

Adventures in Lifelong Learning Fall Term Schedule – 2026 – as of August 11, 2026
1st Session – September 14-October 16
2nd Session – October 26-December 4 (skip week of November 23)

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Course Descriptions – Alphabetical Order

Acrylic Painting II

Patsy Taylor-Moore

Acrylic Painting II is for those who would like to expand their use and knowledge of acrylic paints. We will introduce some drawing, including centering and perspective. The focus of the four classes will be to focus on refining techniques introduced in Acrylics for Absolute Beginners class. We will explore more advanced methods and start to find our individual style. Pre-requisite for this class is Introduction to Acrylics, or pre-approval by instructor.

Students will need to bring/purchase art tools that can be obtained from an art and craft supply store or big box store. A supply list will be sent with confirmations.

Registration is open to those who have not used a registered spot for the class before. After August 31, if spots remain, former students can register.

An Affair of Honor: Pittsburgh's Last Recorded Duel

Leo Grogan

On January 8, 1806, thirty-two-year-old Tarlton Bates, the Prothonotary of Allegheny County and editor/part owner of the "Tree of Liberty" newspaper, was killed in Pittsburgh's last recorded duel. This course will examine Bates' life, the reason he came to Pittsburgh, and why he and other newly minted republican men opted to settle their differences on the field of honor.

ASL - Sign, Smile, and Communicate! A Stress-Free Introduction to American Sign Language

A.R. James, PhD

Have you always wanted to learn American Sign Language but felt too nervous to begin? This fun, beginner-friendly course is designed for learners with no prior ASL experience. In a relaxed and supportive environment, you'll learn basic signs, practice simple phrases, and begin communicating with confidence at your own pace. Mistakes are welcomed— they're part of the learning process! Through interactive activities,

games, and guided practice, you'll discover that learning ASL can be enjoyable, rewarding, and stress-free. Come ready to sign, smile, and connect with others while learning ASL.

Members may take one section of this class (either 4:30pm or 6:15pm).

This class is virtual and will not have a physical onsite class location. You must have your own device to participate. The virtual meeting link will be sent in your confirmations.

Basic Astronomy

Susan Button

For those completely new to astronomy, the first step is to become familiar with the night sky, how it changes through the night and season by season, and how it varies according to the observer's latitude. Students in this class will be actively involved in making and using models to enhance learning about their place in the universe. We will learn about our observable sky "neighborhood" at a very basic level.

Participants must be comfortable being in a slightly confined and dark space for approximately 30 minutes. There is a new dome, so participants do not need to bend over. The area will be lit when entering. This class is a repeat of the other Basic Astronomy courses offered.

Registration is open to those who have not used a registered spot for the class before. After August 31, if spots remain, former students can register.

Members may take one section of this class (either first or second session).

Ben Franklin: the Autobiography

Michael Secilia

This book discussion group will read and examine an essential work of the American literary canon: The Autobiography of Benjamin Franklin. We'll trace Franklin's rise from a humble printer's apprentice in Boston to a leading public figure in Philadelphia and an internationally known statesman. Participants will consider Franklin as both a historical figure and as a literary craftsman.

Participants will need access to Franklin's biography. There are plenty of editions out there, including free online versions.

Berlin Airlift

David Albert

The Soviet blockade of land access to Berlin from June 1948 to May 1949 was the West's first major challenge of the "Cold War." The Berlin Airlift was the response, an incredible effort by the western allies that kept the city alive during the winter of 1948 and signaled western resolve to the Soviet attempt to control all of Berlin. This presentation looks at the events and decisions leading up to the airlift, the airlift itself,

life in Berlin during the airlift, and the results of one of the most challenging and successful feats in the history of airpower.

This class will meet for three weeks, September 21, 28, and October 5.

Catholic Social Teaching (CST) and Pope Leo XIV

Jim McCarville

While some have tried to dismiss Catholic Social Teaching as "the Church's best kept secret," Pope Leo has been bringing it front and center. So, what is CST? What are its Biblical, Magisterial, and more recent roots? Why does Pope Leo think this ancient wisdom can help us sort out the challenges of today's new technologies.

Students will explore ancient and current Church teachings, how the Popes Francis and Leo want us to understand the mission of the Church in the World, our role/responsibility in carrying the mission out, and how it might help us grapple with contemporary questions of war, migration, care for creation, and even surviving artificial intelligence.

Christianity's Conundrum

Mark Macedonia

This five-week course will examine the history of the early Christian Church in an effort to explain those events that led the Church down the path toward Reformation in the 16th century. From this point the historical examination will evolve into exploring the impact—both positive and negative—that the Reformation has had on world history.

Cloth Mache

Dana Winterhalter

Description TBA

Members may take one section of this class (either Monday or Wednesday).

Discover China: Language, Culture, and Travel

Xuan Li

China is one of the world's oldest civilizations and one of today's most fascinating travel destinations. This course introduces participants to Chinese language and culture through an engaging, practical, and interactive approach. Rather than focusing on grammar and memorization, the course emphasizes cultural understanding and everyday communication that travelers and lifelong learners can enjoy.

Participants will learn basic Mandarin phrases, explore Chinese customs and traditions, discover regional cuisine, examine famous historical landmarks, and gain insight into contemporary Chinese society. Whether students are planning a future trip to China or are simply curious about its language and culture, this course provides an enjoyable introduction that requires no previous knowledge of Chinese.

Economics of War

Paul Kasunich

This five-week course will explore the expansion and influence of the military complex in the United States and around the world. From the First World War to the present conflict in Iran, the U.S. military has grown exponentially over the past 100 years. Particular emphasis will be on the influential relationships between business interests and U.S. military institutions and leadership as well as the role of the U.S. military in certain sectors of the U.S. and the world's economy.

Elementary Dear Sherlock: The Further Adventures of Homes and Watson

Michael Young

In something of an extension of the previous primer on Sherlock Holmes, but without that being any sort of prerequisite, these weeks will go further into the methods of the groundbreaking fictional detective. The course will start with an overview of Holmes and his author, Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, then we will begin one of the longer stories, *The Sign of Four*. We will solve the mystery during the next week. After that, we will discuss one story a week, starting with "The Speckled Band", "The Empty House" (when Holmes came back), and end with "The Six Napoleons." For each of the four mysteries, we will again watch the adaptations from the 1980's British series starring Jeremy Brett.

Encounters With Jesus: The Gospel Stories and Ordinary People

Ed Bobinchock

One of the interesting features of the stories of Jesus related in the gospels is his interactions with people from all walks of life. The course will explore the stories of some of the interactions between Jesus and the ordinary people he encountered during his ministry, as well as to develop an appreciation of how the stories in the New Testament can relate to our lives of faith today.

Everyone has a story to tell, and Chicken Soup wants to hear yours!

Rosemary McLaughlin

Every life is filled with moments worth remembering and stories worth sharing. Whether it's a lesson learned, a heartfelt memory, or an experience that could inspire others, this course will help you bring your story to life. Using the *Chicken Soup for the Soul* website and examples from published collections, you'll discover what makes these stories resonate with readers and how to shape your own for possible publication. In a welcoming and encouraging atmosphere, participants will write, share their stories, and offer thoughtful feedback as they celebrate the power of personal storytelling and the connections it creates.

Faith in Action, Rooted in Grace: Catholic Social Teaching and the Life and Dignity of the Human Person

Adam Couch

This course is a further study of what the Catholic Church describes as the "central and essential element of our faith" and what has been nicknamed 'the best kept secret of the Church'. In this second of a series of courses, we will examine the foundation of all the principles of Catholic Social Teaching: that the dignity of the human person is the

foundation of a moral vision for society. In addition to class lectures, participants will be asked to read Church documents and participate in class discussions. *Participation in previous Catholic Social Teaching courses is not required for this class.*

Faith on Film

Fr. Peter Horton

This course will focus on several contemporary films which contain themes of faith, can serve as parables, or feature heroic figures living their faith each day. As we watch the films together, we will look for those themes and open up in discussion following each film. Themes of peace and social justice, discipleship, trust and relationships with others and our world will be featured. In a way, we will be examining the themes of redemption portrayed on film by some of our better and lesser-known directors and actors.

The movies for this term are: *Holy Days, Dough, Nonnas, The Music of Silence, and Noel.*

Feminine Hand of God: Deliverance in the Book of Judith

Adam Couch

This seminar offers learners a thorough yet accessible biblical study of the Book of Judith. Sessions will include textual analysis, close reading, guided discussion, and theological reflection. We will explore how God works through the unexpected to bring deliverance, examine the dynamics of gender and power, and wrestle with ethical questions such as Judith's use of deception. Throughout, we will reflect on how this ancient story speaks to Christian discipleship, perseverance, and hope in impossible circumstances. This study invites deeper engagement with an often-overlooked biblical novella of a simple widow who, as the instrument of God's deliverance, saves Israel from foreign conquest.

Five Obscure Presidents (And Why They Matter)

Leo Grogan

Washington, Jefferson, Jackson, Lincoln, Wilson, Roosevelt (Theodore and Franklin), and a handful of other Presidents are household names. Their images appear on money; cities, towns, and schools are named for them, and one, Andrew Jackson, is associated with an entire age. Their impact on American society is unquestionable. However, there are a handful of lesser-known Chief Executives (Van Buren, Polk, Tyler, Pierce, and Hayes) whose decisions changed the course of American history. This course will study their Presidencies and explain why they matter.

Fraktur

Fran Halley

Fraktur is a decorative and script form of folk art that originated in 16th century Germany and flourished among Pennsylvania Germans in the 18th and 19th centuries. It is known for its highly artistic and elaborate folk art images and borders. Fraktur is named for the heavy, angular German font, which is also known as Blackletter. Fraktur pieces often commemorated marriages, baptisms, house blessings and academic

achievements. Learn about the history of Fraktur and create a personal commemorative piece of your own just in time for the holiday season.

Grandma Moses and the Art of Memory Painting

Fran Halley

Memory painting is a classification of folk art and naive art, or the work of artists who are not classically trained in the fine arts. The key feature of memory painting is the joy of storytelling with images instead of words. Grandma Moses (1860-1961) was a masterful memory painter who lived a long, extraordinary life. Learn about her impact on post-World War II American art and tell your own visual story as you create a memory painting in gouache, colored pencil or a combination of both.

Hellos and Goodbyes

Michele Reiss

Grief is a normal and inevitable part of life. We will all experience big and little losses during our lifetimes. Grief is not just about loss; it is about change. The loss of a loved one, retirement, aging all require that we adapt in some way. All involve a series of hellos and goodbyes. So, let's learn about grief and find ways to help ourselves and support others.

“I stumbled when I saw”: Learning from Tragedy in Shakespeare’s *King Lear*

Theresa Doerfler

How do we care for aging family members?
What do we owe our children? What do they owe us?

Shakespeare’s *King Lear* explores these questions and many more. In this class, we will dive each week into one of the play’s five acts. Students will have a chance to read and discuss passages, to watch clips of the play to see how it has been interpreted for different times and cultures, and to find the beauty in Shakespeare’s challenging and deeply moving masterpiece.

