



# OLLI-Wilmington:

*40 Years of  
Lifelong Learning Excellence*

*1980 - 2020*



**September 30, 2020**

## OLLI-W: Who We Are

OLLI-W is the Wilmington Campus of the Osher Lifelong Learning Institute started by the University of Delaware 40 years ago. OLLI-W is an adult educational cooperative between the University and lifelong learner members and volunteers.

### Adult Educational Cooperative

<p>University of Delaware</p>		<p><b>Members</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Lifelong Learners</li><li>• Instructors</li><li>• Volunteers</li><li>• Fees &amp; Gifts</li></ul> <p><b>Benefactors</b></p>
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## Introduction

This short history celebrates 40 incredible years of growth and accomplishment between the University of Delaware and the OLLI-W members and volunteers who constitute our vibrant community of lifelong learners. It is also a snapshot of OLLI-W educational programs and activities today.

Over the years, the University of Delaware and OLLI-W partnership has strengthened to become a comprehensive educational and social model serving approximately 2,400 adults at the flagship Arsht Hall in Wilmington, as well as campuses in Dover and Lewes. As a result of this success, OLLI-W has become a blueprint for successful lifelong learning programs throughout the United States.

This OLLI-W history booklet is dedicated to the instructors, members, volunteers and staff who have created an institution that is admired, replicated and recognized for its unique design and purpose. Throughout this publication, members and volunteers are recognized for contributions that have built and sustained OLLI-W over these 40 years with their bountiful gifts of time and talent. Thank you, volunteers!

The Table of Contents of the history booklet is shown to the right. Each page was written by an OLLI-W volunteer with expertise in the subject area. Thank you, authors!

Given the current COVID-19 pandemic, this booklet was produced on a best-effort basis.

Submitted by:

40<sup>th</sup> OLLI-W Anniversary Committee  
Volunteer Development Engagement Committee

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# Welcome:

## Mission & Vision of OLLI-W

Neil Cullen

Welcome to OLLI-Wilmington's 40<sup>th</sup>-anniversary year. Though celebrating under the unusual circumstances created by COVID-19, it is important to mark this milestone with a brief overview of OLLI-W's history, aspirations and program.

As a part of the Division of Professional and Continuing Studies within the Graduate College at the University of Delaware (UD), OLLI-W hosts most of its activities in Arsht Hall on the UD Wilmington campus. The following excerpts from the OLLI-W Bylaws set forth OLLI-W's unique mission and vision as an educational cooperative.

### **Mission**

We "provide opportunities for intellectual development, cultural stimulation, personal growth and social interaction for people 50 years of age or older in an educational cooperative run by [our] members who volunteer their time and talents. The program is centered on classes developed and led by fellow members."

### **Vision**

We offer "a premier educational program composed of a diverse membership of people who come together to be intellectually, culturally and socially stimulated in an educational atmosphere. Through its programs, OLLI-W enhances, enriches and extends the quality of life of its members."

### **Educational Cooperative**

Our "members, in addition to paying membership fees set by Council, should be willing to support its Mission and Vision. Support can be demonstrated in a number of ways, including teaching classes, volunteering for committee work, and providing financial and other support to OLLI."

Over OLLI-W's 40-year history, members have embraced these guiding principles and created one of the largest and most successful OLLI programs in the United States. Today, current members stand as the beneficiaries, so please read and enjoy this brief history and overview of OLLI-W's educational program.

# Founding and Early Days of the Academy

Robert Ehrlich

Extending University of Delaware's cultural opportunities to lifelong learners was an idea presented by UD's President Edward Trabant to Jack Murray, director of continuing education in 1976.

In 1979, the project advanced from idea to plan when two retired New Yorkers, Charles Blake and Bert Spivey, approached the UD administration about further education. Ultimately, Blake became the first curriculum chair and Spivey became the first chair of Council of what is known today as OLLI-W. They were joined by Ed Buxbaum, an exemplar of lifelong learning, who had retired from a career in chemistry, obtained a second doctorate in anthropology and taught at UD. In addition, UD Continuing Education secured the service of former Delaware state senator, Louise Conner.



President Trabant (right) honors steering committee member Charles Blake (left) while Louise Conner looks on.

After the group formed a steering committee, it introduced its plan to the community at meetings and luncheons. Jack Murray and members of the steering committee visited The Institute for Retired Professionals at The New School in New York, which became a model for the Academy of Lifelong Learning. The committee planned four classes, but enthusiastic recruiting added many more.

The Academy opened on February 6, 1980, offering 21 classes for 45 students. By the end of the week, attendance grew to 85, and within a few weeks to

135. In 1995, Pauline Lynch recalled the "first hour of the first day of the first year." Her *Great Decisions* class had just eight members and the largest class had little more than 20.

Early members recalled the historical elegance of Wilcastle, the former clubhouse of the Wilmington Country Club that stood across the driveway from where Arsht Hall is today. Some rooms were too hot, some too cold; restrooms were inadequate; and some walls were so thin that lively discussions and laughter were shared between them.



Wilcastle

Spivey noted that "The academic curriculum was supplemented by receptions that were a treat to 'eye and palate.'" Members attended holiday parties in Wilcastle's mahogany-paneled ballroom and participated in travel opportunities, which ranged from dinners in Philadelphia and visits to the Folger Shakespeare Library in Washington, D.C. to overnight trips.

At the end of the first semester, the steering committee elected an 11-member Council to guide the growing Academy and hired a full-time Program Coordinator, Florence Garrett. The University subsidized a portion of the Academy's operations for the first 3 ½ years and then it was on its own, supporting costs through the growth in membership. And grow it did until, ultimately, Wilcastle was no longer adequate for its needs.

## Arsht Gifts and Arsht Hall

Jane Long & Mare Payne



Roxana and Samuel Arsht,  
Portrait by Delaware Artist, Dawn Majewski

In 1988, Wilcastle was in a state of abysmal disrepair. The space had quickly outgrown its purpose and was unable to accommodate the groups that wished to use it.

