



OLLI @ UTEP

On Campus
Miners Hall
Room 209

(915) 747-6280



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OLLI MEMBERSHIP MEETING A GREAT SUCCESS



OLLI held its annual membership meeting on Thursday, December 5 at the UTEP Centennial Museum. Members heard a greeting from UTEP Extended University Dean Beth Brunk-Chavez, messages from Board of Directors Chair Janet Dand and Executive Director Lynn Provenzano, followed by reports from each of the members of the Board of Directors. Members had submitted questions in advance, and Board members took turns answering the questions. The meeting was merrily interrupted by a 'flash mob' of singing UTEP Opera Department students singing *Libiamo* from Giuseppe Verdi's *La Traviata*. It was a delightful surprise enjoyed by all. We resumed answering questions, enjoyed light refreshments, and then adjourned to the OLLI lounge for coffee and a variety of scrumptious bundt cakes.

We have included a few pictures of the meeting in the OLLI Photo album at the end of the newsletter. Look for an OLLI on Line special edition to come out in January. In that addition, we'll recap the reports from the Board of Directors and the Executive Director, print the member questions and Board answers, as well as any questions that were asked after the meeting. We'll also inform you of Board goals and plans for 2020.

"Small cheer and great welcome make a merry feast."

William Shakespeare

A MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Happy Holidays, Everyone!

It's been a whirlwind of movement at OLLI this year. I often look at December as a time to send out that holiday letter recapping the year's adventures. Yet, we've been on this journey together in some way and we can see the benefits of the work that has gone into developing our OLLI community. We're not quite done for this year. You have met our new administrative assistant, Lily Duenas, and our work study student, Kristian Mancillas. Now, you can welcome German Juarez, our second work study student. German and Kristian will each be working 12 hours/week. Both will be studying the A/V equipment in each of the classrooms and will be trained on Aceware to assist with registration and data entry. Training is in place for all of our staff regarding UTEP compliance, systems, and software.

Many of you have been contacted regarding the \$30 refund/donation project. It's been slow going as we are still in need of signed request forms. The first of the refunds have been sent out. Donations are greatly appreciated. This was an old, old, old parking tag deposit that we needed to reconcile. So, if you got a call from one of our volunteers and have not filled out an official request or refund or donate form, please contact us. Otherwise, we ask for patience with this project.

Watch your mailboxes for the Spring 2020 catalog. We have been working with the Extended University marketing department and the catalog is better than ever. Plus, the development office has helped us with additional mailing lists. We are able to distribute more Spring catalogs than in previous years and will have additional catalogs available in the office for OLLI members to distribute to doctor's offices, libraries, clubs, and any other location where we can recruit members.

What will your New Year's resolution be? We've had to take a good look at OLLI growth, so you'll hear us shouting out to recruit new members. That's the first resolution. There will be more. In the meantime, look forward to the installation of a Sierra Springs water system for the OLLI lounge, a pilot program with the Golden Age Fitness program that is developing into new collaboration and possibilities for the future, and more with the International Studies group. Did you know that there are 72 countries represented in the UTEP student body? How many countries are represented at OLLI?

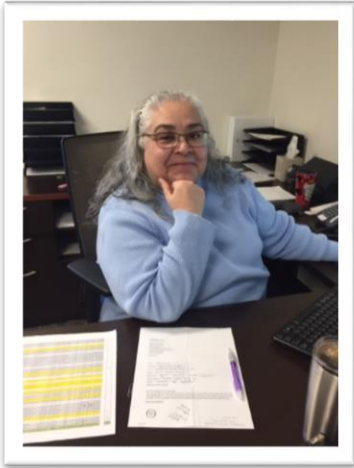
FYI...The office will be closed December 24th through January 6th for the UTEP winter break. We'll be back in full swing for January registration. Volunteers will train on the 6th. Registration starts on January 7th. Enjoy the winter break and return to OLLI refreshed and ready to take on a new year with us. Spring is already blossoming into something special!

