



# The Bronstein Center for Healthy Aging and Wellness

*Annual Report*

**July 1, 2022–June 30, 2023**



Submitted by:

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*Visionaries—Sol and Arlene Bronstein*

## **Introduction**

The University of Southern Indiana (USI) Bronstein Center for Healthy Aging and Wellness is dedicated to advancing understanding of aging and promoting the well-being of older adults through interdisciplinary education, research and engaged partnerships. On July 5, 2022, USI announced it was the recipient of the generous \$1 million leadership gift from the Sol and Arlene Bronstein Foundation, established by the Bronsteins, to expand programs of excellence in dementia care and advance care planning education. The following report outlines program progress from July 1, 2022, to June 30, 2023, and outlines the five initiatives of the Bronstein gift agreement.

## **1** Conduct evidence-based training and certifications for dementia care and advance care planning education for USI students, USI faculty, regional healthcare professionals and community members.

Three education programs took place to deepen knowledge and advance skills related to advance care planning and working with people living with dementia.

### **Statewide Education for Nursing Home Staff Members**



*Teepa Snow and a participant at an educational program at USI*

A dementia orientation curriculum designed for nursing home employees was created in collaboration with Teepa Snow, an internationally recognized dementia care educator. The offering includes a 2-hour dementia curriculum made available to all skilled nursing facilities in Indiana to use for new employee orientation. Materials included are a step-by-step script, a supporting Teepa Snow video and a PowerPoint presentation. Orientation topics include brain changes associated with dementia and supportive responses to caring for people living with dementia. The Bronstein Foundation funds

supported two 1-hour webinar sessions on March 16, 2023, outlining the curriculum and helping users navigate the materials and technology. Teepa Snow, Dr. Beth Nolan, Dr. Katie Ehlman and Nick Faddis moderated the first 1-hour Zoom session with 31 nursing home educators attending. The second 1-hour session was moderated by Beth Nolan and Nick Faddis with 17 people attending for a total of 48 attendees.

### **Advance Care Planning Certification Courses**



*Participants at the First Steps ACP Facilitator training*

Respecting Choices (RC) First Steps Advance Care Planning is an evidence-based model of advance care planning (ACP) that seeks to create a culture of person-centered care. Two classes were offered in 2023 to become *First Steps* ACP Facilitators where participants receive a certification after completing both sessions. Part I was offered virtually on April 14 through a series of online modules. Part II was held in person at USI on April 21 as a hands-on, interactive experience. Twenty students in a section of the course (IPH356) – Ethics & Healthcare in a Pluralistic Society, joined along with seven

community members and healthcare professionals. The participants practiced the previously learned tools from the online modules to simulate real advance care planning conversations.

## Meet Me in the Minka USI Faculty Book Club

The Bronstein Center hosted a book club in Spring 2023 for USI faculty and staff to promote dialogue about advance care planning and end-of-life decision-making. Dr. Kevin Valadares and Nick Faddis facilitated discussions of Atul Gawande’s book, *Being Mortal* in the USI Minka, a compact house on campus used as a learning lab for living well.

During the four book club meetings, participants formed small groups to discuss the assigned chapters. Attendee participation ranged from 15 to 17 for each session. We also had an appearance from Dr. Bill Thomas, internationally known geriatrician, USI consultant and book contributor. He called in from Shuri, the Minka’s telepresence robot, and shared his experiences mentioned in the book.

Faculty and staff from the Bronstein Center for Healthy Aging and Wellness, Health Administration, Gerontology, University Strategic Communication, Geriatric Workforce Enhancement Program, Human Resources, Rice Library, Criminal Justice, Psychology, Creative and Print, Alumni Engagement and Volunteer USI, Romain College of Business, Honors/LLCs, Mathematical Sciences, English, Communications and Media, and the College of Nursing and Health Professions participated in the book club.



Book club participants during Spring 2023 Semester

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*“The Being Mortal book club was an eye opener for aging here in the United States. Being prepared for aging is what I learned from being part of the book club, and it was interesting to hear my USI colleagues’ thoughts on aging.”*

– Peter Whiting, USI Professor of Library Science

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## **2** Develop and/or enhance artificial intelligence and/or smart home technology to support people living with dementia.

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### **Interdisciplinary Collaboration to Enhance AI and Smart Home Technology**

In the Fall of 2021, the University of Southern Indiana received a \$50,000 Catalyst Award from the U.S. National Academy of Medicine (NAM)—part of the National Academy of Sciences— for a project to improve emotional well-being and independence for people living with dementia, especially those aging-in-place. The project, *Joy for People Living with Dementia Using a Virtual Assistant*, is based on “Joi,” an artificial intelligence (AI) virtual assistant that creates personalized “joy pops” for people living with dementia within a smart-home living environment housed in USI’s Minka. With NAM funding, Joi kits were created as *playgrounds* to be used by students from USI Engineering, Computer Science and/or Computer Information Systems programs. The Joi prototype is the main feature of the kits which can be used in conjunction with the other provided materials. The goal of these kits is to give students the ability and resources to be creative and innovative in creating something new or improved to help people living with dementia and/or aging-in-place.

