

Nevada Center for Ethics & Health Policy  
University of Nevada, Reno



## SAVE THE DATES:

- **Tue., Oct. 17, '06**  
"Stem Cells Now,"  
Christopher Scott, PhD, Center for Bio-medical Ethics, Stanford University
- **Fri, Oct. 20, '06**  
"Aging & Ethics,"  
Harry Moody, PhD, Director of Academic Affairs, AARP
- **Spring 2007,**  
"Narrative Medicine,"  
Rita Charon, MD, PhD, Columbia University

**Nevada Center for Ethics & Health Policy**  
...promoting shared health care decisions.

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[www.HealthEthics.org](http://www.HealthEthics.org)



## First UNR Bioethics Certificate Graduate!

Chuck recently completed the core courses (*Foundations in Bioethics I & II, Clinical Ethics*) and two electives for a total of 14 graduate credits of our brand new academic program. He works as an oncology nurse at Washoe Medical Center. The Graduate Certificate in Bioethics, the first in Nevada, and fourth in the west, provides an opportunity for graduate students and working professionals to gain knowledge and skills in the



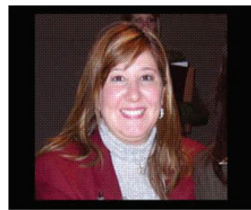
Charles "Chuck" Bonney, RN

specialized area of bioethics. In addition to traditional class meetings, most courses are offered either in web based, evening, weekend, or intensive formats. Certificate students can

combine coursework with other degree programs such as the Master in Public Health but must apply for each program separately. Good work Chuck! Currently, there are 12 students enrolled in the certificate and minor program. For more information about the certificate, please visit: [www.HealthEthics.org](http://www.HealthEthics.org) or send us an email:

[ethics@unr.edu](mailto:ethics@unr.edu)

## Romero honored as a Hispanic Portrait of Success



Elisabet "Lizzie" Romero

The Center's multicultural education coordinator, Lizzie, was recently featured in the Nevada News for being a recipient of the "Hispanic Portrait of Success," sponsored by KLAS-TV in Las Vegas. This year, she was also elected as President of the Clark County Health Dis-

trict's Latino Health Coalition, called **LUCES**. In partnership with the University of Nevada Cooperative Extension (UNCE), NCEHP now shares a couple of offices at UNCE's new campus at 8050 S. Maryland Pkwy., #100, Las Vegas, NV 89123, phone # 702.257.5537.

## Pain Management Keynote Speaker



Alan Wells, PhD

Alan Wells, PhD, NCEHP's Research Coordinator was the keynote speaker for the Pain Management conference held on April 5 at Truckee Meadows Community College (TMCC). Alan is also a faculty member of the American Medical Association's Inst. for Ethics in Chicago, and conducts research on vulnerable patient populations and racism in medicine. The conference

featured the Hospice Foundation of America's national teleconference, presentations from Senator Bernice Mathews, providers, clinicians, TMCC and UNR faculty. There were over 100 local participants including hospice workers from Fallon, Fernley, Truckee, and State-line. A similar conference was also held in Las Vegas, and major cities throughout the U.S.

## The Ethics of Dispensing Pharmaceuticals

By Barbara Thornton, PhD, Founder, NCEHP



Recently, states all over the nation, including Nevada, are considering legislation regarding the law and the ethical obligations of pharmacists. Some are recommending that pharmacists be allowed to refuse dispensing birth control or emergency contraception (i.e., morning-after pills) on the basis of conscientious objection. They argue that:

- No one should be forced to do what they think is morally wrong.
- Women can find another pharmacist, and pharmacists can send women to someone else if they have an ethical problem serving the customer.
- Life begins at conception and birth control interferes with the conception process.
- Providing birth control medication, especially emergency contraception, is only the beginning of a slippery slope leading to the provision of medicine to terminate life, particularly for fetuses, seniors or the disabled.
- The profession of pharmacists should be a “healing only” profession.

Others, however, believe that dispensation of these medications is necessary on the following grounds:

- The primary medical relationship is between doctor and patient. A pharmacist must carry out a doctor's orders just as an EMT must do CPR. In certain professions you have to accept and perform duties when you agree to work in that field.
- Any patient, male or female, has the right to make

personal choices about their medical and pharmacy care as well as obtain the medications their physician has prescribed.

- Chaos would result if each individual serving the public claimed a right to sell only the health care they personally approved.
- Pharmacies dispense Viagra and sell condoms. Isn't that in the same category as reproductive medication?
- In rural and impoverished areas there often is only one pharmacist which makes it impossible to send the patient to someone in the nearby vicinity. This is particularly hard on people with few financial resources or limited transportation.

Some have suggested that objecting pharmacies not stock birth control medication and announce that decision publicly so that patients can make arrangements elsewhere. Federal legislation has also been proposed allowing a pharmacist to refuse to fill a prescription only if someone else is present to take care of the patient's request. Another proposal suggests that the FDA authorize the sale of over-the-counter birth control including emergency contraception which would not require a pharmacist's approval. Numerous states are suggesting legislation that does not allow a pharmacist to refuse medication to any patient.

On May 4, 2006, Nevada's Subcommittee to Review Regulations voted on a rule allowing pharmacists to refuse filling prescriptions only if it was based on their professional judgment — rather than on their personal beliefs.

For more discussions on topic visit [www.HealthEthics.org](http://www.HealthEthics.org).

## Gerontology Certificate receives Program of Merit (POM)

Congratulations to the Gerontology Academic Program (GAP) which obtained the national Program of Merit recognition from the Association of Gerontology for Higher Education. It is the first undergraduate certificate program in the U.S., and the

seventh university in the nation to be recognized as a POM institution. Kudos especially to Dr. Betty Dodson, Lisa Almada, and the gerontology faculty for attaining a high standard of excellence in gerontology education!



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