

HELPFUL LINKS

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Newsletter



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March 20, 2026

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UPDATES

2026-27 BOARD OF DIRECTORS ELECTION

This year's Nominating Committee (Tammy Belden, Chair; John Aldock; Barbara Beizer; Ed Feinberg; and Dave Hensler) developed a slate of four candidates to fill the four positions on the Board of Directors that will become vacant in June 2026. The committee believes these candidates have amply demonstrated the skills, experience, background, and energy needed for OLLI at AU leadership.

The Board of Directors has reviewed and approved this slate of candidates, which will appear on the ballot for the election scheduled for April 10, after the annual meeting.

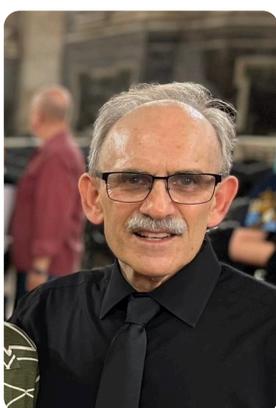
Additionally, OLLI has a process by which any member may be nominated if a petition with at least ten signatures from active OLLI members is presented to the Nominating Committee. Once the Nominating Committee receives the completed petition, along with a brief bio of no more than 100 words, and a photo, it will consider and review such nominations for Board approval through March 27. Interested candidates should contact the OLLI office for the petition form and other details.

On behalf of the OLLI Board of Directors and the membership, thank you to the Nominating Committee members for this critically important work.



Jeff Porter

Jeff Porter joined OLLI in the spring of 2017. He has been a member of the Board of Directors since 2023 and teaches the "Current Events and Public Policy" study group alongside David Callet. He is a current member of both the Strategic Planning Committee and the Membership and Outreach Committee. Jeff also became chair of the Social Committee in spring of 2019 and has arranged a variety of social events for OLLI. Previously, Jeff taught public school before embarking on a business career. He owned several small shops and became a retail manager before serving as the Director of Catering at Whole Foods for nearly 20 years.



David Flaxman

David Flaxman was the previous Chair of the OLLI Board and has been a dedicated member of OLLI since 2016. He continues to serve on the Board and is currently Co-Chair of the Lecture Committee. He also teaches

many classes on music and Italian for OLLI. David is a summa cum laude graduate of the Honors College of Michigan State University and has a master's degree in mathematical logic from Johns Hopkins University. After a long successful career in the information technology industry, he is now engaged primarily as a musician, performing with several distinguished choral groups in DC, and serves as president for two of them.



Paul Vamvas

Paul Vamvas joined OLLI in fall of 2019. He currently serves on the Lecture Committee and is a co-producer of the OLLI podcast, "Curiosity Never Retires." He also served as OLLI's Serendipities Coordinator for a period of time and has taught courses on the Constitution and the courts. Paul retired in 2019 after 20 years with the Federal Judicial Center where he produced educational programs for federal judges. He has a JD degree from the University of Maryland School of Law and an LLM focused on constitutional law from the Georgetown Law Center.



Lynn Lewis

Lynn Lewis has been an OLLI member and strong supporter of OLLI's mission since 2013. She has co-facilitated the popular TED Talks class with two OLLI colleagues since 2017. An enthusiastic member of the

Lecture Committee, Lynn has suggested a wide variety of speakers for OLLI members. As an active member of the Dupont Circle Village, she cohosts a monthly dinner speaker gathering and volunteers for various Village programs. Lynn holds a master's degree in journalism from Ohio State University and a bachelor's degree in education from the University of Michigan, and she previously worked in the administration of both institutions. She was also a freelance writer and editor in both the public and private sectors for nearly five decades and taught writing courses for adults.

ACADEMIC PROGRAMMING

PRELIMINARY FEEDBACK

The [preliminary feedback form](#) is available on the OLLI website under "Classes" and then "Semesters/Minis." As always, feedback is anonymous.

