



Director's Corner *John P. Laitner*

The May issue of the newsletter covers the annual MRRC Research Workshop, and includes articles on the impact of personality on earnings and saving for retirement, Social Security webinars, and a listing of 2010 Key Findings on Disability.

We were delighted to have Staff Director of the Senate Special Committee on Aging Debra Whitman attend the workshop this year. She spoke about issues that she feels are attracting particular current attention in Washington related to Social Security. She also mentioned topics that may not have received their fair share of research effort to date.

About 50 researchers attended overall, with 30 making presentations on their current work. Topics included the effects of the continuing economic slowdown, interdisciplinary research, the life-cycle model, and 9 papers on SSDI. Six of

the speakers were first-time participants.

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The annual workshop provides MRRC researchers with a chance to exchange ideas and hear comments on their work. It is designed to foster discussion, with equal time allocated to presentations and remarks or questions from the floor. As always, the MRRC appreciates the Social Security Administration's support for this event.

2011 MRRC Annual Research Workshop

On May 15-16, 2011, about 50 researchers gathered at the Institute for Social Research in Ann Arbor to attend the Seventh Annual Michigan Retirement Center (MRRC) Research Workshop. MRRC Director John Laitner kicked off the conference on Friday with opening remarks and enthusiastically welcomed everyone. The day-and-a-half long meeting presented a packed agenda with 30 research

presentations and two lunchtime talks.

Speakers addressed the impact of the financial crisis and recession on the elderly, the health and well-being of older Americans, consumption and saving behavior across the life course, Social Security and disability benefits; Social



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Security reform; insights from psychology and behavioral models; pension reform in Chile; and updates on key data resources. (See photos from the workshop on pages 4-5.)

The first session, chaired by John Laitner, dealt with the current recession and housing market. Susann Rohwedder led off with a talk on *The Effects of the Financial Crisis on*