Rich Fischer, then associate director of statewide planning at the University of Delaware, said that while he was walking through the Academy of Lifelong Learning one day, “A diminutive woman, Roxana Arsht, came up to me and said, ‘We need more space ... how do we get a building up here?’” Fischer replied, “Well, somebody shows up with the money ... how much are we talking about? You’re not going to get people to listen to you unless you’re talking about a million dollars.” Roxana responded, “Okay” and away she went.

Several days later, Fischer got a call from UD President David Roselle, who stated, “Roxana Arsht came to see me. She said the Academy needs a building, she’s going to get the million dollars ... and how soon can they start?”

The Arsht family became major contributors – not only Roxana and her husband, Sam – but also their daughter, Adrienne. Council formed a fundraising committee with the goal of raising \$3.5 million – the amount the architect felt would be necessary to construct a new building. Thanks to the

generous pledge of the Arsht family, UD authorized construction of Arsht Hall on December 8, 1988, ultimately leading to a groundbreaking in May 1990 and building dedication in October 1991.

In addition to the Arsht’s contribution of \$2 million, members and friends of the Academy donated another \$1 million to the fundraising campaign. The University provided the remaining \$3 million of the \$6 million total building cost.

In fall 1991, the Academy of Lifelong Learning moved from Wilcastle to its proud new home in Arsht Hall. The vibrancy and high quality of the Academy was reflected in its cutting-edge building, a nearly 1,400-member enrollment and a curriculum of 108 varied and diverse courses.

In 2010, the Academy of Lifelong Learning received endowment support from The Bernard Osher Foundation. In recognition of its affiliation with the Foundation, the Academy became the Osher Lifelong Learning Institute at the University of Delaware in Wilmington.



Arsht Hall

## Recognition of Key Events & People

### Snapshot of OLLI-W: Fall 2019 Registration Data

Total Registered Members	2,396	
Female	1,468	61.3%
Male	928	38.7%
Average Age, years	73.7	
Members under 70 years	706	29.5%
Members over 70 years	1,688	70.5%
Number of Courses	303	
Number of Instructors	299	

### Past Academy and OLLI-W Chairs by Year

Chair	Year	Chair	Year
Albert Spivey	1980	D. H. Andriadis	2001
Robert Cavanaugh	1981	Warren Boyer	2002
Edwin Buxbaum	1982	Kenneth Jones	2003
Robert Grimble	1983	Herman Glotzer	2004
Agnes Dignam	1984	Peter Wellington	2005
Arron Brennesholtz	1985	Nancy Norling	2006
Lillian Zolin	1986	Irene Farrance	2007
Robert Grimble	1987	Steven Dombchik	2008
David Morrison	1988	Donald Grimes	2009
Glen Barbaaras	1989	Robert Faatz	2010
Thomas Chase	1990	Nancy Wolfe	2011
Thomas Chase	1991	Leo Kaser	2012
Lucien Maury	1992	Ken Mulholland	2013
Dorothy Roberts	1993	Pam Meitner	2014
Irwin Engleson	1994	Ben Raphael	2015
Irwin Engleson	1995	Thom Remington	2016
Richard Warner	1996	Joan Miller	2017
Ivar Lundgaard	1997	J. Harry Feldman	2018
David Munson	1998	Martha Hays	2019
Gloria Thomas	1999	Neil Cullen	2020
John Schmutz	2000		

### OLLI-W Program Managers Provided by the UD

Florence Garrett	1980	OLLI-W Program Managers and Staff are provided by the University of Delaware. OLLI-W has a great history of a skilled support team overseeing program operation.
Robert Robertson	1992	
Ruth Flexman	1995	
Linda Osoinach	2005	
Basil Mass	2007	
Carol Bernard	2014	
Jennifer Merrill	2018	

### Timeline: Academy and OSHER Lifelong Learning

Year	Events
1976	UD President Art Trabant suggests UD Lifelong Learning
1976	Jack Murray suggests Wilcastle, Goodstay Center
1979	Richard Fischer and Nancy Aldrich submit plan
1979	Trabant approves plan for The Academy of Lifelong Learning
1979	George Kazan organizes Wilcastle open house; 200 attend
1980	Classes start: 85 members; 22 courses
1980	Bert Spivey, first Council chair; 11 Council members
1983	500 members; 50 courses
1984	First overseas trip to Portugal
1987	Art studio opens
1988	Roxanna and Sam Arsht gift for Arsht Hall
1989	OLLI Lewes program opens
1990	Arsht Hall construction begins
1991	Chorus started by Sara Goldstein and others
1991	Arsht Hall is dedicated; \$6 million total cost: \$1M members/friends; \$2M Arsht; \$3M UD
1991	Classes begin at Arsht Hall; 1,400 members and 108 classes
1991	Elizabeth (Betty) Manchester donates endowment gift, more than \$1M
1999	Concert Band starts, Martha Newlin, others
2004	2,100 members; 197 instructors; 244 classes
2005	Summer program starts, Ellen Strober first chairperson
2009	Orchestra started, Peter McCarthy and others
2010	OLLI Dover program opens
2010	The Bernard Osher Foundation gift; name is changed to Osher Lifelong Learning Institute (OLLI) at University of Delaware
2010	\$1M Spivey Endowment
2014	Outreach begins to expand classes into the community
2014	"Renewing the Dream Campaign" \$1.5M goal; led by Pam Meitner and Neil and Betsey Cullen; 92%-member participation; \$1.8M raised
2015	2,302 members; 246 courses
2017	Major renovations to Arsht Hall
2020	2,400 members; shift to virtual learning

# Educational Volunteer Cooperative

Boyd Sorenson

OLLI-W appreciates the many volunteers that have sustained its educational cooperative over the last 40 years.

