

UMRA U NEWSLETTER

A Communication of the University of Minnesota Retirees Association

JANUARY 2016

January program speaker, Alexander Khoruts, to discuss new views on immune disorders

Alexander Khoruts is an associate professor at the University of Minnesota School of Medicine, and he is a graduate of the University of Minnesota. Some have titled his work, “Gut Reaction,” but it is much more complex than that, and most important his work has developed a procedure that is saving thousands of lives.

Dr. Khoruts’s clinical interest is gastroenterology with a particular focus on immune



disorders affecting gut function.

During the past decade there has

been a revolution in medicine calling for a major revision of the germ theory of disease. Over the centuries, our society and its physicians, have learned to view microbes mostly as potential pathogens. Traditional clinical microbiologists have been able to isolate and grow many pathogens in the laboratory, and we learned how to kill them. Many infectious diseases have been largely defeated with this approach over the past century.

However, the pathogen-centric framework of thinking ignored the microbial communities that are an integral part of the human body. Indiscriminate use of antimicrobial drugs does have serious costs. First and foremost, this includes emergence of new superbugs resistant to most antibiotics, such as *Clostridium difficile*, vancomycin-resistant enterococci (VRE), carbapenem-resistant *Enterobacteriaceae* (CRE, or “nightmare

bacteria”), and many others. These formidable pathogens are normally prevented from causing disease by microbes indigenous within our bodies. This emerging new threat was recently identified by the White House as one of the most urgent problems of this time.

New approaches are needed to counteract this problem. Dr. Khoruts and his team have been the leaders in the country in developing the new field of “Microbiota Therapeutics.” They were the first group to demonstrate that it is possible to engraft entire microbial communities from healthy donors into recipient patients suffering from recurrent *C. difficile* infections. Because of this work, the procedure became known as “fecal microbiota transplants” or FMT. They then standardized the process, which has now been taken up throughout the country with thousands of patients receiving this life-saving treatment.

Dr. Khoruts believes this is only the beginning of a new chapter in medicine. There are many challenges ahead, including:

- Development of new microbiota therapeutics for other infectious disease problems.
- Development of a helpful regulatory framework.
- Applying microbiota therapeutics to the maladies that have become commonplace in the 21st century, including obesity, diabetes, autoimmunity, inflammatory bowel disease, atopic diseases, and even neurodevelopmental disorders such as autism.

—Donna Peterson, UMRA president-elect

UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

JANUARY
LUNCHEON MEETING

Tuesday, January 26, 2016
11:30 a.m. – 1:30 p.m.

Featured Speaker

Alexander Khoruts, associate professor of gastroenterology, U of M School of Medicine
“Gut Reaction”

Location

Conference Room ABC,
Campus Club, Fourth Floor,
Coffman Memorial Union

Menu

Italian Sausage Lasagna,
coffee and tea.

For vegetarian or gluten-free options, please request when making your reservations.

Reservations ARE Required

Deadline: Thursday, January 21
Prepayment of **\$16** per person; annual prepayers **must** also make reservations.

To reserve your place(s), send your check payable to UMRA to
UMRA Reservations,
c/o Judy Leahy Grimes,
1937 Palace Ave., St. Paul, MN
55105-1728

Or, contact her before the deadline at 651-698-4387; e-mail:
Jleahy4654@aol.com.

Please honor the reservation deadline date; if cancellations are necessary, please call by Jan. 21.

Parking

All U ramps and the East River Road Garage with UMRA’s discount coupon — \$6 for the day.

UMRA NEWSLETTER

FROM THE PRESIDENT

Words Matter—

Freedom of speech is a right granted to us all by the first amendment of the U.S. constitution. We hold this right dear. This right is further protected for University professors by the tenure system. It sets the tone and standard for respectful exchange of ideas throughout the university community. It is core to the pursuit of knowledge.

Freedom of speech is a profound privilege. It inspires creativity. It allows the dissemination of literature, poetry, and music. It informs science, politics, and religions. It creates public dialogue among diverse people, in the press and the electronic media. It is a powerful motivator, moving individuals to laughter or tears, to great feats, or violent acts. It can embolden crowds to cheer or jeer, to form mobs or to disperse safely. It is used in protests, to right the wrongs of society as well as to incite evil acts.

