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Enrollment tops 6,000 for 257 classes, lectures

OCALA, FLA. – A record 257 classes and lectures covering topics from health and wellness to academics, the arts, computers and technology are included in the winter catalog of courses offered by Master the Possibilities at On Top of the World Communities, the educational hub of this award-winning active-adult community.

Now entering its fifth year, Master the Possibilities has reached a new milestone, attracting more than 6,000 enrollments for January-March classes, reports Daniel F. Dowd, director of education for On Top of the World Communities. The reason is its curriculum.

The Visiting Scholar Series, for instance, will bring renowned lecturers to Ocala for presentations on U.S. foreign policy, immigration policy and reform, dictatorships in South-east Asia, the life of the late Sen. Tom Watson, and odes by the poet John Keats. Moreover, famed New York sports photographer Suzy Allman will share photos and anecdotes.

Other series will focus on archaeology, Alzheimer's Disease, eyes, birds, pharmacology, cardiology, Florida history, legal issues, films, Japanese, veterinary medicine and science.

Academic and special-interest programs range from dream interpretation to the economy in Scandinavia. There is a class on antiques and another on iPods, iPhones and iTunes. The Bear Didn't Do It explores a double homicide in Marion County, while Borat and the Road to Cultural Competency takes a look at garage sales and tailgate parties.

Health topics include Medicare, orthopaedics, medications, orthovisc injections, acupuncture, CPR, diabetes and pain management, among others. Art classes are offered in oils, watercolors, stained glass, paper crafting, pottery, calligraphy, floor cloth painting and even basket weaving. Computer instruction is offered from the basics to advanced.

The catalog can be viewed online at MasterthePossibilities.com while a printed version is distributed at the 10,000-square-foot Master the Possibilities Education Center in the new Circle Square Commons at On Top of the World Communities, just off State Road 200 at SW 80th Avenue and SW 80th Street. Online registration is available on the website 24 hours a day or by calling (352) 854-3699. Courses are open to the public.

The program's classes, presentations, lectures and film series annually generate 17,000 class enrollments. Seating usually is limited, so early registration is recommended. The Master the Possibilities Education Center was designed to accommodate small classes – such as computer labs for 10 students – and large lectures in the Circle Square Commons Cultural Center that seats 830.

About 80 percent of Master the Possibilities' instructors have graduate degrees, and roughly half have taught on the college and university levels. Others bring to the classroom vast practical experience derived from careers that include the diplomatic corps, corporate boardrooms, research facilities, art galleries and more.