Instructor BIOs

Emanuel Abramovits is a Mechanical Engineer with an MBA and has been a concert promoter since 2000, directly involved in many events by international artists. He designed and staged many original orchestral events, including several world premieres. He served as the Cultural Director at UNION ISRAELITA DE CARACAS for eleven years as has been teaching online for many institutions since 2020.

Ernest Ayo is a founding member of PANACHE CROQUET in 2018. Have taught the OLLI croquet course in West Feliciana for the past 4 years. Upon completion students will be able to set up a croquet court, know the rules, and strategic use of the equipment and the various shots used. Also, they will have the confidence to play a game with our regular members.

Katie Bailey is a doctoral student with LSU's Doctor of Design program, with a specialty in Museum and Archival Studies. She is originally from Columbus, Ohio, but now lives in Baton Rouge. She received her M.A. in American History in 2022 and recently received her master’s in library and information science and graduate certificate in archival studies from LSU. She is a graduate assistant and works remotely for the William Breman Jewish Heritage Museum of Atlanta.

Sherry Barron is the founder and artistic director of the Academy for Cultivating Arts Baton Rouge Home School Chorus. She taught music in public schools for over 20 years and maintains a private piano studio.

Donald Beale is Director, Online Distance Learning, at LSU. He has a master’s degree in general humanities and has done additional graduate study in English, focused on American film and literature. He has taught English and film studies courses at LSU.

Thomas Beard has a PhD from Duke University and is a Professor Emeritus of Economics at LSU. He has a life-long interest in opera. He has taught opera courses for the Lagniappe chapter of OLLI at LSU for 42 semesters and for OLLI at Auburn University for eight semesters.

Agnes Bickham is a certified yoga teacher with 1000+ teaching hours of experience. She received her Yoga Teacher Certification from Shambhava School of Yoga in Kona, Hawaii. She has practiced and taught Hatha Yoga (primarily) at various venues in the Baton Rouge area. Agnes teaches yoga as a stabilizing practice that grounds students, and promotes a sense of well-being, strength, confidence, balance and joy.

Adam Bosworth is from Gonzales, LA. He fell in love with wine and wine education as a 21-year-old which prompted me to achieve a WSET certification. I love sharing knowledge and having fun in the process.

Henry Bradsher earned two bachelor’s degrees and did graduate work at Harvard before working as a foreign correspondent in such inventive cultures as those of China, India, and the Islamic Middle East, and lectured on cruise ships in all Seven Seas.

Matthew Calamia is an Associate Professor in LSU's Department of Psychology. He completed his PhD in Clinical Psychology at the University of Iowa. He is a clinical neuropsychologist and conducts neuropsychological evaluations at Jefferson Neurobehavioral Group. His research, which
includes over 100 peer-reviewed publications, focuses on healthy cognitive aging and neurocognitive disorders.

**John S Case** is a writer of Short Stories with three books published. He won first place in category by Press Club of New Orleans four times.

**Harsha E. Chacko Ph.D.** is a Professor Emeritus of Hotel, Restaurant and Tourism Administration at the University of New Orleans where he taught for 33 years and has successfully completed the requirements for the Certified Specialist of Wine from the Society of Wine Educators. Dr. Chacko is the wine director for Bonne Cuvee Wine Tours, a company with a mission to provide wine educational experiences through wine tastings and travel to premier wine regions. (bonncuvee.com).

**Phil Chenevert** lives happily with his cat Buddy in Central. (Buddy says hi). He has a master's in counseling, but please don't hold that against him. Phil's main hobbies are recording audiobooks and taking naps. He is 83 and has given up on losing weight, so he is concentrating now on getting taller. Phil does not play the tuba.

**Penny Crawford** is a master flower show judge and has been gardening and designing with plant material all her life.

**Dr. Erica Daigle** is a native of Louisiana who received her BS in Biological Sciences and MA in English from LSU. Her PhD work at the University of Iowa focused on English Renaissance literature (especially Shakespeare) and the history of Western medicine. Erica has taught OLLI courses on Shakespeare, world mythology, the history of medicine, and various topics from Western medieval and Renaissance literature.

