ESD’s Joe Coughlin keynotes UCLA Conference on Technology and Aging

Joseph F. Coughlin, AgeLab Director, keynoted the UCLA “Technology and Aging Conference: Successful Aging in a High-Tech World” May 9th, at the Skirball Cultural Center in Los Angeles. Sponsored by the UCLA School of Medicine Center on Aging the event explored cutting-edge innovations in the medical, consumer and lifestyle fields that help people live better longer.

Speakers included actor and author Kirk Douglas and Dr. Bruce Dobkin, medical director of the UCLA Neurologic Rehabilitation and Research Unit discussing the effects of stroke and rehabilitation options, Intel’s Eric Dishman on product development as well as industry leaders from Microsoft, Accenture, Qualcomm, Toyota and others.

Organized by Dr. Gary Small, UCLA’s Parlow-Solomon Professor on Aging and Director of the Center on Aging, the event featured leading researchers from UCLA, Duke University, and the Mayo Clinic. Presenters discussed the operating room of the future, mobility and connectivity, and the future of healthcare as they related to demographic transition.

In his keynote, “Technology, Aging and Inventing Longevity 3.0,” Dr. Coughlin described his developing ideas around a concept he has coined “Longevity 3.0.” Building upon the AgeLab’s multi-disciplinary research and the contributions of its home department, MIT’s Engineering Systems Division, Coughlin argued that future advances and innovations in aging are fundamentally a systems challenge. Where most improvements in longevity over the last 300 years can be traced to technology that has improved the delivery of better nutrition, sanitation, and healthcare, future improvements in quality of life, in developed and developing economies, will require far more than technology. According to Coughlin’s Longevity 3.0 thesis, the next societal challenge is far more complex than extending life – it is how to develop and strategically align innovative technology, entirely new social systems, and institutions to support longevity that demands lifelong independence, wellness, mobility, education, productivity and engagement.