The fifth issue of IARU News reports on several exciting IARU initiatives. These projects include the 2011 and 2012 sessions of the IARU Summer School on Interdisciplinary Aspects of Healthy Aging in Copenhagen; the IARU Aging, Longevity and Health project, including the iHan network activities; and the Position Paper of the University of Copenhagen for the 8th EU Framework Programme (FP8), which is responding to Aging Societies as a major global challenge. Finally, we provide an update on the 15 floor building for research and education at the Faculty of Health and Medical Sciences, University of Copenhagen, currently under construction and to be completed by the end of 2014, which will house the Center for Healthy Aging.

With best regards,

Ulla Wewer, Professor, DM.Sci
Dean of the Faculty of Health and Medical Sciences, University of Copenhagen, Denmark

CEHA Welcomes the
2012 IARU Global Summer Program

Following Center for Healthy Agings (CEHA) participation in the successful IARU Congress in October 2010, the Center decided to offer a two-week summer school course in 2011 and to participate regularly thereafter in the IARU Global Summer Program. In 2011, CEHA hosted the course Interdisciplinary Aspects of Healthy Aging from 18-29 July. Investigators representing all CEHA programs lectured at the summer school and the course was coordinated by Assistant Professor Ying Liu.

The two-week summer school in 2011 provided an intercultural and interdisciplinary experience for all participants. During the first days of the session, CEHA researchers presented lectures that provided basic background for aging-related research topics. The students spent the next 5 days working in supervised groups on several interdisciplinary research projects and prepared written essays. On the last day, each group presented their findings to the whole group.

The students were a diverse group including 14 master level students from University of Peking; ETH Zürich; Oxford University; University of Tokyo; National University of Singapore and Australian National University and 2 students from the University of Copenhagen. The cultural and educational backgrounds of the students were diverse, and the project subject matter also challenged the students to think in new ways on highly interdisciplinary projects. This intellectually stimulating environment provoked many interesting discussions.

CEHA hosted a very successful farewell dinner for all summer school students on 27th July at Tivoli – a famous amusement park and pleasure garden in the center of Copenhagen. Students from the contemporaneous IARU Summer School Course Kierkegaard: The Individual in the Global Society shared in the fun at Tivoli as well (see photo). CEHA and the University of Copenhagen will co-host and co-sponsor the Summer School again in 2012. Warm welcome to IARU Summer School 2012 on 5-23 July. See healthyaging.ku.dk/education/iaru-summer-school/iaru-summer-school-2012 for more information on the 2012 Program.
Neurodegeneration and Life Course Issues
In the subproject Neurodegeneration and Life Course Issues several specific interdisciplinary research projects on life course issues in relation to neurodegeneration have been established in the CEHA. These involve plans for collaboration with the University of Tokyo and the Australian National University.

Within the neurodegeneration sub area, IARU partners, led by Professor Albert Gjedde from CEHA, initiated an International Healthy Aging Network (iHAN) in 2009. iHAN is a network for researchers both within and outside the established IARU network.

iHAN is coordinated by CEHA members and associates, and is funded by a Global Excellence grant from the Capital Region of Denmark to the Molecular Neurobiology of Aging and Consciousness (MNAC) unit in the Department of Neuroscience and Pharmacology, Faculty of Health and Medical Sciences, University of Copenhagen. At present, the core activity performed by iHAN is acquisition of neuroimaging data relevant to aging and neurodegenerative changes of the human brain.

One research area of current interest to iHAN participants is the visual system of the brain, in part because retinal ganglion cells are especially susceptible to age-dependent degeneration, including the excitatory stress (excitotoxicity) that has detrimental effects on the mitochondrial compartment. The main computing nodes of the network reside at Aarhus University, Denmark (Christopher J. Bailey, M.Sc., and Anders Rodell, Ph.D.), University of Queensland, Australia (Andrew Janke, Ph.D.), and Yale University, USA (Fahmeed Hyder, Ph.D.). Members of the network are also planning to attend and contribute to the Gordon Research Conference on Brain Energy Metabolism and Blood Flow at Colby College, Waterville, Maine, August 11-17, 2012, during which iHAN leadership will convene for their next organizational meeting.

Recent additions to the MNAC include professors Maurice Ptito PhD DSc and Linda Hildegard Bergersen (CEHA), PhD and associate professor Miriam Kolko, MD PhD.