Lynn Provenzano, Executive Director

FIVE QUESTIONS FOR LILY

OLLI is pleased to introduce you to our new Administrative Assistant, Lilia Duenas (she goes by Lily). She brings a wealth of experience to the position, and we are thrilled to have her! We cornered her during her busy schedule for a brief interview, so please meet Lily:

Why did you choose to apply for the Administrative Assistant position?



I was an OLLI member until spring 2019, while I was completing my degree here at UTEP, and I experienced first-hand the camaraderie that is shared between the instructors, members and the staff. I have always been an advocate of lifelong learning, and I believe that everyone has the capacity to learn new skills. OLLI gave access to classes that I previously did not have the opportunity to take. I had come across the OLLI catalog a couple of years prior to turning 50 and I was impressed by the program and the classes that were offered. Having been a member, I can really appreciate that as OLLI members we are a community, and also part of the larger UTEP community.

Tell us about your other job(s) at UTEP.

While I was completing my last 2 years of school, I decided to challenge myself by taking on a student employment position at the Wise Theatre costume shop. I had not sewn in years and I did not have any formal instruction so it was somewhat out of my comfort zone because I was expected to also assist in instructing the practicum students on the basics of sewing and costume construction. It was very rewarding to see students realize that they just learned to sew on a button, use a machine, and even construct a garment. Prior to that I worked for the state of Texas for 24 years. As a public benefits employee, I had the opportunity to help and refer people from different backgrounds and cultures, including the different challenges they were facing. I learned that I enjoyed working with people and listening to the stories they had to share. It wasn't always easy, but it was rewarding.

Have you ever taken OLLI classes? If so, please tell us about that.

I have taken Repujado, Tai Chi, yoga, and Moving Gently with Creative Purpose. I took the classes as a break from my studies, and as an opportunity to learn something new that I previously didn't have access to due to time and commitments.

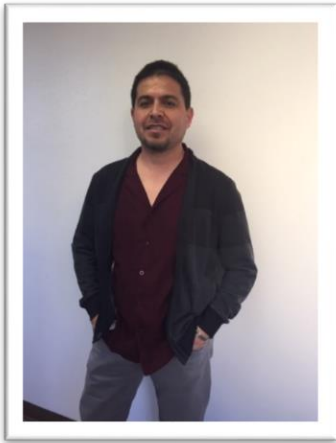
You have worked here for a short while---any impressions, challenges, etc?

Everyone is very friendly and willing to help. I get to see the community in action on a daily basis. I have the opportunity to learn new office programs and skills that are offered by UTEP to better serve OLLI members. I like challenges and love to problem-solve so as OLLI is entering into the next phase I am excited about putting my new skills to work. The biggest challenge right now is learning everyone's name. As I scroll through the many lists of names, I am slowly, but surely, associating names to faces.

Tell us a little about your hobbies, interests, etc.

I was born and raised here in El Paso. I am a first generation American citizen and also a first generation college graduate. I started my college education at UTEP back in 1985 and it took me only 34 years to complete my undergraduate degree. I do plan to enroll in a Master's program in the future now that my only daughter has started her undergraduate degree. I love puzzles, reading, sewing and some crocheting. I love to bake for the holidays and I like to try new recipes for dinner. I collect penguins so I have received some interesting gifts over the years, including a Japanese gum wrapper (no gum) depicting a penguin on an iceberg. Because of OLLI, I can now include repujado and yoga as my hobbies.

HAIL, CESAR



OLLI is very fortunate to have some amazing instructors, and Cesar Rivera is surely one of them! Cesar holds a Juris Doctor Degree from UCLA and a Master's in Interdisciplinary Studies from UTEP. He taught bilingual adult literacy for two years and has been teaching philosophy at local colleges and universities for almost two decades. Currently, he teaches Philosophy and Ethics at EPCC, as well as Religion and the Law at UTEP's Religious Studies Program. He has been teaching at OLLI since August 2018. In the short time he has been teaching at OLLI, Cesar has already garnered quite a following. His classes tackle tough, sometimes controversial subjects, and he handles these topics, and the lively class discussions that ensue, with aplomb and humor. Meet Cesar Rivera, in his own words:

What are some classes you have taught at OLLI, and is there a particular favorite that you really enjoy teaching?