Participants are asked to purchase (or borrow) a Folger edition of the play (readily available new or used) so that we can all be on the same page as we read and discuss the play.

Intermediate Crochet: Intermediate Stitches

Cheryl Butler

This class is for experienced crochet students. There will be exploration of four intermediate stitches with one class for questions and tips.

Introduction to Acrylic Painting for the Absolute Beginner

Patsy Taylor-Moore

Introduction to Acrylic Painting is for those who would like to try the medium of acrylic painting. It is for **the absolute beginner**. There is no requirement for any background in drawing, though we will discuss how design, centering and perspective effects the painting. The focus of the five classes will be to introduce the student to color theory,

supplies needed for acrylic painting, painting techniques and we will complete four or five small acrylic paintings.

Students will need to bring/purchase basic art tools, all of which can be obtained from a Dollar Store, Dollar General, an art and craft supply store or big box store. A supply list will be sent with confirmations.

Registration is open to those who have not used a registered spot for the class before. After August 31, if spots remain, former students can register.

Introduction to Drawing

Maria Farina

Discover the joy of drawing! Intro to Drawing is the perfect class to build a strong artistic foundation while exploring your imagination. You'll learn core drawing techniques, including the elements of art and principles of design while you develop your power of observation. We will use the world around us to inspire our pencil exercises and drawings to bring animals, nature and creative ideas to life. Come ready to explore, experiment, relax and most of all, have fun! Supply list will be provided.

Registration is open to those who have not used a registered spot for the class before. After August 31, if spots remain, former students can register.

Members may take one section of this class (either first or second session).

Introduction to Ethics

Monica Festa

This course prepares students to research, discuss, and apply concepts of ethics based on the ethical triangle (Deontology, Virtue, Consequentialism). Students will discuss elements associated with each approach, analyze these approaches in case studies, and apply various ethics in decision-making scenarios.

Introduction to Weight Training

Jack Gardner

This course will introduce participants to the basics of training with free weights and cable resistance machines. We will begin with an orientation to the weight room at La Roche, and review safety precautions, as well as weight training terminology. Each session, participants will have the chance to learn new exercises to build their personal weight training repertoire. We will review proper technique, modifications and appropriate load and repetitions. This course is taught by an LRU student who is guided and supervised by Dr. Emily Shimko.

Members must be at the ALL & Fitness or ALL &F Fitness Plus Level of Membership to take this class.

Members may take one section of this class (either first or second session).

Introduction to the Art of Storytelling

Misty Mator

Storytelling is an indelible part of what it means to be human; it is through stories we build connection and meaning. This course will be an introduction to how to orally present an engaging story, whether you are offering a personal story, a folktale, historical story, or original fiction. The course will include discussions on what a story is (as opposed to an anecdote), the storytelling triangle, story selection, and activities to strengthen oral storytelling skills to help students reach their personal storytelling goals.

iPhone Basics

Jennifer Engel

Join this low-pressure, hands-on class to learn how to use (and not use) your iPhone. The class will take participants through how-to videos, activities, and instructions on the various aspects of an iPhone. Ample time will be allotted for questions.

Participants must have their own iPhone, already use the phone, and bring the phone to each class. This class is ONLY for iPhone users, not other types of cell phones. Members who previously took an iPhone Basics course must wait until May 19 to register.

Registration is open to those who have not used a registered spot for the class before. After August 31, if spots remain, former students can register.

Iran: A Brief History – Part 1

Bob David

Iran is an ancient civilization that dates back thousands of years. This course will introduce participants to those more recent dynastic periods from the 16th century to the 20th. This overview will describe the impact that those dynasties, along with the adoption of Islam as the dominant religion, had in shaping its culture and politics. The secular and clerical worlds repeatedly clashed, which ultimately culminated in a Revolution that overthrew Shah Reza Pahlavi in 1979. That revolution, and the events that precipitated it, will be the subject of Part II.

Journaling for the Second Half of Life

Marjorie Mills

In this course students will learn about the benefits of journaling to enhance personal growth for the second half of life. They will learn a variety of journaling exercises that will help them to reflect on how past experiences and relationships have impacted their lives. Students will also learn how journaling can help them envision their lives going forward and set goals to live their best life. Students will be encouraged to discuss the exercises in class but are not required to. Students should bring a notebook and pen or pencil to class.

Mandala Magic

Dana Winterhalter

MANDALA is a Sanskrit word (from a language of ancient India with a 3,500-year history; it is the primary liturgical language of Hinduism and the predominant language of most works of Hindu philosophy as well as some of the principal texts of Buddhism and Jainism. It means “circle” or “center.” This artform is probably as old as humankind itself—in rudimentary form, mandalas appear on walls and in caves in some of the earliest marks made by humans. We often associate the word mandala with circular designs that have colors, shapes, and patterns repeating from the center. Mandalas can be precise, carefully measured, geometric, and perfectly symmetrical — or in contrast, free-flowing, organic, and asymmetrical. We will be using the freehand method.

Why is drawing mandalas so popular?

- Relaxes the body and mind.
- Cultivates the feeling of happiness, inner peace, and general well-being.
- Eases stress, anxiety, worry, overwork, fear and depression.
- Activates creativity and improves focus.

Registration is open to those who have not used a registered spot for the class before. After August 31, if spots remain, former students can register.

Members may take one section of this class (either Monday or Wednesday).

Mighty Fine Music

Mike Plaskett

Join radio host Mike Plaskett in person at La Roche University as he shares recorded music and musical research gleaned from over sixty years in record collecting and radio. Selections are fresh picked from Mike's new radio series, *Mighty Fine Music*. Each record wants to be heard in context, so we'll listen to the music, share their stories, occasionally look at old photos and occasionally consider the finer things in life.

Even if you are too young to remember this kind of music directly, the jazz, swing and popular music of the 1930s and 40s is still a source of melody and joy for anyone with ears to hear it. Plus, lots of that music was still being brilliantly played into the 1950s and 60s. We will give it a go. Now is a fine time to join Mike Plaskett for this new, informal series of songs, stories and recordings from those bygone days.

Mike can now be heard every week on station KCEA in San Francisco with his new show, *Mighty Fine Music*. You can hear it every Saturday in Pittsburgh (and nationwide) on the big band channel, Swing Street Radio. <https://www.swingstreetradio.org/listen-live-and-requests/> Mike's *Mighty Fine Music* show airs online every Saturday at 2 PM Pittsburgh time. In addition to online Swing Street Radio, *Mighty Fine Music* is also carried on several other internet radio sources that relay the original.

Mix It Up - Book Club

Natasha Garrett

What happens when we allow ourselves to step outside the life we thought we were supposed to live? Explore these fiction and non-fiction titles that focus on the theme of new beginnings.

The books we will read are:

- *Dolly All the Time* by Annabel Monaghan – September 18
- *Atmosphere* by Taylor Jenkins Reed – October 16
- *Everything is Tuberculosis* by John Green – November 13
- *Our Souls at Night* by Kent Haruf – December 4

New World Wines, South America

Patty Jones

The class will discuss and taste a variety of wines from South America with a focus on Argentina as a primary producer of wines in this region.

This course will have a course fee of \$50 to cover the cost of the wines. This course will meet for 3 weeks, October 29, November 5, and November 12.

North Park Nature Photography

Lee Markowitz

Explore the natural beauty of North Park while developing your photography skills in this hands-on, field-based course. Each session will meet at a different location within the park, likely including grassy lakeside areas, a wildflower meadow, and an accessible wetlands boardwalk trail. These varied settings will provide opportunities to photograph landscapes, flowers, fall foliage, birds, and other wildlife. Along the way, we will explore techniques for composition, lighting, and photographing a variety of natural subjects, with an emphasis on learning to see and capture nature creatively. Participants of all photography experience levels are welcome. Sessions will involve relatively easy walking and provide opportunities to enjoy photography while exploring the diverse natural environments of North Park.

Locations will be announced in confirmations, and transportation is on your own.

Poetry for the Soul

Karen Lehman

Poetry allows for a deeper dive into the soul .

As expressed by poet, Jan Richardson—"If we cannot lay aside the wound, then let us say it will not always bind us."

A time to look into what we hold onto and let go. Shared discussion and individual time for reflection.

Poverty in America

Marjorie Mills

This class will explore why the richest country in the world has more poverty than any other advanced democracy. We will be reading and discussing the book *Poverty, by America* by Matthew Desmond. The book offers a framework for understanding the causes of poverty as well as proposing solutions to ending it. Please read the prologue and the first chapter prior to the first class. The instructor will briefly review the chapters at the beginning of class so feel free to attend even if you have not read them.

Registration is open to those who have not used a registered spot for the class before. After August 31, if spots remain, former students can register.

Singing for Fun

Patsy Taylor-Moore

Singing for Fun is designed as a program for older adults that will include breathing exercises, vocal warm-ups that are adapted for mature voices, singing of a variety of songs, and incorporating some social and movement-based activities. You do not need to know how to read music, as we will focus on learning familiar tunes with the aid of digital music.

No experience is necessary. It will run both sessions, and the group will grow together to build a repertoire of music for the upcoming holiday season.

This class runs for 10 weeks (matching the regular class schedule).

Swim Stroke Refinement Lessons

Cathy Fodor

This class is for those who can swim in the water but want to improve their stroke or their endurance. We will focus on a number of strokes including front and back crawl, breaststroke, elementary back stroke, and others. Join Cathy and this small, personalized class to become a stronger and more efficient swimmer.

This class is for people who can swim but want to improve how they swim. This class runs for 10 weeks (matching the regular class schedule).

To register for this class, the participant must have an ALL Membership at the Fitness Plus Level. The fee for the class is \$50.

The Art of Storytelling: Folktales & Fairy Tales

Misty Mator

Folktales and fairy tales appear in every culture. They present the hopes and struggles of everyday people within the garb of mystical elements on a legendary scale. This course is a companion to Art of Storytelling with a specialized focus on the folktale & fairy tale genre. The course will include discussions on folktales & fairy tales, the difference between the two, and the opportunity for students to workshop a folktale or fairy tale for performance.

The Dismantling of Diversity Equity and Inclusion (DEI) Part II

Jamaal Craig

This course will continue building upon our understanding of diversity and inclusion as laid out during the previous term. In the next session we will explore in greater detail the meaning of whiteness and its economic, social, and political power dynamics.

Participants will be asked to purchase *White Fragility: Why It's So Hard for White People to Talk About Racism* as we will be reading it for the course. Regular reading before each session is strongly encouraged.

This will be a hybrid course; Hybrid means we will be using multiple modalities for the course. We will have live, in-class lectures and discussion, online written discussion, and supplemental material presented outside of the in-class portion of class. Participants in the hybrid course must have access to a computer with an internet connection. Participants must also be computer literate and be comfortable using software, email, and performing other activities on the internet.

The Great War: An Introduction to the First World War 1914-1918

Jack Puglisi

This class will examine the causes, conduct and consequences of the world's greatest man-made catastrophe. It will examine the history, politics, culture and personalities of the event that shaped and formed our modern world.