Recent publications from iHAN/MNAC projects include:

Health Policy Challenges of Aging Populations
In the sub area Health Policy Challenges of Aging Populations, CEHA scientists are planning a collaboration with Professor Sarah Harper, Director of the Oxford Institute of Aging, first discussed in Copenhagen in early 2011. So far, the discussion led to a proposed seminar originally scheduled for late 2011, now re-scheduled for 2012. The seminar will involve Professor Sarah Harper and Senior Research Fellow Dr. George W. Leeson from the Department of Sociology at Oxford University as well as researchers from CEHA in Copenhagen. In the meantime, CEHA Ph.D. fellow Bodil Ludvigsen is working as a guest researcher at Oxford Institute of Aging and CEHA Professor Susan Reynolds Whyte is planning to visit Oxford in early summer 2012.

Evolutionary Medicine
The Evolutionary Medicine Program is an established program of the Centre for Social Evolution (CSE) in the Department of Biology, University of Copenhagen, coordinated by Professor Jacobus J. Boomsma and Dr. Sean G. Byars. CSE researchers in the Evolutionary Medicine Program recently completed a study.

Update on the Aging, Longevity and Health Project
Fifty students in the 2011 IARU Global Summer School Program and their supervisors are shown in Copenhagen after the farewell dinner at Tivoli. The participants represented seven IARU member universities.
The 8th European Union (EU) Framework Programme (FP8; the European Framework Programmes for Research and Technological Development) is expected to start in 2014. The academic community at the University of Copenhagen recently identified a number of major global challenges faced by the international society, one of which is Aging Societies. These are gathered and published in the University's FP8 Position Paper.

The challenge of the Aging Societies is defined by the fact that the number of elderly in Europe is rapidly increasing. This calls for effective therapeutic treatments that will ensure physical, psychological and social well-being for this segment of the population. Through a range of interdisciplinary approaches to aging, the Aging Society platform seeks to present effective guidelines on how to ensure a healthily aging population in Europe. The FP8 Position Paper of the University of Copenhagen outlines these challenges as well as key research areas necessary in order to create sustainable solutions and continued growth in Europe and beyond.

Discussions related to these ideas are described in the University's Position Paper on FP8. The document can be viewed at the following website: fi.ku.dk/fp8

The Copenhagen Center for Healthy Aging (CEHA), which was established in 2009, focuses on research into aging for better health and reduced frailty throughout life. The mission of CEHA is to determine how more people can live healthier lives and enjoy a robust old-age. The multidisciplinary research programs at the Center investigate biomedical, social and psychological influences on healthy aging, and develop initiatives for preventing and treating aging-associated dysfunction and disease.

CEHA research themes include:
- Molecular Aging
- Neurobiology
- Muscle and Matrix
- Life Course Perspective on Aging
- Health Care Policy and Preventive Medicine
- Health Promotion, Communication and User-driven Innovation
- Interdisciplinary project

CEHA is funded for its first five years by the Danish foundation Nordea-fonden with a possible extension for another five years (www.nordeafonden.dk/english). The Center, which is led by Managing Director Lene Juel Rasmussen, is based at the University of Copenhagen, primarily at the Faculty of Health and Medical Sciences.

More information on CEHA is available on healthyaging.ku.dk
Aging Research in a New Science Tower in Copenhagen

The Faculty of Health and Medical Sciences, University of Copenhagen, is now expanding and improving its research facilities. This ambitious project became a reality in December 2010, when the Faculty received a very generous donation of approximately USD 125 million, dedicated to a new building. The new facility will be a 35,000 square metre extension of the existing Panum Building. The donation came from the non-profit foundation formed by A. P. Møller and wife Chastine Mc-Kinney Møller, owners of the large Danish shipping and oil conglomerate A. P. Moeller – Maersk. Half of the construction sum of the building on the Blegdamsvej address will be covered from this fund. This is a historic donation from a private foundation, and the University of Copenhagen is very grateful and proud of this visionary donation to benefit research and education at the University. With its 15 floors, the new Panum-building has been designed to create the best possible environment for modern research and teaching. The Faculty of Health and Medical Sciences has designated the two first floors of the facility for CEHA. CEHA is looking forward to occupying its new research home by the end of 2014.