



June 2019  
Volume 6, Issue 2  
Editor: Nicole Grant

**OLLI on LINE**  
**SPECIAL EDITION**

## THANK YOU FOR 30 YEARS, DR. NATALICIO!



Diana Natalicio was named president of UTEP in 1988. During her long and distinguished career with the University, Dr. Natalicio has also served as vice president for academic affairs, dean of liberal arts, chair of the modern languages department and professor of linguistics. Her sustained commitment to provide all residents of the Paso del Norte region access to outstanding higher education opportunities has helped make UTEP a national success story.

During Dr. Natalicio's tenure as president, UTEP's enrollment has grown from 15,000 to over 25,000 students, who reflect the demographics of the Paso del Norte region from which nearly 90% of them come. More than 80% are Mexican-American, and approximately 5% commute to the campus from Ciudad Juárez, Mexico. Since 1988, UTEP's annual budget has increased from \$65 million to more than \$500 million. UTEP is designated as a Carnegie R1 university, recognized nationally for both the excellence and breadth of its academic and research programs. UTEP's annual research expenditures have grown from \$6 million to nearly \$95 million per year, and doctoral programs from one to 22 during this same period. To accommodate steady growth in enrollment, academic programs and research, the university has recently committed nearly \$400 million in new and renovated facilities expansion in science, engineering, health sciences, and other student quality-of-life related infrastructure.

Dr. Natalicio has served on numerous boards including the Hispanic Scholarship Fund (HSF), Rockefeller Foundation, Trinity Industries, Sandia Corporation, U.S.-Mexico Foundation for Science (FUMEC), American Council on Education, National Action Council for Minorities in Engineering (NACME), Association of Public and Land-grant Universities (APLU), and Internet2. She was appointed by President George H.W. Bush to membership on the Advisory Commission on Educational Excellence for Hispanic Americans and by President Bill Clinton to the National Science Board, where she served two six-year terms, including three two-year terms as NSB vice-chair.

In 2017, Dr. Natalicio was named one of *Fortune* magazine's Top 50 World Leaders. In 2016, she was honored with the Hispanic Heritage Award in Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math, and she was included on the 2016 TIME 100 list of most influential people in the world. In 2015, The Carnegie Corporation of New York honored Dr. Natalicio with its prestigious Academic Leadership Award. In 2011, the President of Mexico presented her the *Orden Mexicana del Aguila Azteca*, the highest recognition bestowed on foreign nationals. She was inducted into the Texas Women's Hall of Fame, honored with the Distinguished Alumnus Award at The University of Texas at Austin, and awarded honorary doctoral degrees by St. Louis University, Northeastern University, Victoria University

(Melbourne, Australia), Georgetown University, Smith College and the Universidad Autónoma de Nuevo Leon (Mexico).

A graduate of St. Louis University, Dr. Natalicio earned a master's degree in Portuguese and a doctorate in linguistics from The University of Texas at Austin.

*President's Biography provided by UTEP*

## **The Strategic Leadership Role of Dr. Diana Natalicio at UTEP**

Dr. Natalicio's 30-year tenure as president of UTEP reflects major achievements. Having spent years coming through the ranks of professor and administrator positions in the College of Liberal Arts, she was aware from the time of her appointment of the special demographics being served by UTEP. So her first goal was to make sure that the population of the university matched that of the area. Having grown up in St. Louis, where there was no public university at the time of her college years, she felt strongly about this demographic need as a mission of public universities.

Dr. Natalicio had remarkable success with the implementation phase of strategic planning, which she credits to her tenacity. This implementation phase includes the attainment and allocation of necessary resources in order that goals be accomplished.

When the university's population proportions reached the goal, she took on the second goal of making UTEP a Tier I research university. Many in the university community and El Paso in general thought this second goal did not fit well with the first. Again, Natalicio's tenacity kept the university moving forward toward giving this unique population further opportunity of new doctoral programs along with the research faculty, buildings, and apparatus that had to be built up. In 2019 the Carnegie Foundation announced its plan to award R1 status to UTEP. So Natalicio's second major goal had been met.