This class will meet six weeks and end on December 10.

The Power of Oz: From *the Wonderful Wizard of Oz* to *Wicked*

Mary Beth Spore

From the 1900 publication of Frank Baum's *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz* to Gregory Maguire's 1995 publication *Wicked* and the spectacular and popular movies and stage productions of each book, the Oz story has had staying power in our culture. Why? Many popular stories have come and gone, yet we continue to tell and retell the Oz stories.

In this class, we will examine both books and both movies, all produced in different times periods spanning well over a century.

Our discussions will center on the ways in which the story has shifted with its production time, the characterizations, themes, effects, and fascination of the reading and viewing audience.

Even if you are not attracted to the Oz stories, this class will explore WHY the Oz stories are important to us and WHY we have examined them for so many decades. Hopefully our discussion will illuminate us about our culture and ourselves.

The fun of this class will rest on the variety of the voices in the room and the wealth of reading and life experiences that lie behind those voices. I hope you will join me!

The Prophets

Fr. Peter Horton

By virtue of our baptism, we are called to share in the prophetic ministry of Christ. Prophecy forms a major part of the Old Testament tradition and the preaching of Jesus. In this class we will examine the general characteristics of prophecy and specifically look at it in the books of Amos, Hosea, Isaiah and Micah in both their own setting and their importance today and connection to Jesus.

The Story of Pasta: From Hearth to Feast

Huck Beard

In this four-part beginner series, learn essential doughs, hand-shaped pastas, filled delicacies, and celebratory baked dishes — perfect for anyone ready to roll, shape, and share.

- **Week 1: The Rustic Table**
Start your pasta journey with the essentials. Learn to mix and knead fresh egg dough, roll silky sheets, and cut fettuccine, pairing with a simple sauce to highlight the pasta's flavor.
- **Week 2: The Creative Table**
After making our sfoglie (pasta sheets), we'll explore the elegance of hand-shaped pastas like garganelli and farfalle, and discover how Italian cooks turn dough scraps into culinary art.
- **Week 3: The Noble Table**
Step into Renaissance-inspired pasta traditions with luxurious ravioli and mezzelune. Make smooth egg dough, create flavorful fillings, and practice shaping techniques.
- **Week 4: The Family Table**
Bring it all together in a celebratory class! Roll wide sfoglie for lasagna or cannelloni, then bake abundant, hearty dishes perfect for sharing with friends and family. Mangia!

This class will have a materials fee of \$60 for the food and materials. You may take one section of this class. If space is still available after August 31, you can register (and pay) for a 2nd section in the 2nd session.

This class will meet for four weeks. 1st Session will meet Mondays from September 21-October 12 and 2nd Session will meet Mondays from October 26-November 16.

Theater in the City (Offered in Both the 1st and 2nd Sessions)

Sr. Rita Yeasted

Pittsburgh is rich with theaters: the Pittsburgh Public, the Benedum, City Theatre, the Playhouse, Pittsburgh Playwrights. And those are just a few. Theater in the City will explore the history of Pittsburgh's theaters and will provide an opportunity to attend two plays together, depending upon what is being offered in a particular season. We will prepare for the plays by learning about the playwright and the play's history, then

discuss the show after we have seen it. I would love to share my passion for theater with you and introduce new plays and new interpretations of old ones.

1st Session Plays

In the 1st session (September 14-October 16), we will see *In Clay* (City Theatre – Sunday, September 27 at 2pm - \$30) and *Hedda Gabler* (Steel City Shakespeare Company at Providence Heights Motherhouse – Sunday, October 11, 1pm - \$15). Attendance at the shows is optional and tickets will be an additional cost. Ticket details and purchasing information will be shared with those who register for the class after the initial registration period.

2nd Session Plays will be announced later in the term.

U.S. Gothic and Horror Fiction

Monica Festa

This course is primarily designed to help students in developing skills in reading and analyzing fiction, as well as introducing students to the fascinating world of gothic and horror fiction. Fiction from different time periods will be explored, including that which is considered the very earliest “U.S. Gothic Fiction” and how these works are still influencing contemporary gothic/horror writers. Students will be exposed to the various elements of fiction including character analysis, plot, narration, use of symbols, theme, tone, and style.

USA at 250: An Introspective Celebration of the United States after 250 Years – Fifth and Sixth Edition

Richard Grimes

These two classes are part of a series, but one can attend one or both, with or without attending the previous classes. Two sections of each class are offered. In the first session, you select one of the Fall One classes and in the second session, you select one of the Fall Two classes.

USA at 250 is a 30-week course focusing on the significant issues, dramatic events, and pivotal figures that have shaped and defined United States history in the nation’s semi-quincentennial year. Structured around a top twenty-five to thirty list (my homage to David Letterman’s top ten list), this course will integrate historical narrative with examples from American literature, art, film, documentaries, and historiography (what historians have concluded and debated). The course will address how historical events, issues, and figures have influenced and created American intellectualism, legends of mythological proportions, and national ideals. The intent of the course is to reflect on the shortcomings of the United States throughout its history but to also offer academic balance by celebrating the achievements and triumphs of a nation as it enters its 250-year anniversary. Engaging visual support for course content and historical narrative will be offered through power point presentations and video documentaries.

Fall (One) 2026--Part Three: America and the Modern World

1. American Baseball during the Progressive Age

2. Fundamentalism vs. Modernism: Pt 1—The Religious Backlash against Progressivism
3. Fundamentalism vs. Modernism: Pt 2—The Roaring Twenties
4. The Cinderella Man and the Great Depression: Pt 1
5. The Cinderella Man and the Great Depression: Pt 2

Fall (Two) 2026--Part Three: The Greatest Generation at War

1. Pearl Harbor: How did this happen?
2. "We Were All Together: The Homefront and Bataan Death March
3. The Normandy Invasion and Liberation of Europe
4. VJ Day and a World Without War
5. Conclusion: The USA at 250!

Voting and Voting Rights in America - Then and Now

Ron Brown

This course will start with an overview of voting in America through the centuries - who voted and how they cast their votes. We will explore post-Civil War laws and constitutional amendments intended to confer voting rights on Black Americans and their initial successes before decades of subversion of those rights. We will follow the rise and fall of the 1965 Voting Rights Act, the impact of gerrymandering on elections and the current challenges to the voting process launched by the aftermath of the 2020 presidential election.

We will wrap up the course with a step-by-step understanding of the process by which our votes are cast, counted, certified, audited and in some elections legally challenged.

Watercolor I

Maria Farina

Due to its very nature, watercolor is a beautifully loose medium where control of water and pigment are key. In Watercolor 1, you will learn the basic washes and techniques to build gorgeous watercolor pieces of art. You'll also have a lot of fun along the way dabbling with different brush techniques and the different special effects other materials bring to the process. Practice and patience are key and with Maria's help, you'll become fluid in the fundamentals to enjoy this beautiful medium!

Registration is open to those who have not used a registered spot for the class before. After August 31, if spots remain, former students can register.

Watercolor II

Maria Farina

The combination of water and pigment is at the heart of the beautiful medium of watercolor. In Watercolor 2, we'll concentrate on the delicate balance of water and ink to gain more confidence in advancing in the watercolor process. We'll also delve more into the techniques and strengthen our knowledge and practice of the fundamentals. This class is for anyone who wants to continue their love affair with watercolor.

Registration is open to those who have not used a registered spot for the class before. After August 31, if spots remain, former students can register.

We're (STILL!) From Pittsburgh...couldn't be Prouder! (Part II)

David Fortun

We have the tallest educational structure in the Western hemisphere.

We have more bridges (446) than any city in the world.

We have the guy who found the vaccine for polio.

AND..... We have the guy who was able to rig a State lottery!

"We" are Pittsburgh, and "we" have every reason to be proud, as we explore the people and places that enable us to say, "...couldn't be prouder."

This is a sequel to a previous course, but all of the material, including the guest speaker, is new. You can attend this course without participating in the previous course.

What's Happening This Week?

Paul Kasunich

This five-week course will focus on a different newsworthy topic each week. The topics will be chosen based on what is making headlines for that particular week. Topics could range from local to national to international, with an emphasis on providing unbiased analysis of the highlighted issue. Class discussion and readings will spotlight the weekly topic.

Who Do You Say That I Am? An Introduction to The Study of Jesus

Ed Bobinchock

This course will examine what the early Church Councils have said about Jesus as well as the theological reflection of some of the contemporary theologians.

Woody Allen's Films and Life

Joseph Givvin

Who is Woody Allen? He has been called many names: comedic genius, sexual pervert, nerd, moral reprobate, *auteur*, philosopher, great filmmaker. This class will explore the many aspects of his life and work. One question we will consider is, can we appreciate the art or comedy of a person for whom we have serious questions about that person's moral character. The class will emphasize his films with a view to understanding and evaluating the character and thought behind them.

Writing Between World: Women, Migration, and the Search for Home

Gemma Stemley

What does it mean to leave home and create another? How do memory, language, family and culture shape our sense of belonging when we live between countries, states and cultures?

This discussion-based course explores these questions through the works of women writers whose lives have crossed national borders. Drawing from Caribbean, African,

American, and the wider global diaspora, we will read memoirs, novels and essays that illuminate the universal human search for identity and home. Although these writers come from different countries and cultures, they share common experiences of migration, displacement, adaptation, resilience, and the challenge of living between two worlds.

Rather than concentrate on literary theory, our discussions will focus on the human stories behind these works. Participants will be encouraged to reflect on their own experiences of change, family, memory, travel and belonging. Whether one has crossed an ocean, moved across the country, or simply experienced the emotional journey of leaving one stage of life for another, these writings offer rich opportunities for personal connection. Each class will begin a brief writing or reflection prompt, followed by guided discussion of selected readings. No prior background in Literature is required.

Writing Club **Maria Simbra**

Unlock your creative voice in a supportive environment with a workshop-style course designed for writers of all levels. Build consistent creative practice with guided narrative and collaborative feedback.

What to Expect:

- *Prompt-driven exploration.* Each session focuses on curated, thought-provoking writing prompts to spark stories and life reflections for immediate drafting.
- *Small group intimacy and interaction.* With the group capped at ten participants, you'll work in a tight-knit community where trust, vulnerability, and genuine connection flourish.
- *The art of sharing.* Practice sharing your fresh work in a low-stakes, supportive setting. Learn to give and receive constructive, craft-based encouragement.
- *Process over perfection.* Discover themes and styles that emerge naturally in your unrehearsed prose or poetry.

The course isn't about writing the perfect story. It's about finding the story you didn't know you had in you. Bring pen, paper, and your muse. Open to anyone who has a passion for words and a willingness to share them.

Registration is open to those who have not used a registered spot for the class before. After August 31, if spots remain, former students can register.

Members may take one section of this class (either morning or afternoon session).

Adventure Fridays (by order of date)

The Benefits of Strength Training for Life's Journey

Friday, September 11, 10-11am

Eric Levitan, Vivo

Research continues to show that strength training is one of the most powerful, and often overlooked, tools for healthy aging. Did you know we begin losing muscle mass as early as age 30, with that loss accelerating after age 60? Over time, this can affect balance, mobility, bone health, confidence, and the ability to continue doing the activities we love.