We encourage you to take a few minutes to provide feedback about each of your study groups after attending two class sessions. **If you have any suggestions for improvement, please be mindful of stating them in a constructive and respectful manner.**

In an effort to increase response rate, paper copies of the feedback form were distributed by the SGR of each in-person class. They can also be picked up outside the OLLI office. If you choose to complete a paper form, please drop it off at the office when you're finished. **The last day to submit preliminary feedback is today, Friday, March 20.**



TABLE TALK WITH THE CURRICULUM COMMITTEE

You may be taking classes this semester, but have you ever considered giving one? Next week, members of OLLI's Curriculum Committee will host informal "Table Talk" sessions near the Social Space on the 5th floor on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday between classes (9:15-9:45 AM,

11:15–11:45 AM, and 1:15–1:45 PM). Stop by the table to learn more about teaching at OLLI, ask questions about submitting a proposal, hear about upcoming deadlines, or simply explore the idea of leading a class yourself. Feel free to come by, chat, and have a treat!

CALLING ALL PROPOSALS

We welcome proposals from both new and previous study group leaders! For more information about being an SGL at OLLI, please visit the [Become an Instructor](#) page on the website. If you or someone you know is interested in leading a study group for the first time and would like to speak with someone, please email olli@american.edu with your contact information and we will get in touch with you. To propose a study group, click the applicable button below. You will need to log in with your OLLI username/password or create an account if it's your first time.

June Minis

June 1-26

Classes meet once a week for four weeks.

JUNE PROPOSAL

July Shorts

July 6-10

Classes meet 2-5 times during one week.

JULY PROPOSAL

Proposal deadline for summer sessions: Sunday, April 5

Fall Semester

September 28-December 4

Classes meet once a week for 7-10 weeks.

FALL PROPOSAL

Proposal deadline for fall semester: Sunday, May 3

If you are a current or prospective Study Group Leader planning a course, you may want to consider some of the creative teaching formats used in OLLI classes to encourage discussion and participation. Some courses are team-taught by two instructors who bring different perspectives and expertise, while others invite guest presenters to join individual sessions and share their knowledge on specific topics. These approaches can enrich the class experience

and make teaching even more engaging and enjoyable. If you are an SGL—or are thinking about becoming one—feel free to contact a member of one of [OLLI's Curriculum Committees](#) to learn more about how instructors have structured their classes.



2026 SPRING OLLI at AU
MEMBERSHIP DIRECTORY

Where Curiosity Never Retires

MEMBERSHIP DIRECTORY

The [Spring 2026 Membership Directory](#) is now available on the OLLI website. Members must be logged in to access the directory. Go to "Documents," and then "For Members Only."

LECTURES

SPRING LECTURE SERIES

Registration is required for in-person lectures. Registration will open at 10:00 AM on the Friday prior to the lecture. **Spring lectures will be held at OLLI:** 4801 Massachusetts Ave. NW, in Room A on the first floor. Visit the [Spring 2026 Lectures](#) page for a full list of this semester's lectures.



TODAY'S LECTURE

Richard Kahlenberg, *Class Matters: A Book Talk about Race, Class, Colleges, and American Politics*

March 20

1:30 PM

In-Person at OLLI

As DEI faces backlash and Democrats lose working-class voters, a new approach is needed. In *Class Matters*, Richard Kahlenberg argues that higher education should prioritize economic disadvantage rather than race to achieve real racial and economic diversity. He contends that race-based admissions have often shielded systems that favor wealthy students while excluding talented working-class applicants. A leading advocate of class-based affirmative action, Kahlenberg played a key role in debates leading up to the Supreme Court's 2023 decision ending racial preferences. A Harvard-educated scholar and

Progressive Policy Institute director, he has been described by *The New York Times* as a “liberal maverick.”

Richard's latest books, *The American Revolution and the Fate of the World* and *Stolen: Five Free Boys Kidnapped into Slavery and Their Astonishing Odyssey Home (A True Story About Slavery in America)* will be available for purchase and signing immediately following the lecture.

REGISTER



NEXT WEEK'S LECTURE

Tom Green and Nathaniel Zelinsky, *Defending the Rule of Law*

March 27

1:30 PM

In-Person at OLLI

Senior DC lawyers came out of retirement last August to form the Washington Litigation Group, a non-profit law firm offering free legal assistance to persons and institutions unlawfully targeted by the USG for exercising their constitutional rights and to bring affirmative litigation to curb government overreach. John Aldock, a firm founder and OLLI member, will interview Tom Green, WLG founder and President, and Nathaniel Zelinsky, WLG managing attorney on how and why the firm was created, its mission, and its efforts to date to defend the rule of law.