**Mark Dauer** is a member of the Louisiana Bar and a retired Deputy Chief Litigation Counsel of the Financial Industry Regulatory Authority. He received B.A. and J.D. degrees from Loyola University. He has been a keen student of the life and works of H.P. Lovecraft for more than 40 years.

**Tommy Draughn**, a lifelong resident of Baton Rouge, is an IT professional with 25 years of experience in the corporate, non-profit, and small-business sectors. As the owner of Glasswing Tech, an IT consulting and support company, Tommy has a passion for demystifying technology for people of all ages so they can use and enjoy their electronic devices for fun and productivity. A man of many talents, Tommy is an amateur photographer, founder of an infamous garage band, maker of the best home-made yogurt in the city.

**Hank Fanberg** holds an MBA from the University of New Orleans and is a PhD Candidate in Urban Planning. With a lifetime of drinking, Hank is pleased to be the first Total Wine certified wine and spirits professional in the state of Louisiana. He especially enjoys French and Italian wines. He is very proud of the time he spent working at the Amici Winery in the Napa Valley. In his spare time, he teaches health care management at The University of New Orleans Henry Bernstein College of Business Administration. Once upon a time he was a hospital administrator. He retired from those responsibilities in 2018. He earned a certificate from Le Cordon Bleu Paris and uses it only at home.
Gaines Foster received his PhD in history from the University of North Carolina. He then had the very good fortune to become a professor of History at LSU, where he taught for more years than he cares to admit. He recently retired.

Lance Foster practiced law for over 30 years, mainly in the intellectual property area. Lance received two engineering degrees and a JD degree from LSU, together with a LLM in international law from McGeorge Law School in Sacramento. Lance has a particular interest in history and economics and how those fields affect legislative and judicial trends.

Pam Freshney has been a reader, teacher and lover of poetry for a long time (OK, 50 years!). With an MA in English Literature from LSU, she has taught high school, middle school and college freshman English, done workshops for the LSU Writing Project and enjoyed book clubs and poetry groups in several forms. She currently works part time at West Feliciana Parish Library.

Jerisse Grantham, owner of the Jeffie Jean Dance Studio, earned her BS from LSU in education with a major in theatre, and has enjoyed teaching dance for more than 30 years in the BR area and Zachary schools. She is an adjunct faculty member at Tulane University and has taught for OLLI for many years. She is certified by Dance Masters of America.

James Heath is a highly trained certified dance instructor with a distinguished background in dance. He has dedicated his life to mastering various dance styles and nurturing the talents of aspiring dancers. Trained in the International styles of Ballroom and Latin, American style Smooth and Rhythm, Country and Swing, James continues to coach, judge, and perform at the highest level.

Pat Heurtin received her BA from SLU in Health Physical Education with a Minor in English and a master’s degree plus 30 hours with emphasis on Health Education from LSU. After retirement, she became the Physical Director of the YMCA of Lake Charles, LA. She has earned additional certifications in various forms of exercise and fitness.

Rev. Stephen Holmgren is the retired former Rector of Grace Episcopal Church and Canon Theologian of the Diocese of Louisiana, and formerly a tenured Assistant Professor of Ethics and Moral Theology at Nashotah House Theological Seminary. He has a B.A., M.A., and D.Phil. degrees from Oxford University. He started college as an Art major and is a long-time student of the arts.

David Howson has a BS in secondary education from LSU (1977) and an MBA from UNO (1992). After 40 years in the marine industry, he began to pursue his passion for South Louisiana culture and cuisines by creating and publishing a website, First...You Have a Beer (firstyouhaveabeer.com) in 2018. In 2021, he founded Le Bon Papa Seasonings, a company that offers his own branded seasonings.

Trent L. James MD has been a physician for 58 years and practiced family medicine for 37 years in south Baton Rouge, retiring from active practiced in 2008. He has been involved in the Baton Rouge Camellia Society in their outreach endeavors, lecturing on the care and culture of camellias. He has co-authored a book entitled Early Camellias in Louisiana 1825-1866: Long Lost Treasures Rediscovered in 2022. In OLLI, Trent and his co-moderator Robert St. Amant, MD, practiced together in family medicine for over 30 years.
Robyn Johnson, PT has worked as an orthopedic physical therapist for 25 years in the Slidell area. She is a former Division I college athlete who has been an avid fitness participant and enjoys sharing my love with others.

