



# OSHER NETWORK NEWSLETTER

Produced by the National Resource Center for Osher Institutes



## Greetings from the NRC 2024

April

It's been nearly a year since the US Surgeon General, Dr. Vivek Murthy, announced loneliness as an epidemic. Dr. Murthy didn't stop there. He went on to explain that this epidemic has an ugly list of side effects that include depression, anxiety, heart disease, and dementia. Thankfully, nearly 180,000 people have found their Osher Institute.

Our Institutes directly combat the negative side effects of loneliness. Members find mental stimulation, friendship, social connection, enrichment, engagement, and meaning. I am proud to work for an organization that's doing its part to positively impact one of today's important issues. In a world in which loneliness can make news headlines, people need the Osher Institute Network.

I would venture to guess that it's not just the members who benefit from our programs; OLLI directors and staff benefit as well. This month I will join the Osher NRC as associate director, but for the last four years, I have enjoyed being the director of OLLI at Northwestern University where my experience has been the

antithesis of loneliness. I have been blessed to work with some of the brightest, most interesting, and dedicated people I've ever met. I have learned from the members' wisdom and experience, been inspired by their careers and accomplishments, and been fortified by the ways they live life to the fullest.

So, whether you are a director, staff, or member, I encourage you to learn, be inspired, and be fortified. Find connection, meaning, and engagement at your Institute. Tell loneliness it can't touch you.

One of the highlights in this month's newsletter is the University of Miami who is celebrating 40 years of lifelong learning. In addition to this significant milestone, UM's Dean Rebecca MacMillan Fox took the initiative to write an [opinion piece](#) about how the Osher program is tackling the loneliness epidemic; an op-ed piece that was picked up by the Miami Herald. UM is just one of our 125 Osher Institutes who are saying, "Loneliness? Not in our house!"

With Joy in Learning and Community,



Kari Fagin, Associate Director

**Osher NRC**

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OLLI NEWS

OLLI AT UNIVERSITY OF MIAMI

**Donna Shalala Joins OLLI's 40th Anniversary  
Celebration**



While it might be typical for a former university president to join an Osher Institute's Anniversary celebration, former University of Miami (UM) President Donna Shalala is far from typical. Dr. Shalala's notable career has shifted between academia and government – elected office, as the United States Secretary of Health and Human Service, and as president or chancellor of leading universities – many times over. She is a recipient of the [Presidential Medal of Freedom](#), awarded in 2008, and served Florida in the US Congress from 2019-21. Even today, she continues to serve as the Interim President of the New School in New York City. But OLLI at University of Miami remains personally and professionally special to her as Dr. Shalala's mother, Edna Shalala, was an active member there up to her 103rd birthday.

OLLI at UM was originally formed in 1984 as the Institute for Retired Professionals, becoming an Osher Institute in 2005. In 2008, while president of the University, Donna helped the Institute find a dedicated home just off campus in Lau Founder's Hall, a facility that was formerly the UM Faculty Club.

Speaking at the 40th Anniversary Celebration Breakfast (one of many activities planned for the Anniversary year), Shalala recounted inviting a special guest to a class she was once teaching. It was her former boss, President Bill Clinton. Clinton spoke of how important it is to broaden ourselves throughout life, to "be like sponges, talk to smart people, learn new things...broaden yourself and do that for the rest of your life." Dr. Shalala connects that advice to Osher members today, "That is exactly what OLLI is all about, learning new things and keeping intellectually engaged for the rest of your life."

OLLI executive director Michelle Alvarez said the program's journey to 40 was "no small feat" and acknowledged the many members who have volunteered and kept OLLI thriving through their service.

[Read more about Dr. Shalala's visit.](#)

Submitted by: Michelle Alvarez, Executive Director, [OLLI at University of Miami](#)

## OLLI AT UNIVERSITY OF NORTH CAROLINA ASHEVILLE Announcing the 2024 Creative Retirement Exploration Weekend (CREW)



**[OLLI at UNC Asheville](#)** announces the return of Creative Retirement Exploration Weekend (CREW), now in its 29th year! Discover the challenges and opportunities of choosing where and how to relocate in retirement at CREW. CREW is an educational program that gives participants an understanding of retirement lifestyle choices, including locations, housing options, finances, downsizing, and more. Participants will gain increased confidence in whether, where, and how to relocate, no matter where they are thinking about moving.