In this engaging session, we'll explore what happens to our muscles as we age, why strength matters for maintaining independence, and the simple, research-backed strategies that support healthy, active aging. We'll also discuss the important role of nutrition, the growing connection between strength and brain health, and how strength training supports the movements that matter most in everyday life.

The session includes a brief guided class demonstration so participants can experience Vivo's approachable, evidence-based training firsthand, followed by plenty of time for questions and discussion.

Widowed? Separated? Divorced?

Friday, September 18, 2:15-3:45pm

Karen Monro Walker

The end of a marital relationship is one of the most traumatic losses a person will ever experience. The normal, natural reaction to such a loss is grief, regardless of whether the marriage ended due to the death of a spouse or due to separation or divorce. Facing feelings of loss, loneliness, fear, and pain can be challenging on one's own. This workshop will share how the Beginning Experience® grief resolution ministry incorporates Team members' own experiences to address the five stages of grief (denial, bargaining, anger, depression, and acceptance) identified by psychiatrist Elisabeth Kübler-Ross, and to accompany individuals as they journey through their grief into renewed hope.

Standing on Their Shoulders – 150 Years of the Sisters of Divine Providence

Friday, September 25, 12:30-2pm

Sr. Michele Bisbey, CDP, PhD

A multimedia presentation tracing the congregation's journey from its origins in Germany to the present day. Topics include the arrival in Pennsylvania in 1876, the founding of La Roche University, ministries through the years, remarkable sisters, and the continuing relevance of the Providence charism. Photographs, artifacts, and personal stories would make the history engaging and accessible.

Self-Publishing: Getting Started
Friday, September 25, 2:15-3:15pm
Maria Simbra

Thinking about bringing your book into the world on your own terms? This introductory session demystifies the self-publishing landscape from manuscript to marketplace. Award-winning author and journalist Maria Simbra breaks down what it actually takes to publish independently. She'll walk you through the fundamentals with a step-by-step roadmap. Perfect for first-time authors ready to bypass traditional gatekeepers and publish with confidence.

Walking Historical Friendship
Friday, September 25, 9:30-11:30am OR Friday, October 9, 1:15-3:15pm
Jay Steele

Friendship is nestled between Bloomfield and Garfield and a very underrated east end neighborhood of Pittsburgh. Friendship was designed as a streetcar suburb and its houses were meant for professional and middle management class families with rising wealth in the Victorian period, featuring elaborate architectural embellishments and both front and back yards. It is a mix of Victorian, Edwardian, Four-Square, Colonial Revival, and Arts & Crafts homes, features such as high ceilings, plaster walls, stained glass windows, and ornate woodwork. Come join myself and the President of the Friendship Community Group as we explore Friendship neighborhood.

Intergenerational International Lunch and Get Together
Friday, October 2 and Friday, November 20, 11:30am-1:30pm

Join international students from around the globe at a light lunch and get together. We'll enjoy pizza, salad, treats, and great conversation. This is a way for lifelong learning members to connect to students and learn about their cultures and countries, and a way for the undergraduate international students to interact with the lifelong learners, learn about you, and practice their conversation skills.

A light lunch is provided at no cost.

Beneath the Mountains: Laurel Caverns and Italian Dining at Mi Madre (Avalon)
Day Trip
Friday, October 2
9:30am-6:30pm
Fee: \$100

Discover the beauty beneath and beyond the Laurel Highlands on this memorable day trip! Our adventure begins at Laurel Caverns, Pennsylvania's largest cave, where you can explore the fascinating underground world through the 800-foot Maze, complete with a spectacular sound and light show.

Those looking for a more active adventure may continue on the Full Lighted Tour, featuring 1,200 additional feet of cavern, 143 steps, the dramatic 45-foot Calico Falls, and the breathtaking Grand Canyon passage.

Prefer a more leisurely experience? The first section is easily enjoyed on its own, with time afterward to browse the gift shop or take in sweeping views of the Appalachian Mountains from the Overlook Balcony.

After our subterranean adventure, we'll head back to Pittsburgh for a delicious Italian dinner at Mia Madre Trattoria, a beloved neighborhood restaurant known for its authentic Italian cuisine and warm atmosphere.

Come enjoy a day filled with natural wonders, beautiful scenery, great food, and good company!

Fee - \$100, Guests permitted at same fee.

Dinner is plated appetizers of fried zucchini and bruschetta, choice of entrée - Chicken Romano or Eggplant Parmesan, and pasta marinara with either entrée. Breadsticks, sodas, coffee, tea, and limoncello cake round out our dinner.

Fee includes Tour of Laurel Caverns, appetizer, dinner, dessert at restaurant, all tips and gratuity for bus, guides, and dinner.

No refunds after Thursday, September 24.

Walking Historical Bellevue

Friday, October 16, 10am-noon OR 1:15-3:15pm

Jay Steele

Bellevue was formed in 1867 after breaking away from Ross Township in 1795. It is only 4.5 miles to Downtown Pittsburgh. This is a very walkable and nice neighborhood with an outstanding main retail section on Lincoln Avenue. We will look and talk about the past, present, and future of Bellevue. The highlights include the former Bellevue theater, Assumption Catholic Church and school, City Hall, Lincoln Brewery, Masonic Hall, Classic Chevrolet, Bayne Park and Library, former Bellevue High School, Revival restaurant, various old churches, Hermann Art Museum, and last but not least the architect Rosseau spectacular home on Watkins. Come join us this fall!

Rachel Carson EcoVillage: Why Community is so Important Today

Friday, October 30, 2:15-3:15pm

Stefani Danes

We experience social isolation so often in today's world that we take it for granted. But people are creating better alternatives. Come join Stefani Danes to learn about these new ideas, including our very local Rachel Carson EcoVillage.

Walking Historical Mexican War Streets

Friday, October 30, 9:30-11:30am OR Friday, November 13, 9:30-11:30am

Jay Steele

General William Robinson developed the Mexican War Streets in 1848 naming the streets after battles and generals of the Mexican American War (1846-48). One of the most popular spots in Pittsburgh. We will look at these beautiful middle-class

neighborhood homes. The highlights include the Russell Boggs Mansion, Mattress Factory, Franco Harris home (during his Steelers years), the eccentric Randyland, The City of Asylum (Alphabet City), Garden Theater, George Ferris house, and the Old Garden Society and so much more.

Living Providence Today – Continuing the Mission

Friday, November 6, 11am-12:30pm

Sr. Michele Bisbey, CDP, PhD

A conversation exploring how the Providence charism continues through faculty, staff, students, alumni, board members, volunteers, associates, Amici Cordis, and friends of the University. Rather than serving as a recruitment event, it would invite participants to consider how they might live the values of Providence through service, justice, hospitality, and hope.

Beyond the Scenery: Lessons Learned on America's Triple Crown

Friday, November 6, 1:30-2:30pm

Patrick Cullinan

Patrick Cullinan's enthusiasm for hiking began on wooded trails around the rolling hills of his Pittsburgh neighborhood. Those early wanderings grew an unconscious appreciation for the outdoors that would eventually cause him to set out after America's Triple Crown: over 7,500 miles of hiking on the Appalachian, Continental Divide, and Pacific Crest Trails.

Patrick's talk will follow his journey as he recounts the changes experienced and lessons learned during his evolution from weekend wanderer to seasoned thru-hiker. He'll speak about everything from memories of his early struggles in the lush green forests of the East Coast to tackling foreboding 14,000-foot peaks in the American West and showcase the diverse beauty—and challenges—of each trail through personal anecdotes and beautiful photos.

Beyond the adventure and scenery, Patrick will talk about the constant evolution of his habits, gear, and mindset as he adapted to the ever-changing demands of the trails. Whether you're a seasoned backpacker or just curious about the allure of long-distance hiking, his account will leave you with an appreciation for these remarkable trails and the profound impact they can have on those who dare to tackle them.

Bruno: Pittsburgh's Legend

Friday, November 13, 2-3:15pm

Dave Creedon

Taking a look at a true Steel City legend, Bruno Sammartino, from the horrors of WWII, early Pittsburgh years, his emergence into the wrestling world and then total dominance of the sport. His devotion to family and his adopted city...let's turn back the clock and reset our memories in this class of Pittsburgh's own.

Spirits, Legends, and Lost Cities: Folklore of South America

Friday, November 20, 1:30-3:30pm

Adrienne M Earle

South America has a rich storytelling tradition shaped by Indigenous beliefs, European colonization, African traditions, Catholicism, and the continent's dramatic natural environment. This seminar introduces memorable legends from several regions and considers what they reveal about nature, morality, cultural identity, and history.

One-Time and Special Events Descriptions (in order of date)

Some one-time and special events are open for guests as well. See description or registration forms for the events guests can attend.

ALL Fall Preview

Monday, August 17, 11am-noon

La Roche University's Introcaso Center for Lifelong Learning invites adults 50 and better to explore upcoming courses at the ALL Fall Preview. The event will take place in the Conference Room of Kearns Spirituality Center on the Sisters of Divine Providence campus, next to La Roche University. Guests will learn about the various noncredit, short-term courses that are offered as a part of Adventures in Lifelong Learning (ALL), a membership-based program for retirement-aged individuals. If interested, participants will be able to become a member and register for Fall Term classes at this event. Current members of the program can bring friends and family who would like to learn more about the program.

Footsteps Through Time: Exploring the Ancient South of Italy and Sicily

Mark Macedonia

Part 1 – Monday, August 24, 2-3:30pm

Part 2 – Wednesday, September 2, 2-3:30pm

This two-part lecture and presentation will examine the history of Southern Italy and Sicily where the past is still very much visible and tangible. An exploration of the historic sites within the southern area of the Apennine Peninsula will showcase how Southern Italy and Sicily became the location for where the seeds of the economy, intellect, and culture of Rome were sown.

You do not need to attend both, but please register for those you would like to attend.

ALL New Member Orientation

Friday, August 28 or Thursday, September 10, 10am-12:30pm

This program will allow new and newer members to the Adventures in Lifelong Learning program to learn the ins and outs of the program, take care of all the logistics of being a member, take a campus tour, and ask questions to the staff. New members do not have to attend, but this will be a great way to get started and take full advantage of the programs.

We plan to offer this program monthly throughout the year to ensure all new members have the opportunity to learn about the program and all its benefits.

Daily Life in Greek and Roman Households

Monday, August 31, 2-3:15pm

Dr. Christina Clark

How did average Greeks and Romans live their daily lives? Would we feel at home in their houses, or would they seem strange? This talk focuses on the material remains of daily life in the ancient Greek and Roman worlds. I will show reconstructions of Greek

and Roman houses, identifying public, private, and gendered spaces and discuss the choice of decorations in household contexts. After a brief examination of architectural elements, I will discuss indoor activities and objects people used in their daily lives.

