



at GEORGE MASON UNIVERSITY

- The Osher Lifelong Learning Institute at George Mason University (OLLI Mason) offers lectures, cultural opportunities and social engagement in a welcoming atmosphere to Northern Virginia residents who desire to learn and share their talents as well as to connect with other intellectually curious individuals.
- An annual membership fee entitles OLLI Mason members access to over 600 daytime non-credit courses and events during four terms each year at three sites in Northern Virginia (Fairfax, Reston and Sterling). The courses range from music and arts to archaeology and history, religion to science and economics. At OLLI Mason, no homework, no exams, and no previous degrees are required. All are welcome and encouraged to participate as members and volunteers.
- Founded in 1991 with 100 members, OLLI Mason has expanded to nearly 1200 members in 2020. Membership is comprised of adults age 50 and above from diverse backgrounds. The average age of an OLLI member is around 68.
- OLLI Mason is one of a network of 124 OLLIs affiliated with universities around the country supported by the Bernard Osher Foundation. In recognition of OLLI Mason's outstanding service in promoting lifelong learning, the Bernard Osher Foundation has provided two endowments of \$1 million each to OLLI Mason, the principal to be managed by GMU.
- A member-run organization, OLLI Mason is governed by an elected Board of Directors, operational and programming volunteers and a paid Executive Director and part time staff who maintain business operations. OLLI Mason is a 501 (c)(3) nonprofit organization. In addition, OLLI relies on hundreds of volunteer teachers to facilitate the program: 50 percent of courses are taught by OLLI Members, 30 percent by community members and 20 percent by George Mason Professors.

OLLI Mason and the Fairfax Community

- About one-third of Fairfax County residents are over age 50 and the numbers are growing. More and more of this demographic are choosing to age in place and are demanding more intellectual and social stimulation.
- OLLI Mason is a vital tool in addressing the growing needs of Fairfax County's aging population. Not only does OLLI offer seniors a plethora of courses, clubs and social activities throughout the year, the Institute functions as an intellectual cooperative in which members volunteer as course developers, instructors, and organization officers. Members constitute 50 percent of OLLI's instructor base and 100 percent of its directing and operating officers.
- About 200 OLLI Mason members have Fairfax City zip codes, yet over 800 members call the Fairfax campus home, commuting from other areas of the county such as Lorton, Annandale and Centreville.
- These members bolster demand for services and products from businesses around Mason and Fairfax City. Many take Fairfax transit, buy gas, eat in restaurants, and shop in the local vicinity.
- OLLI Mason partners with government and non-profit organizations to extend its learning mission into the broader community. It shares programming and space with the Reston Association, AARP, and the Jewish Community Center, and it regularly provides free classes for the City of Fairfax and George Mason University on issues of importance to county residents and university students.

OLLI Mason and the Fairfax Community (cont'd)

- Over the past few years, OLLI has scheduled dozens of public classes at the Sherwood Center and facilitated even more for George Mason's Fall for the Book festival. It sponsors an annual oral history project with the George Mason University Libraries, sharing with students and archiving in perpetuity first-hand accounts of key historic events, like the Cuban Missile Crisis and Civil Rights Movement.
- OLLI members volunteer for myriad community projects (county, city and federal), such as providing holiday photographs of USO Wounded Warrior families, taking portfolio shots for Mason Theater Department students, serving on Mason advisory boards, and performing skits for Fairfax County's Senior Scam Alert campaign.
- OLLI's Executive Director serves on many regional and state boards associated with aging issues, including the Fairfax County Long Term Care Coordinating Council and on the Governor's Council on Aging.
- As evidence of the extent of the community service, George Mason University honored OLLI Mason with the John C. "Jack" Wood Award for Town Gown relations in 2016, and the OLLI Photography Club was awarded the Fairfax County Adult Volunteer Group Service Award in 2019.

OLLI Mason Membership Distribution



OLLI Mason Community Benefits



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