

OLLI Newsletter

SPRING-SUMMER 2025 Volume 9, Issue 2

OLLI @ UTEP (915) 747-6280



SUMMER OLLI Coordination Council

Helen Schmid
Chair

Ramona Marslender
Secretary

John Schmid Financial Oversight

Melanie Thomas Technology

Elizabeth FordCommittee Liaison

Karen Fraser Volunteers Ex-officio Advisor

Sonya Villa-Saenz EU Advisor

Lynn Provenzano Executive Director Curriculum Marketing

Read about OLLI's Council Members starting on page 12.



A MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR | Almost Speechless



Hello to you, our Members!

There are simply not enough words to describe the Spring and Summer terms here at our OLLI. I'm almost speechless almost ...with gratitude for the resiliency and support that our members, volunteers, staff, Extended University and Osher National Resource Center have given to bring us to this pivotal point in our sustainability and growth. Let me simply say "Thank you!"

We moved our OLLI office and lounge on December 20, 2024- following our Annual Luncheonand launched directly into 2025 with Spring registrations, a satellite lounge, and split responsibilities to two locations. AND...WE DID IT! While we did not meet our membership goal of 550 this year, we overcame challenging logistics, still welcomed new members, grieved for those that passed before us, forged new partnerships in our communities, and moved forward with engaging programming and activities.

Our fall term is ahead of us and we will grow beyond our own expectations with your continued help, fresh ideas, and our centralized classrooms in our new home at Memorial Gym with our wonderfully organic and welcoming lounge.

Let's create connections, build our membership, grow and get even better together!

Lynn Provenzano



WORDS FROM THE COORDINATION COUNCIL CHAIR | Thanks



As the chair of the OLLI Coordination Council, I thank you all for attending OLLI classes and participating in clubs and tours.

I hope you enjoyed the variety of classes. We always want your feedback on what went well and what did not meet your expectations. We strive to bring you interesting classes, tours and clubs.

I am taking this opportunity to thank Lynn Provenzano for her ongoing efforts, tireless efforts and love for OLLI. I would hope all of us could capture some of her energy and excitement - she inspires me.

We all have a stake in OLLI's success! Please spread the word, bring in new members Thank you for your support. See you soon.

Helen Schmid

EXTENDED UNIVERSITY (EU)

is UTEP's hub for online and other nontraditional academic programs, professional training and education, and community enrichment. EU strives to improve access to UTEP's outstanding educational opportunities for all who seek them out. EU's component units provide educational opportunities and services to support both nontraditional students and educators interested in new modes of

teaching.

A MESSAGE FROM THE DEAN | Interaction and Unlearning



In July, I was in Portland, Oregon, for the Summit for Online Leadership and Administration Conference. The weather was great, the people were friendly, and the wine was amazing! One of the conference's keynote presentations stuck with me in a number of ways, especially with these two significant thoughts that I share with you. Heather E. McGowen is the author of two books: The Empathy Advantage and The Adaptation Advantage. Her fast-paced, entertaining, and thought-provoking presentation was called: "Leading through Uncertainty:

The Curiosity Advantage." Out of the many a-ha moments she shared with the audience, I'll relay two that particularly resonated with who we are at OLLI.

First, the world is experiencing a loneliness epidemic. McGowen cited two 2023 reports from the Surgeon General and the World Health Organization to tell us that 13-50% of adults report loneliness. Loneliness can lead to destructive behaviors. She said, simply, that loneliness=15 cigarettes a day. Both of these reports emphasize the need for and importance of social connection. But beyond that, consider how easy it is to check out at the grocery store, pass someone on the sidewalk, or pick up lunch at a drive through with no engagement, no eye contact, and very few words exchanged. I've probably repeated 80 times an easy- to-remember phrase she shared: "make every transaction an interaction." I suspect many of us at OLLI do this naturally—we wouldn't want to participate in OLLI if we weren't social creatures! Yet, it reminded me to be more deliberate about saying hello, asking how someone's day is going, and, at the very least, flashing a friendly smile.

The second big takeaway is that there is power in unlearning, which, she says, is more difficult than learning. However, adapting to the constant changes in the world around us requires that we be willing to unlearn what we think we already know. She cited Alvin Toffler (from 1970!) who said that "The illiterate of the twenty-first century will not be those who cannot read and write, but those who cannot learn, unlearn, and relearn." The benefits of unlearning are not just adapting more effectively to our environments, but to also move us from a zone of certainty to a zone of curiosity. The zone of curiosity opens us to listening openly to others; wanting to understand their views and experiences; and learning from, with, and about them. Again, I cannot think of a better way to capture the spirit of OLLI where curiosity never gets old!

