



Volume 24—Number 5

## News & Views

May 2020



### President's Message

#### Distance Learning at LLI/NOVA

Despite the plethora of emails and training videos, all you need is a computer or tablet with a camera and microphone or a smartphone or tablet for distance learning (i.e., Zoom, Webex).

That is the mechanical part, the mental/emotional adjustment is not as simple. For example, on Easter Sunday I noticed a neighbor with advanced Parkinson's disease on her daily stroll (1,000 steps) formally dressed, every hair strand in place, and wearing makeup. When I complimented her beautiful appearance, she proudly informed me that she was dressed for several Zoom sessions later that afternoon/evening. I was taken aback; previously she didn't have a stand-alone email address!

Another Easter Sunday event that jarred me was an 8 a.m. phone call from my niece who resides in Columbia, MD, asking me to go to church with her from her residence but *in Chicago* . . . at her favorite church, which she attended when in med school there, via a distance learning platform.

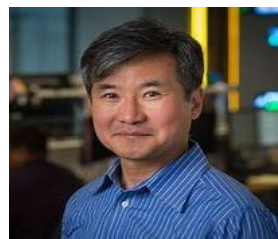
These and many other experiences are splendid, and they better connect us and help us to grow in our horizon years.

However, none of these experiences replace our physical in-person learning experiences. The LLI/NOVA leadership understands and appreciates the invaluable networks provided by in-person participation in our activities. There is no replacement, and we recognize we are unable to deliver the intended LLI/NOVA programs supported by your dues as a result of coronavirus social distancing mandates.

So, as promised, we developed criteria to credit all members' accounts by extending renewal dates for 90 days. In return, we request you to continue renewing your membership when your current renewal date comes up.

-- Anna Dixon, LLI/NOVA president

### Our May 6 Forum is cancelled. However, don't miss:



#### Our June 3 Forum Speaker via Zoom

One of Northern Virginia's most popular economists will be discussing our economy in this very unsettling time.

NOVA professor John Min is well known and highly regarded for his mastery of complex financial and economic issues, and for presenting

them in an entertaining and easily understandable manner. Join us via Zoom on June 3 at 10 a.m. All members will be sent an email reminder, agenda, and log-on logistics prior to this meeting.

Dr. Min will discuss how cyclical fluctuations in revenue and spending have failed to improve income mobility in our country. He will note how the promised engine of upward mobility --education-- has failed many due to increasing costs, especially for those starting out in low-income families. This structural inequality keeps the poor from improving their lives through educational and economic opportunities.

He also will speak about our expansionary stimulus fiscal policy during this coronavirus era.

Among his topics:

How is the nation's current stimulus package different due to easy migration of millennials to/from major urban centers?

Do current economic trends suggest that the amenities and economies of urban centers are fading in popularity with the millennials and seniors?

Does this mask the unequal distribution of income that persists across generations? Over the last 40 years, fewer Americans are making more than their parents did at the same age.

His presentation will keep us engaged and provide us with a lot to think about. We are fortunate to have this sought-after professor and industry expert during this period.

John Min is a full-time professor of economics at NOVA. He is the chief economist and managing director at Tempus, Inc. Dr. Min also teaches global finance training and investments at the New England Institute of Business. His doctorate in economics is from George Mason University, his MBA degree is from George Washington Uni-

versity, and his undergraduate degree is from the College of William and Mary.



## COMMUNITY OUTREACH

During this Covid-19 pandemic, the need is greater than ever in our food pantries. Food for Others was slated to receive our food collection for May. They distribute food to more than 2,000 families each week and are currently experiencing an increased demand.

Obviously at this time it is difficult for us to get food to their warehouse. But there is a way we can help. Food for Others is raising money for a Mobile Food Pantry that will allow them to get food to those who cannot come to the warehouse. You can mail a check to Food for Others, 2938 Prosperity Ave., Fairfax, VA 22031 or go to [www.foodforothers.org](http://www.foodforothers.org) and click on DONATE to donate by PayPal, credit or debit card.

If you are able to help in this fundraising endeavor, any amount would be deeply appreciated. If you have a relationship with another food pantry, your support is needed wherever possible.

Stay safe, practice social distancing and help in any way you are able. Thanks for your generosity.