Another attribute exemplified by Dr. Natalicio is her persistent world view, especially apropos of a leader on an international border. Her support for faculty and students traveling for international research and study is well known. Serving 2 five-year terms as a trustee for the Rockefeller Foundation, she had the opportunity of exercising her oversight duties in several African and Asian countries. This experience amplified and strengthened her world view.

### ***Dr. Melanie Treviño***

*Dr. Treviño is an associate professor (retired) from UTEP's College of Business Administration, specializing in strategic international management. She is also a long-time OLLI member.*

## **Recuerdos & Reminiscing**

When I became the OLLI Director back in 2014, one of the first meetings I had was with President Natalicio.

We had a common experience of spending time in Brasil; Dr. Natalicio as a grad student and a few years later I was there as a Peace Corps Volunteer. We spent a good part of the meeting reminiscing about our shared experiences, places we had visited and Brazilian food we had enjoyed! We quickly lapsed into speaking Portuguese!

On every other occasion that we met, we moved right into Portuguese and that was just fine by me! It considerably brightened my whole experience on the UTEP Campus. Dr. Natalicio had this great facility for making one feel welcome and valued!

***Ian Wilson***

## DR. DIANA NATALICIO TALKS TO OLLI, PART I



### OLLI INTERVIEWS DR. NATALICIO

From left: Lynn Provenzano, Dr. Melanie Trevino, Dr. Natalicio, Nicole Grant

#### ABOUT THE INTERVIEW

After Dr. Diana Natalicio announcing she was retiring after thirty years at the helm of UTEP, interviews began to pop up in numerous newspapers—the *Austin American Statesman*, *Dallas Morning News*, *El Paso, Inc.*, *UTEP's Prospector*, etc. News stations ran interviews and UTEP organized lively, creative events such as *Fun with the Bun* and *Thank You for Thirty* (more on these later). OLLI at UTEP was thrilled to learn that she had granted us an interview! After the initial euphoria, reality set in: what to ask her, especially after she had already given so many interesting, informative interviews? Would she be bit weary of all the questions? All fears were dispelled once we sat down with her for an hour-long chat. She is so warm, gracious, funny, well-spoken and interesting—the time flew by as we laughed, reminisced and looked to the future. We recorded the interview (thank heavens the cell phone didn't die on us!), and for the most part, the interview is direct quotes from her. I hope you enjoy reading it as much as I did talking to the wonderful, unique Diana Natalicio.

**Nicole Grant, OLLI on LINE editor**

#### EARLY DAYS

She had heard about programs for mature adults from faculty, friends, professional colleagues and said "I had it in my head that this is something that we should do." In typical can-do fashion by enlisting faculty and community leaders (such as Herbert Schwartz of *The Popular*), she gave the green light to establish the program known as the Center for Lifelong Learning. She commended the passion and teamwork of those early founders. The Osher grant came years later as well as the new name Osher Lifelong Learning Institute, or OLLI. As she was talking about OLLI, she mentioned working with Ian Wilson, former OLLI Executive Director: "I was very fond of Ian; he has a global perspective that I find

refreshing.” When told that Ian was asked to write up some memories of working with her, she quipped “Ah, a tell-all! Well, I used to love for him to visit because I got a chance to speak Portuguese.”

## **PARKING**

Yes, Dr. Natalicio brought up the thorny issue of parking on campus! We were discussing some of the challenges in placing and keeping OLLI on campus: “Well, we’ve had issues with parking and other things and trying to solve all those things while at the same time serve our students well is a challenge.”

There was, at times, a thought to locate OLLI off campus, but she feels programs such as OLLI should remain on campus, and that the whole idea is to create a (university) environment.

