YEARS

2019-20 Annual Report Osher Lifelong Learning Institute at the University of California, Berkeley



It ended with a Zoom.



Director's Note



Susan Hoffman Director, OLLI @Berkeley

Whew! What a year it has been. If there's one word that captures the spirit and takeaway of this moment and our response to it, it's resilience.

As I reflect on the past six months and its wave of unprecedented challenges, I am in awe of the resilience displayed by everyone in the OLLI community. Our members, faculty, staff and volunteers overcame every zig and zag thrown their way, making the pivot from in-person to online instruction with a collective insistence that we continue our mission.

When the university shifted to remote learning, our staff worked tirelessly and creatively to support faculty on the use of Zoom while helping members access their online courses and fully participate in them. Most remarkably, every interaction took place in the midst of other dislocations in our collective lives: sheltering-in-place, social distancing from friends, family and neighbors, masks.

Through it all, we worked to be a thread of continuity and community, which has helped us and our members weather this disaster. Our courses stayed relevant and special events were added to respond to the pandemic, the election and the deeply entrenched issues of racism and inequality. Members and faculty expertise taught and inspired us, while OLLI staff contributed to the collective knowledge of what works in remote learning.

Another significant contributor to our resilience has been the generosity of our donors. Last Oct., we launched an Annual Fund campaign, "Reach for the Teach," which targeted a 25% pay increase for faculty. The response was immediate and heartening. We reached our goal and did so in record time.

This annual report offers a glimpse, but only a glimpse, of 2019-20. Behind each course, event and conversation lies something harder to capture: the energy, creativity and perseverance of the OLLI community. If it's resilience the nation needs right now, we've got it.

Thank you for your ongoing support and belief in OLLI @Berkeley.



2019-20 by the numbers



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We spent July 1, 2019 to June 30, 2020 doing what we do best — focusing on the future. We anticipated, planned, organized, designed, redesigned, responded and curated a stimulating learning program for older adults that both met the moment and, thanks to the hard work and resolve of the OLLI community, surpassed it. Despite the whiplash of this extraordinary year, we remained steadfast in our mission to create and faciliate a public space for the campus and community to experience the joys and benefits of lifelong learning. Little did we suspect going into fiscal year 2019-20 that the "public space" would end up being a Zoom room. Onward.

Fall 2019 - Winter 2020

Awarded NSF grant with campus partners

I n Oct. 2019, OLLI @Berkeley along with two campus partners — the Fung Fellowship for Wellness and Technology Innovations and the Lawrence Hall of Science (LHS) — was awarded a National Science Foundation (NSF) grant focused on advancing understanding of informal STEM learning in older adults. It is the first NSF grant ever awarded to any of the 124 Osher Lifelong Learning Institutes in the U.S.

This type of campus collaboration — one that spans generations and areas of expertise — is rare although hopefully not for long.

Little research has been done on the impact of informal STEM learning on older adults. Informal learning generally means the sometimes deliberate, often spontaneous, always creative gathering of knowledge outside of traditionally structured learning environments.



To date, the research team has conducted online member surveys and one-on-one interviews, laying the groundwork for twoday workshops in which members and Cal undergraduates will brainstorm, ideate and prototype solutions to a design challenge. Originally scheduled for spring and fall 2020, the workshops have been postponed until it is safe to gather in person once again. We are thrilled by this campus partnership and the NSF's recognition of the value of learning about, and engaging with, older adults. We think of our members as pioneers in the field of lifelong learning, and it seems right that they should be involved in such formative research.

— Susan Hoffman, Director

Fall 2019 - Winter 2020



Intergenerational program launched

In Oct., we began our new intergenerational initiative, Words Over Time (WOT), which promotes age-spanning, perspective-shifting dialogues between OLLI members and Berkeley undergraduates. Facilitated by Berkeley's Darren Zook, WOT provides an opportunity to initiate civil, reflective and meaningful conversation across the chronological divide and the social and political landscape. Topics addressed were climate change, the funding of higher education, and women's rights and the #MeToo movement.

Aging Research and Technology Summit

We co-hosted the second annual Aging Research and Technology Summit held on campus in Sept., bringing together leading researchers, academics, technologists, caregivers and older adult advocates presenting their efforts to confront the crisis of dementia and other brain disorders. Speakers included Randy Schekman, Nobel laureate and professor of Molecular and Cell Biology at Berkeley.



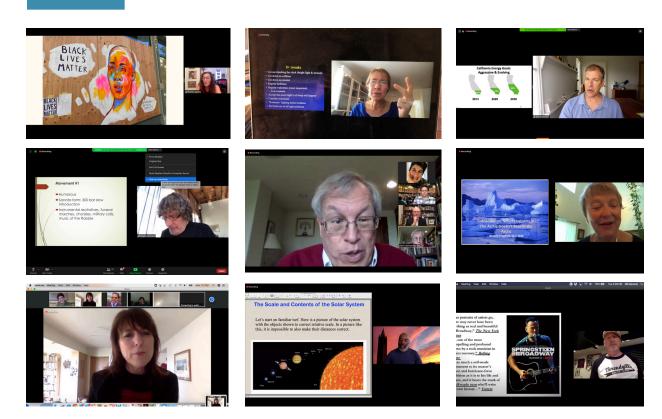
Campus partnerships

Starting in fall 2019, we actively expanded and cultivated campus partnerships — Berkeley Law, Lawrence Hall of Science and Alumni Relations, among them — to further cement our role in the life and learning of the UC Berkeley community.

