

OSHER LIFELONG LEARNING INSTITUTE
AT THE UNIVERSITY OF DENVER

Annual Report

2022-2024

MESSAGE FROM OUR EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



*Jackie Wyant, Executive Director
and Bernard Osher*

OVER THE LAST TWO YEARS, the staff and volunteers of OLLI at DU have worked to re-invigorate our program and to further nurture the learning community of members and facilitators which has enjoyed success for 28 years. Our goal remains to foster a collaborative and communicative community where members and facilitators learn from each other as friends; where every member has the opportunity to both teach and to learn.

As with almost every organization in the world, the Covid pandemic of 2020–2022 necessitated significant changes in almost every aspect of our program—location of our sites, marketing, technology, communications, member engagement, volunteer involvement, finance, and operations. There were silver linings, however: members no longer had to choose from attending courses which were close to their homes; they could enjoy online courses with facilitators and members and create new friends from throughout Colorado and the nation. Facilitators who previously had difficulty attracting enough members for in-person courses for meaningful discussion could welcome members from multiple OLLI at DU sites. Facilitators who had moved could once again teach for OLLI and new facilitators from other states could offer online courses to our members enriching our program of opportunities. And, finally, the behind-the-scenes operations of OLLI could create program-wide processes and procedures to reduce the burden of staff and volunteers at each in-person location and to create consistency throughout.

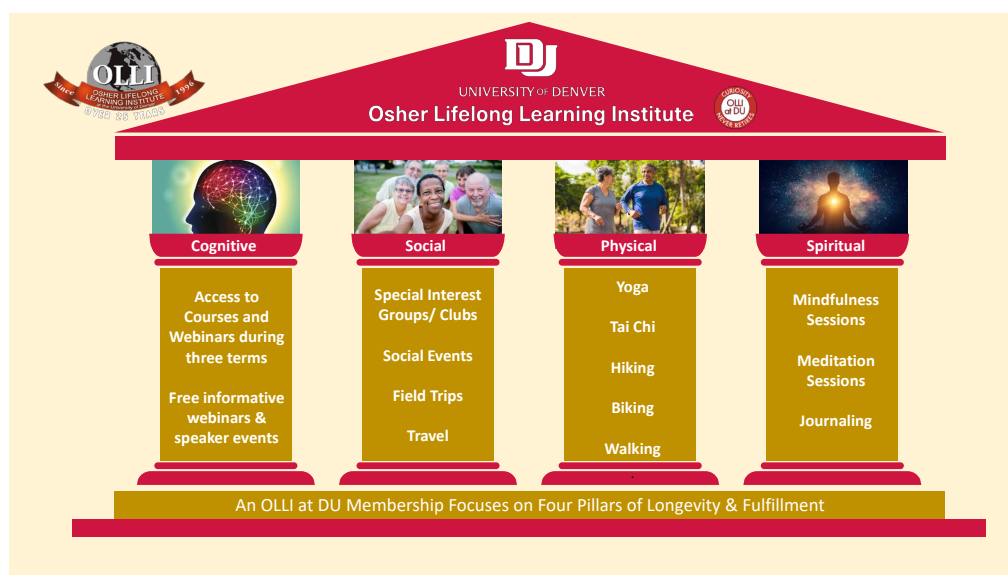
Most OLLIs nationwide experience a 20% attrition year over year. We are happy to report that over the past two years, we have not only absorbed that 20% attrition, we have grown our membership by almost 400 from 1761 to 2167. This growth can be attributed to the efforts of a number of individuals who worked tirelessly on committees -the Strategic Planning Committee (2022–23), Membership Engagement (2022–present); Marketing and Communication (2022–present); Community Outreach (2022–present); Technology (various taskforces); Financial Advisory (2022–present); Core (2023–present) and Site Curriculum Committees; Volunteer Involvement (2022–present) and Fundraiser/Social Committee (2024).

Some difficult decisions were made during the past two years which impacted members who lived in our most northern and eastern areas. Financial constraints due to significantly declining attendance at in-person courses, necessitated the closing of our newest sites — Boulder and East. Members and facilitators were encouraged to join other OLLI sites.

OLLI at DU has emerged from the shadow of the pandemic a stronger and more cohesive community of learners. After much reflection and a thorough review of both the origin of our OLLI (as VIVA in 1996 and then as OLLI at DU in 2006) and through communications with other OLLIs nationwide, we introduced an annual membership in the summer of 2023. The focus of this membership is on building a community of curious individuals who seek to both teach and

learn from each other — it's how we began 28 years ago! OLLI at DU wishes to distinguish itself from other lifelong learning organizations who only offer courses. Through this membership program, we will build a foundation of members who can engage, socialize, have meaningful discussions between classes, participate in fitness activities, and travel together.

OLLI's focus on building a community of learners is based on four pillars of longevity and fulfillment — areas that research on healthy aging have indicated are vital for older adults: Cognitive; Social; Physical and Spiritual. This focus has been instrumental to our success.



Jackie Wyant

We are grateful for your participation in OLLI and have prepared this report to inform you of our work. Throughout this report, you will note the accomplishments of this community of learners over the past two years; I am confident you will be impressed.

OLLI at DU will end the 2023–24 year with a balanced budget. Costs, as you know, have skyrocketed over the past three years and one area which OLLI could benefit from is more volunteer participation. There are a number of staff tasks which could be done by our members. I encourage you to reach out when you see a notice that volunteers are needed — everything from a one-time task to serving on one of the committees noted above will be of great importance to our community.

As the Executive Director, I am proud of the accomplishments of our community and look forward to seeing you in a course, at a social event, or even on a travel opportunity.

All the best,

Jackie Wyant

FROM THE ASSOCIATE DEAN



*Teri Markle, Associate Dean,
University College, DU*

As I reflect on the past year at the Osher Lifelong Learning Institute (OLLI) at the University of Denver (DU), I am filled with a profound sense of gratitude. I witnessed firsthand the dedication of our members, staff, and volunteers, all of whom have demonstrated an extraordinary commitment to collaboration, communication, and community.