As part of the Bronstein funding, these kits were offered as additional resources to senior design groups in Engineering, Computer Science and Computer Information Systems. On November 10, 2022, Dr. Katie Ehlman and Nick Faddis met with the chairs of these departments to propose an interdisciplinary collaboration. Dr. Ehlman and Nick Faddis created resource packets for the program chairs that included literature about aging-in-place and people living with dementia, the inventory of AI technology in the Minka, idea clusters for possible senior project designs and the Joi kits.

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### **Computer Science/Computer Information Systems Senior Design Project**

As a result of the interdisciplinary collaboration described above, the USI Computer Science and Computer Information Systems senior undergraduate students designed their senior project with the technology in the Minka. The group proposed creating centralized compatible technology in the Minka under the control of one device management system with the goal of aiding and advancing aging-in-place and people living with dementia. For those pieces of technology that are incompatible with their suggested device management system, the group has provided reasonable alternatives. In their 2-hour final project presentation on March 2, 2023, the group presented the business case for this project, the current devices listed in the Minka, the pros and cons of our current smart home management systems, a compatibility matrix of our current inventory against their suggested device management system and a cost-benefit analysis for those alternative devices.

### 3 Launch the annual Bronstein Faculty Research and/or Innovation Award to support excellence in dementia care and/or advance care planning education.

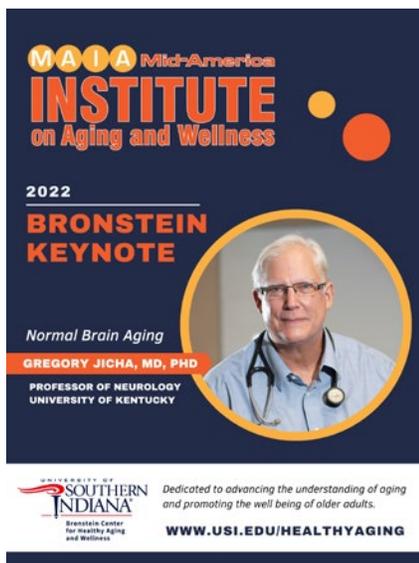


Dr. Junghee Han, MSW, PhD, is the first recipient of the Bronstein Faculty Research and/or Innovation Award. She is an Assistant Professor in Social Work at USI and is conducting an exploratory mixed-method study to identify potential factors affecting advance care planning and end-of-life care decisions among older Korean Americans in the region, including Indiana, Tennessee and Missouri. Up to 15 participants will be recruited using snowball and convenience sampling. The study will use non-random sampling because older Korean Americans are considered a hidden population in this geographic area.

### 4 Launch the Bronstein Affiliate Visiting Faculty position in the USI Bronstein Center for Healthy Aging and Wellness with a focus on dementia and/or advance care planning.

The design and implementation of initiative four will begin in the 2023–2024 academic year.

### 5 International/national speakers as the *Bronstein Keynote* at the Mid-America Institute on Aging and Wellness (MAIA) annual conference.



The Bronstein Center funded the keynote address at the Mid-America Institute on Aging and Wellness (MAIA) conference in 2022. **Gregory Jicha, MD, PhD**, a professor of neurology with the University of Kentucky, presented his research on brain change and dementia. He received his medical degree from Albert Einstein College of Medicine, Bronx, New York. He then completed a fellowship at Mayo Clinic, Rochester, Minnesota. He is board certified by the American Board of Psychiatry and Neurology. The title of his keynote presentation at the MAIA conference on August 11, 2022, was “Normal Brain Aging.” One hundred and ninety-five people attended his keynote presentation.

# Financial Report

The Bronstein Center spent a total of \$24,284 between July 1, 2022, and June 30, 2023. Four of the five initiatives were started in the 2022–2023 fiscal year—the first year of funding. The breakdown of expenses by line item is as follows:

- Salary and Benefits (Faculty/Administrator and Graduate Assistant) — \$20,967
- Materials and supplies — \$2,317
- Bronstein Keynote costs — \$1,000

The Bronstein Faculty Research and Innovation Award for 2022–2023 will be dispersed in the 2023–2024 fiscal year. As well, the Affiliate Visiting Faculty position is being designed and adopted for the 2023–2024 fiscal year.



*In the heart of USI's vibrant campus stands the Minka Learning Lab for Living Well, a federal and Bronstein Foundation funded initiative of USI's Bronstein Center for Healthy Aging and Wellness, a USI Foundation initiative. Minka is Japanese for "house of the people" and it's a model for what homes can be for those seeking to age in place. Equipped with smart technology controlled by artificial intelligence (AI), it's designed to support multiple ages and abilities.*



**Bronstein Center for Healthy  
Aging and Wellness**

*Dedicated to the well-being of older adults.*

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