While the University of Delaware provides the structure and administration for the educational cooperative, and generous benefactors provide the funding for its physical facilities, it is OLLI-W's amazing volunteers who provide the beating heart of this lifelong learning institute.

OLLI-W is unique in its organizational model – members are students as well as instructors and volunteers. They also provide the governance that makes this dynamic institution its own powerful engine of success, while required to only pay a modest fee to cover operating costs. OLLI-W members are wholly engaged and committed to the success of the program. They are grateful for the skilled instructors leading OLLI-W's large selection of classes.

Page 4 features a list of Academy and OLLI-W Chairpersons over the last 40 years. This volunteer service is special. The job is demanding and represents the ultimate in volunteer service to OLLI-W. These folks deserve special appreciation for volunteering and their leadership as well as their dedication to this educational cooperative.

Volunteer engagement is key to OLLI-W's continued growth and success. Active and engaged seniors want to be involved in lifelong learning and socialization. Engagement at OLLI-W means attending classes and, perhaps, joining a committee and taking on a leadership role. Most members find themselves communicating to friends and associates the powerful benefits of membership in this active vibrant community.

Volunteers at OLLI-W are plentiful! In fall 2019, Reg Herzog from the Volunteer Development and Engagement Committee surveyed all OLLI-W committee chairs to quantify the extent of volunteering at OLLI-W. What follows is a summary of the survey, based on OLLI-W volunteer commitments in the fall 2019.

<b>OLLI-W Volunteer Summary, Fall 2019</b>	
Registered OLLI-W Members	2,240
Number of Committees	30
Individual Volunteers	599
Total Volunteers (Multiple People)	970
Total Volunteer Hours	11,374
Average Hours per Volunteer	19
% of Members Who Volunteer	27%

To summarize the data:

- 27% of OLLI-W's membership volunteered in some capacity.
- Volunteer hours totaled 11,374 (this is a low estimate, as some volunteers were missed). The 11,374 hours is equivalent to 5.5 years of full-time, 40 hour/week work.
- 30 committees led by at least 60 leaders guided the programs that engage OLLI-W members each semester.

In 2020, OLLI-W's educational volunteer cooperative has shifted to virtual learning due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The University of Delaware and the statewide OLLI staff have made excellent progress for fall 2020 by:

- Creating an entirely online registration process.
- Implementing the software and systems for a 100% virtual fall semester using the Zoom platform.
- Training instructors to use Zoom tools to lead their classes.
- Training the membership to use Zoom to join educational programs.
- Creating, fostering and supporting programs that promote socialization and interaction between OLLI-W members.

Much appreciation is due to the University of Delaware for carefully and quickly adjusting its policies and procedures during these challenging COVID-19 times. That appreciation extends to OLLI-W members for their flexibility in adapting to this virtual reality, as they find new avenues of lifelong learning. OLLI-W's ability to adjust and maintain this community of lifelong learners is a testament to how well its educational cooperative works.

## Fine Arts

Karen Foster

Art has been a popular subject since the Academy of Lifelong Learning was founded. Many retirees and other seniors want to move beyond their former careers and learn new leisure skills.

Four of the original 24 courses at the Academy of Lifelong Learning were in fine arts. They were taught in a tiny room at Wilcastle and were very popular. By 1985, there were nine art courses, and 31 were on the schedule in spring 2019. Through the years, many art courses have had long waiting lists, as they are so incredibly popular.



Early sculpture class at the Academy of Lifelong Learning

One of the goals of the Arsht Hall construction project was to provide adequate space for fine arts. Today, two purpose-built rooms with north light, sinks and lots of shelves provide a great environment for artwork. A dedicated art closet holds equipment used by instructors. The sculpture studio, located in an outbuilding near Goodstay Gardens, provides additional space. The program has outgrown these spaces, and cooperative arrangements for additional art courses are now held off-site at the Delaware Art Museum, the Center for Creative Arts and the New Castle County Art Studio.

In 2018, in response to the many students who wanted to try an art class but were not sure what medium they would enjoy, OLLI-W introduced an

introductory *Art Sampler* course. This class, which is designed for beginners, allows participants to try drawing, watercolor, acrylics and oil painting. Art supplies are provided for a small fee, so students do not have to invest in expensive materials.

Through the years, artists at OLLI-W have exhibited their work. Early exhibits featured clotheslines strung with artworks on the Arsht Hall patio. Exhibits soon moved inside, with a hanging system featuring movable rods installed in the hallways, lobby, reading room and room 105. Most classes present an exhibit, and artworks cover the building for the last few weeks of each semester. OLLI-W artists have also had exhibits at the Wilmington Art Loop, The Lorelton, the Delaware Art Museum and the old Brew Ha Ha! on Kennett Pike.

OLLI-W art students hold an annual sale, which has expanded over the years to include crafts made by any OLLI-W member as well as work done in classes. In the past few years, the weeklong sale, with 20% of the proceeds going to OLLI-W, has generated close to \$3,000 annually.

Art students have also started an annual art supply yard sale, which allows artists who are downsizing or changing mediums to sell unwanted supplies and equipment while providing quality supplies to new art students.



Eve Stone's Oil Painting Class

# Language

Mary Shenvi

Do you have a passion for the arts? An interest in science and technology? Are you a student of history? Do you enjoy travel, meeting new people, and staying active? Are you looking for great brain exercises? Every area of human endeavor is communicated through some form of language.

For 40 years, OLLI-W members have indulged their interests in arts, science, technology, travel, active living, socializing and exercising their minds by enrolling in foreign language classes. From the six classes offered in 1981, the language program has grown and changed in response to members' interests.

While language enrollment and course offerings in Delaware high schools was declining in the 1990s and foreign language was not even a graduation requirement, the program at OLLI-W flourished. Courses offered over the past four decades have included Yiddish, Latin, Greek, Italian, Spanish, German, Chinese, Portuguese, French and Hebrew language study. More specialized language courses have included *World Cinema, Theater, History and Literature, The Art of Translation, Spanish Through Songs, Japanese Language for Travelers, Japanese Culture*, and a study of the *History of the Indo-European Language* family.

