

Sign Me Up! Lifelong Learning for Older Adults – *Estelle Rodis-Brown*

Whenever the seasons change, there's a certain restlessness that stirs us... the desire to expand our horizons, learn new things, explore new places. Especially during back-to-school season, it's good to know there are plenty of options in Northeast Ohio for older adults to plug into free or low-cost programs that deliver lifelong learning and enrichment opportunities.

If you're 60 or better, you can build skills, explore new ideas, enhance understanding and enrich life by attending any state college or university, thanks to the Ohio Department of Higher Education's [Lifelong Learning](#) program. (At some locations, students as young as 50 can attend for free).

Each Lifelong Learning Institute (LLI) or Institute for Learning in Retirement (ILR) caters to retirement-age people who are committed to lifelong learning. These non-credit college programs are structured with regular semesters and coursework. You just don't have to worry about what grade you'll earn.

If you prefer hands-on experiences and adventures to books and lectures, there also are plenty of enrichment options available locally.

Want to learn more about learning more? Start with these programs:

Baldwin Wallace University: [Institute for Learning in Retirement](#) – (Berea)

The Institute for Learning in Retirement (ILR) at BW offers older adults the opportunity to continue learning in an informal, flexible and non-competitive college environment. Offering non-credit, college-level courses on a variety of topics, the BW ILR provides an accessible and inexpensive educational and social experience.

ilrbw.org/

ILR@bw.edu

440-826-3188

Baldwin Wallace's [ILR-East](#) holds courses at Temple Emanu El in Orange Village. This all-volunteer endeavor makes the program enjoyable and successful.

bw.edu/alumni/organizations/ilr-east/

ilreast@bw.edu

440-826-2400

Case Western Reserve University: [Siegal Lifelong Learning Program](#) (Cleveland)

Siegal Lifelong Learning has personal enrichment courses and lectures, continuing professional studies opportunities, and educational travel to national and international destinations. Programs are held on campus, in their Beachwood facility and online.

Lifelong Learning: case.edu/lifelonglearning

Continuing Professional Studies: case.edu/cps

Course Audit Program for Senior Citizens: case.edu/seniorauditprogram/

216-368-2091

Cuyahoga Community College (Tri-C): [Encore 55+ Learning](#) (Various Locations)

Many programs and courses are available through Encore 55+ Learning at Tri-C. For more than 45 years, Tri-C has provided those 55 and older with a unique learning experience without homework, tests or books with three ways to learn:

- 1) **Encore Campus Fridays** Experience Encore at the [Eastern Campus](#) and [Western Campus](#) for seven weeks from 9 a.m.-3 p.m. tri-c.edu/encore-senior-adult-programs/.
- 2) **[Encore On-the-Go](#)** Learn from your home via Webex at 9 a.m., 11 a.m. and 1 p.m. for seven weeks. encore@tri-c.edu
- 3) **[Neighborhood Scholars](#)** This program brings Greater Cleveland to you through community partners. tri-c.edu/encore-senior-adult-programs/neighborhood-scholars/index.html

tri-c.edu/programs/continuing-education-courses.html

Program 60: tri-c.edu/program-60/index.html

216-987-2274

Lorain County Community College: [Center for Lifelong Learning](#) (Elyria)

The Center for LifeLong Learning at LCCC has in-person and online courses for adults 50+ and/or retired. Topics include computers, the internet, estate planning, career enrichment, fitness and recreation, world cultures, astronomy, gardening, history, genealogy, antique collecting, creative writing and more.

lorainccc.edu/community/center-for-lifelong-learning/

Senior Citizen Registration: lorainccc.edu/admissions-and-enrollment/register-for-classes/senior-adult-learner/

jkrupa@lorainccc.edu

440-366-7536

Additionally, these local colleges and universities offer free courses to older Northeast Ohioans:

- University of Akron: **60 Plus (60+) Program**: uakron.edu/60/
- Cleveland State University: **Project 60**: csuohio.edu/project60/project60
- Kent State University: **Senior Guest Program**: kent.edu/seniorguest?spotsearch=true
- Lakeland Community College: **Senior Citizen Audit**: lakelandcc.edu/web/about/admissions-requirements#senior
- Stark State College: **Senior Citizen Discount**: starkstate.edu/admissions/

In most cases, no college credit is earned and some costs (for books, equipment and lab fees) may apply. Contact the admissions or registrar's office of a participating institution for details, including class availability at regional campuses nearby.

ENRICHMENT

- **[Programs for Active Older Adults at the YMCA](#)**

The YMCA offers fitness classes, social clubs and other wellness programming for active older adults. Exercise classes include water exercise, strengthening and cardio classes, yoga and stretching. Walking clubs and numerous travel excursions are also available at some locations.

clevelandymca.org/active-older-adults-0

- **[Road Scholar: Educational Travel & Learning Adventures](#)**
Road Scholar (formerly known as Elderhostel) is a not-for-profit organization that provides educational travel programs primarily geared toward older adults. Headquartered in Boston, it hosts trips throughout the U.S., Canada and abroad. Close to home, [Lake Erie: Birding the Islands and Shores](#) is a popular six-day trip for birders in Put-in-Bay on South Bass Island, featuring bird walks, bird banding, an island field trip, Point Pelee National Park, a Magee Marsh excursion and more. The itinerary depends on what time of the year you go. Call 800-454-5768 to inquire or go to roadscholar.org/find-an-adventure/12641/Lake-Erie-Birding-the-Islands-and-Shores.

roadscholar.org

Community senior centers also organize free and low-cost activities for older adults, including group fitness, arts-and-crafts, games, hiking, lectures, dance, book discussions, writing workshops and support services to help residents remain active and engaged. Check with your local government or library for more information.

Expand your horizons with lifelong learning and enrichment opportunities in your neighborhood this fall. You'll be invigorated to learn something interesting, enjoy a different experience and meet new friends. Take a seat; it's back-to-school time.