Under the leadership of Executive Director, Jackie Wyant, OLLI at DU has built strong connections internally and within the greater community to foster an environment where lifelong learning truly thrives. The sense of community has been a source of inspiration as OLLI at DU continues to rebound from the impacts of the pandemic. OLLI at DU members have celebrated shared successes and supported each other through difficult times, demonstrating the true essence and potential of a lifelong learning community.

This year, OLLI at DU recognized the power and impact of partnerships with the launch of two new initiatives, OLLI on the Move and a collaboration with OLLI at CSU. These initiatives have made a difference in the lives of members and the larger community, providing new opportunities for personal growth, social connection, and intellectual engagement.

Looking ahead to the coming year, I am confident that OLLI at DU will continue to build on the solid foundation of collaboration, communication, community, and connection. OLLI at DU is committed to embracing new opportunities, presenting programs that inspire and delight, navigating challenges with resilience, and continuing to be a vibrant space for lifelong learning.

Teri Markle
Associate Dean, University College, DU



ACCOMPLISHMENTS 2022–2024

Technology

- Selected and designed a new learning management system (Campus CE – for registration, website, and data reports)
- Redesigned an existing staff position to create the role of Operations Coordinator responsible for the new registration and reporting system.
- Introduced the use of the Microsoft TEAMS app to share information among all OLLI staff and the Finance Advisory Team
- Developed and launched a new OLLI at DU website tied to the new learning management system (olli.du.edu)
- Redesigned an existing staff position to create the role of Technology Coordinator who is responsible for design and maintenance of the new website, our use of Zoom for online classes, and the training of OLLI members and instructors in the use of Zoom.
- Created a taskforce to investigate options for hybrid course delivery & hearing assistance system; we will be conducting audits of each of our locations during the summer of 2024 with purchase of equipment for hybrid and hearing assistance to follow.

Communication

- Launched *Everything OLLI*- a weekly informational newsletter.
- Designed new website to provide all programmatic information for the members.
- Initiated a Monday Morning Memo for OLLI staff to keep them updated about meetings, program data, social events, free member webinars.

Marketing & Development

- Moved the work of a previous Marketing & Communications consultant to a new staff position (Marketing and Communications Director).
- Formed a standing Marketing committee comprised of OLLI volunteers and led by the Marketing Director.
- Conducted weekly Marketing Committee meetings and monthly meetings with DU University College Marketing Team.
- Launched an OLLI at DU Facebook page and used analytics to judge our marketing efforts.
- Hired a Marketing Intern from the Daniels School of Business

Community Outreach

- Launched the *OLLI on the Move* initiative to bring an awareness of OLLI at DU to the larger community.
- Offered select programming in all six Douglas County public libraries beginning with January of 2023
- Collaborated with senior living communities and organizations throughout Metro Denver (Overture, Balfour, Heritage Todd Creek, Cherry Hills III, Broomfield Community Center) to bring programming to their clients and to raise awareness of OLLI.
- Repurposed a staff position into a Community Outreach Director position responsible for the OLLI on the Move program and other community involvement activities.
- Formed an OLLI on the Move Committee and a team of OLLI on the Move facilitators.
- Spoke at county-level Councils on Aging, senior resource centers and organizations who provide senior services.
- Participated in numerous Senior Living Fairs and Expos with informational tables manned by volunteers and staff.



Ron Knox,
Highlands Ranch Library

Financial

- Formed a Financial Advisory Team to provide input and assistance with reviewing OLLI revenue and expenses and to assist in the development of the OLLI at DU budget and pricing plans.
- Initiated a membership fee for OLLI at DU and provided enhanced member benefits in order to strengthen the culture of belonging to an organization with lifelong learning opportunities both in the classroom and in the community.
- Moved from an all-inclusive program (membership and unlimited course registrations for one price) to a new pricing plan of separate membership fee and course registration fee.
- Worked toward diversification of revenue streams (memberships, course registrations, sponsorships, donations, travel commissions, reciprocal memberships).
- Generated \$35,000 in revenue from commissions for OLLI travel opportunities over two years.
- Worked collaboratively with the DU Advancement office to launch a Technology Fundraising campaign in Winter 2024 with \$21,000 in raised funds to be used by OLLI sites to improve AV, hybrid, and hearing assistance capabilities.
- Strengthened the relationship with DU Advancement and launched weekly reporting of donations.
- Projected to end FY24 with a balanced budget of revenue and expenses.

Member Experience

- Formed a standing Membership Engagement Committee which selects monthly social events for our members.
- Re-introduced the OLLI Travel program with trips to Nashville (Music), Georgia & Alabama (Civil Rights tour), New York City (Theatre), and Japan. Offered courses tied to these travel opportunities.
- Introduced Shared Interest Groups and launched programs: photography, walking, hiking, snow shoeing, birding).
- Offered 41 free informational webinars for our members during 2023–24
- Created a member background and experience database for opportunities in volunteering.
- Added the responsibilities of volunteer management to an existing staff position (Volunteer Coordinator)



Behind the Scenes Tour at DCPA

Program Design

- During 2022–23, launched a Strategic Planning Process focused on five areas: Membership, Marketing, Curriculum & Facilitator Development, Technology, and Finance.
- Designed the lifelong learning opportunities for OLLI at DU members around four pillars of longevity and fulfillment: cognitive, physical, social, and spiritual.
- Added the responsibilities of Curriculum Manager to an existing staff position — this manager leads a Core Curriculum Committee of volunteers from each site.
- Formed a Core Curriculum Committee to provide guidance to all OLLI sites with the development and evaluation of courses, webinars, and other learning experiences.
- Core Curriculum Committee accomplishments: common process for course proposals among all OLLI at DU sites; common course proposal form, common evaluation survey.
- In Fall of 2023, designed a new, interactive “flipbook” catalog.
- Launched a First Friday Facilitator Forum — a meeting to discuss facilitator development and support.
- Revision of an outdated Curriculum Handbook (previous edition was 2011) -in progress.
- Designed report templates from our new Learning Management System to provide data for future program design to site staff and committees.



