The primary goal of the Atlanta Regional Geriatric Education Center (ARGEC) is to employ an interdisciplinary framework to create sustainable, outcome-targeted, innovative educational experiences for area health care professionals, students, trainees and practitioners. ARGEC is comprised of a powerful network of partners actively pursuing this goal, including Emory University (lead), Morehouse School of Medicine, Georgia State University, and the Atlanta Regional Commission/Area Agency on Aging.

**Component Organizations**

**Emory University**

Emory is a place where collaboration and teamwork thrive. University President Dr. James Wagner has said that what "Emory truly is, and what it should remain—a UNIversity—with the emphasis on oneness of community, oneness of vision, oneness of purpose and aspiration, oneness of enterprise." Aging is regarded as a key strategic area; the Executive Vice President for Health Affairs and other leaders of the Woodruff Health Sciences Center of Emory University convened a charter committee to identify strategic plans for a new Emory Center for Health and Aging, and this Center is now formally in place. The Emory CHA, for the first time, elevates the administrative framework supporting aging-related education, training, and research to the top level of Emory’s Health Sciences Center, underscoring its importance. With a John A. Hartford Center of Excellence distinction, a VA Geriatrics Research, Education, and Clinical Center, and the Center for Health in Aging, Emory University is, more than ever, committed to Geriatric Medicine. With this project, we are committed to developing an innovative, sustainable, and exportable resource to train physicians to work in interdisciplinary teams to improve care for older adults.

**Emory Center for Health in Aging (CHA):** The CHA has developed several initiatives aimed at enabling seniors to age safely and successfully in their homes and communities. We have organized our efforts into four general categories: outreach, education, advocacy and community based participatory research. Status as a WHSC Center and affiliation with the Wesley Woods Center allows an interdisciplinary perspective where School and Institutional boundaries can be more easily overcome than by a program within a single unit. We fully intend to use our unique position as an interdisciplinary, inter-institutional organization to continue to build cross-cutting partnerships and to develop comprehensive programs which touch on all aspects of aging, from science to social policy. The CHA has garnered nearly $2.6M in external funding from federal and private sources in the last two years. During 2011 into 2012 CHA has moved from the capacity and program development model of years one and two into a period of implementing new or revised programs; adapting center objectives to fit the needs of regional constituents based on successes/barriers identified in earlier years; and developing targeted evaluation measures which more specifically address our impact in academic settings and in the community at large. CHA leadership continues to identify key stakeholders and to adjust operations and fiscal policy to administrative, economic, and health policy changes that may affect CHA activities.

**Emory Division of Geriatric Medicine and Gerontology:** The Division of Geriatric Medicine and Gerontology is dedicated to advancing the healthcare of the elderly population. Based
primarily at the Wesley Woods Center of Emory University and the Atlanta VA Medical Center, the program has also expanded to establish a Geriatrics Center at Grady Memorial Hospital, a major site for training Emory students and residents. The Division has 25 faculty geriatricians: 13 at Wesley Woods Center, 11 at the Atlanta VA, and one at Grady Hospital; a dentist trained in geriatric dentistry; and 4 active Gerontologists. Each year the Division trains up to 5-6 fellows as well as rotating internal medicine and family medicine residents and medical students. Major foci of research in the Division include: improving function and quality of life among frail, cognitively impaired nursing home residents; urinary incontinence and nocturia; sleep disorders; fall and injury prevention; and androgen therapy in older men.

**Emory University School of Medicine:** After nearly 3 years of planning involving hundreds of medical faculty, students, and other key members of Emory’s schools of nursing, public health, and graduate programs in the arts and sciences, Emory implemented an innovative medical curriculum and opened a new 162,000 square-foot building with state-of-the-art classroom, laboratory, and study space in 2007. Full details are available, but important features are included here ([http://www.med.emory.edu/admissions/mdcurriculum.cfm](http://www.med.emory.edu/admissions/mdcurriculum.cfm)). The curriculum was designed by the faculty and student leadership with attention to what characteristics are desired in graduates. Desired traits include graduates who are clinically expert physicians with a firm grasp on basic science principles, who remain curious, life-long learners, who stay involved in their local communities and address issues of social justice, who play leadership roles in medicine and remain committed to understanding the sociological, psychological, and economic issues of the patient, the family, and the community. The new curriculum is competency-based, with an early introduction to clinical experiences and an increase in student mentoring throughout the four years of medical school. The new curriculum also employs clinical simulations and standardized patients for skills training and assessment. Based upon the results from the Emory Reynolds Program, geriatric medicine earned a seat “at the table” during the planning for the new curriculum. Of the four clinician advisors in each one of four Societies–for a total of 16 practicing physicians–two are from geriatric medicine. Additionally, there is a week-long “Aging Week” didactic and experiential series for the M-1 students.

