

Education Never Ends: Examples of Senior Learners

SENIORS

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*"THE IMPORTANT THING
is not to stop questioning."*

— Albert Einstein

Our society needs to look at education in a new way.

We usually think of education and associated funding generally for the young, but now that the population is aging and more people are delaying retirement, we need to find new ways for individuals to receive ongoing education. Educational programs need to be more hands-on so individuals can be better prepared for the ever-changing workplace.

In addition to finding better ways to learn, there are many other reasons to continue to pursue educational opportunities as adults. Education is a good way to keep a sharp mind



by challenging ourselves and providing new stimulation. Also, education is a social vehicle where we can meet others or reach out to new contacts in long-distance learning classes.

In addition to the above-mentioned reasons for adult education, higher education leaders need to gain an understanding of the future needs for

senior learners.

This is a diverse group consisting of different races, educational statuses, work experiences, cultural backgrounds and income levels. Educators need to find ways to attract them into taking courses that fulfill personal interest and to fill gaps in the workforce, including those in health care, science and technology.

Personal stories of senior education

Everyone in life has their own joys and difficulties. Some seniors deal with their difficulties by finding enjoyment and intellectual stimulation through their love of learning.

Ruth Diamond is a 95-year-old woman who has gusto for learning. A mother, grandmother, great-grandmother and recent widow, she loves to learn and help others. She decided at a young age, after watching her blind grandmother give up on life, that she would always "live life to its fullest, no matter what difficulties she encountered."

While in her 70s, she and her husband, Willie, joined a senior program with the Israeli army. She enjoys learning while listening to books on CDs and is intrigued by artificial intelligence.