Tom Green is President of the Washington Litigation Group and a former Sidley Austin partner who has represented public officials in major national matters, including Watergate, Iran-Contra, and the prosecution of Dennis Hastert. He is a Fellow of the American College of Trial Lawyers and a Vietnam veteran.

Nathaniel Zelinsky is Senior Counsel at the Washington Litigation Group, where he litigates major constitutional cases. He argued *Barnes v. Felix* before the Supreme Court in 2024, winning unanimously, and previously served as a special prosecutor in the State of Minnesota v. Derek Chauvin case.

John Aldock is Secretary and General Counsel of the Washington Litigation Group and a retired partner of Goodwin Procter. He chaired the Advisory Committee on Rules for the U.S. District Court for the District of Columbia for more than 40 years and is a Fellow of the American College of Trial Lawyers.

REGISTER

OLLI EVENTS

AMERICA 250 EVENT: PRESENTATION PROPOSALS

OLLI will celebrate the 250th anniversary of the Declaration of Independence with a special event on June 29 and 30. This two-day program will feature a series of short presentations on topics related to the "America 250" theme.

We invite members of the OLLI community to participate in this celebration by offering a brief presentation (approximately 20 minutes, followed by 10 minutes for Q&A). While America 250 commemorates a historic milestone, presentations may explore the influence of the Declaration of Independence across many aspects of American life. Topics are not limited to history and may include art, music, politics, culture, and more.

To propose a presentation for consideration, please email the following information to olli@american.edu

- Your name
- Title of presentation
- Brief description of the presentation
- Your bio
- Your availability on June 29 and 30

Submission deadline: Friday, April 3



HAPPY HOURS

A happy hour will take place each Friday after the lecture (about 2:30 PM) at Pizzeria Paradiso across the street from OLLI. There is space for up to 25 people. Each person pays their own way. Registration is encouraged, but not required.

[REGISTER](#)

OLLI

Lunch Club

OLLI LUNCH CLUB

12:00 PM

Millie's Restaurant | Registration Required

[Tuesday, March 24](#)

[Wednesday, April 8](#)

[Thursday, April 23](#)

The OLLI Lunch Club will hold its next luncheon of the spring semester on Tuesday, March 24 at 12:00 PM at Millie's restaurant across the street from OLLI. There is space for up to 12 people. Each person pays their own way. **Please register using the links above.**

SERENDIPITY TALK

Andrew Hiller, *From Page to Stage: Muppets, Publishing, and Chutzpah*

Monday, March 23 | 3:30-4:30 PM

Online via Zoom | No Registration Required

Andrew has been heckled by Robin Williams, wrote skits and performed them with the Jim Henson gang, and has seen plays on the New York stage and his books on best sellers' list... Oh yeah, he's also an OLLI SGL. Now, his latest book, *Hornytown Chutzpah*, is about to hit shelves. If you're wondering about the title, it has to do with Bugs Bunny (plus the visual of a cartoon sign featuring a little red devil with big ole horns) and antisemitism.

[View more info.](#)

No registration is required for Serendipities. The Zoom link will be emailed to all those subscribed to the OLLI newsletter the morning of each talk.

If you do not receive the newsletter and would like to attend, please join the email list at https://www.oli-dc.org/join_email_list.

OLLI CONCERT SERIES: RITUALS

April 1, 2026

4:00-6:00 PM

Katzen Arts Center in Abramson Recital Hall

4400 Massachusetts Ave. NW

FREE | Registration required

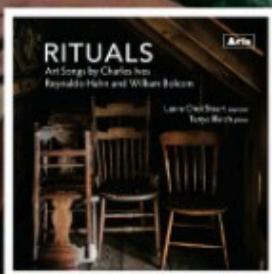
We are excited to announce the first event in OLLI's new concert series. Each concert is free and open to the public. Light refreshments will follow along with an opportunity to purchase CDs for \$18.99.

