

# Lifestyle, Culture, and Health Newsletter

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**ALOHA** ...to our cherished participants in the Lifestyle, Culture, and Health Study. The fact that all of you have roots in Hawai'i makes our study very special and unique. No other study has information about elementary school-aged children and their health and well-being later in life. Thank you for being part of this very important study about how people age.

Most of you are now in your sixties. As we get older, we notice some changes for the better and some that are not so good. In some ways we get smarter as we get older because we have more life experience to help us solve problems. On the other hand, many of us notice that we have more trouble remembering names of people and things. The good news is that scientists are discovering ways to keep our memory and thinking strong into old age. But we need to learn more about aging well. With your continued help, and if we are funded, we plan to study these changes over the next five years. If you have already come in for the second clinic exam, you know that we've added some measures of thinking to help us follow these changes over time.

It's hard to believe, but it's been 19 years since we started trying to find all of the participants in the original study. Our study has been funded all this time by the National Institutes of Health. This shows they truly value **your contributions** to science.

Please stay with our research 'ohana as we find out about life in the sixties and beyond!

If you haven't already come, we invite you to join us for the second clinic visit. It's also not too late to come in for your first clinic visit. Please give us a call at (808) 432-4688 to schedule an appointment. If you missed our most recent questionnaire (Q8), let us know by calling Chris toll free at 1-800-261-4997, x 2113. As always, we recognize and appreciate the valuable gift of your time, and will provide compensation for your participation in the clinic visit and completing questionnaires.

With each passing year you teach us more and more about health and well-being across life. Thank you again for everything you have shared. We look forward to the years ahead. Wishing you all a healthy and happy new year. A hui hou!

Sarah and Caryn



Kailua, O'ahu



Sarah Hampson, Ph.D., leads the research team in Oregon.



Caryn Oshiro, Ph.D., leads the clinic visit team in Hawai'i

## Why am I in this Study?



Jack Digman, Ph.D., gathered information on your group during the years 1959 to 1967. He was studying behavioral descriptions of children. He obtained permission to gather data at the UH Lab School, O'ahu and Kaua'i public schools, and in parochial schools on Kaua'i. Whole classes in participating schools were included.

Teachers described their students on behavioral characteristics at the end of the year. You will not remember participating because permissions were handled at the administrative level in those days. Jack's original work bloomed into an important field of investigation and, after 40 years at UH, Jack retired to Oregon where he continued his passion for research at the Oregon Research Institute. At age 73, he was funded by the National Institutes of Health to follow-up his earlier study. Jack died in 1998. We honor his legacy as we strive to continue his work.

## Q and A Corner

### Q: Why am I in this study?

**A:** Over 50 years ago, when you were in elementary school, your class was in a study. Teachers' descriptions of every student's behavior from that time are helping us understand you and your classmates' health now.

### Q: Why is this study important?

**A:** It's an amazing opportunity to be able study people from childhood to midlife, and to continue to study them into their 60's and up. No other study we know of can do this.

### Q. Why am I important?

**A:** Every single person in our study is valuable. We combine information from everyone's questionnaires and clinic results to get the most accurate picture we can. You can never be identified in our results, but you are part of an incredible team.

### Q: What if I stopped doing the questionnaires or missed the clinic visit?

**A:** No problem! You can pick up where you left off at any time. Your contribution is so valuable to the study that we will always welcome you back as an active participant.

### Q: What are some of the things we have learned so far?

- Kids described by their teachers as hard working and reliable were in better health at mid-life. But, it's never too late to start living a more healthy lifestyle.
- There's a part of your genes, called telomeres, that shorten with age. People who experienced traumas in childhood are likely to have shorter telomeres. You can protect your telomeres by not smoking and keeping a healthy weight.
- The questionnaires show that people have changed very little in the ways they think, feel, and behave over the last 20 years. But compared to when they were children, they have changed a lot.

### Q: What things can I do to stay young and sharp?

**A:** Keep active and stay connected to friends and family.

**We look forward to meeting you at your 10 year clinic visit!**

**Our goal is at least 400 clinic visits by the end of March. We are at 97%!!! A big mahalo to those who have already come in. Please kokua, if you can, by scheduling a clinic visit. Only you can help us to reach this important milestone.**

**Clinic Research Staff  
Darlene, Jonathan, Amy  
Deepa, Valentyna, Yannica, Caryn**

## Welcome to New Staff



**Yannica Theda Martinez, M.S.** has joined the LCH team as a recruiter/interviewer. Many of you have already

spoken to/seen Yannica during the last year. She earned her Masters in nutritional sciences and brings in a wealth of information and enthusiasm. We are thrilled to have Yannica onboard.



**Deepannita Roy, MPH,** is our most recent addition to the LCH study team. She has an MPH in

Epidemiology. She has been conducting study interviews and has an eye for detail. We are delighted to have "Deepa" on our team and welcome her with open arms.

**Please update your address and learn more about the project at:**

<http://lifestyleculturehealth.ori.org>

**Contact the Lifestyle, Culture, and Health Project**

**In Oregon:** [www.ori.org](http://www.ori.org)  
Toll-free (800) 261-4997, x 2113

**On O'ahu:** (808) 432-4688  
Elsewhere call toll-free  
(800) 833-5006

