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**GEORGE MASON UNIVERSITY PROFESSOR NAMES  
TOP 10 “NANA” TECHNOLOGIES FOR SENIORS**

*List to aid adult children left worried after holiday visits*

FAIRFAX, Va., January 9, 2007 – Responding to adult children who may be shocked at the decline in an older parent’s skills noticed during a holiday visit, Andrew Carle, assistant professor and director of George Mason University’s Program in Assisted Living/Senior Housing, has released a list of the Top 10 “Nana” technologies capable of assisting in daily needs.

Carle is internationally known for having created the “Nana” term to describe technologies “designed, intended or that can otherwise be used to improve quality of life for older adults.” Significant physical and cognitive declines can occur in individuals over the age of 80 even over a period of a few months.

Top products include:

- 1. “MD.2” medication dispenser:** A “bubble gum” style dispenser that drops pills into a slot at programmed times – then provides audio and visual reminders. If pills are not taken within a designated time, the machine automatically telephones a son, daughter or other source to let them know. “Individuals over 65 represent 12 percent of the population, but take one-third of all prescription drugs and more than one-half of over-the-counter medications,” stated Carle. Available from [epill.com](http://epill.com).
- 2. AlertOne® Fall Detection Monitor:** Unlike other wearable pendant devices, which require the user to be conscious to be activated, AlertOne offers a patented new technology that can “recognize” when the wearer has fallen and is non-responsive and automatically call for help. “Falls are the number one cause of death from injury in those over 75,” said Carle. “But the time you need these devices most is when you are unconscious.” Available from [alert-1.com](http://alert-1.com).
- 3. Nintendo “Brain Age™: Train Your Brain in Minutes a Day” and “Big Brain Academy™”:** With a U.S. baby boomer turning 60 every seven seconds, Nintendo is targeting games for an older market. Both Brain Age and Big Brain Academy offer handheld games designed to exercise the area of the brain where memory is stored. “And you can play against your grandchildren,” Carle added. Available at major retailers and for use with the Nintendo DS™.

- 4. Dakim [m]Power™ Cognitive Fitness System:** Developed in conjunction with researchers from UCLA and executives with backgrounds in both Hollywood and Disney, the [m]Power provides scientifically based brain exercises for individuals with more significant cognitive deficits. The self-contained computer utilizes face recognition and touch screen technology to identify users and allow play without a keyboard or mouse. The system also automatically adjusts across five skill levels while in use and tracks results for caregivers and healthcare professionals. “As many as one-third of individuals over 80 suffer from some form of cognitive deficit,” said Carle. “These games are designed to maximize brain health and mental acuity while being extremely entertaining.” Long term care facility based-models available through Dakim.com. A home-based model is expected within the next year.

Carle’s list also includes six “lifestyle” products often sold as convenience items that can make a significant difference in the lives of older adults. These include products to assist with meal preparation, household cleaning, temperature control, entertainment, mail retrieval and communication. Products, along with Carle’s comments, include:

- 5. Black & Decker Lids Off™ Open-It-All™ Jar and Can Opener:** “Makes preparation of something more than frozen foods a reality.” Available at major retailers.
- 6. iRobot Roomba® Vacuuming Robot:** “Focus groups showed older users feel as though they are still able to take care of the house.” Available at major retailers.
- 7. Kelvin™ Talking Thermostat:** “No more getting up and down or needing a magnifying glass.” Available at [actiontalkingproducts.com](http://actiontalkingproducts.com).
- 8. Tek Partner™ Oversized TV Remote:** “Big, lighted buttons, and impossible to lose.” Available at [bigbuttonremotes.com](http://bigbuttonremotes.com).
- 9. Hanna Mail Chime™:** Sends a wireless signal when mail is delivered to a mailbox. “For older adults getting the mail is an important part of staying connected to the world. But it can be risky when making multiple trips while using a walker, or in inclement weather.” Available at [smarhome.com](http://smarhome.com) and other retailers.
- 10. Jitterbug™ Cell Phone by Samsung:** Designed with large buttons, bright screen and a cushioned ear rest. “Cell phones keep getting smaller even as older adults’ vision and manual dexterity decrease. This addresses that.” Available at [gojitterbug.com](http://gojitterbug.com).

As boomers age, Carle says the future of “Nana” technology is right out of science fiction. “We’re looking at a medicine cabinet that will talk to you, shoe inserts that will give a 70-year old the balance of 20-year old, eyeglasses that will change automatically from reading to distance vision and robotic assistants to carry your groceries – all within the next five to 10 years,” Carle said. But he states the most exciting technologies may be in “smart clothes” that will monitor heart rate, blood pressure, oxygen levels – even administer CPR. “Your mother use to tell you to wear your good underwear in case of an emergency – now your underwear may save your life.”

Carle is a recognized expert on senior housing and care and founding director of the Program in Assisted Living/Senior Housing. His work has been featured in *The Washington Post*, *USA Today*, and on National Public Radio and Fox Morning News, among others. The list reflects his opinions and is not based on formal criteria.

### **George Mason University**

George Mason University is an innovative, entrepreneurial institution with national distinction in a range of academic fields. Enrollment now tops 30,500, with students in 173 degree programs at campuses in Arlington, Fairfax and Prince William. George Mason currently offers credit classes in Loudoun County. This expansion is part of George Mason’s mission to further establish itself as a distributed university in which each of its campuses has a distinctive academic focus that plays a critical role in the economy of its region.