As we head into another fall semester, I encourage all of us to reflect on the possibility of unlearning some of what we think we most certainly know to find out what we can relearn in its place. And, of course, make every transaction a meaningful interaction.

Dr. Beth Brunk

OLLI Fall 2025: Launching a New Academic Year

August Memberships and Registrations

OLLI is dedicated to providing service to the OLLI community and welcomes new members.

Each One. Reach One.

Invite friends, colleagues, and relatives to join OLLI. Enjoy learning and feeding your curiosity together!

Learning (and unlearning) is timeless!

Spotlight | SUMMER ANTHOLOGY

Instinctive Writing

Facilitated by Mónica E. Gómez, OLLI members discovered new insights through discussions, creative writing, reading aloud and more. Copyright remains with the authors, who have granted permission for use of their writing in the OLLI Newsletter and/or Bulletin. Authors share their Summer 2025 Inspired writings.

Ida Chavira

In the back of my dad's blue and white Scottsdale pick up with my two brothers and Bronson from next door, and Eloy who lived up the street in the house with big windows and a black door. My dad stopped at the corner where the new family moved in. He talked to a dad and three boys ran to the truck and hopped in the back. My dad told us their names, and we drove around our neighborhood to pick up more friends to play baseball at Album Park.

I always brought water from the kitchen faucet in one of my mom's Tupperware containers with ice cubes from the plastic ice tray. The boys drank from the red Coleman thermos my dad filled with the water house.

Bronson was good at batting. My older brother was the best center fielder. My younger brother played second base and was the fastest runner. Eloy always wanted to pitch, but he wasn't very good at it. Everyone else played where my dad, the coach, put them. My dad taught the new kids how to throw a baseball and how to catch. I played third base and never could hide my smile in the middle of my sweaty face when Coach let me bat before the boys and called each pitch in my favor.



Elvia Contreras

Late July of 2023 I took a trip to Padova, Italy to visit my daughter and her family. I flew from Dallas to Rome where my family was waiting for me. We drove from Rome to Padova. It was a 4-hour drive however, a very enjoyable trip stopping at some beautiful villages along the road.

Days later after our arrival in Padova we got on the road and traveled to Falcade Province of Belluno, Italy in the Veneto region where my daughter, husband and my two beautiful granddaughters spend every year the whole month of August.

Falcade lies in a sunny valley surrounded by wonderful Dolomite mountains and the Chivita mountains. Almost every day we would go climbing up the Dolomite mountains which feature some of the most beautiful landscapes anywhere with vertical walls, sheer cliffs and a high density of narrow, deep and long villages. It was a memorable trip not only because of the beauty that surrounded everywhere we went but most importantly my happiness of enjoying all that beauty with my beloved family.

Page | 3

OLLI's "Instinctive Writing" classes are sponsored by the



Mirna Naylor

An Unremarkable Life
The Most interesting person I have met.

She was my grandmother on my father's side of the family.

Even as a child, and although at that point in my life, I did not know the word, let alone the meaning of the expression "unremarkable", there was something within me that kept navigating into the realm of the concept of "unremarkableness."

Her days were spent on a rocking chair positioned in such a way that the sky was her whole and only view. In the early morning hours, the church bells resounded so loudly that they often woke me up. At 5:00 am, every morning, my grandmother was ready to faithfully attend mass.

She, my grandmother, was strict about the teachings of the catechism, God and evil. Her sermons to all of us, her grandchildren, were brutal. Without even pronouncing the words, she constantly reminded us of the importance of duty, honesty, fairness and empathy, particularly when we, the children, fought with words and fists when trying to decide who had been the first to cross an imaginary finish line.

Telling on another child, usually one of our cousins, was not allowed. She would send us both to a nearby corner of the patio, where she kept an eye on us, demanding that we talk. And we could not go back to the playing group unless we were holding hands and smiling, even if it was a fake smile, something that we learned very quickly from the older kids.

Being late was not an option. Whenever she was expecting us to be ready for whatever reason, usually visits to the church during Easter and Christmas, we knew that our faces and hands had to be clean, as well as our dresses and shoes.

That "unremarkable" life left such "REMARKABLE" imprints on my being, that even today my sense of ethics in work, daily life, and friendship is guided by those wise words spoken so many years ago in a world which does not resemble the world we live in today.

Spotlight | SUMMER ANTHOLOGY

More creative writing from the "Instinctive Writing" classes with Mónica E. Gómez

Richard Rheder

A Bloody Mess

The only thing that sucked on my body that night were thirsty North African mosquitos, which feasted fiercely on my blood in the cheap, un-air-conditioned hotel near the market. After drinking their fill, they were so heavy I could easily smash them on the walls of the room. I wonder what the cleaning crew thought the next morning when they saw all the blood spatters.