The New Space Race

Tuesday, September 1, 1-2:30pm

Dr. Soren Fanning

The first Space Race was about being first - the first person in space, the first to land on the moon. Today, the contest is to see who can create a permanent presence beyond Earth. With the successful Artemis II mission in April of 2026, we will look at the challenges and motivations for the new push into outer space, and what it might hold for the future of humankind.

Courtship and Marriage Customs in Ancient Greece and Rome

Thursday, September 3, 2-3:15pm

Dr. Christina Clark

How did the ancient Greeks and Romans think of love and marriage, and how did they become engaged and arrange marriages? What did their marriage ceremonies involve? This talk will answer these questions and focus on ancient Greek and Roman courtship customs and marriage rituals as seen in both literary texts and material remains such as vase-paintings and tombstones.

Mass of the Holy Spirit and La Roche Picnic Lunch

Tuesday, September 8, 11am-2pm

Join the La Roche community at its opening mass and picnic lunch with the Most Reverend Mark. A. Eckman, D.D., Thirteenth Bishop of the Diocese of Pittsburgh. This is an annual event. It will take place in the Providence Heights Motherhouse Chapel.

Following the mass, the La Roche community (including lifelong learners) will gather for a picnic lunch on Bold Lawn.

The event is free, but we do ask you to RSVP for a count.

How the Russo-Ukrainian War Might Change Everything

Thursday, September 10, 1-2:30pm

Soren Fanning

What was supposed to be swift Russian conquest has evolved into a grinding endurance contest that has lasted for four years. Along the way, the nature of warfare itself seems to be rapidly changing, with profound consequences for all the major powers in the world, including China and the United States. We will explore the reasons that all of us may have to rethink war and peace in the 21st century.

Burnbabyburn!

Sunday, September 13, 8-11pm

Fee: \$60

Join us as we go to see *Burnbabyburn! the American Dream* at the August Wilson House, put on by Pittsburgh Playwrights. This will be the first show discussed at the Theater in the City class in the first session, but anyone can attend.

A note from Sr. Rita about the play "The title is misleading. This is not a violent play. Pittsburgh playwright, A.K. Payne, wrote a memory play. I went to the June 14 reading of the play and was touched by the poetic dialogue of this recent NAACP Theater Award winner. The play uses photographs as an important element; thus, the omission of afternoon performances. It is the story of girl who grew up in Pittsburgh. As Monteze Freeland writes:

"It is a play about parenthood, identity, chosen family, and hope, written with a poetry that is both timeless and immediate, highlighting the people of this once smoky city between three rivers."

Transportation will be provided from and back to La Roche. The show will be held outside.

Narcisi Small Bites and Wine

Wednesday, September 30, 5-7pm

The event will start with a tour of Narcisi's wine cellar - The Tank Room - with an in-depth explanation of the wine making process. We will then continue in The Library room (above our Tasting Bar) where we will dive into the extensive tasting of 5 wines. We will describe the grape varieties, the vinification process and the most effective way to learn about wine, following the 5 steps of a "proper" tasting.

Each wine will be paired with 5 different gourmet bite tastings made by our very own chef Mullen; you will be amazed to see how the foods pair with the wine and amplify the perception of flavors and aromatics of the wine, and vice versa! They are going to include food with influences from Southern Italy and Sicily.

The various food options will contain meat and possibly fish.

This event will take place at Narcisi Winery, 4578 Gibsonia Rd, Gibsonia, PA 15044. Transportation is on your own. The cost is \$55 per person and guests are permitted. Space is limited and payment is due by September 11.

Senior Health and Fitness Day

Wednesday, October 28

More information will be announced in September, but we will have a Health Fair, demo and open fitness classes, special, healthy food in the dining hall, vaccination clinic, and much more!

Kerr Museum by Candlelight and Oakmont Trip

Wednesday, December 2

2:30-8:30pm

Fee: \$105

Let's have an early Christmas celebration together!

In historic Oakmont, at the turn of the 20th century, we'll tour the Kerr Memorial Museum. The museum showcases a middle-class Victorian house commissioned in 1897 and beautifully restored and decorated to depict the life of a small-town doctor. We will tour the 1st and 2nd floors, as well as a medical museum in the basement. We'll meet Dr Kerr and his lovely wife and daughter, dressed for the occasion. Afterward, dinner at Hoffstot's Cafe Monaco (Drinks on you own tab.)

Another little sweetener--we'll make a quick stop at Oakmont Bakery as we arrive in Oakmont. Purchases can be left on the bus while we tour and eat.

Here's the plan:

2:30pm Depart LaRoche

3:15pm Arrive Oakmont Bakery

4:00pm Tour Kerr Memorial Museum

5:30pm Depart for Hoffstot's

6:00pm Dinner begins

7:30pm Depart for home

8:30pm Arrive at LaRoche

The cost of the trip for members and their guests is \$105.

Included: Tour of Kerr Museum, buffet dinner at Hoffstot's (salad, chicken picatta, lasagna roulade, roasted potatoes, coffee/tea/sodas/iced tea, round trip bus, all gratuities. Bar, specialty drinks, and bakery items at Oakmont Bakery on your tab.

No refunds after November 13.

Special Interest Groups
Member Led Groups – Schedules Subject to Change

ALL Social Club

First Wednesday of the Month, 4-6:30pm, Location announced monthly.

Join fellow members at local restaurants for socializing and good food. Each month, members meet at a local area restaurant. There are individual checks, food and beverage specials, and a good time had by all.

Coffee and Conversation Special Interest Group

Wednesdays, 9-10:15am

Looking for some good conversation to go with your morning coffee? Join our informal gathering of lifelong learning men's morning coffee group. We hope to have relaxed discussions on life, news, hobbies, and everything in between. The group decides the topics and discussions. No agenda. No membership. Just friendly faces, fresh coffee, and lively conversation. We hope the group will eventually meet on a regular basis to share stories, laughs, and ideas.

ALL Game Night

Third Wednesday of the Month, 6:30-8:30pm, Kearns Spirituality Center Dining Room

Join fellow members in the dining room of Kearns Spirituality Center and play games! Members can bring their own games and snacks. The event is alcohol free and there is no cash betting.

Fitness Class Descriptions

Cardio, Strength and Core (Intermediate to Advanced Fitness Class)

Edna Spang

This class focuses on strengthening your core, improving cardio fitness and toning muscles. Equipment will be provided.

This is a fast-paced, intermediate level exercise class. Participants must be able to handle physical activity and be able to move easily up and down from the floor. Wear tennis shoes, bring a towel, yoga mat and drink.

Chair Yoga

Emily Shimko, EdD

This form of yoga will be practiced both seated and standing using a chair for support. Chair yoga is an accessible option for beginners, those who may not be able to go to the floor, individuals recovering from an injury, or those who want to explore their yoga practice in a different way. Incorporating breath work and adapted yoga postures, practitioners can gain physical and mental benefits including improved stability, strength, flexibility and stress reduction.

Chairs will be provided. It is recommended to bring two yoga blocks. Mats are optional.

This class is for members who cannot participate in the other yoga classes we offer and who may struggle with other fitness courses.

Circuit Training (Intermediate to Advanced Fitness Class)

Edna Spang

This class will help improve your cardiovascular health and muscle strength. We will complete a circuit of cardio and strength exercises using a variety of equipment. 1-minute intervals will have your heart pumping and muscle burning.

This is a fast-paced, intermediate level exercise class. Participants must be able to handle physical activity and be able to easily go up and down from the floor. Wear tennis shoes, bring a towel, yoga mat and a drink.

Gentle Yoga

Kathryn Jolley

Ready for yoga? Whether you are new to yoga, returning to yoga after a long hiatus, or simply looking for a less strenuous yoga experience, Gentle Yoga may be for you. Step-by-step cues and instructor adjustments ensure proper alignment. Guidance through breathwork and an internal focus encourages the positive benefits of yoga: improved flexibility, greater strength and balance, reduced stress, and a positive spirit. Participants must be able to get up and down from the floor with guidance and should bring a yoga mat to each class.

Hatha Yoga (Intermediate)

Kathryn Jolley

This level yoga class builds on the basics learned and practiced in any beginner or Gentle Yoga class. Classes may include more variety and challenge in poses, some flow and a greater focus on integrating breath, mind and body. While a good understanding of basic yoga asanas (poses) is important, the focus on alignment and balance to prevent injury continues. More challenging asanas, movement from one pose to another and a slightly quicker pace make this a bit more demanding class. Some prior yoga experience and a bit more strength are helpful for this class. Participants should bring a yoga mat to each class.

Intermediate Hiking

Edna Spang

Join the instructor to explore different areas of our region each week. Along the way we will talk about the different trees, plants, mushrooms and birdlife at the park. We will walk on trails that have rocks, roots, uneven terrain, and steep hills. **It is a steady paced 3–4-mile hike, intermediate level.**

Hiking or trail shoes are recommended. Also, hiking poles or a walking stick is helpful. Prepare for all weather conditions. Starting locations will be posted on the online calendar.

Meditation Practice

Kathryn Jolley

Whether or not you have ever tried meditation, this practice may help you learn to meditate with positive benefits like reduced blood pressure, lower cholesterol, improved focus, less stress, improved sleep and may encourage many other benefits. Together, we will try a variety of types of meditation which may help you find a method that suits you well. Enjoy the community aspect of practicing meditation with others. This is not a history lesson; this is about PRACTICING meditation in community.

Muscle Conditioning- Strength and Endurance

Emily Shimko, Ed.D.

Build muscle strength and endurance in this group fitness class. We will use dumbbell weights and other equipment to move through a variety of muscle fitness exercises with little rest between exercises. Modifications and a range of weights will be offered. Participants should have adequate mobility for this class. Weights will be provided, but participants are advised to bring a mat and water.

Beginner does not require participants to get on the floor. The intermediate level requires participants to get down and up from the floor throughout the class.

On the Move

Robyn Smith, Patsy Taylor-Moore

On the Move (OTM) is a proven group exercise program to improve walking in older adults. All classes are done to music and led by a trained OTM instructor. OTM has a

warm-up period, progressive walking and stepping patterns, strength training exercises, and a cool-down period. OTM welcomes individuals who want to improve their walking or balance, are fearful of falling, have chronic conditions such as arthritis, heart disease, or diabetes, can walk on their own but may be unsteady or have some difficulty, and/or want to exercise and have fun. People who participate in OTM may become more confident in their walking, walk farther without having to stop and rest, walk faster, and find it easier to do daily tasks.

Pilates

Abby Werner

Strengthen your core, improve your posture, and enhance flexibility with this low-impact, full-body workout. Pilates focuses on precise movements, breath control, and alignment using just your body weight and a mat. This course will help you build deep core strength, improve stability and leave you feeling balanced and energized.

Participants will need to bring a mat to each class.

Tai Chi - 24 Short Form (Beginner)

Sifu David Slaughter

Tai Chi is a low impact set of movements that benefits the mind and the body. Some of the benefits include improved balance and flexibility, better focus and concentration, stress reduction and overall well-being. The movements are done in a slow relaxed coordinated manner that helps increase circulation of the brain and the internal organs. Tai chi helps regulate the nervous system, which sends signals to the brain that enhances our reaction skills. Each movement has a specific name and purpose.