Soprano Laura Choi Stuart and pianist Tanya Blaich present a recital and discussion featuring the art songs of three contrasting composers: Charles Ives' American experience of community and family, ancient rituals and passions of Reynaldo Hahn's *Études latines*, and the intimate domestic rituals of William Bolcom's vivid miniatures in *Briefly It Enters*. RITUALS is a full recital program shaped into an album-length narrative—song as ritual: memory repeated, language tasted...life, love, and death revealed in a few concentrated minutes.

Laura Choi Stuart will also be appearing as the soprano soloist in a performance by the City Choir of Washington of the great Mass in B minor by JS Bach at National Presbyterian Church on May 31 at 5:00 PM. For more information and tickets [click here](#).

ART SONGS by Charles Ives,
Reynaldo Hahn,
& William Bolcom

Laura Choi Stuart, SOPRANO
Tanya Blaich, PIANO



OLLI CONCERT SERIES
RITUALS

APR | 4
01 | PM

FREE
Registration
Required

Abramson
Recital Hall
KATZEN ARTS
CENTER

4400 Massachusetts Ave. NW | Parking \$2/hr

Please share the above flyer and information with your community listserv. If you have any questions or need additional information, please contact the OLLI office at olli@american.edu or 202-895-4860. Thank you for being an ambassador for OLLI in your local community!

MORE INFO/REGISTER

MEMBER HIGHLIGHTS

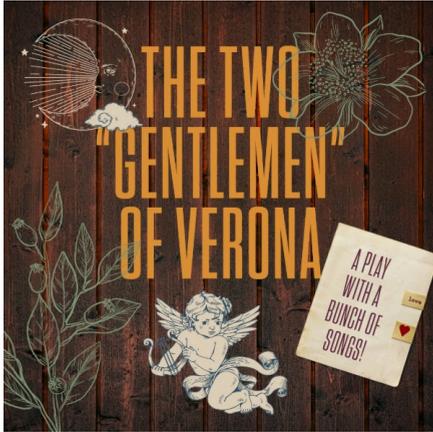
HOW WAGNER SHAPED FILM MUSIC

Dan Sherman, a longtime SGL who has given many Serendipity talks and courses on a wide variety of musical genres, gave a talk titled "How Richard

Wagner Shaped Film Music: Korngold, Hollywood, and Star Wars." [Click here](#) to watch the full talk on YouTube.

Dan will also be giving a [Serendipity talk on Rachmaninoff](#) on Monday, April 13.

AU EVENTS



**The Two "Gentlemen" of Verona,
A Play with a Bunch of Songs!**

March 26–27: 8:00 PM

March 28: 2:00 PM & 8:00 PM

Harold and Sylvia Greenberg

Theatre

4200 Wisconsin Ave. NW,

Washington, DC 20016

Adapted from Shakespeare by Aaron

Posner

Songs by Greg Kotis and Aaron Posner

[Tickets](#): \$10 for seniors (55+)

MORE INFO/REGISTER



250+ AT AMERICAN UNIVERSITY

The 250+ at American initiative offers a year of multidisciplinary programs that invite AU's community to reflect on the nation's past, engage in the present, and imagine the future.

MORE INFO/EVENTS

Osher Lifelong Learning Institute at American University

The Osher Lifelong Learning Institute at American University is an association of, by, and for the people in the Washington, DC area who wish to continue to study and learn. OLLI at AU is dedicated to the proposition that learning is a lifelong process and that *curiosity never retires*.

Web: www.oli-dc.org | **Phone:** 202-895-4860 | **E-mail:** oli@american.edu

Location: 4801 Massachusetts Ave. NW

Mail: 4400 Massachusetts Ave NW | Washington, DC 20016

Tony Long, *Executive Director*
Lesley Diaz, *Director of Academic Programming*
Lisa Olson, *Director of Operations and Projects*
Jesse Williams, *Operations Manager*
Annabel McClure, *Programs and Projects Coordinator*
Andrew Smith, *Operations Assistant*
Lauren Petrillo, *Administrative Coordinator*

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