

NCJW
|
NY

COUNCIL
LIFETIME
LEARNING



Course Catalog
2026

Engaging
Minds &
Building
Lifelong
Community



Stained Glass

NCJW NY Council Lifetime Learning (CLL)

Council Lifetime Learning (CLL) is a community for curious, engaged New Yorkers who believe learning never stops. It's where people come together to explore new ideas, build meaningful connections, and pick up new skills—all while redefining what it means to thrive at every stage of life. CLL is a welcoming, inclusive community that embraces people from all backgrounds and lived experiences. Together, members grow community, spark creativity, and challenge outdated ideas about aging through dynamic programs and shared learning.

Register for Yearly Membership and Classes

Scan the QR code to become a member and register for classes. Council Lifetime Learning (CLL) programs are open exclusively to NCJW NY members. The annual membership fee from July through June is \$72.

Scan the
QR code
to register
for classes.



Council House Box Office

Members can get free or deeply discounted tickets to concerts, dance performances, and Broadway or off-Broadway shows through the Council House Box Office. Members must sign up for email alerts by contacting councilhouseboxoffice@gmail.com or debbie@ncjwny.org.

Financial Assistance

We offer scholarships and subsidies for all programs so **cost is never a barrier to participation**. Membership fees may be waived and class scholarships are available for those with financial need. Please contact our social worker, Letitia Maun, at lmaun@ncjwny.org for assistance.

NCJW NY National Council of Jewish Women New York

Council House
241 West 72nd Street
New York, NY 10023
212-687-5030 Ext. 481/468
ncjwny.org/programs/

STAFF

Tracey Onyeuche *Director of Community Programs*
646-884-9461 | oonyeuche@ncjwny.org

Letitia Maun *Social Worker*
646-884-9471 | lmaun@ncjwny.org

Debbie Aronson *Program Coordinator*
212-687-5030 Ext. 681/468 | debbie@ncjwny.org

ART CLASSES

- Beading
- Drawing for Everyone
- Figure Life Drawing
- Intro to Tapestry Weaving
- Intro to Watercolor
- Mixed Media Collage
- Open Studio
- Painting in All Media
- Pastels
- Printmaking
- Stained Glass
- Watercolor
- Weaving

EXERCISE & WELLNESS

- Chair Yoga
- Feldenkrais
- Meditation
- Pilates
- Self-Defense: Using Your Mind & Body
- Tai Chi

PERFORMING ARTS

- Dance Fit
- Musical Theater
- Vocal Training & Performance

DISCUSSION & ACTIVITY GROUPS

- Book Club
- Eleanor Leff Jewish Women's Resource Group Book Discussion
- Embroidery
- Games with Friends: Canasta, Mah Jongg & More
- Knitwits
- Mah Jongg
- Men's Life Group
- Short Reads, Long Conversations
- Short Story
- What's the Good Life? Philosophy Through Literature

RESOURCES & SUPPORT SERVICES

- Lunch, Interaction, Nurturing, and Companionship (LINC) Program
- Resources and Support Groups for the Elderly and Caregivers

Beading

Mondays, 10 AM – 12 PM | Beth Stanek

All levels are welcome. This open studio class offers beginner group lessons and one-on-one instruction in knotting, Softflex beading, wire wrapping, finishing techniques, and design. Students may repair old jewelry or create new pieces. A wide selection of beads is available; students may also bring their own.

Drawing for Everyone

Mondays, 1 PM – 3 PM | Gene Wisniewski

For beginners through experienced artists. Personalized instruction helps students strengthen observational drawing skills and develop individual style. Supply list available at the front desk.

Intro to Watercolor

Tuesdays, 10 AM – 12:30 PM | Marika Hahn

Ideal for beginners or those seeking a refresher. Learn color mixing and essential watercolor techniques, including wet-on-wet, wet-on-dry, layering, and composition. Weekly themes and demonstrations provided. Liquid watercolors supplied; tube paints optional. Supply list available at the front desk.

Mixed Media Collage

(Bilingual Instructor)

Tuesdays, 10 AM – 12 PM | Sigfrido Benitez

A hands-on collage workshop for all levels. Learn step-by-step techniques using recycled images from magazines and other materials to create expressive works. Supplies provided. Spanish speakers are encouraged to register.

Watercolor

(Intermediate)

Tuesdays, 1:30 PM – 4:30 PM | Marika Hahn

Designed for students with prior watercolor experience. Focuses on illustration-based watercolor using liquid watercolors (provided) and advanced techniques such as brush control and layering. Weekly demonstrations and themes emphasize creativity and fun. Tube paints are optional. Supply list available at the front desk.

Pastels

Tuesdays, 1 PM – 3 PM | Francine Perlman

Explore traditional and abstract pastel techniques using soft, hard, oil, and water-soluble pastels. Work from observation and imagination while incorporating mixed media. Classes include artist references, group discussion, and critique. Supplies provided.

