

Thursday, April 16, 2020

Hello LIFE members,

Happy Spring! Given the unprecedented times we are currently living through right now, the arrival of spring puts a smile on my face and the ability to appreciate all the beauty that unfolds in this season. The freshness in the air, the excitement of new growth in gardens and the anticipation of the increased temperatures that will follow. This is also a time when many registrations take place for new programs and courses offered throughout the city and surrounding municipalities. As we all know, due to COVID-19, many of these offerings have either been cancelled, postponed, or reformatted to a virtual platform.



As I reported in my last communication with you, through the combined efforts of member volunteers, instructors and staff working collectively, we succeeded in developing in a very short time frame, new exciting online courses with well renowned instructors for you, the members of LIFE to enjoy and embrace. Registration began on Monday, April 13 and I am thrilled and proud to report that we have had an **overwhelming response for these new online courses** from you, the membership.

Your positive response represents the trust and support you place in “your” organization. A heartfelt thank you to all who have signed up for these new online classes. This support reconfirms that as members of LIFE you value LIFE and your LIFE membership. Further, you value, believe and support LIFE’s Core Values: Learning, Community, Inclusion and Integrity. Since COVID-19 hit all of us, it has been a whirlwind accepting this new reality, adapting and preparing to embrace whatever our new normal will be. Change is never easy at the best of times and even more challenging when you’re thrown into it without any say. Your actions this week clearly demonstrate LIFE members are open for change and willing to adapt to learning virtually.

Many comments have been made to me directly or through email comparing us to additional online offerings that are available “out there”. It’s important to realize there is a difference between ourselves and these other offerings. LIFE is known and respected for offering a **variety of quality courses** (four, six, and eight weeks) and **selection** delivered by sought-out instructors. Even though we are known for our courses, there is so much more to LIFE, such as our clubs, affiliation and special privileges with Ryerson, special events, friendships, connections etc. Ask yourself why you joined LIFE. What attracted you to LIFE? What do you enjoy and value? Recently, a few members described to me what being a member of LIFE meant to them, a feeling of belonging, knowing “they belong”. There is a difference.

I have been asked by many of you to include FAQs in my future Executive Director’s message. My leadership style has been and always will be, transparent. I welcome your questions and will try my best to answer them to the best of my ability.

Continue to stay well, healthy and be kind to one another.

Onward and online!



Deborah Bonk Greenwood

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