Greetings from the NRC

Osher Institutes across the country regularly engage in a variety of outreach activities – both on campus and in their broader communities. The pandemic has taught us that social engagement is critical to our success, both as individuals and as organizations. This month, two Osher Institutes show us how using our OLLIs to convene a variety of people to discuss and learn from one another is always a good thing. When we extend beyond just our OLLI groups, it opens the door for new ideas and collaborations, too.

Forums from California State University San Bernardino – with a successful intergenerational event, and from Southern Oregon University – with a gathering of people exploring long term care, helped members and others in their communities gain important insights and form new friendships. Similarly, through a new marketing video designed to recruit new members, OLLI at University of the Pacific reminds us that the best of marketing tells relatable stories.

Finally, we introduce you to the newest member of the Osher NRC staff, Amanda Rhodes. Amanda has solid experience working with older adults and directing an Osher Lifelong Learning Institute. Join us in welcoming her to the wider Osher Network.

OLLIs are about community engagement. Curiosity and learning are common themes in that work. Building communities and relating to one another on many levels is what keeps us alive and healthy. As the pandemic begins to loosen its grips on our daily
lives, may we celebrate the coming of spring remembering and engaging with our Osher communities more than ever before.

Here’s to a wonderful March,

Steve Thaxton, Executive Director

Osher NRC
National Resource Center for Osher Institutes
Many Osher Institutes find rich rewards in creating intergenerational programming. Last fall, OLLI at California State University San Bernardino (CSUSB) found an innovative way to unite and involve Gen Z students on campus with the seasoned adult learners of the Osher Institute. An "Intergenerational Forum" was held, assembling an engaged group of undergraduates and OLLI members that formed the basis for a student project, a documentary, and a podcast. Throughout the process, deeper understandings of one another, spirited conversations, and new friendships evolved.

“At the forum we had five OLLI students sitting across from five Gen Z students,” said Lacey Kendall, communication studies project advisor at the CSUSB Palm Desert Campus. “The moderator asked questions and both sides took turns responding from their point of view. The questions ranged from ‘What is the hardest thing your generation had to live through?’ to ‘What was the most influential artist of your generation and what did they say that affected your generation?’” The event became part of a special studies internship project for CSUSB undergraduate students. The original idea for the project came from television writer and producer Lou Gorfain, who is also an instructor for the Osher Lifelong Learning Institute.

CSUSB Osher Director, Angela Allen observes, “The personal connections that were created between OLLI members and the students involved are continuing today. Our members and undergraduate students were inspired by this event and are exploring new intergenerational projects that will build on what this forum began.”

To read more about the event see this Desert Sun article or watch the documentary on YouTube.

Submitted by: OLLI at CSU San Bernardino

OLL AT UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHERN OREGON

OLLI Vital Issues Forum: "Plan4Care: Values and Choices"
Older adults and those who provide or manage their care often have no idea how to locate care supports, cannot afford to pay for it, or manage care effectively. The desire for information was evident in the large number of attendees at a just completed three-part series of Zoom webinars produced by the Osher Lifelong Learning Institute at Southern Oregon University (SOU). The free, public OLLI Vital Issues Forums were titled “Plan4Care: Values and Choices.” They provided practical guidance for navigating, planning, and finding resources. It attracted close to 600 registrants.

The series was led by Dr. Heather Young, PhD, RN, a nationally recognized gerontological nurse. Dr. Young is Professor and Founding Dean Emerita of the Betty Irene Moore School of Nursing at UC Davis and a Senior Fellow with AARP focusing on family caregiving policy. Each session included three panelists presenting an in depth look at one aspect of the care planning process: anticipating care needs and considering personal values, developing and communicating an action plan, and identifying resources for implementing a care plan. These sessions were sponsored by OLLI at SOU, Asante, the Rogue Valley Manor, and AARP.

Although attendees were largely southern Oregon residents, the materials have relevance to those living in other regions. OLLI at SOU is now making available the recordings, slides and resource page of the Forums, free of charge.

Based on the depth of interest in this area, OLLI at SOU plans to add related classes to those already included in the Life Planning category of the 80-100 diverse courses offered to its members each quarter.