## **OLLI, FINE ARTS AND EL PASO PRO MUSICA ON CAMPUS**

“One of the hopes (when CLL/OLLI was established) was that we would engage the participants (OLLI) in our (UTEP) fine arts programs, and while we’ve had an increase, I don’t think it’s where it needs to be. Some of that has to do with the fact that the performances are in the evening and people don’t like to drive at night.”

She’s pleased that El Paso Pro Musica, now housed on campus and collaborating with the UTEP music department, has infused such energy into the department. “Our students can graduate and say they’ve had master classes with the Julliard String Quartet, Itzak Perlman, and that’s made a huge difference in their future careers. The Pro Musica performances present showcases for the fine arts students and offers wonderful exposure for UTEP students.”

## **WILL SHE TEACH A CLASS AT OLLI?**

When asked if she would teach a class at OLLI, she said she would be interested in doing something but promised herself she wouldn’t make any commitments at this point. She stated “I’m going to travel and sort out my life and just breathe.”

“I do think OLLI is an extremely important program, but I don’t want any management responsibilities. That’s why I rented a condo--I don’t want to have to manage anything, including my life, I think! But every now and then, to share some things I’ve been thinking about. “

“I speak a lot outside El Paso, and I sometimes think it’s a shame the sharing takes place elsewhere. But I am trapped in a role here where I’m not as free to speak. But now I will be, and I’ll be dangerous!” She added that she’s jokingly threatened colleagues that she’ll write a tell-all book.

## **TWO BOLD GOALS AND THE IMPORTANCE OF PUBLIC UNIVERSITIES**

When asked if she had achieved her goals, Dr. Natalicio had this to say:

“The big issue in higher education today is what everyone’s calling social mobility, and it’s just that we’re not educating the lower income students. However smart they may be, they just don’t get a chance. And without that college degree you just don’t get that stepping stone to a better life.”

“I am very committed to the idea that there has to be a strong commitment to the public. I didn’t have access to a public university. But the problem is that the public universities strive for prestige, they want to be like the privates. What’s the matter with that? Well, everything! You know, it just doesn’t work, so I’ve been trying to get public universities to change the narrative to rather than fight each other for trying to achieve a U.S. News & World Report ranking, to say how are we going to serve our public mission? We’re here, for a mission! So I am just absolutely driven by that idea because I know the importance of higher education in my own life, I see it in the lives of our students, and for anybody with talent to be denied an opportunity to get an education –well, that hurts all of us, it really does! So, that’s my passion.”

“We had two bold goals: one was to align our student demographics with those of the surrounding region: we should look like El Paso; you assume talent crosses all ethnic, gender, socioeconomic boundaries, you should look like the region from which you draw 90% of your students. But we didn’t look like that. It was about access. And so we have been able to achieve that first goal. And so now that we offer access to those students, the second goal was to offer those students a high quality education as well, and that means offering research and doctoral programs. That was to insure that we just didn’t offer the students an open door on the front end, but we also gave them a quality education on their way to a degree so that when they get out in the market place they can use their diploma to get really good jobs or go on to graduate school. And we achieved that goal this year with the R1 status, which is like the Good Housekeeping Seal of Approval for higher education. It’s a very big deal in higher education to be an R1.”

“People told us we couldn’t do those two things simultaneously. They said ‘You can’t be a research university if you’re going to worry about the poor kids in your city.’ And I said we have to worry about them. Now our model is being used by a lot of universities and some surprising universities are inviting me to come and talk. These are big R1 universities, and they don’t look anything like their population. And this is becoming a big problem for many public universities. One of the reasons for our success is that we understood our ecosystem and our responsibility to our population.”

### **SOME OF HER AMAZING ACCOMPLISHMENTS**

Enrollment: from 14,056 to 25,151

Hispanics enrolled: from 53% to 80%

Budget: from \$65 million to \$500 million

Research expenditures: from \$6 million to \$95 million

Doctoral programs: from 1 to 22

Endowment: from \$20 million to \$241 million

Source: The University of Texas at El Paso

### **TO BE CONTINUED**

Part II of the interview with Dr. Natalicio will be published in the next newsletter. This is the particularly humorous part of the interview, in which she discusses downsizing to a condo, her bucket list, a regret, a fond memory, her love of sports (especially baseball!) and more.

