

CES Osher Bulletin

Dedicated to the joy and excitement of learning for adults 50 or better.

OSHER
LIFELONG
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INSTITUTE

A bulletin from the SDSU College of Extended Studies

Director's Corner

It's *back to school* time at the Osher Lifelong Learning Institute! And there are a lot of new and exciting things to tell you about.

First of all, we have a new Osher program coordinator named Jennifer Barrett who started here in mid-spring. Many of you have met her already, but I would like to take this opportunity to formally introduce her. Jennifer recently moved to San Diego from Fairfax, Va., where she worked at George Mason University as the undergraduate program coordinator in the Psychology Department. She holds a BS in psychology from Virginia Commonwealth University. She's thrilled to be living in San Diego and has already proved to be a great asset to our program. If you haven't met her yet, feel free to introduce yourself!

We also have several new instructors from SDSU joining the Osher faculty this semester. Along with their engaging teaching styles, they bring some intriguing new topics to our schedule:

- Martha Doran, Ph.D., associate professor in the SDSU School of Accountancy, will be teaching **Catch Me If You Can: Understanding Fraudulent Behavior**.
- Rebecca Frey, MA, lecturer in the SDSU Department of History will be teaching **Greek Mythology: From Culture to Chaos**
- Rick Helzer, associate professor of music and associate director of jazz studies at SDSU will give a lecture for Osher members

called **Personalizing the Tune: Jazz Musicians and the Great American Song Book** (more information on this lecture is listed below).

- Edward J. Blum, Ph.D., assistant professor of history at SDSU, will be teaching **Religion and Politics in American History** (my interview with Professor Blum appears below).

Of course, many of your favorite instructors are back again, teaching new topics. The entire line-up of courses, lectures, activities, and events can be found in the *Fall 2009 Osher Catalog* and on our web site at www.neverstoplearning.net/osher, where we have debuted a short video about the program. If you are a Facebook member, you can also find our new Facebook page by searching "SDSU Osher Institute" on the Facebook web site: www.facebook.com.

Another new component of the Osher program this fall is something we are calling the **Network Lounge**. It's a place for you and your fellow Osher members to continue those riveting discussions you start in class. Bring your lunch and your thoughts on what you've learned each week. Computers will be available for you to do further research or just check your email. You can even enjoy informal computer skills tutorials, conducted by our friendly volunteers. The **Network Lounge** will be open on Fridays, Sept. 4-Dec. 18, from 11 am-1 pm in the Extended Studies Center



SAN DIEGO STATE
UNIVERSITY

College of
Extended Studies

never stop learningSM

Please join us this Saturday!

**Osher Institute Fall 2009
Open House**

Saturday, August 22, 10 am

**SDSU Extended Studies Center,
Room 206**

Meet program staff and this semester's faculty, learn about our upcoming classes, and visit our exceptional facility! Enter a raffle for a free course and book club books!

RSVP to (619) 594-2863 or by email at osher@mail.sdsu.edu for directions and parking permit.

Osher Institute Staff

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Room 207/209. There's no need to register in advance; just drop in!

As always, I encourage you to continue to share your ideas and feedback with me. I can be reached at rlawrenc@mail.sdsu.edu or (619) 594-4704.

Sincerely,

Rebecca Lawrence, Program Director,
SDSU College of Extended Studies

Spotlight On... Professor Edward J. Blum

New Osher Instructor

Edward Blum is assistant professor of history at San Diego State University and will be teaching the upcoming Osher course titled **Religion and Politics in American History**. He is a historian of race and religion in the United States and an award-winning author.

When did you first become interested in history, race, and religion?

I grew up in all-white suburbs in New Jersey and became interested in race and religion when I was in college. I read the works of leading African Americans from the past, such as Frederick Douglass, Ida B. Wells, and W. E. B. Du Bois, and was fascinated by their analysis of the United States and especially the religious implications of racial division and hatred. So I wanted to study it more to better understand how issues of race impact our spiritual lives – both in the past and the present.

Did one interest come before the others?

I always loved history. I think that's because of my religious

background. I spent my teenage years reading the Bible just about every day and learning life lessons from stories of the past. I was then interested in how religious people lived their faith in the past.

What was the most surprising thing you've learned while conducting research?

First, that people who suffer or are oppressed find the most inventive and creative ways not only to fight their oppression, but also to endure it. Second, that listening and humility are the trademarks of truly amazing people in the past.

If you could travel back in time, whom from the past would you most like to talk to? What would you say or ask?

Dwight Moody, an evangelist from the late 19th century. He lived a life dedicated to acting on his religious convictions. He's been called simple by some historians, because he preached a short message. But I find such integrity – to hold a conviction and to act on it day-in and day-out in one's life an amazing

quality. I would probably ask him why he didn't care more about the racial issues of his day, like segregation and lynching.

Are there any specific lessons from history that you think current world leaders should look to today?

That convictions must be tested against justice and love; that beautiful ideas must be tempered by recognition of human fragility and evil; and that it is far harder, but much better, to listen well than to speak well.

What do you enjoy most about teaching?

The innovative interpretations of my students and their abilities to find fascinating documents from the past.

What other interests and activities do you pursue outside of your work?

With my fiancée, I lead a small church service at a Senior Citizens' Center in La Jolla. I love board games and playing in the water. Oh, and kite flying. I've got a great stunt kite that I zip around the sky of Mission Beach. ■

Upcoming Osher Events

Free for Members!

Osher Book Club

***Them*, by Nathan McCall**

Thursday, Oct. 8, 9-10 am
Extended Studies Center, Room 201

Personalizing the Tune: Jazz Musicians and the Great American Song Book

Rick Helzer, associate professor of music, and associate director of jazz studies at San Diego State University

Tuesday, Oct. 13, 9-10:50 am
Extended Studies Center, Room 206

Please register in advance by calling (619) 594-5152 or online at www.neverstoplearning.net/osher/lectures.html

On Campus

Osher membership gives access to these great events!

Women's Studies Anniversary

The 40th Anniversary Celebration of Women's Studies at SDSU will take place this fall and will include events, exhibits, and reunions.

For more information, visit:
www.rohan.sdsu.edu/dept/wsweb/anniv40.html

The Parma Payne Goodall Alumni Center Grand Opening

Public dedication and open house featuring SDSU President Stephen L. Weber, building tours, live entertainment, and refreshments.

Saturday, Oct. 17 at 11 am

For more information, visit:
www.sdsualumni.org

**Want to learn more about what is happening on campus?
Visit <http://events.sdsu.edu/>**