For me Tangier was a lot like Mexico, which I had visited the previous summer. Busy pedestrian markets. Bright vibrant colors assaulting the eye. Strange smells. Poverty juxtaposed with privilege.

Tangier is said to be "the most colonized place in Africa". My visit was just 8 years after the legendary "international zone" where anyone could buy anything was absorbed back into the kingdom. After decades of occupation and division by French, Spanish, British, and later after WWII American interests — and weakly overseen by the King — it still retained some of its exotic patina of danger. That patina has faded some in the ensuing 61 years! But Tangier still trades on its somewhat notorious past.

As I have since visited some 30 plus countries in the subsequent decades, I believe myself to have been protected variously by youth, innocence, age, poverty, privilege, experience and naivety. I have had my pocket picked in Naples, and the Mexico City Metro (both times losing a camera), survived a minor bus accident in Colombia, caught a legendary case of diarrhea in the Amazon, and accidentally hit a submerged sea lion on the head with a paddle while kayaking off the coast of Patagonia. I have slept on the ground in a Guatemalan refugee encampment in Chiapas, and hitchhiked one rainy night looking for a ride from Huehuetenango to Solola. We gave up and found a hotel in town where the proprietor told us, "No one goes down that road at night, señor!"

The term "slow travel" still appeals greatly to me, though at 81, I'll "settle" for the speed of a jet since time is short, or for the luxury of a cruise ship since I am not so fast or tough as I once was.

Home is pretty good too.



Marie Livington

"We're going to Germany!" The three of us danced around excitedly. Well, first we had to get to New York City. Our Dad was already over there. The three of us were going on a long road trip without Mom. She was in for it driving three boisterous children across the Southern US and up the East Coast. We had to take that route to visit all our relatives along the way. After all we were going to be gone for three years.

We arrived in New York in a very hot and humid August. Our car had to be delivered to the ship that would take it to Germany. We were loaded onto a plane. The year was 1958 and our plane was not a jet, it had propellers. Not that we were expecting a jet, we were just three kids and their Mom who had never flown anywhere before.

Our first stop was Newfoundland to fuel up for the flight across the Atlantic. We had been across the Pacific Ocean on a ship when we were younger. We were excited and nervous about flying over the water at night. The next morning looking out the window, there were clouds all the way to the horizon. My nine-year-old brother looked back at Mom and asked if we're dead yet because with that many clouds we must be in heaven.



Andy Mendoza

I've marveled at the geometry and construction of the aircraft and its engines. And there is a certain level of uneasiness and wonder at the process of being propelled through the air at an incredible velocity.

I watch some of the others, and they seem so calm and sedate; as if the process of flying through the air is anything but a means of getting there.

To me, I took the feelings of flying and somehow merged them with my experience of learning about a new place and the inhabitants. It was a beautiful experience, but mostly the latter part.

And I too after a while became used to the process of flying, but it had only a slight resemblance to what I felt the very first time.



Lynda Sekerci

Magic In Maya Lands

I was eighteen, accompanied by my sister and best friend.

The three of us traveled to Maya lands, so rich with history and charm.

The pyramids were impressive—but then: WOW, BAM!

I gazed at the turquoise blue water and white sand. My soul felt nourished and my heart sang.

Later, snorkeling in crystalline sea water surrounded by fluorescent fish, I felt amazement. It was divine! Like a psychedelic dream come true, Cancun, in colors I never knew.

THE OLLI CONNECTION | OSHER National Resource Center

124

339

131,067

The National Resource Center for Osher Institutes (Osher NRC) is a non-governing center of excellence, hosted by Northwestern University, benefiting older adults, through the national network of 124 Osher Lifelong Learning Institutes (OLLIs).

The Osher NRC's mission is to help Osher Institutes thrive:

- by connecting the 124 Osher Institutes to each other and to resources within higher education, lifelong learning, and purposeful aging;
- by collaborating with and among Osher Institutes and partner organizations that value lifelong learning and purposeful aging;
- by consulting with the independent Osher Institutes, their host colleges, universities, and members regarding effective practices, operations, and solutions;
- by celebrating the successes, camaraderie, and growth in Osher Institutes and in individual members with their shared love of learning.

OLLI at UTEP's reported 2024-2025 Membership: 441

(oops...down from 501 for any number of reasons)

NEW MEMBERSHIP GOAL: 552 Moving into Fall... EACH ONE. REACH ONE.