Dear OLLI Members,

Those of you, who have been with OLLI for a great long time, remember Peter Aceves Rivera. Peter was instrumental in building the CLL (Center for Lifelong Learning) program, which is now our valuable OLLI program, for more than 10 years. You may also remember that his health began to decline in his last years as OLLI's director.

Peter transitioned on June 12, 2019. According to his partner, it was a "spirited battle". His body has been donated to the Texas Tech Paul Foster School of Medicine for education and research.

*OLLI Members are invited to attend Peter's memorial service:*

**Date: Sunday, July 21<sup>st</sup>**

**Location: GEO's - 2701 N. Stanton**

**Time: 1PM to 3PM**

*May Peter find comfort and peace in the loving wings of Angels.*

## *In Memory of Peter Rivera*

Reprinted from the El Paso Times:

01/05/1945-06/12/2019 Peter left us on June 12, 2019 after a lengthy illness. He is preceded in death by his parents, Felix and Juana Rivera, brother Xavier Rivera, and sister Angelina Simmons. Peter is survived by his life partner of 46 years, John Parker, siblings Marie Flowers (David), Joaquin Rivera (Roseann), Agustin Rivera, and Manny Rivera, and his beloved niece Felicia Simmons Hartiens (Isaac).

Peter was born in El Paso and raised by his two aunts, Maria and Luz. At age 17, he ventured to California where he spent the next two years in a Trappist monastery.

In 1964, Peter moved to northwest Indiana, thus beginning an illustrious career at Inland Steel. Peter was the first Hispanic executive at Inland Steel and likely its first openly gay executive.

Peter retired at age 50 and, with his partner John, returned to his hometown of El Paso.

Shortly thereafter, he began what became a new passion and career in continuing education at UTEP's Center for Lifelong Learning (presently OLLI). His interest in continuing education evolved into Peter finding himself the Chairman for CLL/OLLI for approximately 10 years. At age 69, he officially retired (yet again!), leaving the Osher Lifelong Learning Institute a legacy of growth and prosperity.

Before falling ill, he enjoyed life to the fullest. He left a profound impression on everyone he touched. During the final days of his spirited battle, he received the utmost excellent care and comfort from Hospice El Paso. A special and heartfelt thank you to Juanita Pantoja and her family at her foster home in Central El Paso, who treated Peter like part of their family.

At Peter's request, his body was donated to the Texas Tech Paul Foster School of Medicine for education and research.

Thank you to all that loved him.

## **PETER RIVERA**

Thinking about Peter Rivera upon hearing of his demise, it hit me that I am one of the few who retains a detailed knowledge of his singular contributions to the Osher Lifelong Learning Institute at the University of Texas at El Paso.

It is not an overstatement to point out that without Peter's efforts, OLLI would not exist today. To be sure, there was the precursor organization known as the Center for Lifelong Learning, but it was Peter who organized, led, and executed the four year process that converted CLL into OLLI with its million dollar endowment and its formal contract, as OLLI, with the University. In that process, enrollments had to be grown to the minimums required for such an endowment, a new structure for the governance of the program had to be formulated and implemented, and the new relationships within the university had to be negotiated and executed. In all of this, Peter, in his capacity of what would become the position of Executive Director had the primary responsibility for all that was done or not done. And he contributed his professional expertise gained as a senior manager in the metals industry complementing his commitment to lifelong learning for a token honorarium, a significant portion of which was returned to the program.

I was there, I saw the work that he did and the positive impact of that work, and I would hope that his memory would be honored by the celebration of those efforts.

