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Training Scholars to Study Aging

West Lafayette, Ind.—Three Purdue University graduate students have been named trainees for a new program to stimulate research on aging.

The appointments are part of a new grant from the National Institute on Aging entitled Interdisciplinary Research on Aging and the Life Course.

“Although Purdue has a rich history of graduate-student training in gerontology, this award puts us at the cutting edge of interdisciplinary training for advanced students,” said Ken Ferraro, Director of the Center on Aging and the Life Course at Purdue University. “We are appointing three students from three departments, and each trainee will work with an interdisciplinary team of scholars.”

The training program targets students entering the third year of their graduate education at Purdue. “We sought students who had demonstrated success in the classroom at Purdue and were active researchers,” added J. Jill Suitor, professor of sociology and faculty associate of the Center.

The three students are Megan Gilligan (Sociology), Nicholas Turiano (Child Development and Family Studies), and Eileen Weinheimer (Foods and Nutrition).

According to Ferraro, students will be part of an intensive training experience that integrates findings from multiple fields of study. “The ultimate goal is to train investigators who can be productive members of interdisciplinary research teams. Many of the major issues in the study of aging are complex. Interdisciplinary training, therefore, holds greater promise for breakthrough discoveries to optimize the aging process.”