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### **WSU's Institute of Gerontology Co-Hosts Research Conference on Aging**

Wayne State University and the University of Michigan jointly hosted the annual two-day conference of the Resource Centers for Minority Aging Research (RCMAR) in early May. Fifty-three persons attended from across the country to share their research approaches and outcomes in studying the problems experienced by minorities as they age. The resource centers are six federally funded university programs, coordinated through UCLA, dedicated to improving and expanding research on the health of minority older adults.

"Scholarship was of the highest quality," Peter Lichtenberg, Ph.D., explained. "We heard presentations by senior scholars and new pilot scholars on a diverse range of research that included Alzheimer's Disease, alcohol use, breast and prostate cancers, and sleep habits. This conference educates and strengthens collaboration between the six minority aging centers, which is key to meeting national research goals."



The Michigan Center for Urban African American Aging Research, jointly run by WSU and U-M is one of these resource centers. It is co-lead by Dr. Lichtenberg, director of WSU's Institute of Gerontology and by James Jackson, Ph.D., director of the U-M's Institute for Social Research.

Nationally, the minority aging centers have twin goals; (1) mentor junior minority scholars in aging and health disparities research and (2) create new ways to partner with the community so as to increase older adult participation in minority health research. Michigan's minority aging center created the Healthier Black Elders Center, directed by Olivia Washington, Ph.D., which plays a major role in educating older African American adults about healthy choices and in recruiting them to participate in research. "This conference showed how our work with the Healthier Black Elders Center engages large numbers of African American elders in research," she said.