COVID-19 had a dramatic impact on MCE&CE’s number of events and participants for FY2020-2021 with hundreds of events needing to be cancelled due to the pandemic. As a division, 672 events were held (compared to 1,839 events for 2019-20) and 36,115 participants attended these events (compared to 159,523 participants for FY2019-2020).

Osher Lifelong Learning Institute (OLLI) offered 97 courses, 57 lectures, 13 study trips, and two events, with a total enrollment of 6,786, all of which are decreases from recent years. Membership totaled 1,030, a 39% decrease from the previous fiscal year’s 1,706 members. On end-of-course evaluations for fall and spring semesters, participants gave an average overall rating of 4.7 for both instructors and courses, and a rating of 4.8 for their overall OLLI experience (on a 5-point scale, where 5=Excellant). Evaluations for the study trips were also strong, with respondents giving an overall rating of 4.8 for those educational experiences. These evaluations compare favorably with previous years’ results.

The Collaborative at the Gateway Technology Center (TCGTC) was able to serve 110 participants through three programs with COVID restrictions in place for all of FY2020-21.

The Upper Coastal Plain Learning Council (UCPLC) served 5,005 people through 7 programs in the FY 2020-2021 year. The Wisdom Tooth Program, the UCPLC’s premier program, continued to thrive and grow. Each year the demand for this dental health outreach continues to be greater than the funds can support. Even with COVID-19, the UCPLC provided supplies and sessions of the Wisdom Tooth Program to 4,722 adult and child participants.

Customized Contractual Education (CCE) Customized education programs were delivered to over 765 participants through 28 events.

Center for Urban Affairs and Community Services (CUACS) continued to partner with the NC Department of Public Instruction (DPI) by advancing online assessment, identifying learning resources for teachers, and building an online assessment platform for DPI to use for online assessments. CUACS was awarded seven project contracts this year with a total funding of $8,913,451.

Technology Training (TT): This year Technology Training underwent some transition including doing away with several discounts, and increasing course prices to be more competitive in the market. Total revenue for this year is projected to be $178,550, in comparison to last year’s number of $405,079; a 56% decrease this year versus the previous year. The COVID-19 pandemic affected the registrations for TT classes throughout this fiscal year. TT offered a new certificate program this year in WordPress.

Office of Professional Development (OPD): OPD offered 183 professional development courses and 12 conferences this fiscal year, including virtual conferences. OPD was projected to have a revenue of $1.96 million this fiscal year.

The Office of Finance and Administration (OFA): The Office of Finance and Administration (OFA) is in its first year of a restructure. OFA encompasses the Finance Office, Human Resources Office, Facilities Operations, and Information Technology Services. Under the guidance and mentorship of the Academic Outreach & Entrepreneurship (AOE) Business Office, the OFA will review all business processes and position roles and responsibilities. As a result of this review process, a report will be provided to the Vice Provost of Continuing Education that will encompass, but not be limited to: a refreshed OFA website, new standard operating policies and procedures, and possible further restructuring within OFA.

Marketing Services (MS): During the 2020-2021 fiscal year, MS transitioned to an entirely electronic marketing strategy (including e-newsletters, email broadcasts, social media, and other online advertising such as pay per click and Google Ads), and completed the first phase of a makeover of the MCE&CE web pages (including transitioning from Destiny-generated course pages to pages that function in conjunction with NC State’s REPORTER and feature new careers-focused content). The new OPD web pages feature enhanced search functionality and related course recommendations on course pages. The new Careers pages allow visitors to search career categories and obtain data on job titles and responsibilities, median wages, employment trends, and links to courses offered through OPD that are
relevant. These new and improved resources make OPD’s pages more user friendly and position OPD and its web pages as a career resource.

McKimmon Conference and Training Center’s (MCTC) business was disrupted again in FY2020-2021 as 368 events were forced to cancel due to COVID-19 which saw a loss of approximately $962,000 in revenue. MCTC was able to secure $345,620 in revenue from 181 face-to-face events that were able to be delivered despite restrictions. An additional 66 events were held online as virtual events. Virtual events were created because of the pandemic and became a much needed, new revenue stream for MCTC. MCTC now has the processes in place to continue to handle virtual events moving forward, even when face-to-face restrictions are lifted.

INITIATIVES
Diversity: Initiatives and Programs
Thirty-six courses, lectures, and study trips gave OLLI members the opportunity to develop their cultural competency, and included subjects such as local and North Carolina African American history, religion, and gender studies, as well as reflective courses on unconscious bias and race. The courses were developed both by OLLI’s Program Development Committee and an ad hoc committee that meets periodically to identify course topics and strategies to advance this work. Again this year, OLLI members generously contributed to the Feed-the-Pack on-campus food pantry. Two drive-up events in December and April collected a total of 1,410 pounds.

Staff: Major New Appointments, Kudos, Professional Activities and Recognition
Kevin McDermott was appointed as the new TOPS Manager and Assistant Director-Center for Urban Affairs and Community Services.

Janice Sitzes completed OIED’s Inclusive Excellence Certificate and PEAK Program.

Mark Bernhard was elected to a two-year term as a Member-at-Large on the University Professional and Continuing Education (UPCEA) Board of Directors.

Awards:
Carmen Dunn was nominated for the Provost Unit’s Award for Excellence in the customer service category.

Kim Little was nominated for a Pride of the Wolfpack Award for her work in successfully converting OLLI courses to the Zoom format.

Other accomplishments included:
Two of MCE&CE’s staffers served on the Staff Senate (Rodney O’Neal and Janice Sitzes); Janice Sitzes is past chair of the Staff Senate and member of the UNC System Staff Assembly.

Janice Sitzes was appointed Director for the UNC Staff Assembly’s Chancellors’ Cup Golf Tournament.

Recommendations and Concerns: COVID-19 has illustrated that the McKimmon Center for Extension and Continuing Education needs to continue to diversify its portfolio to have more online and hybrid learning options in comparison to its historical business model of almost all face-to-face events. Adding key initiatives/partnerships like the online Digital Skills Bootcamps with HackerU will help to diversify our portfolio of programs in FY2021-2022. While this next year may not get us back to the same pre-pandemic enrollment numbers that existed two years ago, we do expect that we will see a much better year programmatically and financially than this past year.