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\$1 million endowment supports Osher Lifelong Learning Institute

CLEMSON — The Osher Lifelong Learning Institute (OLLI) at Clemson University can set a steady course for the future, thanks to a \$1 million endowment from the Bernard Osher Foundation of San Francisco.

Clemson University President James F. Barker announced Tuesday that the Osher Foundation has awarded OLLI \$1,050,000, including \$1 million for an endowment and \$50,000 in a grant to cover operating costs until the endowment begins producing revenue in three years.

Barker made the announcement during OLLI's annual membership meeting.

The Osher Foundation's support of the Clemson-based program goes back to 2005 with the first of three annual \$100,000 grants. The name of the program was changed then from Clemson University Lifelong Learning to OLLI at Clemson University.

Annual income produced by the endowment will support OLLI's operating costs.



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Video of the
Announcement](#)

"We are fortunate that the Osher Foundation's strong commitment to lifelong learning has touched the Upstate of South Carolina through this endowment," said Fran McGuire, director of OLLI at Clemson University. "The generosity of Osher Foundation, along with the support of the College of Health, Education and Human Development; the department of parks, recreation and tourism management; and the enthusiastic cadre of OLLI volunteers, provides us with the resources needed to help shape the quality of life of adult learners."

The program received another major boost last month when Patrick Square and the Charles K. Cheezem family announced plans to build a [permanent home](#) for OLLI at the Patrick Square development. The value of the building, still to be constructed, is estimated at \$1.6 million.

OLLI at Clemson University is aimed primarily at retirees who teach and learn from instructors and each other in a wide range of interest areas from photography to computer training, cooking to woodcarving. From 13 courses in 2002, the program has grown to 83 in the current catalog.

"We are excited about the opportunities provided by this endowment as we progress toward our goal of providing Upstate residents with an excellent lifelong learning program while embracing the uniqueness of our members at Clemson," McGuire said.

The program was started as a result of a collaborative effort by Clemson University and interested individuals from the surrounding community who saw a need for stimulating educational opportunities for residents.

A board of directors, comprised of participants, guides the program, which has grown from 85 members in 2000 to 871 at the beginning of 2008.

California businessman Bernard Osher created the Bernard Osher Foundation in 1977. The foundation focuses on education and health care.

END

See images below.



Ed Krech, president of OLLI Board; Tom Giffin, Clemson development officer; and Michael Cheezem, principal and president of Patrick Square.



Michael Cheezem and President James Barker look at drawings of the new OLLI home.



Ed Krech, president of the OLLI board.



Brett Wright, chairman of parks, recreation and tourism management (left): Ed Krech, OLLI Board president; James F. Barker; Michael Keezem; Charlie Cheezem, for whom the Future OLLI home is named; and Larry Allen, dean of the College of Health, Education, and Human Development.

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