In a typical semester, an average of 30 instructors offer 40 courses that focus on building language proficiency and fostering cultural understanding.

Most Spoken Languages (Millions of People)			
English	1,132	Arabic	274
Mandarin	1,117	Bengali	265
Hindi	615	Portuguese	199
Spanish	534	Russian	258
French	280	Indonesian	170

OLLI-W language courses embody the mission to promote lifelong learning while providing opportunities to connect with others and create community. Language learning is not limited to the classroom. Informal groups get together during lunch or between classes to practice. The range of topics these groups address reflects the

curiosity, sense of humor and involvement of a typical OLLI-W member. During semester breaks, many language students put their learning to the test through travel abroad.

OLLI-W is indebted to its talented and enthusiastic instructors who have acquired their knowledge of foreign languages and teaching skills through extended amounts of time living, working or traveling in other countries. This knowledge must be constantly refreshed, as languages evolve daily and even grammar rules and orthography change. What was current 40 years ago sounds stodgy today.

In 2020, OLLI-W introduced an exciting new addition to its foreign language program: *American Sign Language*. Which languages will interest the next generation of OLLI-W members? With 6,500 major languages worldwide, the choices are vast!

Language Instructor Honor Roll	
James Weiher	German; First OLLI-W instructor to be awarded emeritus status
Jacqueline McNeill	French; 50+ semesters; founding faculty member
Fred Cash	Spanish/Portuguese; 40+ semesters
Harold DiCarli	Started Italian program; 40+ semesters
Sally Stier	Italian; 40+ semesters
Elisabeth Kottenhahn	German; 30+ semesters
Veronika Kruse	German; 30+ semesters
Ginou Berkowitch	Indo-European, French; 30+ semesters
Jane Owen	Ancient Greek; kept this initial offering alive since 2004

## Music Education

Paul Hess



Paul Hess Conducting the OLLI-W Concert Band

The joy of music can often be found echoing in the hallways and classrooms of OLLI-W's Arsht Hall. OLLI-W members have enjoyed a wide range of amazing and varied music courses and performances, from beginning to more advanced offerings, over the years. Of course, these opportunities proudly continue today.

In 1991, Sarah Goldstein founded the *Academy Chorus*, offering the very first music course. This was followed by the *Chamber Choir*, founded by Dana Ulery in 2008, and the *Madrigal Singers*, founded by George Bayley in 2010. Since their inception, all three courses have been led by outstanding music educators. The music studied and performed as a result of these courses reflects a high caliber of demanding selections.

1999 saw the inception of the *Concert Band*. It all began when Barbara MacArthur left a slip of paper in the suggestion box. Shortly after the call went out, 22 eager instrumentalists gathered for their first rehearsal; most having not played their instruments in years. After a rocky start, band members Martha Newlon and Howard Smith provided the energy needed to keep the nascent group going. Leadership has since included Joe Lofland, Carroll Humphrey, Composer Henry Gass and current Conductors Paul and Joyce Hess. The *Concert Band* has grown to include more than 80 musicians, meeting for rehearsals twice a week during normal semesters.

As with all music groups at OLLI-W, the band program grew to include many other instrumental

offerings. They include: *Beginning Band* and *Intermediate Band*, *Jazz Orchestra* and *Ensemble* classes, during which musicians can enhance their skills in small groups.

*Orchestra* began as a small string ensemble in the mid-1990s, eventually evolving to its current form in 2009, led by Peter McCarthy. It now has about 40 members under the guidance of conductor Al Twedde.

In 2006, OLLI-W offered its first guitar class. The prime mover was Barbara Hoffman, along with her husband Keith Hoffman, and Chuck Porter. At last count, there were at least seven classes at OLLI-W that incorporate the guitar, including *Folk Band* and *Rock Band* as well as various levels of guitar instruction. Attendance in these classes averages 30 enthusiastic students per semester.

In addition, there are many other fun and popular music course offerings at OLLI-W, such as *International Folk Dancing*, *Recorders*, *Drum Circle*, *Old Time String* and *Barn Dance* and *Opera*, to name a few.



Academy Concert Band, First Concert – Spring 2000

One of the great joys afforded by *the Performing Arts* program at OLLI-W is the long-standing tradition of performing concerts throughout the year at Arsht Hall. These greatly anticipated events provide fun for the musicians and enjoyment for audiences. As OLLI-W and its members look to the future, these long-standing music traditions will surely continue to foster Music Makers for Life!

## Humanities and Social Sciences

James Moser

Humanities at OLLI-W is soooo broad, encompassing soooo many instructors, soooo many topics and soooo much inspired discussion! Here is summary of humanity and history classes offered in fall 2019:

Humanity & History Class Category, Fall 2019	# Classes
Culture & Travel	8
Genealogy	10
General Studies	11
History	27
Literature	14
Philosophy and Religion	10
Politics	8
Writing & Poetry	6

Some of the notable courses and instructors of recent years are below. (Kudos and apologies to soooo many left out!)

Several OLLI-W courses have garnered continuing member support, semester after semester: Diana Stevens' *Current Events Lectures*; Carl Schnee, Susan Del Pesco and Liane Sorenson's *Current Event Speakers*; Jim Krum, Michael Lantham and Bob Johnson's *Of Minds and Men*; Steve Dombchik's *Great Decisions* (every semester since 2001!), and Debbie Haskell and Judy Tigani's *Hike into History*. In addition, there have been numerous courses on Delaware history and, especially, Hagley.

OLLI-W has offered courses centered on "things" and "events," including *Amazing History of the World's Ships* (Edward Grygo), *History of Aviation and Medieval Science* (Ray Hain), *History of Cathedrals* (Don Grimes), *Scottish Castles* (Margaret Gutteridge), *Dead Sea Scrolls* (Irv Esbitt), *The Black Death* (Rita Meek) and *Holocaust Revisited* (Jack Vinokur).

