

UCLA Women & Philanthropy

Celebrating and inspiring women throughout the UCLA community as major donors, leaders and decision-makers

Creating Future Bruin Civic Leaders

Creating collaborative opportunities for change is the goal of UCLA's Center for Community Engagement (CCE). It's committed to reaching communities on local, national, and global levels by bringing Bruins—faculty, staff, and students—together with community partners. CCE creates transformational educational experiences that benefit both students and the communities they serve. Through community-engaged teaching, learning, and research, CCE aims to create a more equitable and just society.

CCE plays a vital role in advancing the Chancellor's strategic priority for civic engagement by providing students experiential learning opportunities that create value for community partners. "There's nothing like working directly with community organizations to empower and inspire our students," Dean of Undergraduate Education Adriana Galván says. "This is a critical step in their journey to becoming future civic leaders ready to tackle the biggest challenges."

Community-engaged learning has significantly evolved since it first launched in 1980 as the Office of Field Studies. In 2006, the Civic Engagement minor was instituted. In 2008, the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching granted UCLA the elective community engagement classification, later renewed in 2015. Integral to CCE's advancement was the 2009-established Astin Community Engaged Scholars program. The



namesakes are Women & Philanthropy Board Member Lena Astin, Ph.D., who passed away in 2015, and her husband Sandy, who passed in 2022.

The Astins research documented the transformative powers of civic engagement for students. Since its launch, the Astin Community Engaged Scholars program has funded the research of 64 students in collaboration with over 40 community-based organizations. Today, the Astins legacy lives on through community-engaged academic courses required in 40 UCLA academic programs. In 2019, the Astin Community Engaged Scholars program became a formal undergraduate component when it joined with the UCLA Labor Center's Community Scholars program.

CCE reached another milestone in 2019 by launching the Chancellor's Award for Community-Engaged Scholars. This annual award supports five UCLA innovative faculty as they design new undergraduate CCE courses.

Assistant Professor of Dance Studies, Tria Blu Wakpa, developed two courses through CCE "Dance: Colonization and Confinement," a collaboration with Tongva artists; and "The Politics and Possibilities of California Tribal Dance," which brings together Tongva, Chumash, Ohlone,

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Serving Others

There are a long line of Bruins in Madhu Chopra Agarwal's family. For 50 years, her father, Inder Chopra, M.D., was a faculty member of UCLA's Department of Endocrinology.

"He saved a lot of lives," Madhu says. "And he never took a day off." Bruins through and through, Madhu and her two siblings attended UCLA. Madhu earned her B.S. in biochemistry in '95 and her M.D. from the UCLA David Geffen School of Medicine (DGSOM)

in '99. While at DGSOM, Madhu met her future husband, Jay Agarwal. The couple came away from UCLA having created some of their closest friendships. "They became our extended family," Madhu shares.

Post-graduation, Madhu established a neuro-ophthalmology practice in Newport Beach. The Agarwals remain active alums, participating in the Alumni Association, Orange County Chancellor's Society Committee, Orange County Bruins, and Madhu is the liaison for her DGSOM class.



Recently, when the Agarwals two children became Bruins—Neal is a junior studying business,

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President’s Message

Spring has arrived, and with it, new opportunities. Nothing energizes me more than discovering avenues to enrich my life, including learning, entertainment, and, most of all, friendships. That’s why so many of the stories in this newsletter excite

me. They demonstrate robust and diverse ways Bruins are engaging with the community and with fellow Bruins.

Our cover features UCLA’s Center for Community Engagement, which received the Carnegie Community Engagement Classification. This honor recognizes the Center’s commitment to collaborating with community partners to build an equitable and just society through programming and by bringing together UCLA faculty, students, and staff.

Another program highlighted in this newsletter is UCLA Extension’s Osher Lifelong Learning Institute (OLLI). You’ll hear about OLLI’s many offerings. As delighted as I am about their courses such as The Mexican Muralists, African American Portraiture, and the movie club, I’m thrilled to

learn OLLI brings the opportunity to forge friendships with members of all different cultures, backgrounds, and ages from 50 and up. We’ll also introduce you to new Women & Philanthropy member Madhu Agarwal. Bruin pride runs strong in Madhu’s heart. Not only did she graduate from UCLA with a B.S. in Biochemistry in ’95 and an M.D. from the UCLA David Geffen School of Medicine in ’99, she met her husband Jay at UCLA. Madhu tells us about her work as a neuro-ophthalmologist in Orange County, and why her family decided to support a scholarship for doctors in-training. This spring, the Agarwals are hosting the Chancellor’s Society Salon and a Dinner for 12 Strangers, which gives you a sense of Mudha’s dedication and spirit.

As we approach Earth Month in April, on the back panel you’ll see information about our upcoming *Talking Solutions: Reasons to Hope for the Future of the Planet* webinar. While information often makes the planet’s future look bleak, a panel of experts will share how UCLA is tackling various aspects of the climate crisis. UCLA leaders will discuss research, technology, and innovations targeted at reducing and adapting to environmental changes, plus strategies for battling environmental racism and injustice. I hope this newsletter inspires you as much as it does me.

— Coretta Harris, ’83, President, Women & Philanthropy

Creating Future ...

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and Winnemem Wintu Nations. For the latter, Wakpa became the first assistant professor at UCLA to receive the Chancellor’s Award for Community-Engaged Research. “It’s clear to me that community-engaged research and teaching have powerful and transformative possibilities,” she explains.