Fall 2018: Religion in the American Legal System; Civil Rights and Anti-discrimination Law.

Spring 2019: The Interaction Between Political Theory and Philosophy of Religion in Modern Democracies; The Role of Legal Philosophy in the American Federal Judiciary.

Summer 2019: Myths and their Persistent Appeal.

Fall 2019: Pluralistic Ethics for a Diverse and Divided Society; Civil Disobedience and Legal Punishment.

So far, I haven't repeated any classes, but I'd like to re-teach the classes on religion, civil rights, and ethics because I think they have been the most fun to teach. The level of interest and motivation the OLLI students showed was very rewarding.

You have a Juris Doctor Degree from UCLA and a Master's in interdisciplinary studies at UTEP. What drew you to obtain those degrees?

Chronologically, in early 2000, I had just graduated with a BA in philosophy when the chair of the department invited me to teach with them. However, in order to be able to do so, I needed to be enrolled in a Master's degree and have taken graduate philosophy classes. Since there was no Masters Philosophy program at UTEP at the time, I decided to enroll in the MAIS, which allowed me to take not only graduate courses in philosophy, but also graduate classes in the social sciences and in Latin American literature that I had always wanted to take.

Subsequently, I decided to further my interest in what mattered most to me in philosophy, which was practical issues of morality, religion, politics, and the way they were treated by the law. That led me to pursue a juris doctor degree at UCLA, where my main concentration was civil rights, anti-discrimination law, and constitutional law in general.

You teach Philosophy and Ethics at EPCC and Religion and the Law at UTEP. Tell us about your interest in these fields of study.

All of these classes involve a critical examination of what many of us humans typically take for granted, i.e., values (e.g., moral, religious, political, legal). By critically evaluating our assumptions and attempts at theorizing

about what we find worth living for, I think we can not only improve our thinking but also make informed decisions and be more kind to each other and ourselves.

The classes you teach at OLLI are popular and create very lively and diverse conversations, and you have quite a following. How do you handle the diverse viewpoints that arise in your classes?

Honestly, when I started teaching at OLLI a year and a half ago I did not expect the interest my classes thankfully have been shown. There are several things I try to handle the expression of diverse viewpoints. For instance, from the beginning of each session I try to establish an atmosphere of cooperation and respect to each other, inviting students to contribute their expertise and opinions but in an orderly fashion. It does not always work, of course, but most of the time OLLI students are very good at regulating themselves to leave room for others to contribute to discussions. Whenever someone monopolizes the mic (so to speak) or deviates from the scheduled topics, I politely remind them we're on a schedule, indicate to them what parts of the class their concerns fit in, and then try to get back to them when appropriate. Furthermore, I promote open-mindedness by encouraging students to challenge me when they feel it's warranted, but also to allow themselves to be challenged in their views, since we all are fallible human beings and we should allow for the possibility that, even in our most solid convictions, we might be missing something others can enlighten us about. Finally and in connection with open-mindedness and human fallibility, I encourage humor and use it myself. Not that I consider myself to be funny, but I'm definitely playful and allow myself to be silly to model to others how we don't need to be always somber when dealing with serious matters. Also, cultivating a ludic sense is important to avoid taking oneself too seriously. Besides, I'm generally averse to academic solemnity. I think this makes me less formal than people expect from instructors but also more relatable than I would be otherwise, which probably encourages discussions in a friendly tone.

What are some takeaways you want your OLLI students to have from your classes?

I can think of several things, but one of them is that, given that we're all fallible, we should be able to doubt all dogmatism, with humor but without being cynical and mean-spirited. The immense difficulties us humans face do not call for cynicism just because easy solutions are not available. They call for hard work and for a kind of cautious optimism that human cooperation and coordination are possible to build a better El Paso, a better borderland, a better nation, and a better world, out of a variety of resources not contained by a single political ideology, school of thought, religious doctrine, or culture.

Cheers, prost, and salucita*

*Editor's note: This is the sign-off that Cesar used in his email to me, and I just had to include it.