The classes will begin with working on the beginner 24 movement Tai chi form and progressing to the advanced 108 movement form. Chi kung, (breathing exercises) postures and footwork will be covered in each class. This is a general level fitness class.

Members may only take one of Sifu Slaughter's classes each week.

Tai Chi - 108 Long Form (Advanced Beginner/Intermediate)

Sifu David Slaughter

The 108 Long Form is an advanced sequence for people that are comfortable with the movements of the 24- short form. All the posture/movements in the 24 -short form, are in the 108 long form. Its structure features a series of postures and transitions, many with multiple repetitions, reflecting the flowing movements of Tai Chi at an advanced level. The form is divided into sections, each containing a variety of stances, turns, kicks, balances, and hand techniques, which makes it a fascinating way to work a more advanced method to improve balance, focus, and flexibility.

This class is NOT for beginners or those with little experience in the art and practice of Tai Chi.

Members may only take one of Sifu Slaughter's classes each week.

Vinyasa Yoga Flow **Emily Shimko, Ed.D.**

Vinyasa yoga is a common style of yoga practice in Western Culture. This type of yoga links postures from one to the next, guided by the use of the breath. Postures and sequences vary from class to class. Benefits of regular Vinyasa yoga practice may include increased strength, flexibility, overall fitness and reduced feelings of stress. Modifications can be made during practice, but participants should be in relatively good health and be able to move between the mat and standing postures. Please dress comfortably and bring a mat and water. You may also bring along your own blocks, towels, straps or any other items to support your practice.

Water Aerobics **Cathy Fodor**

Join us for a low impact but high intensity water aerobics class where no swimming skills are needed. This class is designed to improve flexibility, range of motion, strength, muscle tone and cardiovascular endurance while using the resistance of the water to cushion the feet, knees and back. Exercises are performed to lively, motivating music and are effective and easy to follow.

Zumba Fitness **Joanna Dilley**

Zumba is a Latin cardio dance-based workout, combining all elements of fitness - cardio, muscle conditioning, balance and flexibility. We mix low- and high-intensity moves for an interval style, calorie burning dance fitness party. Once the Latin and World rhythms take over, you'll see why Zumba Fitness classes are often called "exercise in disguise." These classes are perfect for everybody; no dance experience is needed! Zumba classes are designed to bring people together to move and have fun!

Zumba Fitness is more intense than Zumba Gold.

Zumba Gold **Joanna Dilley**

Zumba Gold is perfect for active older adults who are looking for a modified Zumba class that recreates the original moves you love at a lower intensity. The design of the class introduces easy-to-follow choreography that focuses on balance, range of motion and coordination. Class focuses on all elements of fitness: cardiovascular, muscular conditioning, flexibility and balance. Come ready to sweat and prepare to leave empowered and feel strong.

Zumba Gold is less intensive than Zumba Fitness.

Plus Members Open Times

Walking Track – Monday through Friday, 8:30am-6pm

Pool Hours – TBA

Program Offerings at Kearns Spirituality Center

These offerings are open to the public as well as ALL members.

Spiritual Direction^{\$}

Spiritual Direction is not counseling, nor is it about giving advice. A spiritual director is a skilled and compassionate listener who is trained in the art of helping another person to pay attention to the presence of God in prayer and life experiences. Staff at Kearns Spirituality Center will get you connected to a Spiritual Director, and you can meet in our facility if you wish. The typical cost is \$60 an hour.

Private Retreats^{\$}

A private retreat allows you time away from the busyness of daily life, for quiet and solitude, and to spend time with God in prayer and reflection. You provide your own material for prayer and meals and decide your own schedule. We can provide a private bedroom with a recliner and desk for your use along with the use of our kitchen. A typical donation of \$40 is offered for one day. If you would like to spend the night, it is \$75 for a single room and \$100 for a suite, which includes a private bath.

Labyrinth

Kearns Spirituality Center invites you to experience the beauty of its permanent outdoor labyrinth. The labyrinth is an ancient, sacred symbol found in many religious traditions throughout the world. During the Middle Ages, labyrinths were prominent in numerous cathedrals in Europe, where Christians walked floor labyrinths or traced their fingers along the carved ridges of wall labyrinths.

Designed and constructed in 2003, the labyrinth is located behind Kearns Spirituality Center. Individuals are welcome to walk the labyrinth. Groups larger than three are asked to contact Kearns to schedule their labyrinth walks. No charge.

Sisters 150th Anniversary Celebration

Through Summer 2027, the Sisters of Divine Providence will celebrate its 150th Anniversary of serving a Provident God and the people they were called to impact. During this year, they will offer programs for lifelong learners and the community. Some of their programs specifically for lifelong learners are listed in our offerings.

Full details about this year's events can be found here:

<https://cdpsisters.org/documents/150th-anniversary>

Biographies of Instructors and Lecturers

David Albert is a retired Air Force officer. As part of his 30-year active-duty career he spent almost 3 years in Berlin at Tempelhof Air Base, the terminus of the Berlin Airlift. As Deputy Commander for Support, he was one of the last of the American military to leave Tempelhof when it was returned to the German government in 1993. David also teaches various Civil War courses for the OSHER Lifetime Learning Institute (OLLI) program at Pitt and CMU and the Center for Lifelong Learning here at LaRoche.

Huck Beard is an obsessive sfoglino (pasta maker) who definitely knows the difference between tortellini and tortelloni. He teaches pasta classes in his home kitchen and at private parties and fundraisers. He is also the longtime Creative Director at Pittsburgh Magazine, a novelist, a photographer, and a professional musician. He and his husband, John, live in the North Hills with their ridiculous Portuguese Water Dog, Humphrey.

Sister Michele Bisbey, CDP, PhD, entered religious life from St. Norbert parish in Overbrook, Pennsylvania. She credits the women who taught her in grade school through college for influencing her decision to enter religious life. She says, "They were dedicated, enthusiastic, passionate and happy."

Sister Michele has worked in higher education since 1987, including La Roche University since 1992. At La Roche, she held the titles of Professor of Religious Studies and Ketteler Endowed Chair of Theology. As division chair of Humanities, she oversaw eight departments, 18 full-time faculty members and a number of adjunct professors. Sister Michele was also the director of The La Roche Experience, a course which emphasizes the history of La Roche College and introduces students to issues in diversity and discrimination, regions of conflict and economic justice. She made God's Providence visible in her ministry by creating an atmosphere in which students could discern where they stood on issues of justice and peace. Through her presence, availability and advocacy, she treated her students in an inclusive, caring and compassionate way. Sister Michele is also involved in foster care. She says, "My experience at foster care ministry has shaped and expanded my understanding of God, community and family." She is currently the Provincial Director of the Sisters of Divine Providence.

Self-described as faithful, caring and creative, Sister Michele enjoys reading, the St. John's Bible and anything Irish. She has published, in Korean, a series of lectures on the emerging theology and spirituality of Providence. Her "Mary of Nazareth, Disciple and Woman of Providence" was published in the Proceedings of Women in Providence in Collaboration.

Ed Bobinchock, Ph.D., a recently retired professor of Religious Studies and Philosophy at La Roche University, has been an avid student of Vatican Council II since the early days of his theological studies at the Katholieke Universiteit Leuven, where

several of his professors served as theological consultants at Vatican II and drafters of several of the sixteen documents promulgated by the council.

Ron Brown is an attorney and political consultant who has a lifelong interest in American History. He has been engaged in many political campaigns as a candidate, campaign manager and consultant. He is also an election attorney with experience in voting rights issues and election contests.

Cheryl Butler, a nurse by profession and a crafter by passion, incorporates the history of crochet with techniques for beginners in the fiber art. Experience includes 50 years of a variety of crochet projects, different crochet techniques, and awards for her creations. Teaching experience includes classes with multiple students at JoAnne Fabrics and individual lessons.

Susan Button was an outreach portable planetarium educator for 16 years and before that a classroom teacher for 11 years. She served on the Executive Council of the International Planetarium Society (IPS) as President Elect, President (2005-2008) and then as Past President (2009-2010). She has served as chair for the IPS Portable Planetarium Committee from 1988 to the present.

As a consultant, through her business, "Quarks to Clusters," she has provided teacher training and assistance to educators involved in lesson and curriculum development in 14 countries around the world since 1990. As associate editor for the "Planetarian", the IPS quarterly journal, she has written a column for mobile and small planetarium directors since 1990. She also wrote and published, with help from colleagues in the field, two handbooks for the IPS: they were titled "IPS Portable Planetarium Handbook" in the English language and "Tips for Portable and Small Planetarium Users" in Spanish.

Adam Couch is an adjunct professor at La Roche University, currently teaching World Religions and Ethics. His background includes both high school and university teaching, along with parish work as a pastoral associate and coordinator of religious education. Adam has a degree in Theological Studies, with a focus in the Christian Intellectual Tradition, from Saint Louis University, along with a Masters of Theology from Xavier University with a focus in Ethics and Spirituality.

Jamaal Craig is an Associate Professor at the Community College of Allegheny County where he teaches courses in Ethnic and Diversity Studies and Political Science. He holds a master's degree in public policy, from New England College and a BA in Political Science from the University of Tennessee as well as an associate's in science in Criminal Justice from the University of South Carolina. He has taught courses including Political Science 101, American Government, State and Local Government, and the U.S. Constitution. He is also the lead faculty of the Youth Civic Leadership Academy (YCLA), a program that partners with the City of Pittsburgh to help youth develop transferable skills, competencies, and experiential learning necessary to thrive as civic leaders, community stewards, and change makers.

In addition to his teaching experience Professor Craig has extensive experience working in government at the Federal, State, and Local levels.

Dave Creedon was all around the world of Wrestling, ringside photographer, knowing the grapplers and the behind-the-scenes stories. Born in Pittsburgh's North Side and raised in then the farming community of Cranberry Township (that's sure not true anymore) and raised his family and still lives in that community.

Patrick Cullinan completed his first thru hike on the Vermont Long Trail at the age of 18 before attending school at Ohio State. Halfway through his junior year he left to hike the Appalachian Trail, and after graduation moved to Vermont and summited all the 4,000'+ peaks in New England and New York. Somehow not yet tired of hiking, he embarked on the Continental Divide Trail in 2022 and set out to tackle America's Triple Crown.

After spending many summers alone in a tent in the woods, Patrick now lives in a house in Pittsburgh with his wife Margaret. At the behest of his wife, he currently enjoys more stationary pursuits like gardening, home improvement projects, and eating delicious food. Patrick continues to explore the outdoors when he can and is looking forward to trips along some of the country's shorter, but no less spectacular, hiking trails.

Stefani Danes is a founding member of Rachel Carson EcoVillage on the Providence Heights campus north of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. During the development phase, she is also serving as project manager. As an architect, she has designed urban affordable housing, cohousing, and community facilities. She has been active in her own neighborhood community organizations since helping to found them in 1989. She teaches courses on housing, intentional communities, and sustainable neighborhood revitalization in the School of Architecture at Carnegie Mellon. Over the past ten years, she has visited more than forty communities in the US and Denmark, prepared post-occupancy evaluations, and has completed a course in cohousing development. She has been a presenter at national Cohousing Conferences and has taught several OSHER courses on cohousing. Her interest in the role of the built environment on communities has guided her career since she did volunteer work in school. She was in the first class of women graduates at Princeton and went on to get her master's in architecture at Yale.

