



**OSHER LIFELONG  
LEARNING INSTITUTE  
AT AMERICAN  
UNIVERSITY**

**2020-2021  
ANNUAL REPORT**

## MISSION

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The Osher Lifelong Learning Institute (OLLI) 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.

# A MESSAGE FROM THE BOARD CHAIR

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For the Osher Lifelong Learning Institute at American University, 2020–2021—the first full year of the Covid 19 pandemic and shutdown—was a year of uncertainty and challenge. It was clear that the pandemic and related shutdown would likely worsen over the year. We faced a crucial question: how does our organization and community—that derives its strength, energy, and enthusiasm from face-to-face exchange of ideas and information—maintain its character without direct personal interaction?

The Board, staff, committees, donors, and other volunteers, although distanced, worked together to maintain our program. Critical to our success was the outstanding performance by our staff—led by Tony Long and Mary Fran Miklitsch, and supported by Lesley Diaz, Jesse Williams, Sara Beatty, and Niranjana Singh—who worked tirelessly to ensure a largely seamless and painless shift of classes and activities to remote operations. They provided Zoom training to more than 1000 members and SGLs, kept members informed of evolving AU and OLLI policies under the pandemic, and arranged for a Zoom assistant in every class that requested one.

After a large drop in spring 2020, enrollment rebounded in the fall—to the highest number ever—and remained strong. Most SGLs who had cancelled their 2020 spring courses returned in the fall. The fall 2020 and spring 2021 semesters had more than 90 classes each. Our donors also responded, with nearly 24 percent of members contributing to our Friends of OLLI Fund, breaking previous fundraising records.

To help members remain in touch with each other in a time of isolation, we introduced the virtual Coffee Chat. Members were provided time to “mingle” with other members via Zoom. Many expressed gratitude for the chance to see and talk with old friends and colleagues.

Our lecture series broke attendance records. More than 400 people logged in to Norman Ornstein’s lecture. In January, Chair Judy Havemann orchestrated a four-part series entitled “Revisiting Washington’s Black History.” Partnering with the DC History Center, the series focused on Black Washington’s role in American music; Howard University’s history; how covenants, redlining, and segregation shaped Washington’s neighborhoods; and the story of a family that has lived in the Washington area since the late 1600s when its first members arrived here enslaved. Hundreds of people participated.

While Zoom presented challenges, it also created opportunities. Members for whom joining class in person would be difficult or impossible now could attend via Zoom. Using Zoom’s recording feature, we taped most classes, then made them available the same day and throughout the semester to all members. We also began developing a permanent library of recordings of selected study groups.

In 2020–2021, OLLI at AU adapted, experimented, and adjusted. Throughout the most challenging year in our nearly 40-year history, we not only survived, we thrived. I am confident we will continue to do so.

John Barger

*Chair, Board of Directors*

“Everyone at the OLLI office has been so helpful, patiently answering questions and assisting reluctant first-time Zoom users lessen the anxiety associated with accessing new technology. Despite my initial reservations, the Zoom experience has been painless. . . . To provide technical assistance to 85 classes per week is nothing short of amazing!”

— Ed Feinberg

## HISTORY

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Established in 1982 as the Institute for Learning in Retirement as part of the Continuing Education Department of American University, OLLI at AU was invited to become an Osher Lifelong Learning Institute in 2005. As a member of the larger Osher Lifelong Learning Institute network, we are one of 125 institutes nationwide funded in part by the Bernard Osher Foundation, which is dedicated to educational opportunities for seasoned learners.

## 2020-21 LECTURES

The Lecture Committee presented lectures via Zoom in 2020-21. This allowed more OLLI members and other individuals to attend as we were not limited by physical space. Below are just some of the year's lectures.