**Nell Hodgson Woodruff School of Nursing** provides educational programs at the undergraduate, masters, and doctoral levels. Education in Gerontological nursing practice is woven into the undergraduate curriculum in a range of clinical and role development courses and plays a significant part in the Adult Nurse Practitioner curriculum. The management of chronic conditions, most of which are associated with late life onset, is a major focus of research at the school as well as of doctoral studies.

**The Emory University Physician Assistant Program** is housed within the School of Medicine in the Department of Family and Preventive Medicine. This graduate program was rated the 3rd best Physician Assistant program in the United States in 2010 by US News and World Reports.

**The Rollins School of Public Health (RSPH)** is ranked among the ten best schools of public health in the nation. Rollins has outstanding departments of epidemiology, behavioral science and health education, biostatistics, health policy and management, environmental and occupational health, and global health. With respect to aging, both strengths and opportunities exist, for focus and growth in curricular offerings for students in degree programs. With additions, Rollins School of Public Health could potentially offer a concentration in aging in one or more of its departments.

**Fuqua Center for Late Life Depression:** A key ARGEC partner, the Fuqua Center for Late-Life Depression at Emory University, has a history of developing community-university partnerships.
in this area and there already exists a regional center for excellence in the Fuqua Center for Late-Life Depression. The benefits of a multidisciplinary approach to treatment are well-established. The Wesley Woods Center of Emory University provides practice resources in this area for the entire state and programs such as IMPACT (Improving Mood-Promoting Access to Collaborative Treatment) provide excellent models of evidenced based collaborative care for LLD. These programs demonstrate the higher likelihood of success created with a multi-disciplinary approach to treating and caring for individuals suffering from LLD.

The Morehouse School of Medicine (MSM), located in Atlanta, Georgia, was founded in 1975 as a two-year Medical Education Program at Morehouse College with clinical training affiliations with several established medical schools for awarding the M.D. degree. In 1981, MSM became an independently chartered institution and the first medical school established at a Historically Black College and University in the 20th century. The School is dedicated to improving the health and well-being of individuals and communities; increasing the diversity of the health professional and scientific workforce; and addressing primary health care needs through programs in education, research, and service, with emphasis on people of color and the underserved urban and rural populations in Georgia and the nation. MSM is among the nation's leading educators of primary care physicians. The faculty and alumni are noted in their fields for excellence in teaching, research, and public policy, and are known in the community for exceptional, culturally appropriate patient care. The school awards the Doctor of Medicine (M.D.), Doctor of Philosophy in Biomedical Sciences (Ph.D.), Master of Science in Clinical Research (M.S.C.R.), Master of Science in Biomedical Research, Master of Science in Biomedical Technology, and the Master of Public Health (M.P.H.), degrees. MSM has seven accredited residency programs: Family Medicine (1981), Preventive Medicine (1986), Internal Medicine (1991), Psychiatry (1991), Surgery (1993), Obstetrics and Gynecology (1997), and Pediatrics (2000). The majority of MSM patient care and clinical training occurs at Grady Memorial Hospital, one of the largest public hospitals in the Southeast. The school's research stature and reputation have grown exponentially over the past decade. In 2008, MSM ranked number three among the nation's community-based medical schools in research funding from the National Institutes of Health and among Georgia's four medical schools, MSM ranks number two. Moreover, MSM ranks in the top five of U.S. medical schools with five or more Institute of Medicine (IOM) members, based on the ratio of the IOM members to faculty size.