The power of the pen is well understood. We know that a picture is worth a thousand words. Yet the power of words is often ignored or given short shrift. In recent months we have witnessed the power of words to incite anger and fear. We have seen words used in protest to try to right injustices (real or imagined). “Black Lives Matter” and “Don’t Shoot” have started a genuine national social movement around police brutality and social justice in general. These words matter!

“History tells us that violent speech breeds violent acts,” wrote Sara Lipton in the December 13, 2015, *New York Times*. We have heard more violent speech in the past year than most of us would like, and we cannot ignore its impact on behavior. Any psychologist can tell you about

the impact on a child who is derided or shamed or bullied. Words that instill hopelessness or a lack of self-esteem in a child can lead to all sorts of anti-social and unproductive behavior as an adult. Violent words and negative attitudes on the part of politicians can give others permission to be violent and to carry out their own frustrations by lashing out on innocent bystanders.

To further quote Sara Lipton, “...history does show that a heightened rhetoric against a certain group can incite violence against that group.... When a group is labeled hostile and brutal, its members are more likely to be treated with hostility and brutality.” We have seen this effect throughout history with the demonizing of a class or group of people; right now it is the Muslims who are most victimized by violent words.

Everyone knows that you are not allowed to shout FIRE in a crowded theater (unless of course, there is a fire). But we do not seem to consider the direct and tertiary power of words that either insult or praise—words that tear down or build up, words that destroy or embolden.

President Kaler called for the University community to embrace diversity and reject violence against Muslims in our midst. In a December 17, 2015, e-mail he wrote, “Take time to learn about cultures and experiences with which you are not yet familiar. Reaffirm your colleagues’ contributions to our community.”

His words matter; our words matter. May we take seriously the burden of the privilege of free speech!

— Jean Kinsey, UMRA President
jkinsey@umn.edu

Professional Development Grants for Retirees awards to be announced in March

The Office of the Vice President for Research (OVPR) reported that we received 12 applications for the Professional Development Grants for Retirees by the December 15 deadline. In consultation with the grants committee chair, Jan Hogan, a review panel will be appointed by OVPR in January. Awards will be announced by March 1, 2016. For more information about the grants program, please visit the UMRA website: <https://umra.umn.edu>.

— Jan Hogen-Schiltgen, PDGR program chair

Dwindling support is closing European museums

Warning! While undertaking preliminary work for a project that would involve extensive use of museum collections in Britain, I learned that two relevant collections, the British Empire and Commonwealth Museum in Bristol and the National Museum of Costume had closed; British government support for museums declined by 30 percent between 2010 and 2016. In the Netherlands the Nusantara Museum in Delft has closed; government support there has had a draconian cut of 60 percent. Such reductions in financial support may lead to other museum closures in these two countries. Anyone interested in undertaking museum-based research thus would be advised to do their work soon.

— Donald Clay Johnson, UMRA member

January 26 workshop—

“Financing health care costs, long-term care, and how estate planning is involved”

Our second of three workshops on managing finances in retirement will emphasize managing health care costs. The workshop will follow the luncheon meeting January 26 at approximately 1:30 p.m. in Campus Club ABC.

The presenter is Professor Andrew Whitman, J.D., Ph.D., C.F.P., professor of insurance in the Carlson School of Management. He has invited several panel members to comment on their personal experience on these issues. The workshop will address the following topics:

1. Medicare and insurance supplements lack coverage for activities of daily living and long term care.

Out-of-pocket health care costs in retirement vary greatly across families. Costs that can mount up include co-payments, deductibles, excluded treatment costs, Part B and Part D premiums, and out-of-pocket costs for prescription drugs. The discussion will focus on finding the best Medicare plan, added Medicare costs for higher incomes, and the value of accelerating income to the next year as part of overall tax planning. Health insurance exchanges offer the opportunity to secure health insurance for spouses and dependents not on Medicare.

2. Dealing with long-term care facilities

Making the best use of independent living, assisted living, custodial care, and memory units requires family planning.