Back to membership recovery after our mid-year move to Memorial Gym and navigating two campus locations (office-lounges-classrooms). The required membership based on our endowment is 500 with a 5% annual increase.

OLLI at UTEP is honored to be one of 43 OLLIs selected this past year for the NRC's OSHER ONLINE national program.

New opportunities await. 13 seats are set aside for each OLLI. Be sure to register! www.utep.edu/olli.

What piques your curiosity?

Osher Online Courses are 6 weeks long. Classes are 90 minutes on Zoom at various times that complement OLLI schedules.

Osher Online

in collaboration with Northwestern University School of Professional Studies

17 New Osher Online courses for FALL 2025. Course fees apply.

- Creative Conservation
- Impressionism: Color, Light and Leisure
- Inequality and Economic Policy
- Peeking Inside the Black Box
- The Life and Times of Nikola Tesla
- The Magic of Motown

- American History in Six Songs (Approximately)
- In Darwin's Footsteps: A Journey to the Galapagos
- Languages of the World
- Legendary Shipwrecks of the Great Lakes: Tales from the Inland Seas
- Public Health in Action: Addressing Stress, Equity and Solutions
- The Power of One in Steve Spielberg Films
- Alexander Graham Bell and the Telephone, 150 Years Later
- From Bauhaus to Brutalism: Modern and Contemporary Architecture
- The African American Military Experience: From Revolution to Civil Rights
- Graceful Exits: Exploring the Economics, Ethics & Ethos of Death with Dignity
- The Films of John Cassavetes and Gena Rowlands: Innovation in Filmmaking and Performance

THE OLLI CONNECTION | Nonprofit Community Partners

Sponsor for OLLI classes and shared classrooms.



"We are the Rio Grande Cancer Foundation. El Paso's largest cancer support community. Every day, we anticipate and meet the needs of patients and caregivers facing EVERY type of cancer, at EVERY age and at EVERY stage in their journeys. Here, learn about the many ways that we promote education, awareness, early detection, healthy living, quality of life and financial and material support in our area."

Sponsored OLLI classes: Chair Yoga, Instinctive Writing, Healthy Cooking Classes

Classroom host for: Folk Guitar/Folk Music Club, Crochet/Knitting Therapy, Inspired Writing, and Memoirs classes.

Location: 616 N. Virginia, El Paso, TX 79902 (915) 562-7660 www.rgcf.org



Location sponsor for Jackie Cordova's healthy food/cooking classes.



"Desert Spoon Food Hub was established in 2015 with a mission to build a more local and inclusive food system. The organization serves a crucial, but often invisible, part of the local food system acting as a facilitator by our values-based approach to ensure all entities along the supply chain, from farmers and farmworkers to consumers, benefit from our food systems model."

Location: 1714 Yandell, El Paso, TX 79902 (915) 219-8900 www.desertspoonfoodhub.org



El Paso Opera's From Concept to Curtain Around Town

OLLI's summer found members in local coffee shops with the El Paso Opera (EPO) and their resident artists to support the Arts in El Paso. Fall takes EPO and OLLI from Concept to Curtain in local coffee houses (including the OLLI lounge) as they get ready for their production of Puccini's La bohème

Watch for More Involvement with Texas A&M Agriculture



OLLI Members learned about the Basics of Container Gardening this past summer. Angelee "Gigi" Shamaley Ph.D., Family & Community Health Agent of the AgriLife Extension in El Paso County, will keep us apprised of community events and will join us again in Spring 2026 with interesting food topics.

301 Manny Martinez Sr. Dr. 2nd floor | El Paso, TX 79905

ph: 915.273.3502 | angelee.shamaley@ag.tamu.edu

Location: 1714 Yandell, El Paso, TX 79902 (915) 219-8900 www.desertspoonfoodhub.org

Our OLLI **GRATEFULLY** received recognition and monetary gift support from community organizations.

The Rotary Club of El Paso
The Woman's Department of the El Paso Chamber of Commerce
The El Paso Woman's Club

OLLI VOLUNTEERS | Team Support

OLLI Volunteers participated in many events and projects that continue to benefit OLLI members and contribute to the sustainability and growth of OLLI's programming and membership.

To all Volunteers ...

Grazie Mille . Gracias . Merci beaucoup . Thank you

15% of our OLLI membership sign on as volunteers. Volunteers are the impactful internal and external network of our community.

ADMINISTRATION

Office Support Team
Aceware Team
Special Task Team
Registration/Events
Lounge Hosting
Classroom Hosting

COMMITTEES

Membership
Community Advocacy
Volunteer Coordination
Marketing
Curriculum
Technology
Finance

5 OLLI Members have credentials and training in our Aceware system.

10 OLLI members make up the general office support team.

7 OLLI members currently serve on the Coordination Council

10+ OLLI Members serve as class hosts and/or attendance takers.