We've witnessed and participated in outstanding biographical courses: *Lyndon Johnson, Roosevelt, Kennedy and Truman* (John Bullock); *Napoleon and Louis XIV* (Vincent Pro); *Alexander the Great*,

*Darwin, Elizabeth & Mary and Victoria* (Margaret Gutteridge); *Winston Churchill* (Art Goldberg); *Teddy Roosevelt* (Parry Norling); *Dostoevsky and God* (James Moser); *Goethe* (Hardy Hoegger) and *Dante* (Richard Kirk).

Of course, there have been many political offerings: *Rise of the Radical Right* (Art Goldberg); *Knowledge, Culture Wars and Truth and Society* (Bill Stanley); *Conservatives and Liberals* (Peter Galleshaw); *Feminist Studies* (Yvette Rudnitzky); and *Trust, Confronting Prejudice and The Color of Law* (Bruce Morrissey).

One staple of continuing education is the survey course, and we've had many: *Prehistoric Western Europe* (Frank Gay); *British History – From Plantagenets to 20th Century* (Susan Shoemaker); *French History, Vietnam, Cold War, and Power Politics* (John Bullock); *France & European History* (Vincent Pro); *British History and History of London* (Robert Ehrlich); *Foundations of Western Philosophy* (Robert & Marion Ehrlich); *Native American Studies* (Bruce Morrissey); and *Wars of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century* (John Fulgoney).

Another staple are the theme-based courses: *Civil War Studies* (Thomas Reed); *Big History, Atheism & Spirituality, Being Human and Illusions of Reality* (John Taylor); *Joseph Campbell & Myth, Compassion Spirituality, Is God Necessary?, Harari, Evil* (James Moser); *Studies of Richard Rohr* (Christine Loveland); *Landmark Cases of the Supreme Court* (Hays Butler); *Science and Religion* (Richard Kirk); *Meditation & Yoga, The Brain and Spirituality* (Hardy Hoegger); and *Death & Dying* (Gary Soulsman).

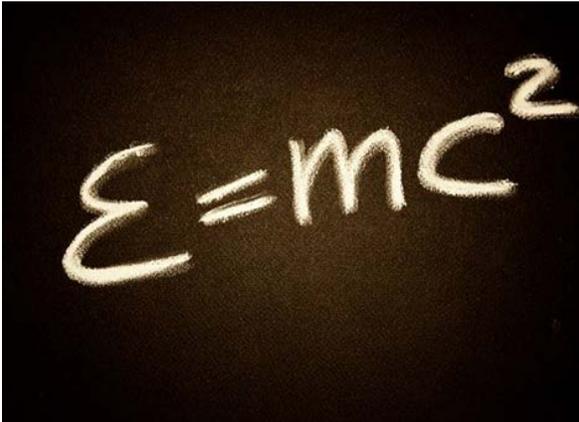
OLLI-W has also hosted a wide range of religion courses: *Buddhism* (Yvette Rudnitzky); *Jesus and God* (Chuck Miller); *How Jesus Became God* (Bob Faatz); *Jewish Studies* (Michael Kramer); *Biblical Studies* (Joseph Theranger); and *Religious Studies* (James Linehan).

Finally, over the decades we've been blessed with many other outstanding instructors, notably Pete Wellington, John Steffney, Gerhard Smit, Ruth Goodman and Rhitt Garrett, to name just a few.

## Science

Saul Reine

Carl Sagan is quoted as saying: "Science is only a Latin word for knowledge." Over the years, OLLI-W members have followed this dictum. Volunteer instructors and student members have continued to pursue scientific knowledge. Many OLLI-W members, who have had careers in the sciences, have contributed their science knowledge as volunteer instructors. Many more OLLI-W members have taken courses in the sciences to expand their knowledge of biology, physics, chemistry, earth sciences, computers, mathematics, nanotechnology, health, medicine, the environment and so on.



The Most Elegant Scientific Expression

My own first OLLI-W science class was a review of Jacob Bronowski's PBS series "The Ascent of Man." A small sampling of science courses presented in the past 10-12 years include:

- *What Darwin Didn't Know*, taught by Harry Dillner
- *Butterflies: Art Meets Science*, taught by Barry Mars
- *Virology 2017*, taught by Steven Toy
- *The Visual System: 20/20 in 2020*, taught by Stephen Silagy
- *Oh Earth!* geology taught by Craig Lewis
- *Birding 101: Introduction to Bird Watching*, taught by Lloyd Maier
- *Memory and Human Life Span*, taught by Saul Reine
- *Meditation for Wellness*, taught by Erhard (Hardy) Hoegger

- *Big History: Big Bang to the Present*, taught by Ed Flexman

Instructors often work as teams when teaching courses at OLLI-W. Their courses include: *Yoga & AMP*, *Tai Chi*, *Genealogy* and *Digital Photography* as well as computer classes covering topics such as word processing, spreadsheet/data and desktop publishing.



Many instructors incorporate video lectures from renowned researchers, scientists, and subject matter experts into their courses. After these expert videos, course instructors offer their insight and open the conversation for class discussion.

As OLLI-W moves into the future, the number of science classes offered will continue to grow. Science subject matter is plentiful, as new fields are frequently discovered and technology continues to improve. The body might get old, but the mind never stops craving more knowledge. Or is it craving more science?