Black History Museum Visit



OLLI Fit - Tai Chi in Observatory Park

Program Implementation

- Created an OLLI at DU Fit Program with daily online fitness classes (tai chi, yoga, qigong, meditation, and mindfulness) based on the four pillars of longevity and fulfillment.
- Launched OLLI Fit in the Park — summer of 2023 and spring/summer 2024 bringing tai chi and yoga outside in Observatory Park for intergenerational physical activities.
- Collaborated with the DU Wellness Program, Knoebel Institute for Healthy Aging, DU Retirees, and DU Enrichment Program to host events emphasizing fitness.
- In Summer 2023, launched *Summer Shorts* — a weekly webinar offered free to our annual members throughout the summer months.
- Used volunteer support to create an inventory of resources available in the OLLI library to facilitators to design courses.
- Re-introduced the opportunity to use the DU library for members and facilitators.



*OLLI Fit in Japan -
Meditation Session*

Collaboration with other organizations

- Creation of a Reciprocal Membership with OLLI at CSU
- Collaborated with CSU to use the facilities at the new CSU Spur campus for courses and meetings.
- Shared and promoted speakers with other OLLIs via our Basecamp discussion board (presentations are offered free to our members via our Everything OLLI newsletter)
- Participated in a monthly forum for other Executive Directors of OLLIs nationwide.
- Created an opportunity for new and current members to take courses at the Broomfield Community Center for FY25 through a collaboration with the Broomfield Senior Services

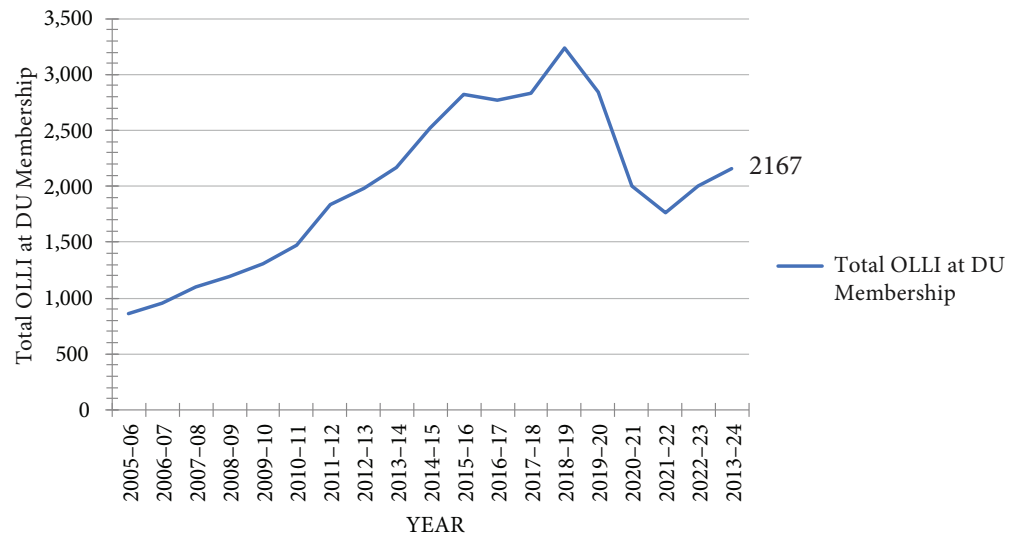
Highlights of OLLI at DU work

- Increased membership to 2160 members (an increase of 399 members in two years)
- Provided 41 free webinars for OLLI members during 2023–24
- Provided 17 free daily online fitness classes for OLLI members
- Designed and launched new website which is integrated with our learning management system (registration and data)
- Formed new OLLI-wide standing committees: membership experience, marketing and communications, curriculum and facilitation, financial advisory, volunteer involvement
- Created taskforces for: strategic planning, addressing the west/northwest region; technology, fundraising
- Realigned of staff to their strengths and program needs and recruited a DU graduate student to the marketing team and an undergraduate Work Study student to the office support team
- Increased the use of DU buildings to reduce rental costs for churches and to provide a presence of OLLI on the DU campus
- Planned first OLLI fundraising/social event: *Back to the Future: Beatles, Brews and Bellbottoms* to highlight our first 28 years and our vision for the future for OLLI; event raised over \$29,000.

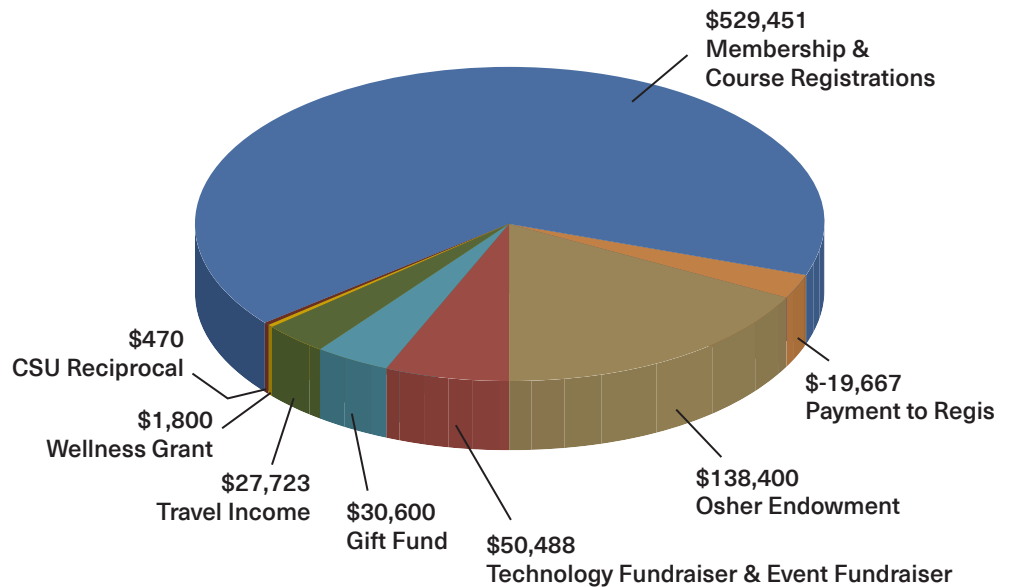
MEMBERSHIP AND FINANCIAL

Total OLLI at DU Membership

(VIVA became OLLI in 2006)