58+ OLLI Members distribute catalogs, set-up and manage fairs, and more.

5+ OLLI was fortunate to have volunteer UTEP students in 2024-2025.

Committee members are hands that help to create awareness recognition, programming and partnerships for OLLI.

Join a committee or the OLLI Coordination Council.

Share even the slightest of ideas. Be part of an OLLI brain trust to explore or create opportunities.

INSTRUCTORS & GUEST SPEAKERS

We appreciate all of our instructors for the quality they add to our programming. 40% of our OLLI's curriculum is supported by volunteer instructors and guest speakers assisting us to keep our program affordable, diverse and engaging.

EXTENDED UNIVERSITY TEAMS

Special Acknowledgments

It takes more than an OLLI village to create our successes. It's the additional support of our UTEP community that helps us all to thrive. UTEP is our host and Extended University is our umbrella.

EU Leadership Team
EU Business Center
EU Marketing Team
P3 (Professional & Public Programs)
Center for Instructional Design
UTEP Online (formerly UTEP Connect)

Communication/Oversight
EU Accounting ,Tech, Compliance
Catalogs and Promotions
P3: OLLI's non-credit cousin & neighbor
CID: Team support to OLLI
For-credit online education



The OLLI QR Code takes you to the OLLI website.

OLLI MEMBERS | Give Support

OLLI relies on the Osher Endowment, Membership Fees, Registration Fees and the generous donations and sponsorships from the OLLI/UTEP community, the community at large and partnerships.

\$12,813: Individual Donations and Gifts

\$ 3,625: Sponsorships (Rio Grande Cancer Foundation)

\$ 125 : Community Recognition Gift (El Paso Woman's Club)

\$ 1,090 : Paso Del Norte's El Paso Giving Day \$ 5,495: UTEP Raise Your Pick Giving Campaign

\$ 23,023 TOTAL

This academic Year: 2024-2025

\$23,023

142 individual donations

THANK YOU!

Your support has enabled OLLI to maintain quality programing and services to Members.

You have made a significant and positive difference in the lives of all those we touch.

OLLI Students supporting UTEP Students ...recognizing food and housing insecurities.

F@OD PANTRY

Founded in 2014, the UTEP Food Pantry provides support and assistance to UTEP students experiencing food insecurity.



Food and housing Insecurity are concerns in the UTEP student population.

Research shows that ...

- 46% of student respondents ate less than they felt they should because there was not enough money for food.
- 38.2% of student respondents did not eat because they did not have enough money.

FHAR Mission:

To connect foster, homeless and adopted individuals through education and advocacy with resources that will assist holistically with their UTEP experience.



The UTEP FOOD Pantry is located just around the corner from the OLLI Lounge.

COLLECTION AREAS

are in the OLLI lounge for ongoing support.

PLUS

The teachers of the Mu Kappa Chapter of Delta Kappa Gamma collaborate with OLLI and contribute to the UTEP Food Pantry throughout the academic year. "Teachers for Students".

The Mu Kappa chapter also donated 50 Christmas stockings filled with toiletries for registered FHAR students.

www.utep.edu/olli

olli@utep.edu



OLLI at UTEP

FORWARD | OLLI Fall 2025

"Learning Never Gets Old"

Catalog front cover adapted from an oil painting by OLLI Member Manuel Dieguez.

FALL 2025 Tidbits

- Everett Dague and Lenae Rasmussen return with new history courses.
- NEW! Junk Journaling Club (journaling and scrapbooking had a creative baby!)
- El Paso **History Tours**: Becoming a City in the 20th Century
- NEW! Progressive Lecture Series: From Concept to Curtain: The Making of La bohème (4 presentations out and about town)
- Unique Lecture Series to feed your curiosity:
 - Multifarious Perspectives
 - Aspects of the Digital Revolution
 - Mind and Body Insights
- Intergenerational Opportunities with tech support
- ➤ My Life Story returns to bring OLLI members' stories alive.
- > 17 NEW **OSHER ONLINE FALL** courses

Catch the Dates!

August 5 | Fall Registration open online

August 7 | 1PM -4:30PM | Fall Registration Event

Memorial Gym – Coffee – Snacks – Assistance

August 20 | Aging to Perfection Expo

El Paso Convention Center

August 27 | Zoom-in Practice with Fun

Registered students - Online

September 2 | Fall Session One Starts

No classes on Labor Day

October 12-19 | Fall Break

No classes in Fall Break unless special events are announced.

