

## **About the William A. Keese School of Continuing Education**

The William A. Keese School of Continuing Education is a unique, resident-run lifelong learning program at Asbury Methodist Village in Gaithersburg, MD. Established more than 50 years ago, the school is founded on the belief that intellectual stimulation and new experiences are vital components to a vibrant life at any age.

### **Our Mission**

Our mission is to foster a stimulating and engaging intellectual environment by offering diverse, non-credit educational and cultural programs "by and for the residents" of Asbury Methodist Village. We aim to engage the mind, inspire a generous spirit, and build community through shared learning experiences.

### **What We Offer**

Each year, running from September through May, the Keese School presents dozens of lectures, classes, and musical performances over two separate semesters. Our curriculum, created and approved by a resident-led committee, covers a wide range of subjects, including:

- History, current events, and global affairs
- Arts, music, and literature
- Science and technology
- Life issues and personal development

Courses are presented by both talented Asbury residents with extensive backgrounds and expertise, as well as invited outside experts. Many lectures and events are available for in-person attendance at venues like the Rosborough Cultural Arts and Wellness Center and are also often broadcast on the campus's internal AVTV television station for easy access.

## Examples of past topics include:

### History & Current Events

- **Four Decades of a Changing Russia.** A personal memoir and reflection on life as an American woman in the Russian capital over 40 years, from the mid-1960s to the early 2000s.
- **Queen Elizabeth I, Good Queen Bess.** A presentation by an award-winning actress and Smithsonian scholar that explores the less serious aspects of life during England's Golden Age.
- **The Washington Trolley Story.** A look into the history of the trolley system in Washington, D.C..
- **Life is Uncertain - Eat Dessert First -- A 9/11 Sequel.** A personal account of being stranded in Gander, Newfoundland, after the 9/11 terrorist attacks.

### Science & Nature

- **Advances in Diagnosis of Alzheimer's Disease.** A lecture on medical advancements in the diagnosis of Alzheimer's disease.
- **Bats: The Unsung Heroes of the Night Sky.** A talk on the ecological role of bats.
- **Breakthrough Medical Discoveries from Basic Research.** This presentation described how basic scientific research, such as understanding how cells communicate, leads to treatments and cures.
- **Climate Change: What We Know (and Don't Know).** Focuses on warming trends, future change pathways, and mitigation strategies.

### Arts, Culture, & Literature

- **Ancient and Modern Myths Unmasked.** Discussion of the "hero myth" patterns found in ancient world myths, modern literature, and movies from *Beowulf* to *Star Wars*.
- **Dante Alighieri.** A class dedicated to the life and work of the influential Italian poet.
- **Quilting: History, Art, and Social Gathering.** A look at the history of quilts and how quilting "bees" evolved into modern guilds.

- **An Evening of Jazz:** Musical performances and a look at the early decades of jazz music from New Orleans to Chicago and New York.

## **Lifestyle & Practical Issues**

- **Toilet Customs, Past and Present.** A historical and global overview of the evolution of the toilet scene and modern trends.
- **Achieving a Good Death.** Explores goals and strategies for living a meaningful life and preparing for end-of-life issues.
- **Artificial Intelligence.** A presentation on the rapidly advancing field of AI.

## **Giving Back**

In keeping with the Asbury spirit of serving others, the Keese School extends its impact beyond the classroom. Surpluses from class fees and generous resident donations fund the **Keese School Education Awards**, which provide scholarships to deserving associates who work in the community's dining rooms and are continuing their college education.