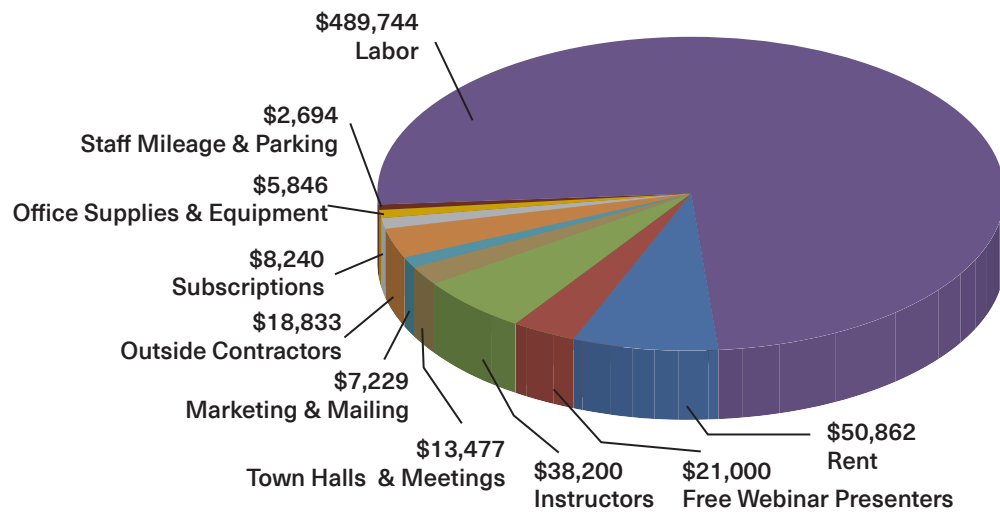


FY 2023-24 Revenue

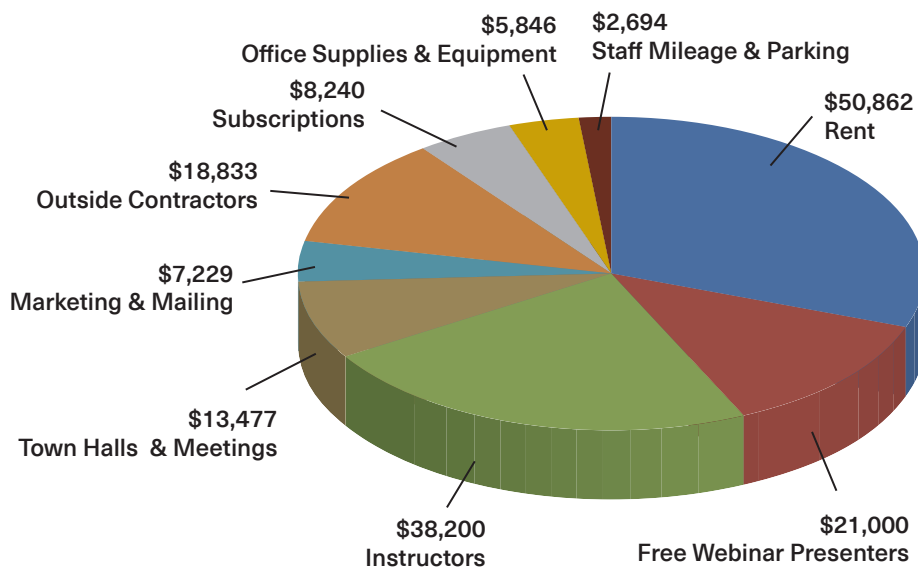


FY 2023-24 EXPENSES

All Expenses



Non-Labor Expenses



CURRICULUM AND FACILITATION

OLLI at DU recognizes that there are four pillars to longevity and fulfillment, and we have built a program that supports each of these areas: cognitive, social, physical, and spiritual. These pillars were created based on a research foundation. Through our lifelong learning organization, there are many opportunities to participate in courses or activities in each pillar or integrated across areas from the four pillars.

The Curriculum Manager staff position was initiated in March 2023. The focus of this position has been to develop a commonality of purpose and continuity across all curriculum activities from all sites; to develop structures and processes that are common across all sites while still maintaining individuality; and enhancing communication for more vertical and horizontal alignment across sites.

The following are initiatives which have evolved over the last year with a strong emphasis on curriculum.

An OLLI at DU Core Curriculum Committee was formed in late 2022. The group is comprised of experienced facilitators, site curriculum committee members, long-time OLLI members, and staff. There are 18 people on this committee. The key focus of this committee is on making the learning experiences more effective and engaging. Over the course of 1.5 years of existence, the Core Curriculum Committee has provided valuable guidance and gained deeper understanding of the commonalities and differences of each site. This deep thinking has contributed to building more awareness and unified learning experiences.



OLLI South Facilitator Get Together

Accomplishments of the Core Curriculum Committee are the following based on common purpose:

- 1-Developed a well-designed process to review and provide input of an *OLLI At a Glance* schedule prior to each term. Each term schedule is reviewed to ensure OLLI at DU-wide in-person and online courses are well-thought out by each site and scheduling “hot spots” are identified prior to the full catalog development.
- 2-A new course proposal form was developed to ensure site curriculum committees receive the necessary data to make informed decisions when weighing information for course submission. Professional in appearance, the form is in PDF Adobe or Microsoft Word fillable and is focused on the instructional thinking facilitators consider as they develop courses.
- 3-An evaluation for end-of-course evaluations was developed by a task force comprised of mostly Core Curriculum Committee members. Participants from each course complete the online evaluation. The design uses a combination of a Likert Scale and narrative responses for acquiring key data for stakeholders. Benefiting from the evaluation data will be facilitators, staff, site curriculum committee members, and OLLI members.
- 4-A project in process is enhancing the categories of Subject Area Groupings. Currently, OLLI at DU has eight subject areas used to categorize courses. These categories can be difficult for usage. Courses don't always fit the identified eight categories and capture the unique interests of OLLI membership. In addition, we haven't used cross categorizing commonly used in learning organizations. This project is emerging to be a well-thought out, clear process that will raise interesting and usable information.

