

***ViewPoint** features candid conversations with prominent health behavior scholars. The column focuses on the human or interpersonal side of research and addresses such topics as how renowned researchers were initiated into the world of research, why they continue to do it, personal challenges encountered over the years, ingredients necessary to be a success as an investigator, key characteristics and qualities of inspirational mentors, sources of consternation, challenges that lie ahead, hot topics worthy of pursuit, and books and materials that are must reading. The intention is to share the viewpoints and thinking processes of our leading health behavior scholars. We hope that the column will be an inspiration to young and seasoned scholars alike.*

Dr **John P. Elder** is a professor of health promotion and behavioral sciences in the San Diego State Graduate School of Public Health and adjunct professor of pediatrics at University of California-San Diego. He received a BA in psychology from the University of Nebraska, MA and PhD degrees in clinical psychology from West Virginia University, and an MPH from Boston University. Dr Elder has received approximately 23 grants and contracts as principal investigator and has helped procure 20 other grants as CoPI or co-investigator (\$15 million). He currently serves as PI for 2 NIH-funded research projects, including the San Diego component of the Trial of Activity for Adolescent Girls, and obesity prevention in Latino home and community environments. He is also the principal investigator of San Diego's CDC-funded Prevention Research Center for promoting physical activity in the Latino community. Dr Elder is an active writer, with 3 books and 225 articles to his credit. In 2003, he received the coveted American Academy of Health Behavior Research Laureate Medallion. His career is profiled by Dr McDermott in *Inside the Academy*, *Am J Health Behav.* 2004;28(2):189-190.

Conversation took place on August 29, 2004.

Am J Health Behav 2005;29(3):
