

Annual Report of the UCLA Emeriti Association

-Daniel J.B. Mitchell, CUCEA representative

April 23, 2024

The UCLA Emeriti Association has continued its programs of dinners and after-lunch programs with speakers on various topics. The main change is that we have been doing so in cooperation with the Retirees Association and that we have switched to a conversation-style of presentation with Stuart Wolpert as emcee asking the presenters a series of questions. Below is a list of events for this academic year:

Thursday, September 14, 2023: 1:30 – 3:00 p.m.

The Emeriti and Retirees Associations invite you to an engaging UCLA Conversation with UCLA Psychology Professor Alan Castel, author of “Better with Age: The Psychology of Successful Aging” (Oxford University Press). Professor Castel will discuss lessons he has learned from research studies and personal accounts from older Americans, including John Wooden, Professor Jared Diamond, Kareem Abdul-Jabbar, Maya Angelou, Warren Buffett, Vin Scully and Bob Newhart. In addition to his insights on successful aging, Professor Castel will discuss with Stuart Wolpert memory, the importance of curiosity and his research on how college students often speed up their course lecture videos, and how well they learn when they do so.

Thursday, October 12, 2023: 1:30 – 3:00 p.m.

The Emeriti and Retirees Associations invite you to an insightful UCLA Conversation on the importance of the humanities to society and to UCLA with David Schaberg, Professor of Asian Languages and Cultures, who served as Dean of Humanities from 2011 to 2022. Professor Schaberg, an eloquent advocate for the humanities, will discuss the humanities with Stuart Wolpert. Extensive explorations of how ancient history, East and West, has been written have informed Professor Schaberg’s perspective on the role of the humanities in the training of students and the making of societies. His research is distinguished by his mastery of Chinese, Greek and Latin, his knowledge of the primary historical texts from each culture and his ability to examine those works through the prism of the latest literary and critical theories. His research serves as a window into our understanding of early China, and helps us to understand Chinese ideas today.

Wednesday, November 15, 2023: 4:45 – 8:30 p.m.

The Emeriti Association invites you to dinner and an engaging UCLA Conversation on “The Art of Teaching” with Neil Garg, who is Distinguished Professor, Kenneth N. Trueblood Professor of Chemistry and Biochemistry, former chair of UCLA’s Department of Chemistry and Biochemistry, and 2018 recipient of our country’s most important award for outstanding university teaching — the prestigious Robert Foster Cherry Award for Great Teaching, which is given once every two years to honor extraordinary, inspiring teachers with a positive, long-lasting effect on students and a record of distinguished scholarship. Professor Garg, the only UCLA professor to win this award, has made organic chemistry one of UCLA’s most beloved undergraduate courses. He will discuss with Stuart Wolpert how he has achieved this and his work to engage students worldwide in the importance of organic chemistry. In his award-winning research, Professor Garg develops new chemical transformations that enable the synthesis of important organic molecules.

Thursday, January 11, 2024: 1:30 – 3:30 p.m., Faculty Club, Morrison Room

The Emeriti and Retirees Associations invite you to a special musical program featuring Inna Faliks, Professor and Head of the Piano Department in The UCLA Herb Alpert School of Music. Professor Faliks will perform a piano concert on the Faculty Club’s Steinway B piano, located in the Morrison room. Professor Faliks, author of a new musical memoir titled “Weight in the Fingertips: A Musical Odyssey from Soviet Ukraine to the World Stage,” will also read from her new book, which details her exploration of Bach’s brilliant music as she grew up in Odessa and became a child prodigy, with the piano her best friend, and her steady rise as a world-renowned concert pianist. She provides insights into the role of music in a world of conflict and change. Professor Faliks will then participate in a Conversation with Stuart Wolpert, and will be available to sign her memoir, copies of which will be on sale.

Wednesday, February 21, 2024: 4:45 – 8:30 p.m.

The Emeriti Association invites you to dinner and an engaging UCLA Conversation with Lynn Vavreck, UCLA’s Marvin Hoffenberg Professor of American Politics and Public Policy and author of the acclaimed books “The Bitter End: The 2020 Presidential Campaign and the Challenge to American Democracy” and “Identity Crisis.” Professor Vavreck is an expert on political campaigns, elections, and public opinion; a member of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, and a winner of the Andrew F. Carnegie Prize in the Humanities and Social Sciences. She runs the UCLA Covid-19 Health and Politics Project, a collaboration between medical doctors and social scientists at UCLA and Harvard. She will discuss with Stuart

Wolpert lessons from the 2016 and 2020 presidential elections, her thoughts on the 2024 elections, the state of American democracy and American politics, and insights from 500,000 Nationscape interviews that she and her colleagues have conducted about American political attitudes.

Thursday, March 7, 2024: 1:30 – 3:00 p.m.