Submitted by: Margaret Evans, OLLI at Southern Oregon University
In October of 2021 the National Resource Center for Osher Lifelong Learning Institutes (NRC) introduced a new resource to the network, the “Stay Curious Marketing Toolbox.” This toolbox is a collection of marketing tools and promotional materials containing design, audio, and video assets. The NRC produced these materials in conjunction with an outside marketing team, with the idea that Institutes would utilize these assets, make them their own, and ultimately grow their OLLIs.

Many Institutes have used materials from the Toolbox. However, OLLI at University of Pacific stands out for their blend of original content mixed with assets from the Toolbox. They produced a commercial in December of 2021 titled “The Gift of OLLI at Pacific.” It was distributed via their social media accounts and can be seen on the OLLI at Pacific YouTube page. The commercial was created by their Social Media Coordinator, Juliana Jackson, a University of Pacific student. It starts (and ends) with original material, while mixing in video materials from the Marketing Toolbox. The result is a wonderful example of how an OLLI can customize the toolbox assets into their own unique media.
Additionally, a social media marketing “tip” from University of the Pacific: use hashtags. Hashtags, as stated by Hootsuite, are “a word or phrase preceded by the pound symbol. On social media, it serves as an indication (for users and algorithms) that a piece of content relates to a specific topic or belongs to a category. Hashtags help make content discoverable in on-platform searches and, effectively, reach more people.” Across their social media sites (YouTube, Instagram, and Facebook), Juliana tags their materials with the hashtags of #OLLI, #LifelongLearning, #OLLI@Pacific, #CuriosityNeverRetires – increasing their social media presence.

Be it media creation or social media marketing, OLLI at University of the Pacific is demonstrating how a little know-how, good story telling, and ingenuity can go a long way in the promotion of an Osher Institute.

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**NRC UPDATES**

**Amanda Rhodes Joins the Osher NRC**

On March 1, 2022 Amanda Rhodes joined Northwestern University's School of Professional Studies as associate director for the National Resource Center for Osher Lifelong Learning Institutes.

Amanda comes to the NRC with almost 10 years of experience in higher education. Throughout her career in higher education, she has held numerous positions, including most recently as the Director of the OLLI at Washington University in St. Louis. She held several positions at Washington University after completing her MSW in Gerontology from the Brown School, progressively broadening her scope. Importantly, this included working closely with Brown School Dean emerita, and now vice-provost, Dr. Mary McKay. Among her past responsibilities was managing the dean's research agenda, serving as a lead member on the college's strategic plan committee, involvement in development and fundraising, as a graduate student recruiter, and as an instructor of MSW level foundations courses. Amanda's focus through her work centers on the well-being and flourishing of older adults.

Amanda holds a Bachelor of Social Work degree from University of Missouri and a Master of Social Work degree from Washington University in St. Louis.
Amanda’s work with the NRC will focus on collaboration with OLLIs across the network to provide support, design, and execution of special projects to build out capacity at the national level and focus on strategic planning and development for the Osher NRC.

QUICK TIPS FOR HELPING OPERATE AN OSHER INSTITUTE

Quick Tip - Market through Member Experiences

While it is well known that word of mouth is the best form of marketing for Osher Institutes, sharing of members positive experiences with OLLI might be the next best thing. These relatable stories can be shared in local newspapers, like this example from the OLLI at Widener University, but also in social media posts and other avenues to spread the word about the positive impact that Osher Lifelong Learning Institutes have on people’s lives.

CAREER OPENINGS IN THE OLLI NETWORK

Job Board

Executive Director, Osher Lifelong Learning Institute
Berkshire Community College

Osher Director
University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee

Program Coordinator, Osher Lifelong Learning Institute
Arizona State University
Part-Time Trip Coordinator - Osher Lifelong Learning Institute
The Pennsylvania State University

Classroom Support Specialist - Osher Lifelong Learning Institute
University of Delaware

Program Assistant - Osher Lifelong Learning Institute
Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey

Is there a staff opening at your Osher Institute? Please send it to us at oshernrc@northwestern.edu