Photo by LLI/NOVA member Joy Meyer

## LLI/NOVA Board of Directors 2020-2021 Election

A vote of the membership is required to replace those board members whose three-year terms expire and the four officers whose one-year terms expire. The 2020 Nominating Committee includes Richard Steelman (chair), David Drashler, Pat Neri, and Patti Volz. We want to introduce you to the candidates below:



### **Anna Dixon—President & 3 year Board term**

Anna joined LLI/NOVA in 2012 and currently serves on the Board as President. Previously, she served on the Curriculum Committee, designing and coordinating classes, and on the Automation (new website), and Holiday Party Committees. She also coordinated the Meet-ups and she leads the Visual and Performing Arts SIG. Anna is a Philadelphia native with a BA in Accounting and an MBA focused on finance. She served as a member of the federal government's Senior Executive Service roughly a third of her career and received many awards including the prestigious Presidential Rank Award for long-term exceptional performance. In the Executive Office of the President's Office of Management and Budget she worked for three presidents before retiring from the Department of Homeland Security. In the private sector, worked as an Associate Partner and as a senior managing consultant for a top 50 global corporation working both nationally and internationally with various governments on IT systems integration. Anna's interests include traveling, watercolor painting, bicycling, court-referred mediation, and serving as a 20+ year docent at the National Gallery of Art.



### **Frederick (Fritz) Ernst—Vice President & 3 year Board term**

Fritz earned a BS in Engineering from the United States Military Academy at West Point, and a Masters in Civil Engineering and Nuclear Engineering from Stanford University. He served 26 years with the Army Corps of Engineers in a wide variety of engineering and other assignments, including in Vietnam, Thailand, Europe, and the United States. He commanded an Engineer Battalion (approximately 700 soldiers) stationed at Fort Bragg, N.C. His final Army assignment was three years serving in high-level leadership and management positions (e.g., Directorate Head and Agency Chief of Staff) at the Defense Nuclear Agency (now the Defense Threat Reduction Agency). After retirement, Fritz provided technical and advisory services to the Defense Nuclear Agency for 22 years and served as the program manager for as many as 300 technical personnel during the contract period. He provided significant input for written and oral proposals that led to the contract's being awarded roughly every five years on a competitive basis.





### **Loren Brandman--Secretary**

Loren joined LLI/NOVA three years ago and has loved learning about new things and meeting new people. She is originally from Newburgh, N.Y., and earned a BS in computer science from Rochester Institute of Technology. She and her husband, Pete, have one grown son. Loren retired in 2016 after 35 years with the federal government, where she served in various positions including programmer, program manager, contracting officer's technical representative, and budget analyst. She has served as LLI/NOVA's treasurer for the past two years

and is looking forward to serving as secretary. Loren enjoys biking, hiking, swimming, reading, and traveling (prior to the corona virus!).



### **Richard (Rich) Davis--Treasurer & 3 year Board term**

A member of LLI/NOVA since December 2017, Rich currently serves as assistant treasurer. For the past two years he chaired the Financial Review Committee and served on the Scholarship Committee. Rich earned a BS in Accounting from LaSalle University and an MBA from George Washington University. He enjoyed a 36-year career with the General Accounting Office (now Government Accountability Office), which included assignments to its Philadelphia field office; European office in Frankfurt, Germany; and headquarters in Washington, D.C.

He attended the Industrial College of the Armed Forces (now The Eisenhower School of National Security), and received the rank of Meritorious Executive of the Senior Executive Service from the Comptroller General of the United States. Following his GAO career, Rich worked 17 years for the Catholic Diocese of Arlington as Director of Internal Audits and Business Manager for several churches. He currently serves as the treasurer of his Home Owners Association and is actively involved with his church and Catholic Charities.