October 16 | El Paso Giving Day | Remember OLLI

Early Giving is October 9-15

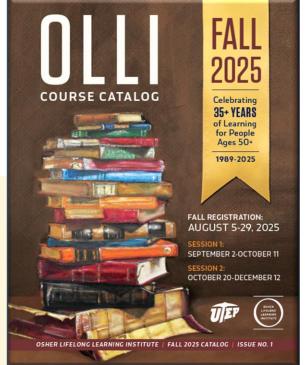
October 20 | Fall Session Two Starts

November 17-28 | Thanksgiving Break

Two-week break.

TBD | The OLLI ANNUAL LUNCHEON

Good people. Good food. Good time.



Spotlight | Intergenerational Bridges: On Campus

"The intergenerational OLLI's intergenerational collaborations have become inspirational for OLLI members, discussions were a great UTEP faculty and students! experience for me. I **ACADEMIC YEAR 2024-2025 Campus Collaborators** think that it's important for my generation to get more connected with the older generation in order to learn from their experiences and help

shape the healthcare system into something that benefits everybody. The meetings really opened my eyes and helped me learn a Carolina lot from our older and

wiser counterparts.

Samuel A. Womack.

"It was a valuable experience to work in the intergenerational technology project and

experience the connection with the students to contribute to what would certainly be

the designers of the

future for us."

Alfredo Arroyo,

OLLI Member

UTEP Student

Valencia. Ph.D. Intergenerational **Brainstorm: Seniors** with Seniors; **Research Projects**



Soyeon Lee, Ph.D. **UX Co-Learning** and Tech Support; Special Projects



Nugent Generations Meet-ups; Special Proiects



James (Jay) Stratton **Special Projects**



Randy a valuable outcome of **Anaya** their work. They will be **Special Projects**



Cherry Duke Coffee Shop Listening Tours with EL Paso Opera



Cecelia Fierro. OTD, OTR CarFit and Aquatherapy



Stephanie **Capshaw** OTD, OTR **Doctoral Advisor** for research with Noelia De La Rosa



Natalia **Villanueva Rosales** Ph.D. Community Advisory Board on Research **Projects**

Research Participation

Many OLLI members participated in UTEP research programs on campus.

- The Effects of Arm and Leg Exercises on Knee Pain Kosaku, Aoyagi PT, PhD: kaoyagi@utep.edu
- 3-D Motion Capture Technology
- The Gait Lab | Katelyn Conroy: kconroy@miners.utep.edu Pasos Seguros: Latin Dance w/ Noelia De La Rosa
- UTEP Hispanic Health Study citr@utep.edu
- UX Intergenerational Surveys w/ Soyean Lee
- Smart Social Connector w/ Natalia Villanueva Rosales' Team
- The Effect of Involuntary Muscle Stimulation of Blood Sugar Control and Metabolic Health Miner Lab Clinical Trials: minerlab@utep.edu

TUTEP HOMECOMING SAVE THE DATE

September 21 - 27, 2025





Celebrating homecoming! Snacks for UTEP students.

Thanks to Noelia de La Rosa who had members moving to music but also became part of the OLLI

Summer volunteer team

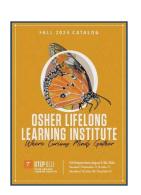
Special

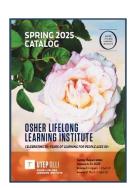
Spotlight | OLLI ON POINT

2024-2025 Snippits

OLLI works with the academic year and 3 distinct terms: Fall, Spring and Summer. This year:

- 263 offers in courses, lectures and tours in-person, online and/or hybrid participation, translated to:
 - 58% in person opportunities 87% online opportunities
- The most popular OLLI offers are tours, introducing OLLI members to historical sites and/or unique local establishments.
- Pickleball was introduced in Fall 2023 and has become the most popular club.
- The Walkercise groups clocked a total of 38 miles in the Spring/Summer Tuesday and Friday one-hour walks on campus.
- OLLI classes and lectures have a 50% attendance rate. The goal is 70% or higher.
- The OLLI curriculum always includes new topics, tours and lectures featured in the OLLI catalogs and covers, at least, 15 categories of diverse interests.
- Our OLLI has participated in 7 UTEP research studies in the 2024-2025 academic year.
- The OLLI office moved from Miners Hall Rooms 208/209 to a larger and renovated space in Memorial Gym Room 102 on December 20, 2024.
- UTEP's P3 (Professional and Public Program), OLLI's non-credit course cousin, shared Miners Hall Room 104 for an OLLI satellite lounge in the Spring and Summer terms.
- The big, well-attended and fun OLLI events for the year were the Annual Holiday Luncheon (December 17, 2024) and the OLLI Summer Social (July 11, 2025).
- OLLI catalogs are mailed to 4700 addresses (mostly in El Paso with some non-local). 800 are distributed locally by OLLI volunteers.
- The front covers of the OLLI catalogs feature artwork by OLLI members: Fall 2024 "Monarch Butterfly" watercolor by Michael Faulkner; Spring 2025 "Blooming Interest" photograph by Richard Dand; and Summer 2025 "Pomegranate" watercolor by Bonnie Deming.
- OLLI volunteers have been the administrative and classroom support staff this year. (Thank you!).
- The OLLI Advisory Board changed their title to the OLLI Coordination Council. Helen Schmid is the new Chair. Karen Fraser is the Ex-officio Advisor.
- This was the third year OLLI participated in the El Paso Giving Day (October 2024) and the Raise Your Pick (April 2025) fundraising campaigns.