Sandra Johnson is a retired teacher with a master’s in education. She taught for 40 years. The last 25 years she taught high school science. After retirement, she worked with Camp Salmen Nature Park as an ecology teacher giving programs with St. Tammany Parish Schools including a summer camp.

Sally Jones is a retired EBR parish teacher of French and some English at both high school and middle school levels. She earned a degree in French education and a minor in English education from LSU in Baton Rouge in May of 1990. She taught at Central Middle and High schools and Zachary High. Then she retired from EBR at Northeast High in 2010.

Trish Kaplan has a master’s degree in education from George Washington University. She is an avid advocate for cats and has worked as a volunteer for over 14 years at Cat Haven, a local no-kill rescue shelter. She has taught for many years for OLLI and loves improving the relationship between humans and felines. She is often immersed in reading something about these interesting creatures and is often referred to as “The Cat Lady.”

Jeanne Keene is a native New Orleanian, with more than 35 years’ experience in the funeral industry. She is the Community Outreach Director for The Greater New Orleans for Dignity Memorial. Jeanne believes there are so many misconceptions concerning funeral planning, and she is very passionate about bringing awareness and educating the community that the Most Perfect Gift we can give our family is to preplan. Jeanne has been referred to as “The Cheerleader of the Death Care Industry” and it very proud it!

Owen Kemp has taught Ollie yoga for over 15 years. Owen Kemp has been a yoga instructor for many years and received her training through the Living Yoga Program at the Barsana Dham Ashram in Austin, TX. She attended training sessions at the Omega institute in Rhinebeck, N.Y. & various venues around the country and internationally. Owen’s style is best described as ‘flow.’

Glen Laborde has been a certified Louisiana Master Gardener since 2013, volunteering as a mentor for the LSU AgCenter’s New Orleans Master Gardener training classes, with the Master Gardeners Speakers Bureau, and with the City Park Pelican Greenhouse plant sales. Always entertaining, Glen’s “Saturday Stories” for those waiting to enter the greenhouse have become classic. His expertise is in tropicals, gingers, roses, camellias, and citrus. Glen has a master’s in science education from UNO.

Angela Larson is a transplant from Seattle, WA. She has lived in New Orleans for over 6 years now. After working for a very large international company for 26 years, she retired to New Orleans. Angela is an experienced Mah Jongg player and enjoy teaching others. Two years ago, she met the love of her life in NOLA; so it seems she made the right choice in moving to this city. She has one daughter who is happily married with 2 children still residing in Seattle.
Linda Lightfoot is retired from The Advocate where she worked for 42 years, the last 15 as executive editor. This is the 31st guest speaker class she has done for OLLI on issues of importance to Louisiana. She has a B.A. in journalism and political science from Ole Miss.

Ed Linz, a retired nuclear submarine commander, is the author of five books, most recently on The Great Depression and The Vietnam War. He is a 1965 graduate of the U.S. Naval Academy and holds graduate degrees from Christ Church College, Oxford University (Economics and Politics) and George Mason University (Secondary Education). He was the recipient of a heart transplant in 1994.

Merrie Lee Logan originally from Iowa, attended The University of Iowa and La Universidad Iberoamericana, before graduating from LSU with a bachelor’s degree in Spanish and French. She taught in public and private high schools for twenty years before joining OLLI.

Kathy Lovett is a Board-Certified Patient Advocate, a Certified Senior Advisor, and a Registered Respiratory Therapist. She is also a community speaker for the Care Partner Project Organization. The Care Partner Project is dedicated to demystifying health care with plain language and simple “to do” checklists so all of us can support our loved ones’ care – with confidence and grace. She has over 30 years’ experience in healthcare and is passionate about helping others be an informed care partner.