FHAR at UTEP NEEDS YOU

Thinking of contributing to a worthy cause? Please consider FHAR (Foster Homeless Adopted Resource), a resource center at UTEP that helps students who have graduated out of foster care or find themselves homeless or in need of an emergency financial boost. Donations may be in the form of \$10 to \$20 gift cards to Walmart, Walgreens, Target, CVS, dollar stores, or fast food places, as well as the UTEP bookstore, and are urgently needed. An example of FHAR's assistance is giving a student a Walmart gift card to buy a white shirt and tie for job interviews. OLLI has generously donated in the past. Gift cards may be dropped off at the OLLI office. Help a struggling UTEP student!

~ IN MEMORIUM ~

Long-time OLLI member Garland B. Greene passed away on November 30, 2019, with his wife of 30 years, Dr. Melanie Trevino, by his side.

For many years he taught the popular OLLI class Films with a Mind of Their Own. The documentary film class was instigated through conversation that immediately followed a trip to Al Gore's film, *An Inconvenient Means*. The participants were Garland Greene, Melanie Trevino, Magdalene and Mike Iglar. Peter Rivera, OLLI director at the time, liked the idea and gave it the name- Films with a Mind of Their Own.

Garland brought on Cris Borges, a UTEP doctoral student, to help him get the course off the ground in Year 1. Garland continued to be in charge of the course for the following 8 years.

Garland was born and raised in New York City (Harlem and Jamaica, Long Island) and after public school education there, he worked in the garment industry for several years before being drafted in the Korean War era. He served 20 years in the Army prior to his retirement in 1974. His last employment before full retirement was teaching electronics at El Paso Community College. Among a variety of post-retirement activities, Garland Greene's most valued experience was a decade as a volunteer at the Chamizal National Memorial. He always provided deep insights and commentary on a variety of movies and documentaries and certainly gave OLLI students a greater understanding and appreciation of film.

A memorial will be held at a later date.

A good head and a good heart are always a formidable combination.

-- Nelson Mandela

LUNCH 'n BOOKS NEWS

Want a suggestion for a good book to read? Look no further. The following is a list of books read this past year by the OLLI Book Club. You're invited to join us at noon in the OLLI Clubroom on the second Thursday of each month. Here's the list of books we read during 2019:

Fiction: *Exit West, The Sympathizer, Regeneration, The Immortalists, The Last, Circe*

Non-Fiction: *The Immortal Life of Henrietta Lacks, The Monk of Mokha, Born a Crime, Educated, The Glass Universe, A Woman of No Importance.*

OLLI BOOK CLUB SELECTIONS

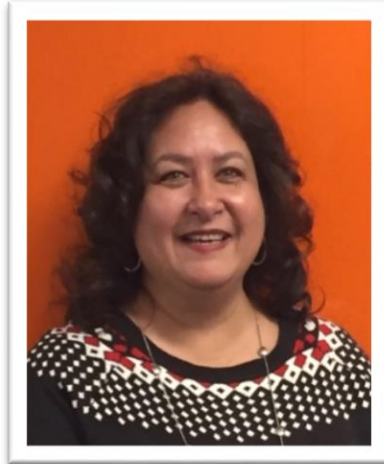
The OLLI Book club has chosen three books to usher in 2020. We meet the second Thursday of the month at noon in the Clubroom. Join us!

January: *The People of the Book* by Geraldine Brooks (fiction)

February: *The Library Book* by Susan Orlean (non-fiction)

March: *Into the Beautiful North* by Luis Urrea (fiction)

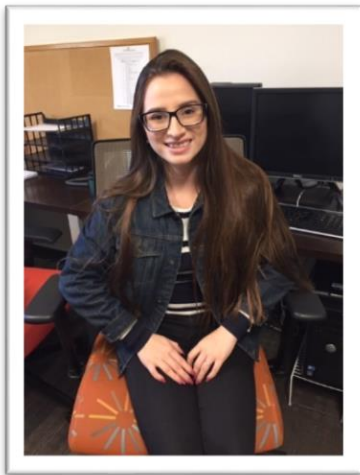
MEET NEW OLLI BOARD MEMBERS



Meet new OLLI Board of Directors
Carolyn Awalt (left)
Marianela Milner (right).