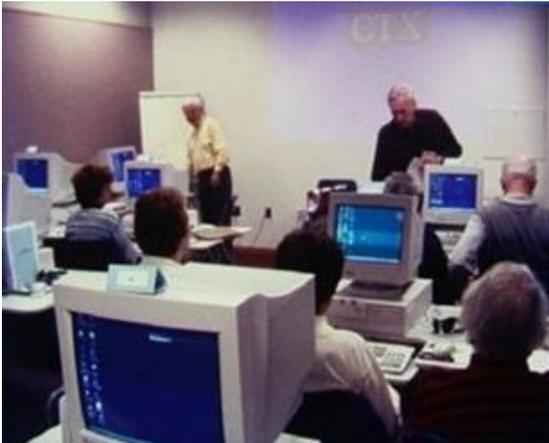
I recall a conversation I had with a UD post-doctoral student who was teaching an OLLI-W course in Astrobiology. He shared his amazement at how different OLLI-W class members are relative to UD undergrads. OLLI-W members listen to the lectures and ask lots of follow-up questions! Yes, this community of lifelong learners is older, but it is wise enough to continue to learn and question.

## Technology and Media

Ken Mulholland & Ruth Flexman

By 2000, the use of personal computers and the internet was prevalent. As a result, OLLI-W anticipated a growing need to provide members with computer courses. These classes began as presentations, which included limited access to the instructor's computer.

A pilot project was initiated so that members could test their interest and instructors could develop appropriate methods for teaching computer skills to seniors. The project was a success, so Council approved a plan to transition one classroom into a computer lab and purchase 12 desktop Microsoft computers, ergonomically appropriate tables and computer programs.



Computer Lab for Microsoft Instruction

Classes filled rapidly and waiting lists grew. The range of classes expanded, and additional members were eager to register. To meet the demand for more space, a storeroom was converted to a computer lab with an additional 12 Microsoft computers. Mac users also wanted classes, so OLLI-W provided 12 Mac laptop computers for use in an additional classroom with tables. After each class, the Mac laptop computers were stored so the room could be used for other classes.

As the level of expertise increased, OLLI-W introduced many other computer courses, including:



Mac Instruction Class

- *Word Processing*
- *Excel and Spreadsheet Development*
- *PowerPoint*
- *Desktop Publishing*
- *Webpage Development*
- *Internet, Video and Downloading*
- *Photo Editing*
- *Genealogy*
- *Cloud Computing*

Now, a new area in the Computers curriculum in the catalog has been added – Mobile Devices. Courses vary, but topics often include smartphones, iPads and Apple Watches.

In an effort to provide more services for members, OLLI-W initiated “Distance Viewing” in 2016. Distance Viewing involves recording classes and putting the recordings online for members to view. Distance Viewing allows members who miss a class to catch up and those who cannot make it to Arsht Hall to view the lectures.

OLLI-W currently uses Distance viewing via the Zoom platform for all its courses. This is a solution designed for all members, as Arsht Hall is currently closed due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Zoom allows instructors to offer courses and members to participate from their own homes. Zoom will be used for all courses in fall 2020 and will likely continue until it is safe to open Arsht Hall.

## Special Events and Social Programs

Joan Miller

Special Events Wednesday (SEW) has been an important part of the OLLI-W lifelong learning program. Every Wednesday from 12:30 to 1:45, members gather in the lunchroom to socialize and enjoy programs presented by prominent guests from the community and around the country. Over the years, special guests have included governors, senators, congressional representatives, mayors, attorney generals and other government officials.

Through the years, members have heard many lively discussions. This is because, during a SEW program, a presenter typically accepts questions from the audience within the last 20 minutes of the program.



Delaware First State Ballet

Perhaps some of the most popular SEW programs have been in the field of entertainment. Ben Raphael, longtime chairman of SEW, has engaged many amazing performers. In 2011, Kevin Zhang invited the winner of the Newark Symphony Orchestra Competition to perform at SEW and this annual tradition continues today. Over the years, OLLI-W members have been treated to Susan Duer pianoforte concerts and programs by the First State Opera, First State Ballet Theatre and David Amado and Allan Jordon with the Delaware Symphony Orchestra. SEW has featured jazz bands, The Ardensingers, Gilbert and Sullivan performances, Celtic music, Swing City Band, a Sinatra vocalist as well as many OLLI-W *Band*, *Orchestra* and *Chorus* presentations.

In the area of movie entertainment, SEW has had Patrick Stoner from WHY and PBS discuss the Hollywood film scene. In addition to politics and entertainment presentations, SEW has welcomed

speakers from other areas. In 2011, the journalist and distinguished author-in-residence at the University of Delaware, Mark Bowden, discussed the writing of his bestseller *Black Hawk Down*. Richard Gillespie, founder and executive director of The International Group for Historic Aircraft Recovery, made two appearances discussing his lifelong effort to find Amelia Earhart.

Scientists, environmentalists, farmers, the Wilmington International Exhibition of Photography, religious leaders, CEOs and historians have also presented programs to OLLI-W members.



Jonathan Duan: Winner of Newark Symphony Orchestra 2016 Youth Concerto Competition

Throughout the year, OLLI-W members gather in the Arsht Hall lobby for goodies and conversation during afternoon socials. Most days, OLLI-W's numerous musical groups entertain members in the lobby with excitingly diverse musical programs. In addition, via the outreach program, OLLI-W musical groups provide entertainment throughout the area at community centers and residential facilities upon request as well as for organizations such as the AARP. Once a year, OLLI-W hosts an annual book sale, during which many OLLI-W volunteers organize and sell thousands of books. OLLI-W community-service programs include mentoring to children, adult literacy tutoring, ecology programs and a free Friday lecture series for the community.

## Diversity and Inclusion

Karen Ingram

OLLI-W is committed to diversity and inclusion, as it is key to successful personal engagement in a learning environment. All OLLI-W members' views are valued on campus.

The campus' diverse population has exponentially increased thanks to a suggestion by a former Council member. This idea, which was approved by Council, enabled the Diversity and Inclusion committee to invite and enroll individuals from under-represented groups at OLLI-W for one semester. As OLLI-W members, they could then enjoy the full benefits of membership – taking classes, enjoying the comradery and attending Special Event Wednesday programs, socials and lobby concerts. After that initial semester, they would have the option to return to OLLI-W as a full-paying member.