Figure Life Drawing

(Bilingual Instructor)

Wednesdays, 10 AM – 12 PM | Sigfrido Benitez

An immersive figure-drawing class using short and long poses with live models. Explore multiple approaches to capturing the human form. All levels are welcome. Supplies provided. Spanish speakers are encouraged to register.



Tapestry Weaving



Watercolor

Painting in All Media

Wednesdays, 10 AM – 1 PM & 2 PM – 5 PM
Gene Wisniewski

Highly personalized instruction in drawing and painting using charcoal, pencil, oil, acrylic, and watercolor. Students may work from photos or develop abstract styles. Supply list available at the front desk.

Stained Glass

Thursdays, 10 AM – 12 PM | Yvette Bendahan

Individualized instruction for all levels. Learn glass cutting, assembly, and design using patterns or original concepts. Supplies provided.

Intro to Tapestry Weaving

(Bilingual Instructor)

Thursdays, 10 AM – 12 PM

Itala Aguilera Zuanetti

Beginner class focused on tapestry weaving using small frame looms. Covers basic structures and design techniques. Supplies provided. Spanish speakers are encouraged to register.

Printmaking

Thursdays, 1 PM – 4 PM | Francine Perlman

Learn printmaking fundamentals with a focus on monotypes and non-traditional materials. Open to all levels; beginners welcome. Emphasizes experimentation and creative discovery. Supplies provided.

Weaving

Fridays, 10 AM – 12 PM | Elinor Dei Tos Pironti

For intermediate and advanced students working on individual projects using a 4-shaft loom. Instruction supports project completion and skill development. Supplies provided.

Open Studio

Mondays 10 AM - 12 PM & Fridays 1 PM – 3 PM
Thursdays 10 AM - 3 PM for weaving students

only | \$35 per term for non-registered art students | Free for registered art students

The art studio is open twice weekly for independent work. For enrolled art students, this time is included in their class fee. Non-enrolled participants pay a small fee of \$35 per-term.

Participants not enrolled in an art class must bring their own supplies.

Feldenkrais

Tuesdays, 10:30 AM – 11:30 AM

Margot Townsend

Gentle guided movement lessons to improve balance, flexibility, and ease of daily movement. Please bring a mat labeled with your name.

Tai Chi

Tuesdays, 1 PM – 2 PM | Roger Puckett

A holistic practice combining Tai Chi, Qi Gong, meditation, and mindful movement to improve balance, flexibility, strength, and overall well-being.

Pilates

Tuesdays or Thursdays, 3 PM – 4 PM

Mike Lesser

Build core strength, balance, and body awareness through Pilates principles. Class may be done seated or on the floor. Barefoot participation encouraged. Please bring a mat labeled with your name.

Meditation

Wednesdays (In Person) or Fridays (Virtual)

Free to Members | Richard Goldberg

Practice meditation through silence, relaxation, gentle movement, and discussion. Beginners are welcome and instructed in all techniques.

Self-Defense: Using Your Mind & Body

Thursdays, 11 AM – 12 PM | Dajeon Aiken

Practical martial arts for real-life situations, including subway safety, walking awareness, dealing with aggression, and safe falling techniques.

Chair Yoga

Fridays, 12 PM – 1 PM | Rupali Dogra

An accessible yoga practice incorporating seated and standing movement, breathwork, relaxation, and brain exercises. Designed to support healthy aging in an inclusive environment. Accommodations can be made for all abilities.



Pilates



Vocal Training & Performance

Wednesdays, 10 AM – 11 AM

Cheryl Warfield

Group vocal classes focusing on technique, interpretation, stage presence, and audience connection. Open to all levels. Includes preparation for a culminating performance.

Musical Theater

Fridays, 10:15 AM – 11:15 AM

Jim Fredericks

Explore the history of the American musical through discussion and singing. Work on solos and scenes from classical composers, including Rodgers & Hammerstein, Sondheim, and more.

Dance Fit

Wednesdays, 2:30 PM – 3:30 PM

Stephanie Lynn Shapiro

An energetic, low-impact dance class combining standing and chair movement, stretching, and upbeat music. No dance experience required. Accommodations can be made for all abilities.

Discussion & Activity Groups

Discussion groups are free to members, and are offered year-round, unless otherwise noted. All discussion groups are free to NCJW NY members only. Membership is \$72 per year (July through June). Membership fees may be waived, and class scholarships are available for those with financial need. To inquire about financial assistance, please contact social worker Letitia at Imaun@ncjwny.org.

Short Story

(Hybrid)

Mondays, 11 AM – 12 PM | Arlene Kossoff & Ruth Taller

Weekly discussion of a short story provided in advance. Lively, facilitated conversations. Space is limited. For Zoom information, reach out to the group leaders or Debbie Aronson at debbie@ncjwny.org.

