

Leadership Asheville Seniors was the first program offered by the North Carolina Center for Creative Retirement (NCCCR), now OLLI. It started 32 years ago when NCCCR was formed by the state legislature at the behest of UNC Asheville's then Chancellor David Brown. The 9-week program is offered each fall at OLLI and, according to early program developer Denise Snodgrass, "It is the best way to fasttrack yourself into the Asheville community and discover some very interesting volunteer opportunities."

LAS is based on the successful Leadership Asheville business networking model that started at, and recently returned to, UNC Asheville. Instead of a total 9 month program at UNC Asheville, OLLI runs its program in nine weeks. Each week one subject area affecting the community is explored in a full-day session of speakers and panels typically at a venue involved with that day's subject. In LAS 31, Fall 2017, the Economics Day presentation was at the AB Tech small business incubator and included presentations about tourism, hospitality, manufacturing, the economy of Asheville and incubator business program. Subject days typically address education, health care, environment, transportation infrastructure and poverty. The Leadership Asheville Seniors program is developed each year by alumni from previous LAS programs.

Hannah Furguele is the new OLLI at UNC Asheville program manager responsible for LAS. She will surely depend on alumni of the program to help design and deliver LAS 32, Fall 2018. Although the subjects tend to stay the same, the emphasis and order of presentations, along with presenters changes every year as the Asheville experience changes. The enthusiasm of the planners, the satisfaction of the participation and the "fast track into the Asheville experience" remain the same.

LAS registration is only open to OLLI members and there are only 35 positions available. The classes take place in the fall on Tuesdays from 9 a.m. until 4 p.m., typically at various venues around the community. The LAS registration fee is \$450. Scholarships are available.

LAS is a great way to learn about the City of Asheville and Buncombe County and how the two governmental organizations work together. Another huge bonus is learning about volunteer opportunities outside OLLI within the area. Often classes will select a community project to support as a volunteer effort after the conclusion of their sessions. Watch the newsletter for further details about registering for LAS 2018.