Easily share the benefits of OLLI.

OLLI AMBASSADOR CARDS

Carry a few with you and share in conversations. Available in the OLLI Office



THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT EL PASO

OLLI Ambassador Osher Lifelong Learning Institute El Paso, Texas 79968 Extended University

500 W. University Ave. Office: 915.747.6280 olli@utep.edu www.utep.edu/olli

Highlights | OLLI COORDINATION COUNCIL

Curiosity and Learning Never Get Old! OLLI | OSHER LIFELONG LEARNING INSTITUTE

OUR VISION

The Osher Lifelong Learning Institute (OLLI) at the University of Texas at El Paso aspires to be a premier membership organization for adults over the age of fifty (50) in an aging demographic through continuing education and social integration - with an expanded reach - to positively enhance mature adult lives in the El Paso Border Region.

OUR MISSION

The Osher Lifelong Learning Institute (OLLI) provides opportunities under the umbrella of the University of Texas at El Paso to enhance the enjoyment, meaning, and direction of all adults over the age of fifty (50); to stay connected; and to support their good health and wellness in an aging community through diverse course offerings in continuing education, social activities, volunteerism, intergenerational experiences, and any other special services.

Meet the newest members in the current positions of the Coordination Council

HELEN SCHMID, Council Chair, Membership and Community Advocacy Chair



Helen was born and raised in El Paso and worked in the insurance industry for 42 years. She served in several industry associations and met her husband who has been a Prudential representative for over 50 years. They have four sons, one daughter-in-law and three grandsons.

She finds that doing volunteer work keeps her productive and sane. She says, "So very happy I found OLLI."

Spring/Summer Membership Committee: Susie Bissell-Currey, Beth Ford, Luis Castillo, Waynene Spradlin, Mary Harris, Susan Sobin, Devon Wall, Michael Faulkner, and Helen Schmid (chair)

Ad hoc participants: Maggie Jackson, Elizabeth Farrelly, Manuel Dieguez, Sylvia Price, Ben Avalos and Karen Fraser.

RAMONA (MONA) MARSLENDER, Secretary



Mona just retired after 39 years in real estate appraising. She is looking forward to continuing her stamp collecting, scrapbooking, ancestry, and sign language. She enjoys listening to audio books, OLLI pickleball, gardening, and UTEP Volleyball. Mona has been an OLLI member for several years. Her favorite classes at OLLI are the ones about El Paso History and Geology. She and her husband travel often with trips planned to Italy and Hawaii soon.

JOHN SCHMID, Finance Chair



John has been a financial advisor for 53 years with Prudential. He is married to Helen, has four sons and three grandsons. They are ardent supporters of UTEP athletics for 35 years and OLLI for the past seven years. John takes on the role of financial oversight with OLLI's executive director and the OLLI EU advisor.

Highlights | OLLI COORDINATION COUNCIL

MELANIE THOMAS, Technology Chair



An OLLI volunteer and student with OLLI since Spring 2025, Melanie also volunteers with UTEP Athletics and has been a member of UTEP Alumni since returning to El Paso in 1984. She is also on the vestry of All Saints Episcopal Church and is the treasurer for the local Daughters of the American Revolution chapter. She received her Bachelor of Business Administration in Marketing and an MBA in CIS from UTEP's College of Business. Recently retired from UTEP, Melanie worked in information technology in education for about 35 years.

ELIZABETH (BETH) FORD, Committee Liaison



Beth Ford has been an OLLI member since 2021. She is a native El Pasoan yet retired as a senior manager from Johnson and Johnson (California). She retired back to El Paso in 2012. She is a graduate of UTEP in Journalism and a past 5-year volunteer with CASA of El Paso. You'll find her playing pickleball with the OLLI pickleball club and adding fitness and travel into her menu of activities.