***Dr. Larry Johnson, Associate Professor of English, retired***

## **LOOKING TO THE FUTURE.....**

### **SOMETIMES LIFETIME MEMBERSHIPS EXPIRE**

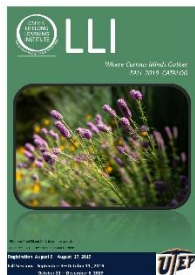
In this special edition of the newsletter, we have honored our retiring university president, Dr. Diana Natalicio. Dr. Natalicio was instrumental in the formation of CLL, (Center for Lifelong Learning). She helped formulate early goals, encouraged university professors to teach for us, as she herself did, and oversaw the merger of CLL with Osher as we became known as OLLI@UTEP. During the past thirty years, UTEP has gone from a small university in the desert southwest to a prestigious research university, and OLLI@UTEP has grown from a totally volunteer operation to a much more streamlined program. Through an agreement between Osher and UTEP, we have enjoyed free garage parking for years, designated classrooms, an executive director, an administrative assistant, computer support, as well as other university assistance. Last year, we lost our free garage parking. Our agreement with Osher had become outdated. The university could no longer provide us with free garage parking with students and faculty paying up to \$550.00 a year. They did provide us with a reduced rate for the garage last year and free remote parking, but it was a blow to our members and to the board. The Sun Bowl Garage fee increased again this year and will increase again next year.

When OLLI@UTEP was established, it was placed under the College of Liberal Arts where it remained for 20 years. This year, it was determined that OLLI@UTEP would be better served under Extended University. The way we function is going to change somewhat. We are faced with additional financial issues. Our instructors need to be able to park in the garage. Many are dashing in to teach and need to dash out as well. OLLI@UTEP has had to pick up the parking fees for around 52 instructors who are not university employees. It is a reality that we need to address. You can see that several changes have occurred since that Osher/UTEP agreement was drafted in 2008-09. The Board and the Executive Director are working through all of these changes. We do realize that benefits we once enjoyed can no

longer be sustained. That is our new reality. When CLL was formed, a \$25.00 lifetime membership fee was established. That carried over to OLLI@UTEP. However, in May, the Board determined that we can no longer maintain a lifetime membership. This fall, membership will be annual. Members will pay \$30.00 for an individual membership, \$50.00 for two people residing at the same address. The annual membership will be for the academic year. For those who have Miner Gold Cards, the Gold Card will be activated once you pay the membership fee, so paying the membership fee in the fall will be beneficial to you whether you are taking classes in the fall or are opting to register for the spring only. Remember that your Miner Gold Card gives you discount prices for the dinner theatre, book store discounts, and free admission to numerous musical programs at UTEP. In addition, a Miner Gold Card will often get you other discounts for some community events. We have never made obtaining a Gold Card mandatory, but we encourage it. There is a one-time additional fee of \$7.50 for the actual card. The membership fee will be assessed for everyone whether you obtain a Gold Card or not. You will be unable to register for classes until you have paid the membership fee.

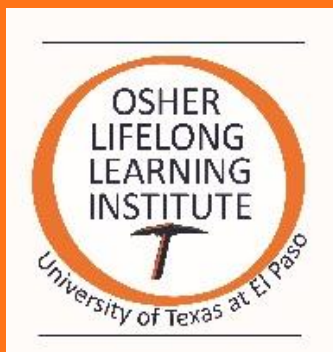
This is the reality that OLLI@UTEP is facing. We are fortunate to be associated with such a great university. OLLI@UTEP is ours, and that means maintaining it and helping it to grow. Remember, it is only your lifetime membership that has expired. As members, we have a lifetime of rich OLLI@UTEP experiences ahead of us.

**Ruth A. Bassett Past Chair**



Watch for the OLLI Fall 2019 Catalog for the exciting new line-up of courses. Coming to you in late July. Online and Walk-in Registration begins August 6<sup>th</sup>.

**Look forward to this Fall Semester!**



**Your 2019 OLLI Advisory Board Members**

- |                                     |                       |
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