Facing societal challenges head-on, community-engaged courses approved by CCE focus on areas ranging from arts and culture, environment, health and wellness to human services, labor, and immigration. The 1,600 students annually enrolled in these courses are looking for answers to societal problems by working alongside community partners— they’re future Bruin leaders in the making.

“Through community-engaged teaching and learning spearheaded by the Center, we’re preparing a new generation with the tools, skills, and commitment needed to build a more just and equitable society ...”

— Shalom Staub, CCE Director

Serving Others ...

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Chip, a sophomore, is pre-med—Alumni Affairs Parents Council joined the list of UCLA programs.

Still, the family wanted to do more to show their appreciation to UCLA. “I’m motivated to support in any way, whether it’s my time, talent, or treasure.” This has seen them supporting DGSOM, UCLA Athletics, and the Chancellor’s Greatest Needs.

This past fall, Madhu became a Women & Philanthropy Circle Member through the family’s support of fellowships at the UCLA David Geffen School of Medicine. “The psychosocial environment of higher education has become very demanding, and the financial burdens are significant,” she relays. “As a community, it behooves us to support students on their journey.”

A new UCLA community that Madhu’s excited to become involved in: Women & Philanthropy. “I’m eager to meet like-minded women who are focused on being beneficial to others and making the world better. I think it’s extremely important to serve others.”

FOR MORE INFORMATION

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FOR MORE INFORMATION

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Lifelong Learning Creates Lifetime Friendships

Catch sight of new billboards in Los Angeles featuring UCLA's Osher Lifelong Learning Institute (OLLI) program, and one might be surprised to discover this isn't for the typical undergrad. Indeed, OLLI is designed for ages 50 to 100 and beyond. "Osher ranges from lighthearted social events to serious academic courses taught at an incredibly high level," explains UCLA Extension Department Director Stephen Mucher.

In 2001, The Bernard Osher Foundation launched OLLI. Today, 123 OLLI programs span the nation. UCLA's Osher program was founded in 2005 by Barry Bortnick, Ph.D. Initially, only six classes were offered. UCLA's program has evolved to include about 60 low-cost, non-credit courses per quarter. Everything from formal lecture courses and seminars to creativity and movement courses, volunteer opportunities, and special events are available. Mucher states, "We benefit from talented, generous members who contribute to new programming and who are energizing an increasingly diverse community."

Osher offers hybrid and ZOOM classes, with in-person meet-ups in the Gayley Center. Located there is the OLLI Lounge. "We have a tight-knit community," Mary Ann Wilson, interim program manager, says of OLLI's 1,200 members. "If there's something important happening—a big game, political hearings, natural disaster coverage—members gather here to watch it on television together." It's common to find a hot game of mahjong underway, too.

While there is a nominal fee for Basic and Plus Membership, financial assistance is available through the Michael Williams Memorial Scholarship Fund. Supported by



Students from the Osher Lifelong Learning Institute (OLLI)

OLLI members, the scholarship honors Mike Williams, a UCLA Extension employee who became a fixture at OLLI upon retirement and helped with audiovisual needs. "He arrived faithfully every morning before 8 o'clock with his donut and coffee," Wilson affirms. After Williams passed away, the program renamed an existing scholarship to honor him.

In addition to gaining knowledge, strong friendships often form. "The combination of learning and having an outlet to be around peers is essential," Mucher says. "A big conversation coming out of the pandemic has been what it means to work with a population that's demographically vulnerable to return to in-person classes." Many answers come from observations like the one made by Wilson. When two friends who hadn't seen each other returned to OLLI after the pandemic, they burst into happy tears upon seeing each other. "People come to Osher and stay for decades—often close friendships are made," Wilson discloses. "For many, that's the best thing about our program."

FOR MORE INFORMATION

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Did You Know ...

UCLA Extension is the continuing education division of UCLA.

It was established in 1917 and is one of the oldest and largest continuing education programs in the United States.

- Annually, UCLA Extension offers over 4,500 courses and programs, serving more than 60,000 students worldwide.
- UCLA Extension was the first institution to offer a course in screenwriting, and its alumni include famous writers and filmmakers.
- A number of online and hybrid courses are available, so students take courses at their own pace and schedule, making it a convenient and flexible option.
- There are a number of international programs, including study abroad opportunities and partnerships with universities in countries such as China, Japan, and South Korea, which allow students to gain valuable cultural and academic experiences.
- UCLA Extension has a strong commitment to community outreach and engagement, with a number of free and low-cost programs for underserved populations, including youth education programs and workforce development initiatives.

Development/Women & Philanthropy

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Women & Philanthropy is going green!

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Environmental news often focuses on the scariest problems, from climate disasters to extinctions, but there are reasons for hope at UCLA. Here, faculty, researchers, and students are finding solutions to help heal the planet.

A panel of faculty experts from across campus will highlight UCLA's work on climate and sustainability issues, resolving problems, and improving how people interact with the planet.

**AN INVITATION
TO AN INSPIRING EVENT ...**

**Talking Solutions:
Reasons to Hope for the
Future of the Planet**



**THURSDAY
APRIL 27, 2023**

5:00 PM – 6:30 PM
Webinar

RSVP

<https://tinyurl.com/WPTalkingSolutions>