3. Issues involved with long-term care (LTC) insurance and estate planning

The implications of LTC products will be addressed—older LTC products have greatly increasing premiums, while newer LTC products are complicated, expensive, and often have life insurance components. Estate planning, tax implications, healthcare directives, property powers of attorney, and trusts will be discussed.

References include *30 Ways to Cut Health Care Costs*, *New Strategy for Paying for Long-Term Care*, a *Special Report on Long-Term Care* on website LongTermCare.gov.



In October Andrew Whitman led the first of three workshops on finances: “Will your cash last?” The January workshop is described above. On March 22, the topic will be Retiree Estate Planning.

UMRA Photo Club plans April workshop

Photo Club members are busy planning to present an April workshop for UMRA members, and they are very interested in any questions you might have about photography — questions about taking pictures, processing pictures on your computer, organizing pictures, etc. Please send your questions to Sheri Goldsmith May, goldsmith009@gmail.com, or Craig Swan, swan@umn.edu.

The UMRA Photo Club meets on the fourth Friday of each month through spring. Meetings are from 1 to 3 p.m. at the Hennepin County St. Anthony Branch Library, New Brighton and St. Anthony Blvds. Many club members come for lunch at noon at the Great Dragon Buffet, across the parking lot from the library. Contact Craig for more details.

UMRA Care Guides—

A service now available to UMRA members

Sooner or later most UMRA members are going to have to make some hard long-term care (LTC) choices. Most of us are neophytes in this area. Given our lack of experience and the enormous stress these decisions entail, it is often hard to think systematically.

A group of UMRA members are training with Dr. Robert Kane, from the Center on Aging, to become “care guides.” They will be available to assist UMRA members who request help in confronting LTC issues.

The guides will offer a way to think through the issues involved. They will not provide advice per se; rather they will offer a structure for decision making during such tumultuous times. They can help you clarify goals, ensure that you know about the full range of potential options, and refer you to resources. They will assist you in using a structured decision-making guide that contains special tools to facilitate examining individual attitudes and family concordance at various stages of the planning process. All the work will be confidential.

The following UMRA members have volunteered to be UMRA Care Guides: Ron Anderson, Helen Carlson, Margaret (Maggie) Catambay, Pat Kelly Hall, Larry Johnson, Earl Nolting, Gwen Perun, and Barb VanDrasek.

To speak with a Care Guide, call the Center on Aging, 612 624-1185. After hours, please leave a voice message with your name and the best phone numbers to reach you, both day and evening. A Care Guide will make every effort to reach you as soon as possible.

If you would like to learn more about what Care Guides are and can do, or if you would like to become a Care Guide, please contact Earl Nolting at 651-633-4333.

From the Cares Committee Bookshelf

Are you or a loved one planning to move to a new setting? Having difficulty eating? Needing more information on communicating with the medical community? To address these and many other questions, look to the *American Cancer Society's Complete Guide to Family Caregiving*, edited by Bucher, Houts, and Ades.

Using Creativity, Optimism, Planning, and Expert Information (COPE) as an overall problem-solving model, the book includes practical and concrete information about care management, emotional responses to cancer and treatment, physical and long-term side effects, cure to care transitions, treatment options, and clinical trials.

Many strategies offered apply to other chronic conditions (dementia, digestive problems, heart disease, cancer) that elders face. Examples: if eating is difficult, have up to eight smaller rather than three larger meals each day. Increase caloric intake by adding yogurt, sour cream, and cottage cheese to foods. For each main topic, home caregiving steps are described as well as when professional help is required.

As the number of elders grow and societal resources decline, more and more care (even procedures like managing IV and PiCC lines) will need to be provided by individuals themselves or their families and friend/volunteer networks. This book provides much needed help and is available through Amazon, American Cancer Society, or a local library.

— Helen Carlson, UMRA Cares Committee

Be a reviewer for 'From the Bookshelf'

If you like to read and to share what you read, the Cares Committee invites you to write a short summary for the Newsletter's "Bookshelf" article. Reviews of good, well-written books on any subject are welcome. Send your recommendations and reviews to umracares@umn.edu.