Beth will be supporting OLLI committees as part of the brainstorms in projects and activities, especially with the Marketing and Curriculum Committees.

KAREN FRASER, Volunteer Coordination, Ex-officio Advisor



Hi. ALL.

I have been around for a while but would like to share a little about how I managed to be here now. I joined OLLI in 2014 as a retired RN, former clinical analyst for a hospital computerized patient information system and transplant from Illinois via Alabama to be near my daughter and her family. Both my daughter and son-in-law are faculty with UTEP. I became volunteer coordinator in July 2019 and then moved upward through the Advisory Board serving as Presiding Chair January 2023 to January 2025. I am now the Ex-officio Advisor for the newly named Coordination Council and will continue as volunteer coordinator until January 2026.

My other enjoyment with OLLI is hybrid class hosting and helping train others for hosting, as well as helping with social events for members and public events on behalf of OLLI. I truly cherish interacting with many of you in OLLI offerings and look forward to seeing you again this Fall.

As always, I thank our volunteer team, office staff, Coordination Council members and Extended University for their collaboration and ongoing support. And a special hug to my new (and now not so new) friends in El Paso.

Spring/Summer Volunteer Committee Members: Liz Highsmith, Donna Jerman, Irene Medina, Andy Mendoza, Don Smelser and Leanne von Mittenwald (ad hoc), and Karen Fraser (chair)

SONYA VILLA-SAENZ, Extended University Advisor



This past year has been a roller coaster ride that consisted of many changes, possibilities and good outcomes at OLLI. OLLI members have been a great support and Extended University appreciates them. We look forward to another year of great outcomes.

We all work together across Extended University. OLLI is part of this family. Thank you!

You can make a difference!

The OLLI Coordination Council needs council and committee members.

Be a special part of OLLI's successes. Contact Helen Schmid. hrschmid@utep.edu

Highlights | OLLI COORDINATION COUNCIL

LYNN PROVENZANO, Executive Director, Marketing & Curriculum Chairs... and a note on Finance



We kept the Marketing and Curriculum Committees relatively quiet this past Spring and Summer as we adjusted to the newer routines and busyness that came from working in multiple locations. That doesn't mean that brainstorming and networking didn't occur. They did, and our focus was pointed and efficient. That brings us to a new era of committee work as the OLLI Coordination Council ramps up. Marketing and Curriculum will be active with hands-on development of lecture series, networking and volunteerism. UTEP's Alumni Association has stepped up to shout about OLLI. The ongoing missions of Marketing and Curriculum committees will be to seek new opportunities to recruit, engage and enlighten members.

On a financial note... We will end this academic year on a positive note and in the best financial standing that we have had in the last five years. It's been a long and challenging journey to get to this point. Financial support came from individual donations AND from memberships and registrations. We've worked lean with the support of volunteers to keep expenses in check. The outcome places us in a good position for growth and sustainability. We need to stay on solid standing. Let's stay the course and navigate through every opportunity to build our successes.

A big welcome to John Schmid as our OLLI Coordination Council Member for Financial Oversight!

Marketing Committee: Mary Ann Snider, Monica Gomez, Beth Ford and Lynn Provenzano (chair)

Curriculum Committee: Marie Livingston, Ruth Bassett, Leanne von Mittenwald, Linda Shubeck, Bob Warach, and Lynn

Provenzano (chair)

Finance: Lynn Provenzano, John Schmid and Sonya Villa-Saenz

Highlights | ON THE PLATE

Here is a quick look at what is on the office plate for Fall.

The OLLI staff and volunteers have been steadily working to keep OLLI strong, efficient and visible in the community.

Ongoing

Membership Growth: 550 and more Fall Registrations and Attendance Member Inquiries and Services Course and Instructor Communications Class Hosting and Troubleshooting Aceware Trainings and Data Entry Compliance/Administrative Responsibilities Administrative and Security Trainings **Zoom Oversight Ambassador Speaking Engagements** Spring Curriculum/Catalog Development

Special Projects

UTEP Research Project Coordination UTEP Intergenerational Coordination El Paso Giving Day **UTEP Homecoming 2025!** Fall Master Calendar Updates Spring Course/Lecture Proposals Instructor/Guest Speaker Recruitment **OLLI/UTEP Collaborative Projects**

Classrooms in Memorial Gym Our new office/lounge in Memorial Gym affords us the opportunity to hold most classes in the same building.

UPDATES:

Master Calendars of classes and links have updated passcodes. Contact the OLLI office at the main number:

915-747-6280

