SYLLABUS

Immigration: The Changing Face of America
Time: 1:00 – 3:00 p.m. on Tuesdays

Facilitator: Bill Baird – 303-284-5880 (bairdwe@comcast.net)

White, Anglo-Saxon, Christian, male. These are the characteristics of those who have been the main demographic in our country and served as our leaders in the past. If you observe faces passing by in downtown Denver, you may find that less than half of them now fit this profile. Some people are concerned and fearful about this change in our society. This can lead to tension. What does the phrase “E pluribus unum.” – on our coins mean today?

This class will look at the history of immigration in our nation along with current laws and life as a documented or undocumented immigrant today. Is immigration a net gain or loss for our economy? What does the data tell us about how many, where from, what ages, and where immigrants settle in America now? What criteria do you think immigrants should meet in order to become U.S. citizens? What should we do to improve current handling of refugees and immigrants?


Jan. 21st: Refugees – why are more people leaving home now than during WW II? What are they fleeing? What are they looking for? How long are they in transition? What fraction are accepted into which countries?

Jan. 28th: Economics of immigrants. The US – Mexican border region. (Bayard Breeding).

Feb. 4th: Coming to America. Speaker: Horst Mehlfeldt – German citizen and OLLI member.

Feb. 11th: ICE and the deportation process. Life as an undocumented immigrant in the U.S. today. Dreamers and DACA. Possible special guest with a story to tell.

Feb. 18th: Services provided to immigrants. Casa de Paz. Legal support for immigrants.

Feb. 25th: Case studies. Assimilation into American life.

Mar. 3rd: What will our country look like in 2030? Would you want to live here then?

Bill Baird is a returned Peace Corps Volunteer and Auburn University Professor Emeritus. He facilitated this class last Winter at OLLI South. He is a senior facilitator, and has led about ten other classes at OLLI South.