## **For Board Members:**



### **Eugenia Burkes**

For over 30 years Eugenia was a legal administrator. In 1979 she began managing the Austin branch office of a Houston law firm with only two attorneys, after having been a registered lobbyist before the Texas Legislature. She ended her career in Washington, D.C., at the international firm of Mayer Brown LLP with 250 attorneys. Along the way she feels fortunate to have worked with some of the greatest legal minds in our nation, especially at her last law firm, which had a very strong U.S. Supreme Court practice. Also, in her role as an administrator, she worked with counterparts in other offices all over the world. She often served on various task forces such as planning a new software rollout or managing an office move in another city. Legal administration was not her first career choice. She began as a history/civics high school teacher in

the Texas valley just eight miles from Mexico. Needing an income that would support a family while wanting to work in law, becoming a legal administrator was a compromise from wanting to go to law school. Thinking back over her long career, she concluded she was happy with the choices made. LLI/NOVA has been an increasing part of her retirement life. She tries to attend most history classes, but the curriculum also has given her the opportunity to take classes outside her comfort zone -- science in particular. Serving on the Scholarship Committee introduced her to the wonderful students at NOVA. Some of their stories have been awe-inspiring, and in some cases heartbreaking, because they have overcome incredible hardships. Currently she is completing a two-year term as Social Media, Web, and Newsletter Editor for the Alexandria Branch of the American Association of University Women. She welcomes the opportunity to give her time and skills to LLI/NOVA.



### **NATASHA MULLIN**

Freelancer, researcher, marketing director, senior writer — Natasha held numerous titles in the South Florida cruise industry before moving closer to her three daughters and six grandchildren in Northern Virginia. Still, she hasn't retired completely. Last year she wrote the website for the new Yachts of Ritz-Carlton fleet, and continues to accept freelance assignments from Crystal Cruises. A graduate of Northwestern University, she majored in English Literature with a minor in History & Art of the Middle Ages and Renaissance. She worked as a copywriter for Sears & Roebuck and for advertising agencies in Texas and Philadelphia; and in Florida, launched her career as a copy and travel writer, working in-house for luxury cruise lines such as Seabourn Cruises, Regent Cruise Lines, Cunard's Queen Mary 2 and Silversea — garnering numerous Addy Awards along the way. She was also the marketing director for Pearl Cruises, where she managed a staff of 15. Non-profit volunteer activities include precinct captain and secretary for the Davie (FL) Democratic Party in Broward County. She went to school in Spain and Switzerland and is fluent in Spanish and French. A travel writer by profession, she is also a lover of languages, museums, world cultures, orchids, oceans and distant shores — and more recently, opera, thanks to LLI/NOVA's remarkable series of lectures by Glenn Winters.

**YOUR VOTE IS IMPORTANT!** LLI/NOVA Bylaws, require an [annual membership meeting](#) to be held in May or June to elect officers and members of the Board of Directors and conduct other LLI/NOVA business. Richard Steelman, Chairman of the Nominating Committee, recommended, and the Board approved, the members published in this issue of the Newsletter for positions on the Board and as Officers. Because we will not be able to hold the vote online during the June 10th meeting, all members will be sent an email immediately after the meeting and asked to reply with their vote selection.

## LLI/NOVA Annual Membership Meeting

**June 10, 2020, 10:00-11:00 a.m.**

In accordance with our Bylaws, LLI/NOVA is required to have an [annual membership meeting](#) to be held in May or June on a date selected by the Board of Directors to elect officers and members of the Board of Directors and conduct other LLI/NOVA business.

The Board selected Wednesday, June 10 at 10 a.m. for this year's meeting. In compliance with government coronavirus social distancing and isolation guidance, we are conducting our required annual membership meeting via Zoom. All members will be sent an email reminder, agenda, and logon logistics on June 8.

The primary business activity that must be accomplished is the election of five members to three-year terms on the Board of Directors, and the election of the four officers (President, Vice President, Treasurer, and Secretary) to one-year terms for the period July 1, 2020 to June 30, 2021.

The Nominating Committee has recommended, and the Board has approved, the members published in this issue of the Newsletter for positions on the Board and as Officers.

Because we will not be able to hold the vote online during the meeting, all members will be sent an email immediately after the meeting and asked to reply with their vote selection.

The second requirement is that the members be presented the Board approved annual Budget for Fiscal year 2021 (July 1, 2020 to June 30,

2021). This budget will be included in the June Newsletter.

