Eyewitness to History
Maggie Lowery shares her perspectives on growing up in the South during the Civil Rights Movement

“OLLI@UND is a popular place to learn about a variety of subjects, from cooking healthy to World War II history to publishing how-to in the digital era. It’s also a great place to learn about some of our country’s most important recent history from OLLI members like Maggie Lowery, who saw firsthand the key stirrings of the country’s Civil Rights Movement in the Deep South.

With a brilliant smile that frames a great sense of humor, Lowery, a graduate of UND’s Home Economics and Social Science programs in 1979, taught an OLLI course this winter about the Civil Rights movement, complete with documentary videos of important events such as the march from Selma to Montgomery in 1965 as well as other key events of the era.

Today, Lowery, who’s taught school, was a special education teacher, social worker, and an officer in several state juvenile facilities, brings her own personal history to her OLLI class, complete with lively stories about the Civil Rights era, including shaking hands with Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

Lowery, who holds a master’s degree from Auburn, grew up in rural Alabama in the 1950s and 60s not too far from Selma. She learned all about racism and the civil rights struggle right in her own backyard—but decided early on to keep her composure and her sense of humor. And, she notes enthusiastically, her work ethic.

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Lifelong Learning Quote
“All the world is my school and all humanity is my teacher.”

George Whitman

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Director’s Corner
What a Great Time to be an OLLI Member!

It is a great time to be an OLLI member! There are so many great opportunities to learn and engage your mind with the great programming that OLLI offers. Summer topics include (not a complete list): Biomedical Engineering Research, Southern Cooking, Civil Rights Movement, American Art History, Prisoners of War and Enemy Aliens in North Dakota during WWII, Great Speeches in Modern History, Lakota Storytelling from Tipi Traditions, The Good, The Bad and The Oily, and multiple day trips. Sign up for OLLI offerings online today! (UND.edu/OLLI)

Here are some highlights on what is happening with OLLI@UND:

• Membership numbers are steady, but haven’t grown over the past year. If you know of someone who would like to take advantage of OLLI’s great lectures, courses, trips, please pass the word along.

• Justin Fraase, marketing manager for UND’s Office of Extended Learning has developed a general poster (11 x 17) that can be hung at different locations. If you would like some posters to promote OLLI and have a location you feel would benefit, call Connie and she will arrange for some to be sent to you or for you to pick them up in Grand Forks or Bismarck. In addition, our graphic designer, Brenda Dufault, has designed an 8 ½ x 11 flier highlighting the upcoming OLLI Showcases.

• We also have some promotional packets for you as OLLI members to share information about OLLI at a service club meeting or an organized meeting you regularly attend. It includes a short video, posters and catalogs. Feel free to call Connie at 701.777.4840 to arrange to pick up your promotional packet.

• We will be sponsoring an Alumni event to coincide with the Fall Showcases. More information to come. MARK YOUR CALENDARS: The Fall Showcases will be from 4:30 – 6 pm in both locations. Grand Forks Showcase will be Monday, August 3, and Bismarck Showcase will be Thursday, August 6.

Again, there are so many wonderful learning opportunities coming up for OLLI members. Take time to visit our website at UND.edu/OLLI.

- Lynette Krenelka, Director, Office of Extended Learning

Upcoming OLLI Showcases

Grand Forks Showcase

• Monday, May 11, 2015, from 4:30 - 6:00 pm: Gorecki Alumni Center, 3501 University Ave, Grand Forks Guest Speaker: Curt Hanson, Elwyn B. Robinson Department of Special Collections - Chester Fritz Library at the University of North Dakota

Bismarck Showcase

• Thursday, May 14, 2015, from 11:30 am - 1:00 pm: Room 431, NECE Building, 1200 Schafer St., on the BSC campus Guest Speaker: Betsy Dalrymple, First Lady of North Dakota, Education Advocate, Volunteer and Author
“Lowery wasn’t dreaming about a college education when a former student from her high school, who had received his degree at UND, gave a presentation at her school. The student had gone to UND under an innovative exchange program between UND and Grambling State College, a historically black college in Louisiana.

“He told several of us that we should apply to the University of North Dakota, and I did, and I got in!” she said. “I was thrilled and really enjoyed the experience because I had grown up in a place where there were black people and there were white people—UND had such a diverse population, and I made a lot of friends from other cultures, other places.”

“I started sewing on the side—my day job was in a juvenile facility,” she said. “After I sewed a wedding dress for a friend, I got real busy, so I secured a business license and went into it full time, right out of my home,” Lowery said. That lasted until the big Loma Prieta earthquake of 1989, which devastated northern California, including the Santa Cruz region. “That was it for my business, so I moved back to Alabama.”

After several more teaching jobs, Lowery started on her PhD and writing a book about her travels and experiences around the country. The book, titled Pressing My Way Throughout America (the title is based on an old spiritual), is done and headed to the publisher, she says.

Lowery says her experiences in Alabama and elsewhere in the United States clearly taught her that racism is real.

“But I’ve also made many friends—white, Black, Latino—along the way and learned that there are good people everywhere,” she says – with a big smile.

- Juan Miguel Pedraza, Writer/Editor, UND University and Public Affairs

Q&A with UND Biomedical Engineering Researchers

Tell us about your upcoming course?

“The course will be divided into four parts:

1. Session one will be introduction to biomedical engineering and some of the problems that it is dealing with.

2. Session two we will be talking about breast cancer and a new method we are proposing for cancer imaging. This is a non-invasive method that does not require breast compression.

3. Session three we will be talking about recent advances in monitoring of cardiovascular signals. This includes using new sensing technologies and the wireless network advances in the past few decades. These technologies are cost effective and can integrate in the daily lives.

4. Session four will be talking about brain computer interface and how to control devices using brain signals.”

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What should people expect when they attend your course?
“To see new technologies and recent advances in the field of biomedical engineering.”

How will these advances matter to people?
“They will provide better diagnostic methods and/or tools for helping people with disabilities and suffering from chronic diseases.”

What do you hope people takeaway from your course?
“I hope people are fascinated by our research and excited about the field of biomedical engineering.”

What’s next for your research?
“We’re working on new wireless and wearable health monitoring systems. Attend our class to learn more!”

Grand Forks Showcase: May 11
Bismarck Showcase: May 14

View all the details at: UND.edu/olli

Did you know?
The UND Alumni Association & Foundation has partnered with Go Next, a leading travel agency, to offer unique and luxurious travel opportunities. With about 10 destinations each year, you’re bound to find something on your bucket list. We’d love you to cross off that item in the company of fellow UND Alumni.

View upcoming destinations online: UNDalumni.org/alumnitours