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Let's call it the **Pandemic Pivot**. We began sheltering at home due to COVID-19 at the end of our winter term. Working from kitchen tables and stuffy attics, our team 1) redesigned our entire spring program, turning 35 in-person courses into 13 live and recorded online courses in just three weeks; 2) informed and galvanized members with rapid and transparent communications; 3) responded personally to hundreds of individual member requests and queries; 4) coached faculty extensively on the use of Zoom technology; 5) hosted Zoom tutorials and a Town Hall attended by close to 800 members in total; 6) mapped out our summer and fall terms, and; 7) did much more...

Spring - Summer 2020



Relevant and timely scholarship

Throughout the spring and summer, we curated a diverse lineup of livestream and recorded online courses taught by UC Berkeley faculty, including Berkeley Law Dean Erwin Chemerinsky, as well as other scholars. We also expanded the number and scope of our speaker events, which focused on an array of topics, from the green revolution to the impact of the coronavirus on vulnerable populations. Because of the depth of our offerings and the fact that virtually anyone from anywhere could gain access to them, we expanded our reach significantly, increasing by 40% the number of cities our members call home.

America's Unfinished Work series

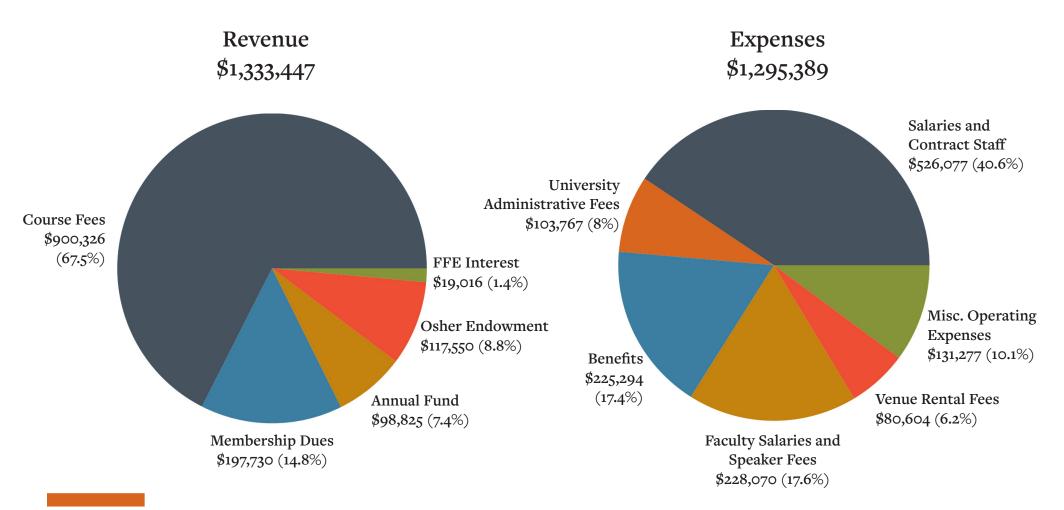


I n immediate response to the march for racial justice that erupted in the spring and summer, we launched "America's Unfinished Work," a speaker series featuring leaders on campus and in the community engaged in the examination and eradication of systemic racism to create a more humane, just and equal society. Our first speaker was Dr. Lawrence Rosenthal, founder and chair of Berkeley's Center for Right-Wing Studies, who spoke on the rise of white supremacy in today's America. 500 people attended the presentation.

Summer Bridge

We launched our first-ever Summer Bridge program in July and Aug. to help our members remain engaged and connected with one another and with us during our typically quiet months. Nearly 400 members attended our multi-week initiatives: OLLI Engages, OLLI Reads and the Vital Aging Workshop.

2019-20 Financials



Despite a fiscal year rife with turmoil and uncertainties, we did, in the end, balance our budget. Significantly lower online-only membership dues were applied to our spring and summer terms causing a 15% reduction in overall membership revenue. That decrease offset any savings from having fewer faculty and no facility rental expenditures due to the shift to remote-only delivery. We also processed \$66,000 in refunds in Feb. and Mar. as a result of course cancelations and member-requested course withdrawals.

Thank You to Our Donors

We gratefully acknowledge the many members and friends who generously supported our program between July 1, 2019 and June 30, 2020.

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We are honored to be supported by powerhouse member volunteers who dedicate their time and energy to help make our institute the best it can be. We are grateful to the committee members noted here and to the many other members who contribute in meaningful ways.

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Thank You to Our Team

Navigating the zigzags of 2019-20 required tremendous flexibility on the part of our staff, faculty and speakers. Good humor, too. It's because of their dedication and resilience that we were able to continue to provide the dynamic, year-round learning experiences and community that our members value.

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