Michael Abramowitz, *The Threats to Freedom and the Work of Freedom House*

Marie Arana, *Silver, Sword, and Stone: Three Crucibles in the Latin American Story*

Raymond Caldwell, *Making Theater Meaningful in DC and Beyond*

W. Neil Eggleston, *Reflections on Attorney General Barr's 2019 Speeches to Notre Dame and the Federalist Society*

Glenn Frankel, *The Hollywood Blacklist and the Making of High Noon*

Dorothy Butler Gilliam, *Thoughts on Journalism and Diversity: A Conversation with Judy Havemann*

Daniel Goldman, *Lessons Learned from the Impeachments of Donald Trump: Is Impeachment a Viable Means of Accountability?*

Rose Gottermoeller, *Negotiating the New START Treaty*

Christine Grady, *Connecting Bioethics and COVID*

William Howell, *Populism and the Presidency*

Mark Leithauser, *Moving Walls and Making Space: Designing Exhibits at the National Gallery*

George Derek Musgrove, *Race and Police Reform in the Nation's Capital*

Norman J. Ornstein, *Governing Ahead: Where Do We Go From Here?*

Adam Rothman, *Georgetown Slavery, Memory and Reconciliation Initiative*

Sandy Ungar, *How Free is Free Speech?*

# STUDY GROUP LEADER SERVICE AWARDS

## 20-24 Years

Linda Freeman  
Larry Heilman  
Irwin Lebow  
Arnold Leibowitz  
Jenny Pierson

## 15-19 Years

Eleanor  
Heginbotham  
Iris Lipkowitz  
Helen Schwartz  
Peter Wolfe  
Michael Yahuda

## 10-14 Years

Lewis Cohen  
Bruce Eisen  
Susan Goodman  
David Hurwitz  
Rose Mosner  
Dave Palmeter  
Mary Poole  
Ray Squitieri  
Wendel Swan  
John Vorhes  
Andrew White  
Susan Willens

## 5-9 Years

Graham Atkinson  
Josh Berman  
Brad Bickford  
Paul Brown  
Phillip Brunell  
Ralph Buglass  
Hanne Caraher  
Fredric Clarke  
Marion Connell  
Dan Coyle  
William Daney  
Jeffrey Drobis

Stephen Elkin  
Mark Gottlieb  
P. Lance Graef  
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Monica Grigera  
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Arthur Levine  
Karen Gail Lewis  
Carol Light  
Ellen Moody  
Daniel Moskowitz  
Mark Nadel  
Lois Neuman  
Louis Nevins  
Charles O'Connor  
Richard R. Palmer  
John Parascandola  
Judith Plotz  
Jacques Read  
Don Ross  
Catherine Sandifer  
Diane Swan  
Al Taran  
Susan Urofsky  
Paul Van Nice  
Carl Weichel  
Kim Weichel  
Chris With

## Up to 5 Years

Judy Alden  
Ibrahim Anli  
Monica Batra  
Joe Belden  
Helen Blank  
Martin Blank  
Monroe Brett  
John Burton  
Ilsa Bush  
Gary Cahn  
Russell Canan  
Albert Cheh  
Richard Chipkin  
Ronald Collins  
Joseph Cotruvo  
Robert Croog  
Susan Drobis  
Robert Feldhuhn  
David Flaxman  
Lisa Friedman  
Nick Glakas  
Christian Godart  
Larry Gondelman  
Margery Gordon  
Jeffrey Gorsky  
Bill Hadden  
Rabbi Shua Hecht  
Heather Heckel  
Gerry Hendershot  
Jim Holman  
Catharine Keatley  
Al Kilborne  
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David Pomerantz  
Jeffrey Porter  
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Hunter Rawlings  
Joseph Reo  
Victor Rezmovic  
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Marjorie Shaw  
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Jay Sherwin  
Milton Shinberg  
Anastasia Snelling  
Joseph Snyder  
Patricia Spector  
Delbert Spurlock  
Mark Stevens  
Karen Stewart  
Matthew Swartz  
Candace Thurman  
Michael Usdan  
James Verdier  
Reggie Walton  
Edward Ward  
Guillermo Warley  
Frederick Weisberg  
Natalie Wexler  
Xenia Wilkinson  
Peter Wilson  
Paul Zeitz

## BY THE NUMBERS

1552

Number members

249

Number of study groups and shorts (A record)

86

Number of new study groups and shorts

153

Number of Study Group Leaders

24

Number of new Study Group Leaders

375

Number of donors (A record)

4

“I enjoy being able to attend OLLI classes and lectures on Zoom; I know it was a ton of work to make this transition, so thanks to the whole OLLI team for that.”