Prior to each term, all curriculum data from sites is filtered to the curriculum manager. This data is aggregated and used to inform the registration system, develop a mini catalog for members to have as a “sneak peek” prior to upcoming courses for each term and finally a full-term catalog is developed.

Beginning with Fall Term 23, a full-term catalog using a new flipbook format, was designed, developed, and utilized. A flipbook is an interactive, online HTML publication that has the look and feel of a real, page turning publication. The transition has now evolved into an approximately 120-page template used for Fall 23, Winter 24, and Spring 24 terms. Overall feedback from members is very positive. As one member wrote: “Every page is a delight, the organization is stellar, and it's incredibly easy to navigate from area to area”.

A new curriculum committee handbook is drafted and feedback will be sought from the Core Curriculum Committee prior to finalizing for use beginning in the Fall of 2024. It was key to update, simplify and create a user-friendly handbook for site and core curriculum committee members. It describes the critical structures, processes, and roles for these committees. This handbook is meant as an over-arching guide for curriculum committee member's work and will contribute to enhancing communication, collaboration, and more effective teaming. Date of roll-out is anticipated to be July 2024.

Curriculum

- Continue to research the prospect of creating one curriculum committee with subcommittees for in-person and online
- Focus on the creation of courses which appeal to our new members in their 50s and 60s

Facilitation

- Introduce an *OLLI Scholars* program for graduate students to teach a course on their research area and gain valuable experience for their careers.
- Design and introduce more collegial learning opportunities for veteran facilitators to provide support and guidance to new or prospective facilitators.
- Launched a First Friday Facilitator Forum — providing an opportunity for facilitators to share best practices and offer support



OLLI South Facilitator Get Together

COMMUNITY OUTREACH AND OLLI ON THE MOVE

Community Outreach and its OLLI On the Move (OOM) component contribute strongly to OLLI's social and cognitive pillars of healthy and fulfilling lives. In concert with the OLLI Membership Committee, Community Outreach creates relationships with cultural organizations that produce group excursions to the Colorado Symphony Colorado, Opera Colorado, the Cherry Creek Theatre and more. OLLI On the Move spreads OLLI at DU awareness, attracting ever-more OLLI members and requests for presentations and courses from libraries, community centers and senior living communities throughout the Denver Metro and Boulder areas.

Since its inception late in 2022, OOM has:

- Delivered 21 individual presentations
- Presented 20 multi-week courses, including multiple courses at various venues.
- Addressed audiences at 7 libraries, 10 senior living communities, 2 civic community centers, a restored military chapel and multiple senior fairs and senior organizations.
- Drawn more than 600 adult learners to presentations and courses
- Contributed more than 400 names and email addresses to those who receive OLLI's weekly newsletter
- Added 147 new members to OLLI through the OLLI on the Move program.
- Contributed approximately \$12,000 of revenue in course registrations.
- Elicited inquiries from 6 additional senior living communities for mutual discussion
- Engaged 29 OLLI facilitators in one or more OOM presentations

The enthusiasm of the members of the OLLI on the Move initiative has helped us achieve its two goals: spreading the word about OLLI and bringing lifelong learning to those who might not be able to come to an OLLI location.



OLLI on the Move Course

MEMBERSHIP ENGAGEMENT

OLLI at DU has created a robust member engagement program that has enriched the experiences of our members. The new program is multifaceted and includes social events, shared interest groups and various member benefits. Many of the social events include an educational component. A group of OLLI at DU volunteers along with a staff member developed the new program. The new program was designed to align with the values and objectives of OLLI at DU. One of the goals of the committee is to offer at least one social event a month to the OLLI at DU members. We are happy to report that we have met this goal. It is also important to the committee to have these events in different geographical regions across the Denver metro region. Our members are spread out and we want to offer something that is accessible to all, we feel we have also met this objective. A few highlights of events we have done include a visit to Wings Over the Rockies with guest speaker, Retired Major General John Barry. A tour of NOAA, this was especially interesting since we were there the day before a big storm hit the area, a behind the scenes tour of Denver Center for the Performing Arts, attended a concert at Cherokee Ranch and Castle and various plays at Cherry Creek Theater.



*OLLI Photography
Special Interest Group*



*OLLI Hiking
Special Interest Group*

The committee created guidelines and a proposal form for Shared Interest Groups. We feel this will be a great benefit to our members. We have had Shared Interest Groups start organically from classes but think this will help our members know what is out there and provide a path on how to start a shared interest group. At this time, we have a walking group, snowshoeing group, photography group, various mahjong groups and current affairs. We look forward to additional groups started by our members.

There has been an increase of wonderful benefits for our members including fit classes, access to the DU library, reduced membership to DU fitness center and webinars on various topics. We are thrilled to say we have offered 41 wonderful Webinars. We have offered these both during the term and also during breaks. We think it is a wonderful benefit to continue to have various educational webinars to keep our members engaged and involved. Next year we plan to continue to increase the benefits for our members.

MARKETING AND STRATEGY

The Marketing Strategy for OLLI at DU has evolved greatly over the past two years, with the help of a Marketing Committee of volunteers and staff. This committee reviews our progress and tactics and discuss ways to improve each month.

With a very small budget, we have found that the very best and most cost-effective way we have to reach members and prospects with a drumbeat of messaging and information is by email. Any marketing outreach we do, including social media and OLLI on the Move programming, should always result in a collection of email addresses, so we can build an actionable relationship with prospective members.