Bob David is a retired technical professional. When he was younger he traveled to and lived in four countries - Japan, Turkey, Saudi Arabia, and Iran. Living abroad introduced him to a vastly different world compared to what Americans are typically used to. He especially took an interest in Iran, having lived in Tehran during all of 1968 when the last Shah was nearing the peak of his power, yet already facing the schisms within Persian society that led to the revolution in 1979.

Joanna Dilley is happy to be a part of the LaRoche University Lifelong Learning Program. She became licensed to teach Zumba Fitness classes in November 2024 and

Zumba Gold in December 2025. She is also certified to teach Silver Sneakers Classic, POP Pilates, and POUND Fitness Drumming classes. Joanna has a passion for music and movement. Her goal in the classroom is to create a space where we can all smile, laugh, sing, and get fit together. When she is not instructing group fitness classes, she enjoys riding her bike on trails throughout Pennsylvania, cooking new recipes, visiting zoos and aquariums, and cheering on Penn State with her husband and two daughters.

Dr. Theresa Doerfler is a lifelong learner who recently completed an MFA in fiction at Carlow University. She has taught both secondary and post-secondary English classes for many years, including at Oakland Catholic High School, Carlow University, and La Roche University. She has published in *Global Sisters Report* and *EarthBeat*, both projects of *National Catholic Reporter*, as well as *Northern Appalachia Review*.

Adrienne M Earle is an educator who believes learning should never stop. She has taught adult education at Rock Valley Community College in Illinois and continuing education courses in Pennsylvania through the Community College of Allegheny County and Community College of Beaver County. Her academic interests include literature, history, folklore, and the classical humanities, and she enjoys bringing these subjects to life through engaging discussion and storytelling. She is excited to work with the Adventures in Lifelong Learning community and share her love of learning with others.

Jennifer Engel is the Executive Director of the Center for Lifelong Learning at LRU. As a member of the GenX generation, she remembers the time without computers and cell phones but has grown up using them. She has spent a great deal of time training and supporting people with the use of their iPhone and other forms of technology.

Maria Farina has been studying art for as long as she can remember. From a family of teachers and artists, Maria was raised to learn fundamentals and practice them to achieve her goals. Maria is thrilled to extend her knowledge of watercolor to her students so they may move forward with confidence to explore and practice this beautiful medium.

Monica Anne Festa holds a PhD in Languages, Literatures, Cultures, and their Applications from the University of Salento, Italy. She earned a Master's in the Science of Instruction from Drexel University, a Bachelor's in Drama from the University of Washington, and a Diploma of English Language Teaching to Adults, from Cambridge English. Before joining LaRoche University, she taught Academic Reading and Writing I and II, Academic Spoken Communication, Basic Methods of Scientific Research and Design, Creative Writing, IELTS and TOEFL test preparation, English as a Foreign Language, Life and Study Skills, Rhetoric, and Workplace Preparedness in the UAE and Morocco from 2004 to 2025. Her research interests include learner engagement, technology-assisted learning, reducing teaching and learning bias, gamification, and curriculum design. Monica earned her Professional Certificate in Online Education through the University of Wisconsin, Madison, in June 2021, and has completed further certified training in the fundamentals of increasing interaction and engagement,

designing gamified learning environments, and creating an interactive syllabus through the Online Learning Consortium.

Cathy Fodor has taught water aerobics, swimming lessons, lifeguarding, and many other Aquatic programs for over 30 years. She is a certified Silver Sneakers instructor and enjoys creating fun Water workouts for older adults.

Dave Fortun retired from teaching English at Shaler Area High School after 36 years. He has continued teaching in Lifelong Learning programs in Pittsburgh for the last 16 years. **Dave has also served as a docent at PNC Park, leading tours for 16 years.**

Jack Gardner is an undergraduate, exercise science major at La Roche University.

Natasha Garrett holds a Ph.D. in international education from the University of Pittsburgh. She serves as the director of International Student Services and as an instructor in the International Studies and Communications Departments at La Roche. As a Macedonian in Pittsburgh, she is passionate about everything cross-cultural—education, literature, art, food/drinks and people.

Joseph Givvin, Ph.D. has returned to live in the Pittsburgh area after 33 years of teaching at Mount Mercy University, Iowa, where he is Professor Emeritus. He has been a member of the American Association of Philosophy Teacher's (AAPT) since 1984 and has presented 12 workshops on teaching philosophy at AAPT conferences. He has also chaired two conferences sponsored by the AAPT. As a result of his work for the AAPT, he was presented an "Award of Merit for Outstanding Leadership and Achievements in the Teaching of Philosophy." He greatly enjoys the opportunity to teach Osher classes at Carnegie Mellon and to engage with the curious minds of the members in thoughtful conversation, especially about humor and happiness.

Dr. Richard S. Grimes has taught Native American history and early American history for 25 years at West Virginia University, Carnegie-Mellon University, Duquesne University, and LaRoche University. He currently teaches at Penn State University-Beaver. An active researcher and writer, his book *The Western Delaware Indian Nation, 1730–1795: Warriors and Diplomats* was published by Lehigh University Press, *Studies in the Eighteenth Century and the Atlantic World* (October 2017). He is currently working on a new book which focuses on the Cheyenne Dog Soldier (Hötä'mitā'niu) military society and their role as tribal police, nomadic warriors, and defenders of Cheyenne culture and homeland on the Great Plains during the nineteenth century.

L. Jon Grogan, PhD, has a bachelor's degree in political science from Tufts University, a master's degree in public history from the University of San Diego, and a PhD in American history (with a minor concentration in African colonial history) from Loyola University Chicago. He is also a retired U.S. Marine Corps officer. He teaches for OLLI programs across the country.

Frances Halley is a local folk artist and illustrator. She is a graduate of the Art Institute of Pittsburgh and is a member of the Pittsburgh Society of Illustrators, the Folk Art Society of America and the Guild of American Papercutters. She has a particular interest in American Folk Art, both historically and as an artistic genre. Her work has been shown at North Hills Art Center, the Martha Gault Gallery at Slippery Rock University, the Foster and Muriel McCarl Coverlet Gallery at St. Vincent's College in Latrobe, PA and at the Sen. John Heinz History Center where she was awarded an honorable mention prize for her piece in the juried exhibit, Art of Facts - Uncovering Pittsburgh. You can see more of her work at www.franceshalley.com. Frances lives in Ross Township with her husband, John and their dog, Lottie.

Father Peter Horton is a priest in the Diocese of Pittsburgh, currently serving as director of the Office of Mission and Ministry at La Roche University. Ordained in 1979, he holds a master of divinity from Mount Saint Mary Seminary and a Master of Arts in pastoral ministry from Duquesne University.

Previously he served as director of Campus Ministry at La Roche (1994-2013) and as an adjunct professor in the Religious Studies Department. Most recently he was the administrator of Saint Thomas More and Saint John Capistran parishes in the South Hills.

Father Peter has served in hospital ministry, retreat ministry and was the National Team Priest for Catholic Engaged Encounter. He also was general manager of the Pittsburgh Catholic Newspaper and served the papers as their entertainment and culture writer for over 20 years.

He is an avid reader, movie buff, theatre lover and a collector of Snoopy memorabilia.

A. R. James, PhD in Education and has more than fifteen years of experience teaching and developing ASL courses for adult learners in classroom and online settings. She is passionate about creating welcoming, interactive learning environments where beginners can build confidence, communicate with others, and enjoy the learning process. Her engaging, discussion-based approach encourages participants to learn at their own pace while discovering that American Sign Language is both practical and fun.

Kathryn Jolley took her first yoga class in 1997, and it has been her passion ever since. She found strength and flexibility for her body, relaxation and focus on her mind and a sense of spirit in facing the world. Kathryn completed her 200-hour yoga training 12 years ago and has completed additional training in Mindfulness, Vinyasa (flow) and Student Adjustments through the Shambhava School in Houston, PA and Boulder, CO. Kathryn is a Reiki Level II practitioner and trained in Yoga Nidra, sometimes called "yogic sleep" and has been teaching meditation for the last five years. Kathryn has taught students from the ages of 6 and 85 and loves to help older adults become more attuned to their bodies in order to maintain and improve their lives.

Patty Jones has been an avid wine enthusiast for many years. She had a 35+ year career in technology / software development and decided several years ago to leave full-time employment in the technology field and pursue formal education and certification in Wine. Patty began courses through the Wine & Spirits Educational Trust (WSET). The WSET, a global organization founded in 1969, is headquartered in London and is generally regarded as one of the world's leading providers of wine education. Patty has achieved the WSET Level 3 award in wine and has been teaching wine classes at a local distributor/importer for the past 2 and a half years.

Paul Kasunich, EdD, has earned a B.S. in Economics, M.S. in Education, and an EdD. All his degrees are from Duquesne University. As well as teaching in the Doctoral program at Gwynedd, he serves as Dissertation Chair for several doctoral students. Dr. Kasunich is no stranger to LaRoche. From 2000-2006, he taught both Macro and Microeconomics in the Business School at LaRoche.

Karen Lehman is a LaRoche graduate receiving a BA in History and a minor in Theology. Furthering her education, she obtained an ME in Social Sciences with Secondary Teaching Certification from Shippensburg University. She pursued Certification in Religious Education, Spiritual Direction, Program Development and Retreats at Kearns Spirituality Center.

Eric Levitan is the founder and CEO of Vivo. Eric brings to Vivo more than 25 years of executive leadership in the technology sector. As he witnessed the decline of his parents' health and quality of life as they got older, he realized he wanted to better understand the aging process and help them. That's why he started Vivo – to create awareness and a safe, engaging, and impactful program to guide older adults to a safer and healthier life.

Xuan Li is an experienced educator who has taught both Chinese and English language courses to adult learners. She currently serves as an Adjunct Instructor in the English as a Second Language Department at La Roche University and has several years of experience teaching Chinese language and culture to adults. She enjoys creating engaging, interactive learning experiences that connect language with history, culture, and real-world communication.

Mark Macedonia is a retired Social Studies teacher who taught for thirty-two years within the Seneca Valley School District, where he taught AP World History and United States History to High School Students. He holds a Bachelor of Arts Degree in communication from St. Bonaventure University, and a Master of Arts in Teaching Degree from the University of Pittsburgh. In the past five years, Mark has authored three books of historical fiction, *The Soles of Cyrus Eblis*, *Beneath a Crescent Moon*, and most recently, *Beware the Shifting Sands*.

Lee J. Markowitz, PhD, is a nature and wildlife photographer with 15 years of experience capturing the outdoors. His work has been featured in *Ohio Magazine* and La Roche University publications, as well as by local organizations including the

Allegheny County Parks Department and Go Laurel Highlands. As a Professor and the Chair of Psychology at La Roche, he brings together his passion for teaching with his love of photography and the outdoors. His photography can be viewed [here](#).

