

## ***About the Center for Vital Longevity at The University of Texas at Dallas (UTD)***

Founded in 2010, the Center for Vital Longevity (CVL) is a UTD research center that houses a large group of scientists studying the how aging affects the brain and mind, and ways to maintain cognitive health for life. Researchers at the CVL are also working on the development of methods for the early detection of age-related neurodegenerative disorders, such as Alzheimer's Disease. Other research conducted at the Center includes study of how the brain supports memory and other fundamental cognitive processes. The Center's facilities in Dallas comprise space for research and administrative staff, along with several research laboratories. Brain imaging studies are conducted at the Advanced Imaging Research Center on the nearby campus of the University of Texas Southwestern Medical Center.

With an increasing number of people facing age-related cognitive decline and impairment, the quest to understand the aging mind and brain has never been more important. Advances in these areas have yet to keep pace with increases in life expectancy that have resulted from dramatic progress in other fields of biomedical science over the past few decades. Researchers in the CVL are actively engaged in:

- Predicting who might be at risk of Alzheimer's Disease long before symptoms appear.
- Developing ways to decrease the prevalence of dementia and to enhance mental vitality in later life.
- Understanding how the brain forms and retrieves memories, and how interventions might affect these processes to improve memory.
- Investigating the effects of physical exercise and mental stimulation on memory and cognition.

### **LEADERSHIP**

A distinguished group of faculty, postdoctoral fellows, graduate students, research assistants, and collaborators form the backbone of the CVL. Their scientific accomplishments regularly appear in high-impact, peer-reviewed scientific journals and their research garners substantial support from the National Institutes of Health and other national funding agencies. Renowned cognitive neuroscientist Dr. Michael D. Rugg is the director of CVL. The founder, Dr. Denise C. Park, is its director of research. Both are fellows of the American Association for the Advancement of Science and the Association for Psychological Science, hold distinguished chairs at the UT Dallas School of Behavioral and Brain Sciences, and have made major contributions to our understanding of memory and cognitive aging.

**Dr. Michael Rugg**, director of the Center, holds a Distinguished Chair in Behavioral and Brain Science. He has been awarded the Henri Hecaen Award for Contributions to Neuropsychology and was elected a Fellow of the Royal Society of Edinburgh. His research on the cognitive and neural processes that support human memory, and how these processes change with age, has been funded for more than 25 years by the UK's Wellcome Trust and Medical Research Council and, since 2005, by the National Institutes of Health. He has published more than 200 journal articles and contributed to numerous books on topics that include memory, brain imaging methods, and the effects of aging, traumatic brain injury and epilepsy on cognition.

**Dr. Denise Park**, founder and the director of research at CVL, holds a Distinguished University Chair and is a University of Texas Regents' Research Scholar. She has been continuously funded by the National Institute on Aging for more than 25 years and has received the American Psychological Association's award for Distinguished Contributions to the Psychology of Aging. She has published more than 200 journal articles and several books on the aging brain.