Dr. Edwin Lyon retired from a career as an archaeologist and historian with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers in New Orleans. He received his PhD in history from LSU. He taught Mississippi River and public history courses at night at Tulane University. He worked as a cruise speaker on the Mississippi River for two seasons. His most memorable visit to an American archaeological site was the immense prehistoric site of Cahokia, across the Mississippi River from St. Louis.

Dr. Marchita Mauck is a retired Professor of Art History at LSU. She earned a Ph. D in Medieval Studies at Tulane University, and has been a visiting professor at Notre Dame University, and at Yale University. She serves as a Liturgical Design Consultant for new and church renovation projects throughout the country.

Bridget May, PhD, FIDEC, Professor Emeritus, Marymount University, taught Interior Design history and research for many years. She coauthored 3 textbooks on history of interiors and has published and presented on various topics in interior design history. After retiring she returned to Baton Rouge. An avid genealogist, Bridget also loves needlework and watching her cats sleep.

Dr. Claudette M. Millsap earned BS and MBA degrees and a Ph.D. in Applied Technology and Statistical Analysis. She is a USAF veteran and retired Federal Civil Servant after holding positions as Director of DISA Slidell Testing facility, Research Scientist, Chief Information Officer for the Joint Marianas Region, and National Finance Center Director of Information Technology Operations. As the Director of Analytics for the NOPD, she performed forensic data analysis to assist detectives in finding subjects and making cases against violent offenders. Dr. Millsap taught Computer Science as an adjunct Professor at Tulane University Cyber Security Department.

Olivia McNeely Pass has a Ph.D. in American and British literature from the University of Louisiana, Lafayette; a master’s in journalism from LSU in Baton Rouge; and a master’s in literature from LSU in Baton Rouge.
Antonio Molesini is an Italian wine specialist for Republic National Distributing Company. He is a native of Cortona, Tuscany, Italy and has conducted wine tastings and wine classes at various locations in Baton Rouge for more than 25 years.

Cheramie Moore has taught theater for 18 years, appeared in and directed over 30 productions and worked as a stand-up comedian. She has a degree from both USM and St Thomas University, Houston, Texas.

Lisa Nelson has an associate degree in office systems technology from Jumonville Technical College. After a 16-year career as an Administrative Assistant I found my love of making pottery. I am a self-taught potter who began to learn the art of ceramics in 2019. I have since worked with the Arts Council of Pointe Coupee to instruct classes for in the area schools and a nursing home. I enjoy showing others the love of pottery.

Elaine Orr received her PhD from the University of New Orleans. She is a certified yoga instructor through the Temple of Kriya Yoga, Chicago, IL. She has taught yoga and meditation for over 20 years. She has also taught stress management, holistic health, and other health and biological courses at a local university.

Jann Peck graduated from LSU with a double major English/Spanish Education followed by a Masters In Curriculum and Instruction. Throughout her 46 years in public education, she was a teacher and administrator, but when she finally retired in 2021, ironically, she trashed all her teaching materials thinking "I will never teach again,"...but then met OLLI. Also, she has danced since she was 2 years of age, and that's a very long time. She was a Dance Minor at LSU and performed in many LSU Dance Revues, Summer Musicals, and Baton Rouge Little Theater. Jann taught Aerobic Dance and Water Exercise in the 1980’s in the Baton Rouge area and after retiring to St. Francisville, she substituted for Chair Exercise and have continued to teach.

TroyLynne Perrault is a realtor at the Garden District Office of Latter & Blum, a Compass Company, licensed in the State of Louisiana since 2008. She has gained unique insights from representing buyers and sellers throughout Greater New Orleans. Her awards and credentials include: she has earned the Latter & Blum Gold/Silver Award annually from 2015 to present. Additionally, from 2015 to present she held the Seller Representative Specialist (SRS) designation to better represent sellers; the Associated Buyer Representative (ABR) designation to better represent buyers; and the Historic House Specialist Designation by the Preservation Resource Center to better assist buyers purchasing and renovating older homes. Among her civic involvement, she previously served on the Historic District Landmarks Commission as a Commissioner and as Vice Chair. Prior to real estate, she enjoyed a full-time career in alumni relations, marketing, and fundraising for non-profit organizations such as Tulane University, Xavier University, the University of New Orleans, the Louisiana Children’s Museum, and Second Harvest Food Bank. She holds a master’s degree in public administration, bachelor's degree in general studies, and a certificate in Paralegal Studies from the University of New Orleans and she is a fellow of the Institute of Politics at Loyola University.