## LLI/NOVA Spring Classes Continue . . . via Zoom

Entering our online classes is not too difficult if you have a fairly new computer or laptop. The camera usually appears as a circle at the top middle point of your screen. You do not need to download Zoom software. In the [llinova.org](#) website, in the "News Alert" box, click on the List of Spring 2020 classes. Even if you had registered before, please re-register using the "Class & Event Calendar." This will ensure that you receive the email prior to the class which includes a URL you can click on or copy to your internet browser and enter just before the class is due to start.

**WARNING:** Your picture will be shown to the coordinator and/or teacher when you select video and audio to see the class. So we advise you to forget the jammies and comb your hair. In the website "Alert Box," click on "How to Join an Online Zoom Class" for full details.

Check the website frequently for further class announcements. Summer class registration begins in early May.



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## **NOVA ACTIVITIES**

### **LLI/NOVA Scholarships Move Toward New Awards**

The LLI/NOVA Scholarship Program this year is a joint effort of our scholarship committee, the NVCC Educational Foundation, and the college student financial aid office. LLI/NOVA provided \$12,000 in November 2019 along with specifications for the scholarships we wish to support. As of March 2020, screening of applicants and determination of winners is under way. Scholarship recipients will be notified in May. So far, this process has not been interrupted by the coronavirus health crisis or closure of the NVCC campus.

Especially encouraging is the number of qualified applicants for the scholarships. There are four categories of scholarships this year. The number of qualified applicants, scholarship criteria, amount of award, and number of scholarships that will be awarded are as follows:

1. We will award one Knox Singleton Leadership Scholarship of \$2,000, for which there are 25 qualified applicants. Scholarship criteria include superior leadership motivation, skill, activity, and results, both in the college and in the community. Minimum GPA 3.0.

2. We will award one Lorin Goodrich Academic Scholarship of \$2,000, for which there are 103 qualified applicants. Scholarship criteria include unusual academic achievement as evidenced by grades and faculty recommendations, and financial need. Minimum GPA 3.5.

3. We will award two LLI/NOVA Leadership Scholarships of \$1,000 each, for which there are 23 qualified applicants. Scholarship criteria include contributions in fostering unity among a diverse, multicultural student body and in providing volunteer community service. The winners must show clear performance as leaders as well as

scholastic achievement. Minimum GPA 3.0.

4. We will award six LLI/NOVA Academic Scholarships of \$1,000 each, for which there are 129 qualified applicants. Scholarship criteria include academic merit as evidenced by grades and faculty recommendations, and financial need. Minimum GPA 3.5.

LLI/NOVA members will be able to learn about and meet some of the scholarship recipients in mid-year, depending on the evolution of the health crisis. The Scholarship Committee will be meeting periodically to determine the makeup of the next year's scholarship offerings, the fundraising strategy, and to evaluate the performance of the NVCC Education Foundation during the current year's trial project, as described in the March newsletter. Fundraising for the next year will begin in late summer.

### **NOVA Emergency Student Aid Fund**

Northern Virginia Community College (NOVA) Educational Foundation has launched a new emergency student aid fund to assist students struggling with the personal and economic fall-out from the COVID-19 pandemic. More than 60 percent of NOVA's 85,000 students work full- or part-time jobs. For many, what little income they have is diminishing rapidly. Financially vulnerable students face furloughs and layoffs as a result of the pandemic, and as child-care options and schools close, student-parents are facing extreme challenges in keeping any employment.

The NOVA COVID-19 Emergency Student Aid Fund will help with the rapid delivery of emergency aid to students who need it most. NOVA's aim is to meet students' basic needs to help them stay in school and complete the semester. Their goal is to raise \$750,000 to provide at least 1,500 grants of \$500 each.



The NOVA Foundation has committed \$250,000 to kick off the effort to encourage individual and corporate donors to join the Foundation in helping our future workforce stay strong.

“Ensuring every NOVA student succeeds is our highest priority always,” said Dr. Anne Kress, NOVA’s President. “But especially now, as our students face unprecedented challenges, we have an obligation to ensure they have our support. Our students will help our community rebuild and prosper, but they can only do this if we provide the assistance they need. I encourage everyone to consider donating to the Emergency Student Aid Fund.”