Movin' & Groovin' in November workshop

UMRA member and certified health coach Martha Feda led the November workshop—Movin' & Groovin'—to encourage members to get ACTIVE! Martha presented motivational ideas about exercise and life. No after-lunch naps for this group. With a holistic view, she emphasized not only the physical but also the emotional, mental, spiritual, and environmental elements of good health as well.

More on the health coaching services of Martha Feda can be found at www.mindyourmedicine.com or send Martha an e-mail to marthafeda@gmail.com.

— Earl Nolting, UMRA Program Committee

Volunteer judges needed to assist middle-school students in debate tournament

The Minnesota Urban Debate League provides a means to empower students, through competitive academic debate, to become engaged learners, critical thinkers, and active citizens who are effective advocates for themselves and their communities. It is an after-school activity that encourages self-confidence, improves academic performance, boosts high school readiness, and provides students a platform to engage in current affairs. The next round of debates runs from January through March.

Volunteer debate judges have a brief training session, watch debate rounds, and evaluate teams based on logic, effective argumentation, and speaking skills. They pick the winner and provide important written feedback to help students improve their debate skills. Prior debate experience is not necessary to be a judge. Your critical thinking, interpersonal skills, public speaking, problem solving, and verbal/written communication are valuable in this work.

The topic to be debated is "The U.S. Government Should Substantially Curtail Domestic Surveillance."

Will you volunteer to judge one or more of the 12 debates? Each lasts 4 hours (including training for your first one). Choose from January 7, 12, 20, 28; February 2, 7, 10, 23; and March 2, 15, 16, 17 (usually starts at 3 or 4 p.m.)

To register as a judge, and for locations and times, contact the University Retirees Volunteer Center: online at urvc@umn.edu or call 612-625-8016.

Alan L. Kagan, Project Director, URVC

"Food for Thought"
It is sad to grow old, but nice to ripen.
— Brigitte Bardot



In the November workshop, health coach Martha Feda had everyone in her audience up and about—waving arms, moving bodies to music—even doing the twist—and most of all...laughing!

UMRA, Big Ten, and AROHE assist American Council on Education's survey on retirement

UMRA works with two national organizations that we learn from and support. The Big Ten Organization of Retiree Organizations is an informal organization that sends representatives annually to an August meeting on a Big Ten campus for a two-day conversation sharing best practices and learning from one another on how to improve recruiting and service to members and other retirees from their schools, while supporting the missions of their schools. Each retiree organization takes a turn hosting the annual meeting, arranging a venue, and developing the meeting agenda. Big Ten representatives met in Minneapolis in 2014.

The Association of Retirees Organizations in Higher Education (arohc.org) is a membership organization representing about a hundred retiree organizations at colleges and universities across the U.S. This organization maintains a professionally staffed executive office at UCLA. Its mission is to support the development and advancement of campus retiree organizations, aiming to enhance the intellectual, social, and physical well-being of retired faculty members and staff as they continue their valuable contributions to their academic communities. Representatives of member organizations meet biennially on a host campus. UMRA hosted the 2014 AROHE meeting, which was a joint meeting with Big Ten representatives.

Both organizations, along with colleges and universities across the U.S., worked recently with an American Council on Education (ACE) survey in examining how two dozen different schools have been dealing with retirement of faculty and staff members.

Retirement was once a singular event—one was working today and retired tomorrow. But in more and more cases nowadays, retirement is becoming an extended event in which the wants and needs of the schools as well as employees who are at or near traditional retirement ages are being negotiated, with retirement evolving into a staged process that takes into consideration the wants and needs of both the retiree and the school for mutual benefit and support.

ACE has published the results of its first-round survey [Claire Van Ummerson, Jean McLaughlin, and Lauren Duranleau. *Faculty Retirement: Best Practices for Managing the Transition* (Sterling, VA: Stylus Publishing Co., 2014)].

Now ACE is engaged in a second round, with the University of Minnesota participating. Much is being learned that will help guide how UMRA can work more effectively with the University of Minnesota in the months and years ahead.