Are you considering a vacation to see Japan, the Amalfi Coast, World War II memorials, Galapagos, Antarctica, Switzerland/Alpine lakes, Costa Rica, Africa, Vietnam/Cambodia, or another exotic destination? Might you like to join a tour with fellow Bruins? If so, you have more than 70 travel options for 2024. The Emeriti and Retirees Associations invite you to an informative UCLA Conversation on “UCLA Alumni Travel/UC Retirees Travel Programs.” Christel Aragon, director of UCLA Alumni Travel, and Dolores Dyer director of travel for the UCLA Retirees Association, will talk with Stuart Wolpert and answer your questions about the benefits of traveling with these programs, the cost, details about some of the upcoming trips worldwide, and more.

Wednesday, March 13, 2024: 1:30 – 3:00 p.m.

The Emeriti and Retirees Associations invite you to an insightful UCLA Conversation with Sara Melzer on mindfulness and how mindfulness can improve our lives. Professor Melzer is currently writing two books, one about mindfulness and photography, and a second on mindfulness and tango. She is a professor emerita of French and Francophone Studies, whose research expertise includes French colonialism in the Classical age and understanding contemporary France through the Classical age. She integrated mindfulness techniques into her teaching of several courses in the Humanities. Professor Melzer is a certified mindfulness coach and has wise insights on topics including how mindfulness can improve not only our focus, but also our relationships and our health.

Thursday, April 11: 1:30 – 3:00 p.m.

The Emeriti and Retirees Associations invite you to an informative UCLA Conversation on aging and the brain with Ming Guo, who holds UCLA’s Laurie and Steven C. Gordon Chair in Neurosciences and is a Professor of Neurology, Molecular & Medical Pharmacology at the UCLA David Geffen School of Medicine and Director of UCLA’s Aging Center. She will discuss with Stuart Wolpert her research, focusing on the molecular basis of diseases including Parkinson’s and Alzheimer’s. Dr.

Guo studies the nervous system of fruit flies as a model for studying the basis of human disease.

Wednesday, May 15: 4:45 – 8:30 p.m.

Presentation of Awards.

The Emeriti Association invites you to dinner and an engaging UCLA Conversation with Amy Rowat, UCLA's Marcie H. Rothman Professor of Food Studies. Professor Rowat will discuss with Stuart Wolpert "Science and Food," including her research on cultured meat; her courses on science, food and society; and UCLA's leadership in food studies. Professor Rowat advances knowledge of science through food and food through science. One of the goals of her research is to grow animal protein in a laboratory for food. Her research holds the potential to meet the food needs of the world's growing population, without slaughtering animals. She has also developed a new platform to rapidly determine cellular stiffness — which could ultimately lead to improved treatments for cancer and other diseases. The evening will also include EA's annual presentation of awards.

Thursday, May 30, 2024: 1:30 – 3:00 p.m.

Should we be excited about artificial intelligence, or terrified, or both? The Emeriti and Retirees Associations invite you to a stimulating UCLA Conversation on "Implications of Artificial Intelligence" with Christopher Kelty, a UCLA professor in the Institute for Society and Genetics and the departments of information studies and anthropology, and director of the Livescu Initiative on Neuro, Narrative and AI; and Daniel Snelson, a UCLA assistant professor of English and design and a writer, editor and archivist, who teaches an English course on AI literature. They will discuss with Stuart Wolpert topics including how AI may impact creativity, art, culture, education, jobs and more.

We also have our upcoming annual Arts and Crafts exhibit program at the Faculty Club (where all our programs are held), featuring the talents of retired individuals.

A variety of other program opportunities are made available through our Emeriti/Retirees Relations Center and the

Retirees Association:

8/4/2024 Tour of LACMA

8/23/2024 Hike in Santa Monica

8/30/2024 LA Conservancy - Millard Sheets

9/14/2024 Conversations - Alan Castel

9/22/2024 Hike in Escondido Falls

9/27/2024 JPL

10/12/2024 Conversations - David Schaberg

10/30/2024 Getty Foundation - Lee Rubenstein

11/9/2024 Hike - Debs Park

11/28/2024 Tour Mission Inn - Riverside

12/6/2024 EA Emeriti Reception

12/8/2024 Travel Meeting

12/14/2024 Hike - Solstice Canyon

1/24/2024 Chamber Music - Palisades

2/16/2024 Hike in Coldwater Canyon

2/27/2024 Getty Foundation - Lee Rubenstein

Our website has been updated. Among the items that can be found there are recorded interviews with emeriti that cover their personal backgrounds and careers at UCLA.

In terms of longer-run challenges, the reality of real estate prices near UCLA's main campus means that over time emeriti will be living further and further away from campus. Our in-person programs will become less accessible for that reason.

Whether use of Zoom or similar methods of remote participation will offset this tendency remains a question.