To read more, or to donate online, [click here](https://www.nvcc.edu/news/press-releases/2020/covid19-emergency-student-aid.html) or copy to <https://www.nvcc.edu/news/press-releases/2020/covid19-emergency-student-aid.html>

Should you wish to donate by email or by phone, you can email [foundation@nvcc.edu](mailto:foundation@nvcc.edu) or telephone: 703-323-3023.

## Opportunity to Act as a Social Host for an International Student

Many LLI/NOVA members have traveled, studied, or lived abroad and know about living in a foreign environment. Now it is your opportunity to give a visitor a glimpse of American home life.

This is an open invitation to LLI/NOVA members to become a social host for an international student attending NOVA Annandale or NOVA Alexandria beginning in August 2020 through May 2021. It is a unique and exciting opportunity to introduce a student to American life and show him/her some of your favorite places around D.C. These 36 students are recipients of a U.S. State Department scholarship providing their tuition and housing. Your role as host is to invite them at least once a month to your home, to a cultural

event, or to go on an excursion.

Patty and Richard Steelman of LLI/NOVA’s board, hosted a young Egyptian woman last year and a male student from Colombia now. Among the activities the students enjoyed with the Steelman family were a first visit to a pizza place, Irish Day in Alexandria, a backyard barbeque, a balalaika concert, Thanksgiving and Christmas dinner. Sarah, the Egyptian student, and her three friends also were given a private tour of Washington National Cathedral. Both students were enthusiastic and eager to learn. The students were extremely appreciative, and their hosts found traveling with them very rewarding.

Please [click here](#) for more information on the Community College Initiative Program and to sign up to be a social host beginning in August 2020. Thank you for considering this opportunity.



Photo on NOVA campus near Godwin Building



## Special Interest Groups



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### Favorite Books Club

Since we are all more or less housebound, I'm recommending books that might provide a temporary respite during these trying times. They may be available as e-books, but you might also consider purchasing one to help support our local book stores.

FICTION --- "American Dirt" by Jeanine Cummins  
"Conjure Women" by Afia Atakora  
"The Fountains of Silence" by Ruta Sepetys (Young Adult)

NON-FICTION --- "The Splendid and the Vile" by Erik Larson  
"Just Mercy" by Brian Stevenson  
"The Library Book" by Susan Orlean

GRAPHIC NOVELS --- "Maus: A Survivor's Tale" by Art Spiegelman  
"They Called Us Enemy" by George Takei  
"Persepolis" by Marjana Satrapi

Keep safe and well. [Click here](#) to go to the SIG webpage.



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### Photography

Although in-person meetings have been cancelled as we practice social distancing, the Photography SIG continues to operate. Our activities are centered around sharing and discussing photos along with instructional information and videos. While that model works best with in-person meetings, in the interim we are operating as follows:

1. Monthly Photo Themes will continue to be assigned for members to try. Those who choose to

participate will submit one photo for that theme along with brief comments about the photo. Each photo, along with comments, will be posted on the website for all to share.

2. Members will be provided with on-line sources of inspiration and instruction.

3. Photography related questions and issues will continue to be circulated among the members for information and input.

[Click here](#) to access the Photography SIG webpage.



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### NEW MEMBERS

Welcome, New Members:  
We hope you will participate in our classes and volunteer your time and talent.

Cathy Casselman  
Agnes Soos

*[At any time, if you have established a member ID and password, you can go to the Member Directory to search for contact information for a current member. At the website llinova.org click on the "Member Area" and then "Member Directory."]*



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**This ought to clear up any and all confusion related to the CoronaVirus.**