Sue Potts received a BS, Masters, and Educational Specialist in education from LSU. She retired after teaching history for 40 years. Since retirement she has worked as a city guide for Visit Baton
Rouge and the riverboats, Old Governor’s Mansion, Old State Capitol, and the current Governor’s Mansion. She has also taught classes through OLLI.

**Usha Ramadhyani**, a retired anesthesiologist, is an LSU AgCenter Louisiana Master Gardener. She has served on the Master Gardeners of Greater New Orleans Board of Directors, oversees their Speakers Bureau, volunteers in the New Orleans Botanical Garden, and is enrolled in the LSU AgCenter’s Advanced Master Gardener program. Usha’s areas of interest are native plants, herbs, vegetables, and gardening for pollinators. A native Bangalore, India, she has lived in the New Orleans area since 1984.

**Lee Brandt Randall** is an artist, illustrator, and arts educator residing in Baton Rouge, Louisiana. For over 30 years, Lee taught Studio Art and Art History to high school students. In her spare time, Lee is the costume designer for the legendary Krewe of Yazoo Precision Lawnmower Drill Team whose members refer to her as the “MacGyver of Rubber Foam.”

**Carla Reeves** is a Professional Pickleball Registry certified coach. PPR is the Official Education & Certification Partner of USA Pickleball.

**Darlene Reaves** has a master’s degree in science teaching from the University of New Orleans and has taught geology, environmental science, and wildlife biology at the New Orleans Center for Science and Math. She enjoys taking courses and teaching courses for OLLI and has taught 13 different OLLI courses for the Felicianas Chapter. She has taken numerous online EdX courses including The Science and Practice of Yoga, from the University of Texas, Arlington and Poetry in America: Modernism, from HarvardX.

**Mike Rich** is a Certified Financial Planner with Pontchartrain Investment Management in Slidell. In practice for more than 16 years, he helps his clients enjoy life and avoid making mistakes with their money.

**Janet Robertson** of Decor by Flora is a Design Franchise Partner of Decorating Den Interiors. Following a 30-year career in the construction industry, Janet turned her life-long passion of interior decorating into a business.

**Martha Robson** loves to play bridge! ACBL certified Best Practices Instructor, she plays at the bridge club in Metairie, and she spends way too much time playing on-line games. She believes that playing bridge is one of the best things you can do for your brain, and she loves helping people learn how to approach this complex and fascinating game. Martha is a retired Pastor, used to work as a tour guide, and loves to cook (and eat).

**Ed Seyler** is an economist for the state of Louisiana. He grew up in New Orleans and received a PhD in economics from LSU in 2022. His work primarily involves public policy issues impacting the state of Louisiana.

**Jane Simmons**, a veteran OLLI instructor, has taught yoga for the past twenty years to students of all ages and stages — from children and teens to nursing home residents. Her training took place in the Living Yoga Program in Austin, Texas, and she has trained additionally in New York, California, and Portugal. Her goal is always to create an atmosphere conducive to the ideal yoga practice.
Dr. Stephenie Slahor is retired from her law practice and university and law school teaching. Now she creates OLLI courses in the natural sciences and interesting places in the world.

Doug Stowell is a consumer and political polling veteran in both U.S. and EU Markets. His career includes Market Research Director for the Xerox Corp., U.S. Clients Director for the U.K. polling firm NOP, Ltd in London and Senior Polling Executive for Wirthlin Worldwide in Washington, D.C. He launched Market Resource Associates, in 2008 and conducts opinion polls on U.S. and global issues. He is a member of the Furman University OLLI in Greenville, SC and conducts ZOOM programs for more than 80 groups nationally. This is his fourth quadrennial election program.

Dr. Robert St. Amant is a retired M.D., 44 years of medical practice, LSU school of medicine, New Orleans, Louisiana. He is a board-certified family physician and Diplomate American Board of Clinical Lipidology.

