The Walt Bodine Show also featured Dr. Anderson and Dr. Jeff Burns on National Public Radio's KCUR, 89.3 FM at 10:00 a.m., Monday, April 23rd, 2007.

Both media clips and respective stories can be seen and heard by visiting [www.kualzheimer.org](http://www.kualzheimer.org) and clicking the links below the "In the News-Local" section.

Dr. Anderson's ADEPT study is assessing the impact of a supervised exercise program in early Alzheimer's disease. Individuals 60 and older with memory problems are being enrolled in this 3-month trial. Enrolled participants will participate in exercise sessions with an exercise specialist three days a week at Kirmayer Fitness Center on the KUMC campus. For more information, or to enroll in this study, please call our Alzheimer & Memory Program Research Line at 913-588-0555.