**Let me know if you have any further questions.**

**Everything we've been told in the last month.**

**The Corona Rules:**

1. Basically, you can't leave the house for any reason, but if you have to, then you can.
2. Masks are useless, but maybe you have to wear one, it can save you, it is useless, but maybe it is mandatory as well.
3. Stores are closed, except those that are open.
4. You should not go to hospitals unless you have to go there. Same applies to doctors, you should only go there in case of emergency, provided you are not too sick.
5. This virus is deadly but still not too scary, except that sometimes it actually leads to a global disaster.
6. Gloves won't help, but they can still help.
7. Everyone needs to stay HOME, but it's important to GO OUT.
8. There is no shortage of groceries in the supermarket, but there are many things missing when you go there in the evening, but not in the morning. Sometimes.
9. The virus has no effect on children except those it affects.
10. Animals are not affected, but there is still a cat that tested positive in Belgium in February when no one had been tested, plus a few tigers here and there...
11. You will have many symptoms when you are sick, but you can also get sick without symptoms, have symptoms without being sick, or be contagious without having symptoms. Oh, my..
12. In order not to get sick, you must eat well and exercise, but eat whatever you have on hand and it's better not to go out, well, but no...
13. It's better to get some fresh air, but you get looked at very wrong when you get some fresh air, and most importantly, you don't go to parks or walk. But don't sit down, except that you can do that now if you are old, but not for too long or if you are pregnant (but not too old).
14. You can't go to retirement homes, but you must take care of the elderly and bring food and medication.
15. If you are sick, you can't go out, but you can go to the pharmacy.
16. You can get restaurant food delivered to the house, which may have been prepared by people who didn't wear masks or gloves. But you must have your groceries decontaminated outside for 3 hours. Pizza too?
17. Every disturbing article or disturbing interview starts with " I don't want to trigger panic, but..."
18. You can't see your older mother or grandmother, but you can take a taxi and meet an older taxi driver.
19. You can walk around with a friend but not with your family if they don't live under the same roof.
20. You are safe if you maintain the appropriate social distance, but you can't go out with friends or strangers at the safe social distance.
21. The virus remains active on different surfaces for two hours, no, four, no, six, no, we didn't say hours, maybe days? But it takes a damp environment. Oh no, not necessarily.

22. The virus stays in the air - well no, or yes, maybe, especially in a closed room, in one hour a sick person can infect ten, so if it falls, all our children were already infected at school before it was closed. But remember, if you stay at the recommended social distance, however in certain circumstances you should maintain a greater distance, which, studies show, the virus can travel further, maybe.

23. We count the number of deaths but we don't know how many people are infected as we have only tested so far those who were "almost dead" to find out if that's what they will die of...

24. We have no treatment, except that there may be one that apparently is not dangerous unless you take too much (which is the case with all medications).

25. We should stay locked up until the virus disappears, but it will only disappear if we achieve collective immunity, so when it circulates... but we must no longer be locked up for that?

—Comments collected from social media.—

## Stay at Home

What are we doing with all that free time?

In order to stay positive, Arlene Gribben needs to see people some time during the day. One way is to get a take-out meal from a local restaurant and sit in the parking lot or drive to a residential neighborhood to have a picnic in her car. While eating she watches any activity around her (usually dog walkers) or works the day's crossword puzzle.

While missing their French conversation SIG, Patty and Richard Steelman stream a movie to watch in English. Then they stream the same movie in French to practice the language. You can't travel to a new country right now, but you can learn a language on [Fluency.com](https://www.fluency.com/). They also discovered MHZ on TV, which has great mysteries and dramas in many languages with English subtitles.

Nan Peck recommends free university online courses: Coursera, edX, and Kadenze. NVCC has videos at [www.nvcc.edu/tvcenter](http://www.nvcc.edu/tvcenter). Try Google Arts & Culture at <https://artsandculture.google.com>. Watch TED talks at [ted.com](https://www.ted.com); e.g. "Do Politics Make Us Irrational?" BAHfest.com is great fun as scientists compete to offer the most ridiculous hypothesis and strive to prove it.

For the more dutiful among us: June and George Chalou are getting rid of very old records and doing the spring yard work. Scott Pinckney says the big trash pile is mounting as he goes through boxes in the basement.

So, what are you doing? Send suggestions to [newsletter@llinova.org](mailto:newsletter@llinova.org) to be printed in the June newsletter. Personally, I am spoiling my cats, who will go into shock when my outside activities resume.

Stay safe,  
Mary Jablonski, Newsletter Editor

## Zoom in 2020

by LLI/NOVA member Eda R. Pickholtz

We all should be happy with Zoom  
We're no longer alone in a room  
We could learn with just one  
Or one hundred and one  
To help beat this pandemic gloom

We all should be happy with Zoom  
We're no longer alone in a room  
Your family's suddenly there  
With virtual cocktails to share  
To help beat this pandemic gloom