For those interested in the Asheville area, an optional Sunday program is offered that includes information sessions and virtual tours.

Cost: \$500 per person for Friday and Saturday sessions only; \$575 per person for Friday and Saturday sessions plus optional Sunday program; cost includes program

administration, materials, and most meals but not lodging or transportation. To learn more and register, [visit the CREW website](#) or contact Hilary Schroeder, life transitions and special programs manager, at [hshroed@unca.edu](mailto:hshroed@unca.edu) or 828.250.3973.

# THE OLLI INSIDER

## INNOVATIVE COURSES AND CONTENT DELIVERY Curriculum Corner



### **Osher Institute at University of Hawai'i at Mānoa Citizen Scientist with NASA GLOBE Observer: Your Passport to Adventure and Discovery!**

**Course Length:** Three Weeks (three sessions)

**Course Instructor:** Cassie Soeffing is a Senior Science Educator at Institute for Global Environmental Strategies (IGES). Ms. Soeffing's expertise includes engaging formal and informal education audiences - including K-12, outdoor education centers, Girl Scouts, 4H, and senior citizens – in authentic NASA science investigations, using GLOBE and NASA data, using inquiry-based learning and employing geospatial technologies.

**Course Delivery:** Online

**Course description:** This course will introduce participants to GLOBE Observer, one of NASA's Earth Science apps and citizen science tools that allow individuals to contribute to global scientific research. Sessions will involve using the GLOBE Observer app to collect data outdoors on clouds, mosquito habitats, land cover, and trees. Engage with NASA scientists, learn how to collect and submit data, explore the importance of a worldwide community of citizen scientists, and learn how to contribute meaningfully to scientific research. Before the first session, download the

app, install it on your smartphone, and register with your email address. We will have a pre-class orientation session to assist in the process.

**Of note:** NASA's [citizen science projects](#) are collaborations between scientists and interested members of the public. Through these collaborations, volunteers (known as citizen scientists) have helped make thousands of important scientific discoveries. More than 410 NASA citizen scientists have been named as co-authors on refereed scientific publications. NASA citizen science projects are open to everyone around the world.

## WOO-HOOS FROM THE 2023 OSHER INSTITUTES NATIONAL CONFERENCE

# OLLI at University of North Carolina Wilmington Offering Adult Literacy Students a Free OLLI Class



What is a Woo-Hoo? A Woo-Hoo is one of those wonderful, amazing, out of the box experiences at an OLLI. All Osher Institutes have the opportunity to submit and showcase their Woo-Hoo for peer Institutes at the Osher National Conferences. The Woo-Hoos are shared during general sessions at the conference, and attendees vote on their favorites. The following is one of the top six winners from the 2023 Osher Institutes National Conference held in San Diego last October.

### **OLLI at University of North Carolina Wilmington Offering Adult Literacy Students a Free OLLI Class**

OLLI at the University of North Carolina Wilmington collaborated with the local literacy council by offering adult literacy students a free OLLI class to enrich their educational experience. Students chose classes aligned with their interests, attended alongside their tutors, and participated fully. This advanced OLLI's efforts to become a more welcoming, inclusive community. OLLI at UNCW was recognized at the Literacy Council's annual, high-profile luncheon for this mutually beneficial endeavor.

## CAREER OPENINGS IN THE OLLI NETWORK

# Job Board

OLLI Program Manager  
[The University of Alabama](#)

Director, Osher Lifelong Learning Institute [Brandeis University](#)

Senior Director of Lifelong Learning and Community Engagement  
[University of North Texas](#)

Director of Program Development and Community Engagement, KU Osher Lifelong Learning Institute [University of Kansas](#)

OLLI Office/Program Manager  
[University of California, Irvine](#)

Director of Adult Education and Lifelong Learning [Casper College](#)

Program Assistant, Osher Lifelong Learning Institute [Rutgers University](#)

Is there a staff opening at your Osher Institute? Please send it to us at [oshernrc@northwestern.edu](mailto:oshernrc@northwestern.edu)

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