Misty Mator is an award-winning storyteller with over ten years of professional experience. She has a degree in Written & Performative Storytelling from Geneva College, and has performed for Pittsburgh's EQT Children's Theatre Festival, the Women's Storytelling Festival in D.C., the Beaver Tales Storytelling Festival, and the Stone Soup Storytelling Festival, along with many other schools, libraries, and festivals. She has given workshops on storytelling for the national organization Story Crossroads, Lincoln Park Performing Arts Charter School in Midland, PA, and Carnegie Mellon University. You can learn more about her at www.stormatorstories.com.

Jim McCarville is the Vice-President (Lay Member) of the Association of Pittsburgh Priests (APP). Prior to a 40-year career in public service, he helped organize and work with the Base Community movement in Brazil and helped organize the World Justice and Peace Office for the Capuchin Province in Milwaukee. He has an MS from Georgetown University (Foreign Service) and Master of Philosophy from Roosevelt University (Sociology/Education). He previously taught at the University of Wisconsin and now teaches in the OLLI programs at Carnegie Mellon University and the University of Pittsburgh. He is the retired Executive Director of the Port of Pittsburgh Commission.

Rosemary McLaughlin is a writer and retired teacher living in McCandless. She had a biweekly column in the North Hills News Record for eight years about teenagers and their parents. She has published a variety of feature articles in the Post Gazette and the Pittsburgh Quarterly. Her real claim to fame, however, can be found in her five stories published by Chicken Soup for the Soul. Twice the editors also chose her stories to feature on their national podcasts. She hopes to share her winning Chicken Soup "recipe" in this five-week course.

Marjorie Mills earned her Bachelor of Art degree from Indiana University of PA and her in Master of Counseling Psychology from Chatham University. She is a licensed professional counselor (LPC) with over twenty years of experience in the mental health field. She has taught journaling in inpatient and outpatient behavioral health settings and in support groups. Marjorie views journaling as a helpful tool for anyone seeking personal growth, clarity, and goal setting.

Mike Plaskett, radio host, is a lifelong collector of phonograph records from the 1930s-40s. He loves to acquaint his audiences with the personalities of that era and especially the charm and artistry inherent in their work. Mr. Plaskett tells stories about the musicians and some of the famous performers. He illustrates with original recordings and slides.

Mr. Plaskett has worked in radio and TV since 1958. In addition to a variety of day jobs in broadcasting, he has been the creator and co-host of the weekly Rhythm Sweet &

Hot show on WESA 90.5 FM (formerly WDUQ) since 1980. Mr. Plaskett and his radio partner, Dale Abraham, are still on “live” every Saturday evening from 6 to 8 p.m.

Jack Puglisi has been reading and studying history for his entire adult life and giving presentations and teaching classes since 2009. He has spoken to numerous private groups such as the Rotary and The Daughters of the American Revolution, as well as many public venues. His audiences have been anywhere between a hundred people to groups as small as six, equally enjoying all of them. He is also an accomplished artist.

Dr. Michele A. Reiss is an experienced medical educator, psychotherapist and author. Before retiring, Dr. Reiss was the Assistant Program Director and Director of Behavioral Medicine for the Family Medicine Residency Program at UPMC St. Margaret Hospital. As such she spent over twenty years educating physicians, medical students and other health care professionals in palliative care and behavioral medicine. As a psychotherapist, Dr. Reiss continues to specialize in helping clients cope with life threatening medical illnesses and/or grief. Dr. Reiss book, *Lessons In Loss and Living*, is a collection of true stories about the many heroes she has been privileged to work with and learn from.

Michael Secilia is a born and bred Pittsburgher and a professor of History and Social Sciences. His research interests include Croatia & Croatian American History; Ireland, especially the diaspora; Native American History; and vernacular historiography. He volunteers as a docent at St. Nicholas Croatian Church and appreciates every opportunity to share and discuss the marvel of that sacred space.

Emily Shimko, Ed.D., is an associate professor in the Health Sciences Department at La Roche. She earned her Bachelor of Arts in dance from Slippery Rock University, and a Master of Science in exercise physiology and Ed.D. in healthy and physical activity both from the University of Pittsburgh.

Dr. Shimko Emily is a Certified Exercise Physiologist, a Certified Strength and Conditioning Specialist and Registered Yoga Teacher. Previously she worked as a personal trainer and loves teaching group fitness. She believes that taking classes is a great way to improve physical health and fitness as well as finding a supportive social environment to meet individual goals.

Maria Simbra is an author, journalist, and writing consultant. She helps writers achieve their goals through her company, Ironed Words Productions. She provides support via groups, retreats, and one-on-one coaching. Her writing roots are in memoir, with essays published in numerous lit mags and performed across the stages of Pittsburgh. Previously, she was a neurologist before becoming an award-winning on-air medical reporter for CBS Pittsburgh for 19 years. Her formal writing training includes a master's degree in journalism and mass communication.

Currently, she focuses on romance, writing as Em S. A'cor in the subgenres of medical romance and Gen X romance. Her books have hit the top ten on Amazon in medical

romance and medical fiction. They've been recognized with a TAZ Award and multiple BookFest silver medals in 2024. You'll find her south of Pittsburgh, coffee in hand, taking on the world one word at a time.

Sifu David Slaughter began training in Chinese Martial arts at the early age of eight years old. Over decades of training and teaching, Sifu realized that learning, patience, and discipline pave the long path to wisdom. Sifu carries forward this philosophy – a philosophy that characterized traditional Chinese “closed school” systems – into an open school where his teaching style demonstrates that every student should be taught what the individual student is ready to learn. At the core of Sifu's teaching are two foundational elements: the training of the body, to build confidence in the individual's physical abilities, and training of the mind, to release personal ego that often gets us into trouble. Sifu Slaughter's reputation for sincerity, patience in teaching, and dedication to his art have become widely known and respected throughout the greater Pittsburgh area and beyond.

Robyn Smith is a member of the Adventures in Lifelong Learning program and a certified On the Move Instructor.

Edna Spang is an outdoor and adventure enthusiast. She has been leading hikes, bike rides and adventures for 20 years. She is certified to identify wild mushrooms and plants for foraging. Edna is also a competitive athlete racing kayaks, triathlons, orienteering and trail running.

Mary Beth Spore, Ph.D., has been a faculty member and administrator at the University for Pittsburgh and Saint Vincent College for over 25 years. She has taught many courses in children's and young adult literature and criticism as well as writing and speech classes. She loves teaching and learning and seeks both in the classroom. She is a lover of children, dogs, reading, and storytelling. She is a native of western PA and received her Ph.D. in English Education from the University of Pittsburgh.

Jay Steele is a retired professor of Health and Physical Education at CCAC. He is a Pittsburgh native born and raised in the Observatory Hill section of the North Side. He currently lives in Ross Township with his wife Carol and pug Charlie. He has also taught since 1998 community education walking courses/tours for CCAC, Pitt and CMU Osher, and Doors Open Pittsburgh. He has developed these walking tours/classes throughout the city of Pittsburgh and Allegheny County which combines his love of exercise, and Western Pennsylvania history and architecture.

Gemma Stemley is a writer, poet, retired College administrator, and musician, having played the flute for several years professionally. She emigrated to the US more than twenty-five years ago, having grown up on the island of Trinidad. As a poet and musician whose art reflects a deep connection to the land of her upbringing, she epitomizes the true Caribbean spirit. Her poetry explores the intimate emotions of having to call two places home. Gemma has performed on several college campuses,

where she was hired to play her Caribbean music. She has also made appearances to read her poetry.

Gemma has a BS from the University of the West Indies and a master's degree from Clarion University in Library and Information Science. She is ABD (All but Dissertation) having completed coursework for her PhD in Literature and Criticism from Indiana University of Pa. She taught classes at both Clarion University and Cheyney University in International Women's literature while working as an administrator on both these campuses. Being an avid reader in world literature she is especially influenced by Caribbean, African, Indian and African American writers. She loves the poetry of Gwendolyn Brooks, Derek Walcott and Rabindranath Tagore.

Gemma has published two books, one of which received an award from the National Indie Book of Excellence. *Finding Home: A Sentimental Journey*, is an exploration of the meaning of home. Her most recent book- *Sharing Spaces: Poems of the Heart* is a collection of her poems.

Patsy Taylor-Moore has been an enthusiastic hobbyist artist in different mediums, for over 60 years. Known for her animal portraits, murals and landscapes, she enjoys painting with watercolors, acrylics, pen and ink and mixed medium. Though her formal training was in social sciences and long-term care, she has never stopped learning and attends continuing education classes in art and guitar. She is the director and choreographer for The Sassy Seniors of Pittsburgh, a senior citizen entertainment group that provides shows in assisted living and skilled nursing facilities, private venues and schools. She is also a 25-year member of the all-female Motor Maids, Inc (United States and Canada), and on her own motorcycles has toured 38 contiguous states and a good portion of Canada.

Karen Monro Walker recently retired from her role as Pastoral Minister at Saint Luke the Evangelist Parish. She is a former math teacher and high school principal and also previously worked as an American Sign Language interpreter. Karen earned a certificate in Spiritual Direction from St. Vincent's University in Latrobe, PA, studying under Fr. Boniface Hicks, OSB. She has been actively involved with the Pittsburgh Beginning Experience® peer grief resolution ministry and recently joined the Beginning Experience® International board of directors.

Abby Werner is a certified Pilates instructor, who enjoys helping others become stronger and more flexible. Abby is a speech-language pathologist, who works in the early intervention setting. Her hobbies include running marathons, traveling, and spending time with family and friends.

Dana Winterhalter is an Adjunct Professor at La Roche University where she teaches several courses involving creative thinking and expression.

Sister Rita Yeasted, SFCC, Ph.D., a graduate of La Roche, holds two degrees from Duquesne University, all in English Literature. Her official title is The Dorothy Saladiak

Distinguished Professor of English Emerita. She has taught in the Pittsburgh area from 1962 at levels from elementary through university, and has been at La Roche for 42 years, serving as English Department chairperson for three decades. Recently retired, she now teaches as an adjunct professor.

Michael Young, PhD in Writing and Literature from the University of Cincinnati, has taught at schools such as the University of Nebraska – Lincoln, Kansas State University, Robert Morris University, and La Roche University. His master's is from Kansas State and bachelor's is from Duquesne University.

He is an award-winning teacher and author of creative non-fiction, along with publications as a poet and short story writer. Recently, he added professional educational consultant to his resume. In addition, he has many articles and essays in peer reviewed journals, anthologies, and encyclopedias – including a couple in the MLA Approaches to Teaching series. His scholarly works range from Writing Pedagogy, Shakespeare, American Literature, Canadian Literature, Pedagogy, to Media (Cinema and Television), plus presentations at more than 90 conferences – including those in History and Sociology – such as CCCC, NCTE, NEMLA, and MMLA. He has been awarded a number of grants, notably by the Canadian Government, and has been included in Who's Who in America.