Everything OLLI goes out every Friday and It includes event information, registration dates, a focus on low enrollment classes, group travel, profiles, upcoming webinars from OLLI at DU and partner organizations, OLLI on the Move events, etc. It has built a loyal following and we have reviewed the metrics that demonstrate that our open and click rates are much higher than the industry average. Our list now includes over 8,300 email addresses and our open rate hovers around 60%, which means we are reaching more than double our current member numbers.

This newsletter started Friday, July 14, 2023 and there have been 41 editions between then and May 3, 2024. There are also special editions and site-specific emails that are sent out from time to time. The more targeted the list, the higher open rates (i.e. just to facilitators or just to members who identify with a campus).



Lunch & Learn with Denver Executive Director for Housing Stability



OLLI South Town Hall

In addition to newsletters, we also rely on several other outreach strategies:

- Specialized outreach with database comparisons, such as lapsed members from 2020 lists.
- Print collateral such as flyers, posters, and brochures and announcements from class assistants.
- Senior Fairs and networking provides a platform for vendors and attendees to know about OLLI, and we collect email addresses through the offer of a free membership drawing.
- OLLI on the Move is highly effective at bringing our programming to potential markets and building our word of mouth and membership. Often it is the advertising and promotion of these events that provides valuable marketing reach.
- Other newsletter inclusion such as the DU Retirees, University College and sometimes other organizations or Realtors give us additional access to new audiences.
- We submit regularly to obtain free press, such as: Denver Post Advertorial, YourHub, and Community Calendars
- Word of Mouth is hard to measure but SO IMPORTANT! It is all about our reputation and how much people enjoy OLLI courses, Webinars, and events.
- Social Media Strategy has expanded greatly since the arrival of our graduate student intern Taylor McDonough, who has focused on a calendar of posts and a paid campaign to create broader interest and likes.
- The Marketing Committee meets monthly to discuss strategies and OLLI at DU also meets monthly with University College Marketing. We are building a relationship with the Knoebel Institute on Healthy Aging and The Enrichment program and have done a joint proposal with them for the first time.



OLLI at the Opera

VOLUNTEER INVOLVEMENT

Since volunteers are the backbone of OLLI, the newly formed volunteer committee was busy designing and developing a program for the overall OLLI program in addition to site specific volunteer roles.

Our major task has been creating a volunteer handbook to post on the OLLI website along with better visibility for the OLLI volunteers. We were able to develop a database for all of our volunteer needs by utilizing the information collected at registration in addition to the survey results for all of OLLI. We are also working on developing a report that links volunteer strengths with opportunities.

We are currently developing a volunteer video to post on the website to encourage others to get involved and a volunteer recognition program that includes a point system for rewards and volunteer recognition months to spotlight volunteers from each site on the Everything OLLI email.

We are developing a planning event for all sites, so we have uniformity among the sites for how we utilize our volunteers. In addition, we are working on activities to solicit volunteers (volunteer fair at each site)



FINANCE ADVISORY TEAM

The Finance Advisory Team was formed in the spring of 2023 with the mission of providing oversight and input into the development of the OLLI at DU budget. Members of the team had served on the Strategic Planning Committee; Finance Subcommittee for the previous eight months. During 2023–24, the team met monthly with the Executive Director to review expenses and to compare projections with actual revenue. Revisions to the expenses were made as necessary.

Over the spring of 2023, the team researched other OLLIs' pricing plans and membership programs. Reviewing five years of historical data for OLLI at DU, the team recommended moving to a membership-based program with separate pricing for course registrations. This recommendation was made with three focus points:

- to create a budget which was balanced,
- to promote a pricing plan which was equitable and accessible for all members, and
- to re-emphasize the importance of a community of learners — a community where everyone has the opportunity to teach and to learn from their peers. It was this third focus point which was of most importance to the team in order to distinguish ourselves from other continuing education programs.

At the end of the spring term 2024, the team reviewed the members response to the pricing plan and recommended adjustments based on member usage.



OLLI South Open House

SPRING 2024 OLLI AT DU FUNDRAISER

Back to the Future: Beatles, Brews, and Bellbottoms

In the winter of 2024, a group of members and staff suggested that it was time for an OLLI-wide social event. Although we had been enjoying a number of monthly social events and outings developed by our Membership Engagement Committee for two years, we wanted to bring members together to celebrate our 28 years of providing lifelong learning and our emergence from the pandemic as a strong, vibrant program.

The Back to the Future event was a resounding success, drawing in over 120 attendees eager to celebrate and reminisce—and the fundraising event exceeded our financial targets.

Among the event's highlights was a live auction featuring more than 70 enticing items, all donated by our members. Acoya Cherry Creek, a new senior living community in Denver, was our host, providing the location, beverages, and valet parking.



Attendees witnessed the craftsmanship of a talented spinner and purchased hand-spun skeins of yarn. Ali Ghassan, a talented local painter amazed all with his craft and even sold four of his paintings.

The history of OLLI at DU was on display with carefully curated posters chronicling this beloved program's 28-year evolution from its inception in 1996 as VIVA, through its emergence as OLLI at DU in 2006 to the present day.

OLLI's nine Platinum Level facilitators (40+ courses) were honored at the event with engraved glass plaques honoring their service. There is now also a "perpetual plaque" in the OLLI office which lists the names of the following OLLI at DU Platinum Level facilitators:

Anne Christner, Charlie Holt, Mac McHugh, Bob Magnani, Mo Mathews, Larry Matten, Sydney Myers, Dick Reinish, Jerry Wischmeyer

Members and organizations stepped up to become Event Sponsors and we are so grateful for their support (Gold \$500 or above):

Susan and Randy Putnam, Jim Ruden, Jean and Penny Friedberg, Bruce and Tayna Caughey, Nancy Qualls, Art and Stephanie Strasburger, Jerry Wischmeyer, Tom Bieging, Don Korte, Jackie and Lee Wyant.

