



May 17, 2017

Groundbreaking public servant elected as new OLLI@UGA president

A veteran teacher and public servant is set to lead the board of the Osher Lifelong Learning Institute at the University of Georgia, known in the Athens area as OLLI@UGA.

Atlanta native and former Gainesville resident Brenda Hayes begins as president of OLLI@UGA's board of directors as of July 1, and will serve for the 2017-2018 term. She is succeeding current president Lee Albright.

Open to residents age 50 and older, OLLI@UGA is a member-driven organization that offers courses, lectures, travel opportunities and social activities throughout the Athens area. Its membership totals more than 1,400.

"For the constantly curious at age 50 or older, OLLI@UGA offers the gifts of exploration, participation and socialization with truly interesting people," said Hayes. "I'm honored to serve this vital organization as president in the coming year."

A former high school English teacher, Hayes was the first woman elected to chair the Hall County Commission and helped secure the 1996 Olympic rowing and canoe/kayaking venue at Lake Lanier. After working as a regional director for the Georgia Department of Community Affairs, she served as associate director at both the Carl Vinson Institute of Government and the Fanning Institute at UGA; she retired from UGA in 2010. She has a master's degree in public administration from the University of North Georgia.

Joining Hayes, other new members of the OLLI@UGA board include:

- Richard Lynch, president-elect
- Margaret Pruiett, secretary
- Victor Gagliano, treasurer
- Jim Alberts, Sherry Malone, Roy Martin, Ginny Spencer and Nancy Grayson (second term)

The organization also recently honored two of its members as part of its annual meeting. The Dr. Carol J. Fisher Award was presented to Lenette Burrell and Peggy Cole for their outstanding volunteer service over many years. Burrell, a member since 1999, has filled many roles such as a long-term host for OLLI classes and, more recently, as an OLLI@UGA ambassador to residents of her retirement community.

Cole, who has been a member of OLLI@UGA for 15 years, has been a key participant on the Membership Committee, calling new members to welcome them.

One of 120 Bernard Osher institutes throughout the United States, OLLI@UGA is a non-profit organization dedicated to meeting the intellectual, social and cultural needs of adults age 50 and older. For more information, visit olli.uga.edu.