Carolyn will be chair of the Speakers
Bureau and Marianela will serve as
Secretary.

MEET OUR UTEP WORK STUDY STUDENTS



Kristian Mancillas is a UTEP sophomore Biomedicine major, and she plans to become a pediatric physician's assistant. When asked what she does in her spare time, she said she goes home to study (spoken like a good student!) Kristian loves to travel, and her favorite destination so far has been Machu Pichu, Peru.



German Juarez is a UTEP junior. His major is Music Education and he hopes to teach as an elementary school Band Director. He is a percussionist, playing a variety of drums and percussion instruments, and he also plays the marimba! He especially enjoys playing the drums at his church.

OLLI JOINS UTEP IN CELEBRATING THE HOLIDAYS

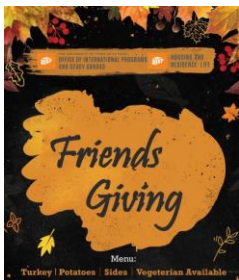
SCARE AWAY HUNGER

The UTEP Food Pantry was founded in 2014 to serve UTEP students with food insecurity. Research suggests that as many as half of college students deal with this. Food insecurity can be an obstacle to student success. OLLI members generously donated to the Scare Away Hunger drive, contributing to 10% of their goal and many grateful students.



UTEP students collecting OLLI's donations. Note the student at the rear flashing the Go Miners! sign.

OLLI GOES TO UTEP FRIENDSGIVING



OLLI Member, Beatriz Vera (above with students), works with the International Studies program and coordinated UTEP's November 25th Friendsgiving holiday dinner. While Thanksgiving may not be everyone's holiday, a friendly celebratory meal is welcoming. OLLI Members provided an array of delicious international desserts, for this meal. (Pictured right: Lynn Provenzano, Marie Livingston, Eva Wooden, Jill Boyea, Kristian Mancillas, Lily Duenas. Not pictured: Ann Walker, Adela Knight)

OLLI ATTENDS UTEP WINTER WORLD CELEBRATION



UTEP’s International Studies celebrated again at the Winter World Celebration on December 11th in the Student Union East TRCC to introduce students to the many different cultures and winter traditions represented on campus. Students had the opportunity to meet our OLLI members, Kjell Hansen and Luis Castillo as they shared OLLI’s international treats (Kjell’s famous kringla, Mexican biscochos, and Italian pizzelles) along with information about our OLLI program and the upcoming Spring catalog.



OLLI SPRING 2020 CATALOG ONLINE IN HOMES AND HANDS SOON

The Spring Catalog is online for you to peruse prior to registration. We’ll find in mailboxes mid-December.

What will the course line-up look like? You can grasp sparrow’s tail, keeping writing that memoir, determine whether Kate is actually “tamed by her marriage to Petruchio, crochet a scarf, play a samba, sing to old tunes, explore the intrigue of the Palace of Versailles, delve into films, documentaries, and TED talks, pursue wellness, explore the world through history, dabble in paint, metal, or threads, and more.

Registrations begins January 7th- Online- By Mail- In Person
Get ready to feed your curiosity and expand your creativity!



REMEMBER!
EACH ONE ... REACH ONE
Bring a new member to OLLI and share the benefits. Let’s grow the OLLI community!

OLLI PHOTO ALBUM * FALL 2019

HALLOWEEN AND DIA DE LOS MUERTOS

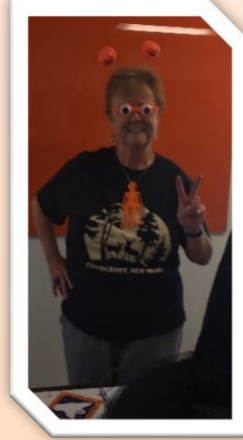
A fine Halloween and Dia de Los Muertos at OLLI . Thanks to all who brought ghoulishly good treats.



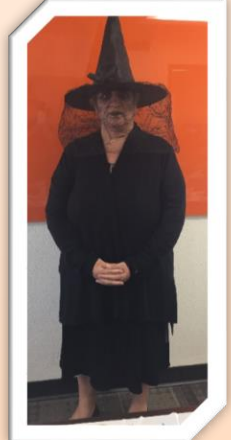
Halloween pixie on the loose!