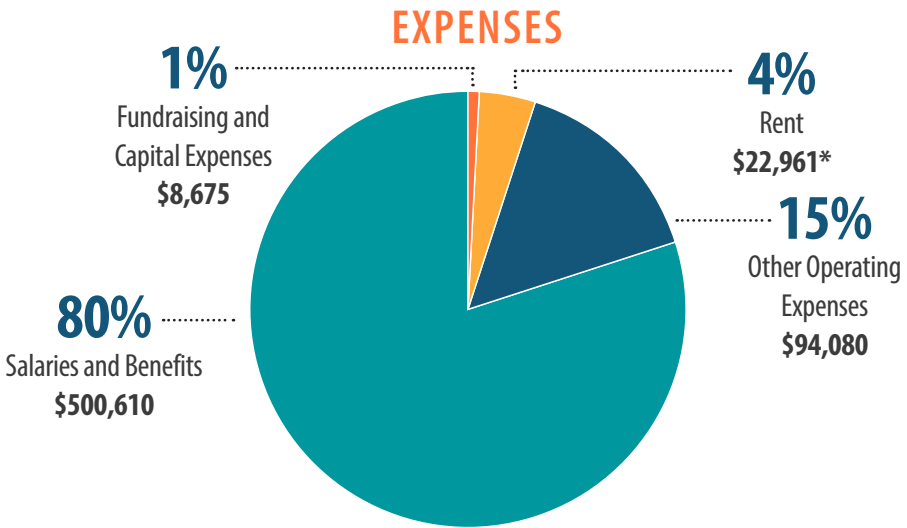
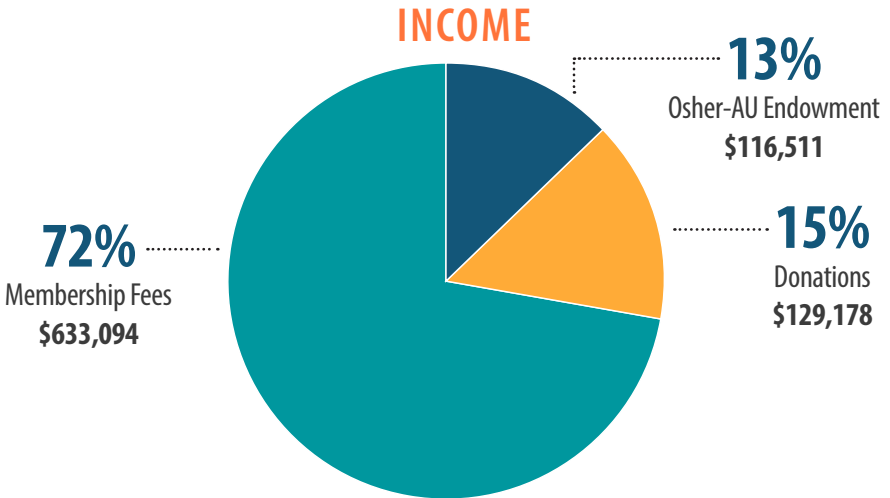
—Mauri Osheroff

“I am amazed at how well things are going with my Alcott study group and am grateful for the professional electronic support OLLI is providing. The class really seems to want things to succeed. . . . People are courteous and don't interrupt each other. But OLLI participants always are like that!”

—Linda Freeman

# FINANCIAL REPORT

Each year, the Treasurer, Finance Committee, and the Executive Director develop the annual budget. The budget for 2020-21 presented challenges much the same as last year in that it was difficult to predict membership enrollment, which typically accounts for approximately 80% of revenue for the year. We were fortunate this year to have stable membership revenue and a robust fundraising program coupled with a decrease in operating expenditures because our program was online for the entire year, which resulted in a net surplus for the year.



## NOTES

\*Rent expenses represent a small portion of the total expenses due to continued rent abatement from American University because of the pandemic.

The balance of the OLLI at American University investment account on June 30, 2021: \$1,788,525.

These are unaudited figures.

“I want to thank you for all of your amazing dedication and hard work. The Zoom workshop today was quite useful. Greatly appreciated!”

