

Tai Chi Exercise For Stroke Survivors Newsletter

Study News:

University of Arizona College of Nursing's Taylor-Piliae Named

Robert Wood Johnson Foundation 'Nurse Faculty Scholar'
*Cardiovascular nurse scientist working with stroke survivors
is selected for prestigious
program to advance careers of nation's most promising
junior nurse faculty*

Ruth Taylor-Piliae, PhD, RN, an assistant professor at the College of Nursing at The University of Arizona, has won a competitive grant from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation (RWJF) to study the health effects of tai chi in stroke survivors.

Dr. Taylor-Piliae is one of just 15 nurse educators from around the country to receive the three-year \$350,000 "Nurse Faculty Scholar" award this year. It is given to junior faculty who show outstanding promise as future leaders in academic nursing. The grant period begins this month.

"The generous support from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation will enable me to determine whether this ancient Chinese art has health benefits for modern-day stroke survivors in America," Dr. Taylor-Piliae said.

For her research, Dr. Taylor-Piliae will develop a tai chi exercise program for stroke survivors and compare the results to other types of rehabilitation care. Tai chi is a low-impact, moderate-intensity Eastern form of exercise. If she finds that the benefits of tai chi are equal to or better than standard practices, she hopes that health-care providers will respond by recommending the exercise to those who have survived strokes.



Photo from EasyTaiChi.com

Changes to the Study...

Study participants will now be randomly assigned to three months of free Tai Chi instruction from a Tai Chi master in Tucson, Silversneakers classes taught by a certified instructor, or receive weekly phone calls with recommendations for participating in a community-based physical activity program. Participants will be evaluated for balance, strength, walking speed, and aerobic endurance at the beginning of the study, immediately after the intervention at 12 weeks, and at a 24-week follow-up, due to additional funding.

Congratulations to participants who have completed the intervention!

And good luck to those of you who are currently undergoing the intervention!

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**View Dr. Taylor-Piliae
discussing her research at:**

<http://nursing.arizona.edu/scripts/facEdu.asp?txtLoginName=rtaylor>

Welcome to the research team...



Marilyn E. Gilbert,
Tai Chi Exercise Study
Research Specialist

Marilyn is a California Native who came to Arizona in 1977 to do graduate work in Nutrition. In 1980, a summer workshop in Boulder, Colorado opened up new vistas in life and work: Marilyn moved to Boulder, had a baby, completed her certification in Massage Therapy, and ran her family's specialty herb and produce business until 1991.

After returning to Arizona in 1992, Marilyn completed a Master's degree in Exercise and Sport Sciences, specializing in Stress Management and Wellness. Marilyn is a writer, an international presenter, a massage therapist and health educator with over 25 years experience in alternative health and wellness, as well as lots of UA research experience.

She began studying Tai Chi with Michael Phillips in Tucson, in 1978, and in Boulder, Colorado studied Tai Chi and Qi Gong with Master Kenneth "Bear Hawk" Cohen from 1983 until 1987.

In Tucson, Marilyn has previously worked at Canyon Ranch Health Resort and at the UA Program in Integrative Medicine, as well as teaching her own Gourmet vegetarian cooking class. She watches the Food Network and professional tennis with equal gusto.

Marilyn lives happily in Tucson with her 4 cats and enjoys making the weekly calls and attending Tai Chi classes for the Research Study. She says Tai Chi has improved her stamina and mental focus in her part-time practice of massage therapy.

In addition to meeting the wonderful and inspiring study participants, she says it is another fabulous "perk" of her job at College of Nursing, which started in June 2009..



Stephanie L. Snyder,
Tai Chi Exercise Study
Research Specialist

Stephanie began working at the College of Nursing in June 2009, as well. She possesses a Bachelor's degree in clinical and counseling psychology, and has research experience in pharmaceutical advertising and frontotemporal dementia. She also has a background in nursing, spending two years as a nurse intern in both acute and intensive care areas.

After caring for her grandparents as a youth, Stephanie developed a passion for working with and improving conditions for the aging adult community. She wants to be a part of advancements in the healthcare delivery system for the geriatric population. She will be working with a large portion of the data from this study, as well as screening and assessing the study participants.

Having recently moved from New Jersey, Stephanie bought a house here in sunny Arizona. She will return to New Jersey this winter for her wedding, but will be back to continue working in the Tai Chi research office. She tries to go hiking or mountain biking every week with her fiancé and energetic puppy. Stephanie's personal interests include playing classical and jazz piano, teaching young beginners how to play the piano, swimming, cooking, financial investing, and international travel.

Feel free to contact us by email:

Marilyn: mgilbert@nursing.arizona.edu

Stephanie: ssnyder@nursing.arizona.edu

Transportation Problems?

Did you know that the Americans with Disabilities Act enables you to have free transportation? With a serious and limiting disability, such as a stroke, you may apply for transportation with the ADA and receive a registration card for options such as Handi-car within 1 to 3 weeks.

Places to call:

ADA - Transportation
Department: (520) 791-5409

Handi-car: (520) 881-3391

Vantran: (520) 791-4371

Community Resources

- ▼ 'A Matter of Balance' classes, held until Dec. 8.
- ▼ 'Healthy Living: Managing Ongoing Health Conditions', held until Nov. 19.
- ▼ 'Enhance Fitness' Program: ongoing classes.

If you are interested, contact the
Pima Council on Aging at:
(520) 790-7262.

Tai Chi Research Office

**1305 N. Martin
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(520) 621-7081**

**Best times to call:
9am-3pm M-F**