Morticia! No. It's Leanne Von Mittenwald, OLLI Events Chair



Mary Harris sees things differently with those wild specs.



A mysterious witch flew in for a visit



Freaky fantastic cookies



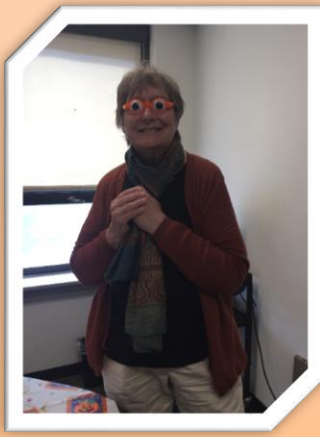
A coven of OLLI witches. They assured us they are good witches.



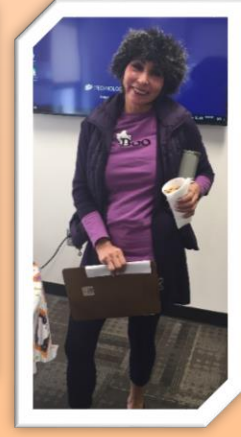
A table of delight on Halloween Day.



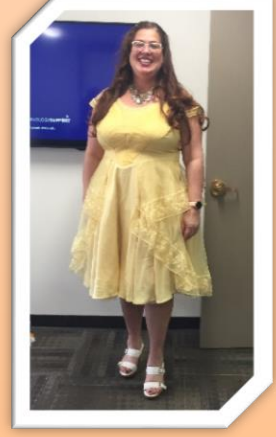
Wait, is that a witch in the OLLI lounge with instructor Steve Schiller?!



Marie Livingston sees things clearly now



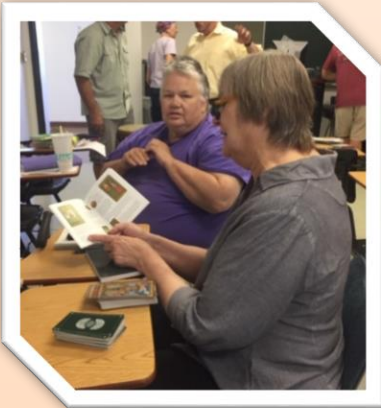
Who says you can't wear purple on Halloween?



We had Princess Maxie Starr Flores pay us a visit

OLLI PHOTO ALBUM * FALL 2019 NEAL LOCKE'S DIVINATION CLASS

We learned about many forms of ancient divination: tarot cards, reading tea leaves, crystal balls, bells, shells, drums, pyramids, gongs--you name it! What fun we had!



Learning about the Tarot cards and a small sample of the drums we banged on in Neal Locke's Divination class. What fun!



And... we banged on gongs. Trudy D'Souza made some noise.



The line-up of equipment for divination: bells, pyramids, crystal balls of all shapes, sizes, colors.



Neal prepares to teach us all about divining with bells.



We looked at shells.....and swirling colors in water---anything to seek the truth! Not sure we have the makings of a good 'diviner', but we sure had fun.



Not sure that Ron Lambert and Tom Shaughnessy are taking this seriously!

OLLI PHOTO ALBUM * FALL 2019

Members Mean the World to Us



Kjell Hansen greeted returning OLLI students to 'kringles', a delicious Norwegian pastry filled with fruit. Many of us have enjoyed his 'bollers', Norwegian kardemumme (cardamom) rolls. Kjell has starter dough that routinely travels with him from El Paso to Norway. He estimates that his starter dough has racked up at least 50,000 airmiles! Thanks, Kjell for sharing your homemade treats with us! What a great way to start the new OLLI session.

Photographer for the day, Rich Dand with new board member, Carolyn Awalt.



Opera UTEP flash mobs the Annual Membership meeting with *Libiamo* from *La Traviata*. What a surprise!



Annual Membership meeting. It was a progressive event. Meeting and light fare at the Centennial Museum. Dessert and coffee at the Holiday Bundt Table at OLLI.