Embroidery

Mondays, 12 PM – 1:30 PM | Ruth Rothstein

A free drop-in group for all levels. Instruction available if desired. Bring your own materials; limited supplies provided.

What's the Good Life? Philosophy Through Literature

Mondays, 1 PM – 2 PM | David Arnold & Susan Matthias

Explore philosophical ideas of happiness and meaning through literature and philosophy, from ancient texts to modern writers.

Men's Life Group

Tuesdays, 11 AM – 12 PM | Howard Fischer

A discussion group for male members focusing on life issues, health, relationships, and personal growth.

Short Reads, Long Conversations

(Hybrid)

Wednesdays, 1 PM – 2 PM | Arlene Kossoff & Ruth Taller

Weekly discussion of current articles or essays provided in advance. Space is limited. For Zoom information, reach out to the leaders or Debbie Aronson at debbie@ncjwny.org.



*What's the Good Life?
Discussion Group*

Book Club

Last Wednesday of the month

2:15 PM – 3:15 PM | Facilitator TBD

Monthly in person discussion of a selected book focusing on themes, characters, and author. For more information, reach out to Debbie Aronson at debbie@ncjwny.org.

Knitwits

2nd & 4th Thursdays of the month

10 AM – 12 PM | Beverly Katz

Drop-in knitting group. Bring your own materials or use the yarn provided.

Mah Jongg

Fridays, 9:30 AM – 12 PM | Thelma Hochberg

For experienced players; beginners may form their own games. No betting. Mah Jongg sets, and coffee and tea provided.

Games with Friends: Canasta, Mah Jongg & More

Fridays, 12:30 PM – 3 PM | Member-Led

Bring your own group and enjoy. Canasta, Mah Jongg sets, and coffee and tea provided. Other games are available. For more information, reach out to Debbie Aronson at debbie@ncjwny.org.

Eleanor Leff Jewish Women's Resource Group Book Discussion

(Virtual)

Last Friday of the Month

1 PM – 2 PM | Marcia Rudnitsky

Monthly virtual book discussion exploring themes, characters, and authors. For Zoom information, reach out to the leader or Debbie Aronson at debbie@ncjwny.org.

Lunch, Interaction, Nurturing, and Companionship (LINC) Program

Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays

11:30 AM – 2 PM

The Helen Bloom LINC program (Lunch, Interaction, Nurturing and Companionship) serves elders experiencing memory loss and dementia, together with their caregivers – both home health aides and family caregivers. Participants gather in a sunny room at Council House, engage in greetings and discussion, and a group activity — such as an art project, movement therapy, pet therapy, or guided reminiscence — followed by lunch. After lunch a professional musician leads singing and dancing, each participating according to their own abilities and preferences.

LINC operates Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays, from 11:30 AM to 2:00 PM. We'd love to welcome you to the LINC community. To learn more, please contact Social Worker Letitia Maun at Imaun@ncjwny.org or at 646-884-9471.

Resources and Support Groups for the Elderly and Caregivers

Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays

By Appointment

Our staff social worker runs monthly support groups for older adults facing challenges related to aging, illness, and loss. Participants share experiences and learn practical coping strategies in a supportive setting.

We also offer a support group for caregivers of individuals with memory loss, primarily due to Alzheimer's disease. Caregivers exchange advice, address frustrations, and gain tools to manage the demands of caregiving.

Individual support is also available. Our social worker provides counseling, helps clients enroll in benefits such as Medicaid and rent subsidies, and connects them to services including legal aid, home-delivered meals, and mental health care.

For more information, contact Letitia Maun at Imaun@ncjwny.org or 646-884-9471 to make an appointment.

Gerson Cultural Art Series

These concerts and events are free and open to the public thanks to a generous grant from the Gerson Family Foundation. Concerts take place every third Thursday of the month from 1:00-2:00 PM. Refreshments are served following the events.



Vocal Training and Performance

Other events hosted at Council House

- Fall Open House
- Community Resource Fair
- Winter Arts Fair
- Hanukkah Celebration
- Spring Open House
- Spring Arts Fair
- Social Mixer
- Health Screening Event
- Career and Volunteer Event



Winter Arts Fair

Ambassador Program

The Ambassador Program brings together some of Council Lifetime Learning's most passionate members and volunteers to share the joy of lifelong learning. Ambassadors help spread the word about CLL, offer creative ideas for connecting with active older adults, and proudly represent the program throughout the community. For more information, contact debbie@ncjwny.org.



"I was attracted to CLL nine years ago by its warm and welcoming community. I love making art here! CLL is an integral part of my retirement, and I feel so lucky and grateful to have found it!"
Audrey Melkin, CLL participant and Ambassador



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