Since the beginning of this Certificate of Invitation program, more than 100 people have been invited. Approximately 75 new members accepted the certificates and are now lifelong learners at OLLI-W. Thanks to this program, there are more minority Council members and instructors, insights from diverse members and social engagement. This has created a healthy environment where members are learning from each other. Today OLLI-W's hallways are bustling with multiplicity of race and ethnicity.

In November 2018, OLLI-W was recognized and bestowed a Humanitarian Award by the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People for its Diversity and Inclusion program. In addition, other national Osher Lifelong Learning Institute programs have mirrored the OLLI-W Certificates of Invitation program.

The objective of the Diversity and Inclusion committee is to have at least one person from under-represented groups present in all OLLI-W activity or committee meetings. The committee wants to ensure that when people walk into the doors at Arsht Hall during an Open House, for instance, they may see themselves and feel welcome.

In the past, OLLI-W recognized and celebrated just a few cultures. However, recently the Diversity and Inclusion Committee began its quest to break down societal barriers and rejoice in all cultures at OLLI-W via a two-day Celebration of Cultures.

A celebration of six diverse cultures, which began March 10, 2020, honored the Asian culture with a standing-room-only presentation and displayed paintings depicting various cultures on the walls at Arsht Hall. The UDairy Mini-Market offered a selection of international foods.



Jack Ling illustrating Chinese Painting

Representatives from the Delaware chapter of People to People International attended the event that day. President Dwight D. Eisenhower started this international organization in 1956 after he saw the horrors of the Holocaust and wanted to break the cycle of hate, fear and misunderstanding.

Unfortunately, the next day, March 11, 2020, OLLI-W closed its doors due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The Diversity and Inclusion committee trusts that OLLI-W's Celebration of Cultures will continue when classes resume at Arsht Hall. We still have a lot to learn from each other.



Celebration of Cultures 2020

# Future for Adult Education and Virtual Learning

J. Harry Feldman

Confession: at the time of this writing, the crystal ball is cloudy in the extreme. In-person classes for more than 2,400 members abruptly ended in March 2020 when the COVID-19 pandemic closed Arsht Hall and, eventually, everything else one can imagine that involved gathering people together.

More than 1,600 members took advantage of a partial refund that was offered for the spring semester membership fee. Council, committees and some OLLI-W classes continued their own via the Zoom video conferencing platform. But most classes were wiped out while state and national COVID-19 trends unfolded, and UD weighed a decision about OLLI-W opening for the fall semester.



OLLI-W Summer Zoom Class

OLLI-W Council quickly decided that the 2020 Summer Session — four weeks of Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday morning classes — would be a statewide endeavor held virtually using Zoom technology. Zoom allows class instruction and participation by all brands of PCs, tablets, smartphones as well as POTS (Plain Old Telephone Service). More than 700 members registered for one or more of the 40+ classes offered. Statewide OLLI Staff and members presented a grand crash course to train instructors and students in the use of the technology.

Council and OLLI-W members alike can attest to the success of the venture, as several took six different classes, often ranging from 15 to 75 participants. Yes, there were occasional hitches,

but they were minor and quickly remedied with the help of staff who sat in on the classes. All things considered, the summer education program went better than expected.

In May, Council voted unanimously that regardless of UD's decision regarding its Newark campus, the OLLI-W fall semester would be virtual. Given the average age of OLLI members, and the fact that many members have underlying health issues that put them in the most vulnerable population, a fall virtual offering was the only prudent decision. This gave staff time to notify fall instructors of the decision and to train those who had not participated in the Summer Session classes.

So, what can be said about the future of OLLI-W under these circumstances? Here is what's known: In the 40 years since its founding in 1979, OLLI at UD has grown steadily from a small number of classes and members to one of the nation's largest and most successful organizations of its type. From the beginning, OLLI-W has been a self-supporting educational cooperative that depends on volunteer leadership, volunteer instructors and volunteer member committees, all of which are supported by a dedicated staff of professionals from the University.

## Fall 2020 OLLI Virtual Classes - Statewide

Registered (9/11/20)	1,722
% OLLI-W	65%
Number of Instructors	228
Number of Classes & Activities	216
Classes per Member	~3

OLLI-W will meet again in person after COVID-19 is under control and we will continue to meet virtually until then. In the future, a hybrid combination of both physical and virtual education and interactions could be an optimum outcome. The number of people who are "50 and better" is going to continue to grow. Among those people, there will be many lifelong learners who will take advantage of the opportunity OLLI-W affords for intellectual and social stimuli. It is certain they will find it here at OLLI-W now and in the future.