The event brought in \$29,875 and as many of our expenses were donated by Acoya Cherry Creek, we netted \$25,000, far exceeding our goal. OLLI will use these funds throughout the year for projects that are not covered by our regular budget.

OLLI members enjoyed the event so much that we will definitely be making this an annual event.

TRAVEL PROGRAM



OLLI at DU's Travel Program is back after an almost three-year hiatus due to the pandemic.

We partner with travel companies to offer excursions to both domestic and international locations. Most of our trips are OLLI at DU exclusive (i.e., we book the entire trip) although we do offer the opportunity for our reciprocal members at OLLI at CSU to join us if we have slots remaining.

Our travel partners include Road Scholar, Collette Travel, and EF Go Ahead Tours. Over the past two years, our members have participated in custom-designed trips to Memphis, to Japan, to New York City for a theatre tour, and on a Civil Rights Tour of the South.

Here are some of the comments from our travelers:

This outstanding trip was a 12!!!! I would never have ventured to the Big Apple without the expert guidance and generous help of Steve & Karl. Loved meeting so many witty, wise, interesting CO OLLI attendees.

The trip to Japan was amazing — we participated in tatami mat making, a Zen meditation session, a traditional hot pot meal, and witnessed the ancient art of tie dying (shibori). Ringing the peace bell in Hiroshima was so moving. Great to share these experiences with fellow OLLI members.

Our OLLI members are happy to be “back on the road” and we look forward to offering these travel opportunities in the coming year:

New York City Theatre – November 2024

Colors of Cuba – March 2025

Washington, DC – March 2025

Shades of Ireland featuring the Wild Atlantic Way – June 2025

Food and Wine of Italy including Florence and Rome- early September 2025



OLLI at DU will be offering special OLLI at DU courses and webinars which highlight these countries/regions — their cultures, food, history, geology, etc. Stay tuned for this intersection of OLLI courses and what many would consider the ultimate field trip!

OLLI SITE REPORTS

OLLI at DU Central

OLLI at DU Central continues to thrive as our original and largest site. During the 2023–24 academic year, we offered a total of 116 courses — 59 in person and 57 online via Zoom. Our members seem to enjoy equally the opportunity to attend courses in person at our three OLLI Central locations — First Universalist Church, DU Ruffatto Hall, and DU Chambers Center for the Advancement of Women — and online via Zoom.

OLLI Central members came out in droves for a kick-off Open House in September and for seven different Lunch and Learns throughout the year, focusing on such topics as the future of fossil fuels, addressing housing instability in Denver, and a look at the legal case behind the Philadelphia Story.

Our curriculum committee works diligently to develop a set of course offerings each term. Public Affairs/ Current Events and History/Economics continue to be the favorite subject areas of our members. We offered a Mah Jongg course each term with tremendous success. We also offered a Birding course which blended in-person discussion with trips in the field. Spanish conversation was back due to popular demand!

This year we bid farewell to John Baumgartner who had served as OLLI at DU Central's Site Manager for five years and to Carol Lynn Tiegs who was Program Coordinator. We welcomed Tamara Barkdoll as OLLI Central Program Coordinator in January and Candace Hyatt as Site Manager in May.

We are looking forward to the return of our facilitator recognition event which has been on hiatus since the pandemic. We will honor the 73 OLLI Central facilitators at a luncheon in June.



DU Ruffatto Hall

OLLI On Campus

OLLI at DU-on Campus programs offered members great opportunities to attend in-person classes on the DU campus, as well as participate in online classes. On-campus courses offer a diverse array of academically stimulating courses in subject areas taught by current or retired DU professors or professors from other universities. Instructors also include subject area specialists in difficult to find areas. Examples of instructors utilized for difficult to fill areas can be a recently retired district court judge teaching courses in law, a highly skilled, nationally known photographer teaching OLLI photography classes, or a finance company CEO teaching economics.

In addition, OLLI at DU On Campus also develops webinar series for members in-between term breaks. These include a series of six webinars offered between the Fall and Winter terms. The most recent series comprised of 10 webinars is the popular Summer Shorts 24. This one begins on June 11 and runs through August 13, 2024.

OLLI at DU recognizes that there are four pillars to longevity and fulfillment, and we have built a program that supports each of these areas: cognitive, social, physical, and spiritual. Each morning, through On Campus, we host free fitness courses to exercise both your body and your spirit.

OLLI at DU South

OLLI at DU South campus has been busy with various activities, classes and growth. Throughout the 2023–2024 academic year we offered 67 classes, 30 of those were in person classes and 2 were off site hiking classes. We are happy with the continued growth of our in-person course offerings and look forward to additional in person courses. The total number of in person courses has increased but also the total number of people attending in person classes has also increased. For the academic year 23–24 we had 664 members attend classes. The energy and community have increased as more people are together. During the academic year we have had 40 different facilitators do classes for us and 3 of these were new facilitators.

We have reimagined the Curriculum Committee based on feedback from existing and prior committee members. We changed the committee to be divided up by task. By doing this we have not only more clearly defined the roles and responsibilities we have also increased the number of volunteers. This approach allows volunteers to do what they are passionate about and best meets their skill set. To honor and celebrate our facilitators we have an annual brunch. The facilitators enjoy this time together and the acknowledgment of their hard work.



Recognizing the importance of community we have organized various social events along with “lunch and learns”. During these sessions members are invited to bring lunch and enjoy obtaining new knowledge from a guest speaker. A few highlights include, learning about the history of the Cherokee Ranch and Castle, insights and tips from the Douglas County Sheriff, and exploring different celebrations around the world.

To kick off the academic year we held an open house. All OLLI at DU South members are invited to explore the facility, mingle with other members and attend a presentation from a guest speaker. These have been very popular and a great way to start the OLLI year.

