

DATE: March 28, 2008

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Patrick Square LLC, Cheezem family make permanent home for OLLI

CLEMSON — The Osher Lifelong Learning Institute (OLLI) at Clemson University will have a permanent home where a growing and increasingly inquisitive senior population can go to explore their educational and cultural interests.

That home is coming soon to Patrick Square, a traditional neighborhood development off Issaqueena Trail near the U.S. 123 interchange.



The building and land, to be named the Charles K. Cheezem Education Center, is a gift to the Clemson University Foundation and OLLI from Patrick Square LLC and the Cheezem family. The property and building are valued at \$1.6 million and the two-story neo-Georgian building will stand as a focal point in Patrick Square's Town Center.

Cheezem is a 1944 graduate of Clemson University and the father of Patrick Square principal and President J. Michael Cheezem of St. Petersburg, Fla.

OLLI is a membership organization geared toward mature adults in the community. The organization's mission is to provide opportunities for adults to further their knowledge in academic and recreational pursuits. Although primarily attended by retirees, the classes are not restricted to any age group. OLLI is run almost entirely by its members, who also lead most of the courses, ranging from nature photography to jewelry-making.

OLLI Director Fran McGuire says a permanent home off the Clemson campus will open the successful program to more participants. OLLI was born from a grant originally secured by a team of eventual OLLI members for Clemson's Department of Parks, Recreation and Tourism Management (PRTM). The original learning-in-retirement program became OLLI with an Osher Foundation grant in 2005.

"We are thankful that Michael Cheezem has chosen to support the Osher Lifelong Learning Institute at Clemson with this gift," McGuire said. "He joins others, including the Osher Foundation; the College of Health, Education and Human Development; PRTM; and the many OLLI volunteers in the Upstate in helping us achieve our vision to provide an excellent lifelong-learning program while embracing the uniqueness of our members and Clemson University."

Patrick Square is a planned mixed-use traditional neighborhood development. Ultimately, the community will include 415 homes, a town center with stores, restaurants and public gathering areas, according to Michael Cheezem.

"Clemson University was instrumental in shaping my father's life, and this education center is a fitting tribute to his life and legacy," Cheezem said. "We see OLLI at Clemson as a 'university for the Upstate,' an amenity for the entire region, and feel privileged to facilitate a way for people to continue their love of teaching and to pursue new passions and vocations."

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