Mark B. Stahl provides professional services and consulting to business organizations, government agencies, and universities on an array of workforce and professional development-related topics. Mark has extensive experience as a continuing education administrator at the University of New Orleans, at the Indiana University School of Medicine, and serves as a consultant to universities and organizations throughout Louisiana. His lifelong interests include photography, gardening, listening to live music, collecting sports cards, bicycling, and playing tennis badly.

William Stickle graduated from Slippery Rock University, PA with a bachelor’s degree in biology in 1965, University of South Dakota (MS zoology, minor in medical physiology) in 1967, and University of Saskatchewan at Regina (PhD biology, minor in oceanography) in 1970. After teaching at SRU, he received a postdoctoral appointment at the University of North Dakota. He joined the LSU Zoology and Physiology faculty in 1972. Bill served as chair of the Department of Zoology and Physiology from 1986-1991 and retired from the Department of Biological Science in 2015. He developed the LSU Marine Biology in Southeast Alaska Program, now in its fourteenth year. He has conducted research in the northern Gulf of Mexico, the San Juan Islands in Washington state, southeast Alaska, and Plymouth England. Bill married Versa Gentis in 1967 and they have three children and six grandchildren, all of whom live nearby.

Versa Stickle has degrees and work experience in English and Library Science. She enjoys writing and encouraging others to write and tell their own legacy stories.

Doug Stowell is a consumer and political polling veteran in both U.S. and EU Markets. His career includes Market Research Director for the Xerox Corp., U.S. Clients Director for the U.K. polling firm NOP, Ltd in London and Senior Polling Executive for Wirthlin Worldwide in Washington, D.C. He launched Market Resource Associates, in 2008 and conducts opinion polls on U.S. and global issues. He is a member of the Furman University OLLI in Greenville, SC and conducts ZOOM programs for more than 80 groups nationally. This is his fourth quadrennial election program.

Dr. Julius Tipton is a musician and an active composer. Rev. Tipton is a retired Presbyterian (USA) pastor with 27 years of experience with churches in Louisiana and Florida. He is a theologian by training and a seeker by nature. His teaching/learning style is informal and inclusive, meaning that he learns from participants and well as sharing knowledge with them.
James Trent has been a physician for 58 years and practiced family medicine for 37 years in south Baton Rouge, retiring from an active practiced in 2008. In retirement, Trent has served as a docent and re-enactor at LSU Rural Life Museum. He has been involved in the Baton Rouge Camellia Society in their outreach endeavors, lecturing on the care and culture of camellias. He has co-authored a book entitled *Early Camellias in Louisiana 1825-1866: Long Lost Treasures Rediscovered* in 2022. In OLLI, Trent and his co-moderator Robert St. Amant practiced together in family medicine for over 30 years.

Dr. Francis W Vanderwall is a Theologian, Retreat Facilitator, Spiritual Director, and Psychologist of Religion. Francis is also an author of seven books on prayer, spirituality, psychology, and Scripture. He received his Doctorate from the Graduate Theological Union and was a Jesuit for 27 years.

Rabbi Barry L. Weinstein was ordained a Reform Rabbi at the Hebrew Union College - Jewish Institute of Religion in Cincinnati, Ohio in June 1971. He was Student Rabbi in Blytheville, Mississippi, and Associate Rabbi for Temple Israel, Omaha, for 12 years and Rabbi for Legacy Congregation B'nai Israel Baton Rouge for 25 years. He is now Rabbi Emeritus.

Elizabeth Williams founded the Southern Food & Beverage Museum and authored several books about food and culture, especially New Orleans food culture. Her podcast, *Tip of the Tongue*, about food, drink, and culture, appears weekly. Graduate of LSU Law Center. She practiced law in Washington, DC, and Louisiana. She has served as a judge in many cooking competitions and consulted internationally on the food of New Orleans. Travel is an excuse to eat in new places.

Sam Zechenelly is a 1991 graduate of LSU Baton Rouge with a BS degree in accounting. He served as a Special Agent with IRS Criminal Investigation Division for almost 27 years. One of his favorite hobbies is learning about using Apple devices.