

OLLI at FSU welcomes new leadership; hears plans for year ahead

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President John Van Gieson and outgoing President Marlene Hanna / Special to the Chronicle

The Osher Lifelong Learning Institute at Florida State University, an organization of nearly 700 community members who participate in academic classes, lectures, field trips and other activities tailored for adults over 50, welcomed new leadership at its spring luncheon March 22.

John Van Gieson, veteran reporter, writer, consultant and community volunteer, has taken office as 2013-14 president of OLLI. Van Gieson previously served OLLI as vice president and organizer of the organization's noon lecture series. Van Gieson succeeds Marlene Hanna, who served as 2012-2013 president.

Eileen Sperl-Hawkins became first vice president, and Fran Conaway became second vice president.

Van Gieson's goals for his year as president include increasing the diversity of OLLI membership, adding courses based on popular culture, and determining ways to attract Tallahassee's Baby Boom generation to participate in OLLI classes and activities.

The spring luncheon also provided an opportunity to hear from OLLI's most recent scholarship winners, Pauli Bruns and Chris Robison, both students from FSU who will use the \$2,000 grants to further their education.

Bruns is a student in the College of Medicine who plans to become a geriatrician and hopes to return to her hometown of Seagrove Beach to serve the most vulnerable residents of that community.

Robison, a graduate student in the Program in Neuroscience, would like to run a neuroscience lab that helps expand understanding of the complex, myriad mechanisms of brain function while devoting substantial time toward science education and outreach.

OLLI's Maymester, a three-week series of classes, begins Monday, May 6, 2013, and ends on Friday, May 24. The class schedule will appear at olli.fsu.edu April 15. Among classes to be offered: Travel Writing and Photography; Movie Musicals; and iPhone Technology. Also to be offered: Spanish, cooking and gardening classes. Registration begins Monday, April 22 at 10:00 a.m. and is available online at www.olli.fsu.edu or by phone at 644-7947.