OLLI at DU West

OLLI West was busy with creating a more engaged in person program with classes and social activities. During the 2023–2024 academic year, we offered 51 classes, 13 of those in person. In addition, we offered 18 stem webinars online with an average of 75 members attending each one. We had 225 members attend classes.

We started the year with an open house where facilitators spoke about their classes and members were able to get reacquainted with OLLI after the summer. During the year, we offered a noon show online before each term where facilitators spoke about their upcoming class and encourage registration.

Our in person classes are growing and we are thrilled with more members coming back to participate. We recognize the importance of social connections and started a “bring your own lunch” program to reconnect with old OLLI friends and make some new ones as well. In addition, we are working on a lunch and learn program to increase connection going forward.

We are re-imagining and re-establishing the curriculum committee at West and working towards building a program of vibrant interesting classes to attract new OLLI members while retaining the current members.



OLLI West lunch social event

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

OLLI at DU thrives because of the support of our members who serve as volunteers on our various committees and as facilitators and class assistants throughout the year.

We would like to acknowledge and express our gratitude to the following:

Executive Advisory Committee members 2023–24

Jacqueline Wyant, Executive Director
Maria Elena Garcia, Curriculum Director
Michael Prevedel, Core Curriculum Committee Chair
Jean Friedberg, Finance Committee Chair
John Rough, Finance Committee Liaison
Tom Bieging, Fundraising Chair
Bruce Caughey, Marketing & Communications Director
Gary Burandt, Marketing & Communications Chair
Paul Simon, Community Outreach Director
Sherry Feinbaum, Volunteer Manager
Darcey VanWagner, Membership Manager
Faye Hastings, Technology Coordinator
Candy Hyatt, Central Manager
Susan Lauscher, Central Curriculum Chair
Barbara Holme, Central Ad Hoc Member
Darcey VanWagner, South Manager
Bob Steele, South Curriculum Committee Co-Chair
Janet Kester, South Curriculum Committee Co-Chair
Pat Paul, South Curriculum Committee
Jim Ruden, South Ad Hoc Member
Sherry Feinbaum, West Manager
Alec Tsoucatos, West Ad Hoc
Penny Friedberg, West Ad Hoc
Fran Fraser, West Ad Hoc Member
Glenn Gravlee, Ad Hoc Member - from Executive Director
TBD, Ad Hoc Member - from Executive Director

Finance Advisory Team

Jean Friedberg
Tom Bieging
John Rough

Fundraising Team – planning committee for May 2024 fundraiser

Tom Bieging, Chair
Paul Simon, Co-chair
Mary Carvalho
Nancy Cassell
Bruce Caughey
Tanya Caughey
Carol Chatfield
Susan Cooper
Judie Maurelli
Lynne Mason
Elaine Levensgood
Nancy Qualls
Nita Sosebee
Jackie Wyant
Dave Johnson

Core Curriculum Committee

Maria Elena Garcia OLLI at DU Curriculum Director
Jacqueline Wyant OLLI at DU Executive Director
Michael Prevedel Core Curriculum Chair, Central
Mary Ann Laurich, Central
Darcey VanWagner, South
David Lippman, Central
Sherilee Selby, Curriculum
Mitch Stewart, Central
Patty Smilanic, South
Patricia Paul, South
Paul Simon, OLLI on the Move
Lindsay Buffington, Regis
Sherry Feinbaum, West
Linda Lange, Regis
Larry Tannenbaum, West
Shelly McHugh, Ad Hoc
Penny Friedberg, West
Dennis Wanebo, West

Membership Engagement Committee

Gordon Appell
Anne Bennett
Penny Friedberg
Glenn Gravlee
Susan Libovitz
John Rough
Anne Wormley

Marketing and Communications Committee

Bruce Caughey
Jeanne Beyer
Gary Burandt
Janet Kester
Taylor McDonough

Volunteer Committee

Mary Carvalho
George Lee

Community Outreach (OLLI on the Move) Committee

Mary Carvalho
Bill Effenbein
Jay Frazee
Glenn Gravlee
Charles Holt
Megan Schulz

Central Curriculum Committee

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Gordon Appell
Gloria Eastman
Barbara Holme
David Lippman
Michael Prevedel
Jon Young

South Curriculum Committee

Janet Kester, Co-chair
Bob Steele, Co-chair
Anne Bennett
Anne Christner
Bill Baird
Karen Dvorchak
Jan Friedlander
Sheila Jones
Charlotte Moreno
Pat Paul
Patty Smilanic
Becky Stout
Peggy Winn
Gary Wyngarden

West Curriculum Committee

Penny Friedberg, Co-chair
Larry Tannenbaum, Co-chair
Fran Fraser
Tom Hughes
Jim Keller
Susan Labovitz
Dixie Vice
Dennis Wanebo

OLLI at DU Staff

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Bruce Caughey, Marketing and Development Director
Paul Simon, Community Outreach Director
Maria Elena Garcia, Curriculum and OLLI on Campus Manager
John Baumgartner/Candace Hyatt, OLLI Central Manager
Tamara Barkdoll, OLLI Central Program Coordinator
Darcey VanWagner, OLLI South and Membership Engagement Manager
Sherilee Selby, OLLI South Program Coordinator
Sherry Feinbaum, OLLI West and Volunteer Involvement Manager
Lindsay Buffington, OLLI Regis Manager
Faye Hastings, Technology Coordinator
Kimberly Penoyer, Operations Coordinator
Dave Johnson, Support Specialist
Christine Liptak, Support Specialist, Travel Coordinator
Mitra Verma, Zoom Assistant; On Campus Program Coordinator

DU Work Study student: Kiley Traynor
DU Daniels School Intern: Taylor McDonough

We also want to acknowledge our **Volunteer of the Year, Dorothy Emery**, OLLI Central member who over the past two years has assisted us in so many ways as we transitioned to a new website and learning management system this year. She has spent countless hours designing reports of data for our staff and committees to use to plan effectively. She volunteered to be part of the West taskforce reviewing our processes in curriculum, facilitation, volunteer involvement, and membership. Thank you, Dorothy.



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