— John S. Adams, UMRA Past President

Exclusive! —a message for women only

It's not meant to be a secret, but we have learned that many UMRA women do not know about the University of Minnesota Women's Club, said Shirley Holt at a recent gathering. "It's time for us to spread the word about the UMWC," said Van Linck, member of UMWC and an UMRA leader.

This is a dynamic women's organization, and it is a natural activity for retirees, although membership is open to all ages. It's great for women who have worked at, graduated from, or have close ties to the University, although it's open to all women in the community who are supportive of the University's mission, regardless of past connections.

Among current UMRA members are at least eight living UMWC past presidents. More than 30 UMRA women belong to the UMWC — some joined decades ago, others discovering it quite recently.

One of those UMRA members, Sue Zuriff, says, "As a retiree, I encourage my fellow female UMRA members to join the University of Minnesota Women's Club. Besides its mission of raising funds for scholarships for deserving women students, it offers many opportunities to make new friends. With 18 special interest sections—there's something for everyone!"



New friends who have memberships in both UMRA and UMWC enjoyed the 2015 Holiday Tea at Eastcliff, an annual benefit for gifts for patients hospitalized over the holidays at the U Medical Center.

The interest groups—ranging from women's health, nature, hiking, travel, music, and arts to book clubs, international concerns, and more—meet in a variety of Twin Cities locations. Annual programming includes five club luncheons.

If you enjoy stimulating activities and conversations with like-minded women friends, then this club is for you. Talk with a UMWC member or visit the Women's Club website, www.umwc.umn.edu, to see a sampling of all the activities that await you.

University of Minnesota
McNamara Alumni Center
Room 264, Suite 250
200 Oak Street S.E.
Minneapolis, MN 55455-2002

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Have you changed your address, e-mail, or phone?

1. Print new information below.
2. Cut out this form **and address label**.
3. Mail both to the address above.

Name _____
Address _____
City, State _____
Zip _____ Phone _____
E-mail _____
Other Info _____

Website: <https://umra.umn.edu>
UMRA's phone: 612-626-4403

Welcome new members to UMRA

Please give a hearty welcome to new members who have recently joined UMRA. Greet them at luncheon meetings, and help introduce them to other members.

John L. Romano, Educational Psychology (CEHD), faculty
2049 Juliet Ave., St. Paul, MN 55105
651-699-7587; roman001@umn.edu

Jonathan and Marcia Ravdin, Department of Medicine/
Medical School, faculty
100 East 2nd St. SE #603, Minneapolis, MN 55414
262-327-5756; 612-367-4657
ravdi001@umn.edu; marcie@umn.edu

John and Judith Sullivan, Political Science, faculty
1735 Princeton Ave., St. Paul, MN 55105
651-699-5630; jsull@umn.edu; judyc19@yahoo.com

Martha and Edward Fortier, Boynton Hlth Lab, barg. unit
10913 48th Ave., Plymouth, MN 55442
763-559-7898;
marthafortier@gmail.com; edfortier@comcast.net

Huber R. Warner, Biochemistry/CBS, faculty/P&A
1666 Coffman St. #315, St. Paul, MN 55108
651-900-1496; warne033@centurylink.net

Jerome and Marie Hammond, Applied Economics, faculty
1200 Josephine Rd., St. Paul, MN 55113-1803
651-484-6734

In Remembrance

We report the passing of UMRA members as we learn of losses to our UMRA community. Since the Newsletter was published last month, we have received news of the following. Our condolences to the friends and families of:

Liselotte (Lisa) Gumpel, faculty, German Department at U of M Morris, died October 22, 2015. Residing in St. Louis Park, she was an UMRA member, 1997–2014.

Hy Berman, Department of History faculty, died November 29, 2015. He had been an UMRA member since 2003; His wife, Betty, continues as an UMRA member.

UMRA Cares Committee is here for support

For assistance and support in the event of the death or serious illness of an UMRA member or family member, please e-mail us at umracares@umn.edu or call 612-626-4403, and leave a message for UMRA Cares.

Also, if you learn of someone who is facing a difficult life challenge, please contact the UMRA Cares Committee.