Georgia State University – School of Social Work: The School of Social Work in the CHHS at GSU started granting degrees in 1981 with the undergraduate degree in social work. In 1998, SSW admitted the inaugural class of MSW students and currently the School offers both Full and Part time graduate education. The sole concentration is community partnerships which prepares students for management and leadership roles in social welfare, nonprofit and human service contexts. The School has an extensive history in providing education in training and has received over $13 million in the past decade for pre-professional and continuing education training on child welfare topics. The faculty of the School of Social Work have offices on the 12th floor of the Urban Life Building on the GSU campus and have grant staff offices about 3 blocks away. Our offices are located three floors above the School of Nursing which allows members of the GSU initiative to have collaborative and proximal relationships on the project.

The Byrdine F. Lewis School of Nursing: The School of Nursing in the CHHS currently has about 350 undergraduate students, in generic and accelerated track programs, and approximately 240 master's students in several specialty areas. GSU has one of only two PhD programs in the Georgia state university system. Faculty offices and research space for faculty are housed on the 9th floor of the Urban Life Building on the main GSU campus. Other professional schools and departments are housed in same building (e.g. nutrition, physical therapy, respiratory therapy). The physical proximity of multiple disciplines promotes
collegiality and interdisciplinary dialogue among various disciplines. Clinical laboratories for the School of Nursing are in process of being moved to a new state-of-the-art facility. The School of Nursing has agreements and partnerships with over 150 clinical agencies that open their doors to student learning experiences. In addition, technology support for the web-enhanced programs is excellent. We have the capabilities and resources to successfully implement our current five advanced practice nursing programs. The goals of the school are: to educate nurse clinicians, practitioners, scholars, educators, leaders, and researchers; to develop health-related community partnerships; and to engage in research and other forms of scholarship.

Atlanta Regional Commission  The Atlanta Regional Commission (ARC) since 1971 has brought public and private leaders serving the 10-county Atlanta region—Cherokee, Clayton, Cobb, DeKalb, Douglas, Fayette, Fulton, Gwinnett, Henry and Rockdale counties— together to address mutual challenges and opportunities as well as issues of region-wide importance. ARC is the comprehensive planning agency in the areas of transportation, land use, environmental services, aging, community services and job training. Since 1974, the ARC has served as the Area Agency on Aging (AAA) for the Atlanta Region. In this capacity, ARC is responsible for funding, planning implementing and coordinating the delivery of home and community based services through a network of 10 county-based aging programs and 12 specialized agencies to provide a continuum of services. ARC supports senior adults, persons with disabilities, family members, caregivers, service agencies and the community at large with programs and services. ARC sponsors the Healthy Aging Coalition comprised of 35 professional organizations representing hospitals, public health departments, local service providers, parks and recreation authorities and many local agencies committed to promoting healthy living. Through the work of CARE-NET, ARC advocates for enhanced services and identifies the needs of caregivers while providing leadership training for lay and clergy to initiate caregiver education and support programs in their respective communities. The Aging and Disabilities Resource Connection (ADRC) brings together key agency advocates who strengthen access to services in a way that increases visibility, is trusted and serves persons of all incomes and ages. ARC recently expanded the RSVP Access to Services Initiative by recruiting retired professional health care workers and other volunteers who provide outreach and critical health information. The AgeWise Connection information and referral service receives nearly 70,000 calls yearly from persons seeking information and resource assistance. Service providers listed in resource database include non-profit agencies, fee-for-service providers and governmental organizations in 294 service categories; a total of 2595 provide service in the Atlanta Region. As a partnering agency, ARC will utilize the resource database to identify and i-link service provider agencies with training opportunities. This partnership will allow ARC to build on the training sessions that have been offered by the Fuqua Center on Late Life Depression in which Senior Center Directors, Case Managers and Information Specialists from the aging network were trained on ways to identify possible depression and mental health concerns in consumers and help them connect to services. Targeted service agencies will include (but not limited to) private home care providers, adult day care centers, hospice agencies, home health agencies, case management services, dialysis and other specialized clinics, public health centers, Federal Qualified Health Centers and community clinics. Additionally providers representing assisted living facilities (licensed as personal care homes), housing facilities (Service Coordinators) health and other aging service agencies will be included. It is estimated that over 2,000 providers in the Atlanta Region will be reached through the aging resource database. ARC also facilitates linkages between the ARGEC and community service entities serving older adults for the purpose of creating meaningful internships and practice opportunities. These interactions prepare students and assist in their educational experiences. Moreover, special attention will focus on providing the ARGEC with feedback relative to the educational needs and knowledge gaps within the current workforce.