—Marilyn Smith

## 2020-21 SPECIAL EVENTS

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In addition to the usual four Lecture Series, during the 2020-21 academic year, OLLI offered Serendipities!—talks by OLLI members and friends, virtual tours of culture and institutions in DC and Rome, Coffee Chats and Happy Hours, a four-part series on Washington’s Black History, a lecture and performance on Mozart, and more.

Serendipity! Book Chat: *Esther Safran Foer, I Want You to Know We’re Still Here: A Post-Holocaust Memoir*

Three Coffee Chats

Serendipity! Talk: Bill Hadden, The CDC

Serendipity! Talk: Carl and Kim Weichel, 1968—A People Divided, A Country on Edge

Two online Happy Hours

Online tour at Smithsonian National Museum of Asian Art: Art Across Cultures

Serendipity! Talk: Joe Hassett, Yeats Now: Echoing Into Life

Serendipity! Talk: Nick Glakas, Franklin & Winston—The Partnership That Saved The World

Online tour of Planet Word—DC’s Latest Museum!

Serendipity! Talk: Carl Weichel, Christo vs. Warhol; Eclectic Art and Eccentric Personality

Serendipity! Talk: Joe Snyder, Genghis Khan—The Man Who Conquered Eurasia

Online tour of the Eisenhower Memorial

Viewing of *Hamlet* by William Shakespeare

End-of-year online social gathering

Revisiting Washington’s Black History, four-part series

James Joyce Birthday Celebration

Serendipity! Talk: Bernard Kempinski, Introduction to the Railroads of the Civil War

Online tour of the American Visionary Art Museum

Third online Happy Hour

Online tour of the U Street Murals in Washington, DC

Online tour of the Jewish Community in Rome, Italy

Nancy Jo Snider, Mozart and the King lecture and performance

Bloomsday Celebration

Summer in-person Happy Hour

Serendipity! Talk: Dan Sherman, Rodgers Without Hammerstein

Online tour of Rome, Italy: Cinema and Food

Serendipity! Talk: Dan Sherman, Tradition: The Music of Bock and Harnick



# 2020–2021 DONORS

The Osher Lifelong Learning Institute at American University has earned the Silver Seal of Transparency from Candid (formerly the Foundation Center and GuideStar), which “indicates that a nonprofit has provided key information in its Nonprofit Profile. By providing up-to-date information, nonprofits allow potential donors and funders to make educated decisions about the work they do to make the world a better place.”

## Friends of OLLI Fund

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Lynn Lewis in honor of OLLI  
    staff and community  
    of learners  
Patricia and Randall Lewis  
Denise and Alexander  
    Liebowitz  
Carol Light in honor of our  
    GREAT OLLI Staff!!!!  
Ysabel Lightner  
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Tony Long in honor of  
    OLLI Staff & SGLs  
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    Revonda B. Mosher  
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Ellen and Jim Myerberg  
Mark and Beverly Nadel  
Louis and Sherry Nevins  
Stanley and Carol Newman  
Elsa Newmyer in celebration of  
    Virginia Newmyer, teacher  
    and guide, and James  
    Newmyer, who loved taking  
    OLLI courses  
Virginia W. Newmyer  
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Joyce and John Vialet

Susan Vincent  
Edward Ward in memory of  
Brock Hansen  
Gray Warren-Boulton in  
memory of my beloved  
brother, Bobby  
Alice Weinstein in honor of  
the staff who Zoomed to  
perfection. Thanks.  
Les Weinstein and  
Lynn Jatlow  
Andrea Weiss  
Francine Weiss in memory of  
Ellen Siegler  
Joan and John Westley  
Betsy White  
Barbara Wierzynski in memory  
of Joel Havemann  
Susan Willens  
Elsa Williams  
Karen Williamson in honor of  
Diane Renfroe  
Peter and Betty Wilson  
Barbara Wise in honor of  
Susan Rogers, sister  
Mark Wolfman  
Pandit Wright  
Amy Young  
Ellen and Bernard Young  
Sally and Anders Zeijlon

### **Raymond J. Rasenberger Scholarship Fund**

KMA Zuckert

### **Anne N. Wallace Fund for Staff Development**

Joyce Chandler

### **In Honor of Carolyn Small Alper**

The Alper Family Foundation

*We have made every effort to ensure all of the above information is correct. We apologize for any errors. Please contact us if a correction is needed.*

# BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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