## Authors and Contributors to the OLLI-W History

	<b>Neil Cullen:</b> Chair of Council and 2014-2019 Fundraising Committee and occasional instructor. Received a Ph.D. in Higher Education from Michigan State and served as a school and university financial administrator. Joined OLLI-W in 2005.		<b>Jennifer Merrill:</b> OLLI Wilmington Manager since 2018. B.S., MBA, Ph.D. with background in coastal research and application of science within national ocean-related policy and climate change education.
	<b>Robert Ehrlich:</b> Career as a research scientist. Joined OLLI-W in 1996. Teaches history and computer classes. Edits the OLLI-W Newsletter.		<b>Joan Miller:</b> Originally from New York City; graduate of Hunter College, Fordham, and NYU. OLLI-W member for 13 years, lecturer, Council four years, OLLI-W Council Chairman 2017-18.
	<b>J. Harry Feldman:</b> Originally from Arkansas, Rockefeller and Fulbright Fellow retired Executive Director of the Greater Wilmington Convention & Visitors Bureau. Joined OLLI-W in 2008, led classes and was Chair of Council in 2018-19.		<b>James Moser:</b> Career educator and minister; OLLI-W instructor in English, religion and philosophy since 2013; served on Curriculum Committee.
	<b>Ruth Flexman:</b> Ph.D., held Lifelong Learning staff positions as Manager, Program Coordinator and Statewide Program Coordinator between 1995 and 2013. Since 2014 served as instructor and committee member.		<b>Ken Mulholland:</b> Involved with lifelong learning member communications. Chair of OLLI-W Council, 2013. Taught computer technologies courses.
	<b>Karen Foster:</b> Retired school administrator; OLLI-W art co-chair since 2013; Council Vice Chair of Membership, 2014-2017; art instructor.		<b>Mare Payne:</b> Delaware native, UD graduate, career in Communications, PR and Marketing. OLLI-W member since 2007, editor of <i>OLLI-W: 40 Years of Lifelong Learning Excellence</i> .
	<b>Paul Hess:</b> UD AS and MM; Music Educator for 55 years. OLLI-W <i>Concert Band</i> Director for 11 years.		<b>Saul Reine:</b> 38-year science and biology educator and administrator. OLLI-W member since 2003, Council Academic Vice Chair, taught a diversity of classes and currently Co-Chairs Curriculum and Computer Coordination Committee.
	<b>Karen M. Ingram:</b> Born in New Jersey; bachelor's degree; retired; OLLI-W member since 2017; taught <i>Bridge</i> ; two terms on Council; Chair of Diversity and Inclusion Committee; Ambassador; member on Nominating and Marketing committees.		<b>Mary Shenvi:</b> B.A., French, University of Delaware; lived in Germany for one year as an exchange student. Studied and worked for two years in Neuchâtel and Zürich, Switzerland. Taught French and Spanish for 30 years. Grateful for my mentor on the Curriculum Committee, Henrietta Imesch.
	<b>Jane Long:</b> Delaware native, UD graduate. Worked for several publications in advertising sales. OLLI-W member since 2006; editor of <i>OLLI-W: 40 Years of Lifelong Learning Excellence</i> .		<b>Boyd Sorenson:</b> From Utah and California, career in technical marketing and consulting; 10 years at OLLI-W, Council, <i>Strategic Planning</i> 2019 and <i>OLLI-Wilmington: 40 Years of Lifelong Learning Excellence</i> program manager.

## OLLI-Wilmington Council

OLLI-W is governed by a Council drawn from membership. Bylaws specify a 15-member Council and terms of three years. Council candidates are recommended by a Nominating Committee and voted on by Council. Currently, there are 26 standing committees. Below are the 2020 Council Members.

### OLLI-W Council Members, 2020

Neil Cullen	Chair
Linda Kellogg	Executive Chair
Michael Walsh	Vice Chair
Ellen Goldstein	Vice Chair
Phil Weinberg	Finance Chair
Les Breedlove	
Marcia Halio	
Karen M. Ingram	
Lewis Martin, Jr.	
Rita Meek	
Bill Rowe	
Gerri Sanchez	
Lucie Shader	
Boyd Sorenson	
Carolyn Stankiewicz	
Ex Officio Members	
Martha Hays	Past President
J. Harry Feldman	Advisor
Jennifer Merrill	OLLI Manager
Bob Ehrlich	Interim Sect.

Two committees guided OLLI-W's 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary activities and the production of the history booklet, *OLLI-Wilmington: 40 Years of Lifelong Learning Excellence*. Committee members are shown below. (The \* signifies committee chair.)

40th Celebration	VDE Committee
J. Harry Feldman*	John Barineau
Martha Hays	Jenna Ford
Paul Hess	Reg Herzog
Jerry Lucas	Leigh Johnstone
Marty Marston	Jane Long
Pam Meitner	Mare Payne
Jen Merrill	Lucie Shader
Sue Sears	Boyd Sorenson*
Andrew Walpole	Pallas Sun
	Jean Youkers

## OLLI-Wilmington Staff

Jennifer Merrill

As an educational cooperative, OLLI Wilmington is reliant on the teamwork of our corps of volunteers and staff of the University of Delaware. From processing registrations, meeting the needs of individual members and navigating facilities and strategic partnerships within the University of Delaware, the staff has provided innumerable supports for the OLLI Wilmington program over the past 40 years. Staff grew from one to a team of eight full-time, and as many as five part-time personnel. With a variety of professional backgrounds and academic training, the common characteristic is the patience and dedication the staff bring to their jobs. From scanning floors for tripping hazards to supporting instructors' needs to deliver high-quality classes, the team has always been ready to assist the members to support the fun and active environment found at OLLI Wilmington.



### Spring 2020 OLLI Wilmington Staff (from left to right)

Tim Ward, Classroom Technology Technician III  
 Andrea Majewski, Program Coordinator  
 Jeanne Kennedy, Office Support  
 Jenna Ford, Administrative Assistant II  
 Dorothy Hofer, Office Support  
 Ellen Saienni, Financial Processor  
 Jennifer Merrill, Manager  
 Colleen Olexa, Office Support  
 Brian Medina, Technology Support Specialist II  
 Joni Bero, Outreach Specialist  
 Pam Vari, Administrative Assistant III  
 Jay Higgin, Audiovisual Technician (*not pictured*)



## Contact Information

### WEBSITE

- <http://www.lli.udel.edu/>

### UD OLLI ONLINE STATEWIDE

- Email: [OLLI-online@udel.edu](mailto:OLLI-online@udel.edu)

### OLLI KENT AND SUSSEX COUNTIES

- Email: [olli-kent-sussex@udel.edu](mailto:olli-kent-sussex@udel.edu)
- 520 Dupont Ave., Lewes, DE 19958 *[All UD OLLI locations are closed at this time.]*

### OLLI WILMINGTON

- Email [LLL-wilm@udel.edu](mailto:LLL-wilm@udel.edu)
- Arsht Hall, 2700 Pennsylvania Ave., Wilmington, DE 19806-1169 *[All UD OLLI locations are closed at this time.]*