

cupc highlights

august 6, 2021

[“Richard Jessor, distinguished professor of behavioral science and co-founder of IBS, retires after 70 years of service to CU Boulder”](#) was the eye-catching headline last week in the *Colorado Arts and Sciences Magazine*. Yes, the day has finally come - our dear friend, colleague, and true pioneer **Dick Jessor** has decided to retire at the age of 95. (Now really, pause to ponder that thought for a moment...) This article beautifully captures his amazing life and influential career. In fact, IBS folks can certainly appreciate this selected excerpt from it:



Jessor and a colleague pitched the idea of IBS to the CU president, Ward Darley, in 1956. At the time of their meeting, Darley was sick and in bed at the president’s home, which is now the Koenig Alumni Center on campus. Once they found the president’s bedroom, Darley asked them, “What do you boys want?” Standing by his bedside, “We laid out our proposal in some detail, after which he said he approved and that we should proceed with our plans,” Jessor recalled.

Am sure we’ll see you around Dick, but perhaps less frequently now. We will miss running into you in the IBS hallways, seeing you seated in the front row of the seminars, and visiting you in your lovely corner office on the 4th floor. Most importantly, we will never forget the difference you made in all of us, expressed by some of your colleagues here:

Dick Jessor has been hugely influential for the development of interdisciplinary social and behavioral science, not only through his founding and leadership of IBS, but nationally and internationally. His influence has been at least as great at the interpersonal level through his tireless work as a mentor, fostering and challenging generations of scholars. I am tremendously grateful to call him a mentor and friend.

~ *Stefanie Mollborn*



I’ve been with IBS for over 20 years but a sneak peek at the emerging IBS history taught me a thing or two about population research at the Institute. I did know that we all owe Dick Jessor a tremendous debt of gratitude for his foresight in envisioning a programmatically-focused Institute from which a population research program arose. I did not realize that the “Program of Research on Population Processes” was launched as far back as the early 1970s! The early program emphasized research on urban expansion and its influence on mental health, social mobility, and fertility. Over the subsequent five decades, leadership by Andrei Rogers, Rick Rogers, and Jane Menken has brought us to today’s highly regarded research center with ongoing emphases in health, fertility, as well as migration and environment. Thank you Dick for your recognition of the centrality of population processes to human well-being, and for laying a critical foundation for today’s CUPC!

~ *Lori Hunter*

His incredible scientific record defined by his continued efforts to make interdisciplinary work the norm rather than the exception and his personal experiences defined by hard work, resilience, and compassion made it quite an honor for me to step into his shoes as Director of the Health and Society Program. The work in our program is heavily influenced by Dick Jessor the scholar and by Dick Jessor the person and this article makes it quite clear to others what we have known for a long time. Dick Jessor is a singularly remarkable human being.

~ *Jason Boardman*

Dick Jessor recruited me in 1983 to head the Population Program in IBS, and ever since then he has been my model academic whom I tried to follow. He was a vegetarian, I became a vegan. He exercised, so did I, often meeting at the machines at CU's rec center. He loved Italy and spoke Italian. We loved Tuscany and took Italian lessons. His publications motivated me to follow suit. I was fortunate to know him for almost 40 years.

~ **Andrei Rogers**

invited talks and presentations

Right on CUPC! We were well-represented at this week's workshop of the NIA-supported "Interdisciplinary Network on Rural Population Health and Aging". The network has provided pilot research funding for two CUPC projects with the hope that they eventually lead to NIA funded research:

- PhD student [Trent Davidson](#) presented collaborative work with **Jason Boardman** and **Lori Hunter**: "Exploring Rural-Urban Differences in Polygenic Associations for Health among Older Adults in the United States"
- PostDoc Research Associate [Cyrus Hester](#) presented collaborative work with **Myron Gutmann** and **Stefan Leyk**: "Understanding Mortality Disparities using High Resolution Spatial Data"

newly funded grants



Drum roll please! Cultural anthropologist "extraordinaire" [Scott Ortman](#) and his Arizona colleagues from U. of AZ and ASU, were just awarded a hefty NSF HNDS award, led by [Archaeology Southwest](#)! Their project "[From Households to Landscapes: Cyberinfrastructure for Interdisciplinary Research in the Ancient American Southwest](#)" will greatly improve the current version of the powerful software platform [CyberSW 1.0](#), used to conduct research on the pre-Hispanic archaeology of the US Southwest and Northwest Mexico. CyberSW 2.0, funded by this grant, will examine relationships between ancient indigenous households and neighborhoods, using the US Census as a model, to measure wealth, inequality, cultural background, and population size. Furthermore, a tribal working group will collaborate with the archaeologists to develop cross-cultural vocabularies and classification schemes!

~ *congratulations Scott!*

recently published papers

Health Promotion Practice has just published the paper "[Contraceptive access and use through school-based health centers \(SBHCs\): Rural and suburban students' perceptions from Colorado](#)", which is a collaborative effort by a group of UCDenver Health and Behavioral Science researchers - [Sara Yeatman](#), [Jean Scandlyn](#), PhD student [Marisa Westbrook](#), and a couple of undergraduate advisees! The team interviewed 30 sexually active individuals aged 15 to 21 living in mostly low-income rural and suburban communities in Colorado where high school SBHCs were recently introduced. The student participants listed convenience, low cost, and greater confidentiality as some of the benefits with accessing contraceptive and reproductive healthcare within their own school, as opposed to accessing these services outside of a school setting. ~ *well done Sara!*

new CUPC Executive Committee members

Let's welcome the "new kids on the block" who are serving on the CUPC Executive Committee this Fall 2021:

- Representing PRA [Health Disparities and Behaviors](#): **Colleen Reid** will temporarily replace **Ryan Masters**, who will be back to serve in the Spring 2022.
- Representing PRA: [Reproductive Health](#): **Amanda Stevenson** will replace **Sara Yeatman**.
A **BIG THANK YOU** to Sara for her valuable time serving on the committee this past year!



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