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This month our featured member is Charles Young. Charles is someone who knows a thing or two about living life to the fullest. He is an inspiring educator, a dedicated community member, a lifelong adventurer, and a truly wise and kind individual.

Living our best lives now and in the future!

As He Continues to Inspire Others, His Pioneer Roots and a Love of Outdoors Motivate Him

IT is not surprising to hear from some of his former students that their teacher, Charles Young, was the reason why they wanted to become history majors in college. Charles, who has



been an associate professor of history and government at Umpqua Community College since 2001, has been fascinated with history since he was a boy.

Strong Pioneer Roots and Pioneer Values

Young’s paternal ancestors arrived in the United States in 1790 and traveled over the Cumberland Gap only one generation after Daniel Boone.

On his maternal side, his ancestors were pioneering on the Minnesota frontier.

Charles recalls times in his childhood when he had conversations with ‘living pioneer’ grandparents. His paternal grandfather had actually “prospected with a burro in remote areas of the Sierra Mountains” when he was sixteen.

Both of Charles’ grandparents were firm “believers in America as a ‘promised land’ where hard work and confidence brought opportunity and success.”



These ‘elder’ family members also modeled the value of service to others and of

maintaining a positive attitude throughout life.

Teaching history is one of the ways Charles has continued to serve his community. He also served on the Douglas County Museum Board for about

eight years. During his twenties, he served four years in the military as a Marine Corps officer. Service is part of Young's DNA.

A Life-Long Love of the Wild

Motivated in part by his heritage, Charles started hiking in the 'wild lands' when he was a teenager. He said those hikes were spiritually intoxicating. He later added distance hiking and mountain climbing. Charles said, "I'll be 73 in August and yet find, after some 60 years of backpacking and climbing, the same level of joy wandering the great outdoors as I did at 14."

Combining his love of pioneering history and his love of wilderness areas, Charles once bought a log house in a remote part of British Columbia and "practiced pioneering for quite a few years with grizzlies, mountain goats, moose, and wolves all around."

Though now living in a much tamer, rural Southern Oregon area, Charles has continued to enjoy a life of adventure. He has completed 31 half marathons and



20 full marathons over the years. Last year he participated in a 5K in New York; he came in second in his age group. During the past twenty years, he has also participated in multiple-week bicycle trips in Colorado, Idaho, and Oregon.

If those activities weren't enough to keep him stimulated, he also does sky diving and bungee jumping. He says these activities can "jump-start a sluggish heart when life seems too tame."

In 2017, Charles "took a 150-mile trek in the Andean Highlands of Peru. Last June, he summited Mt. Kilimanjaro in Africa with his daughter. This



summer, Young and his daughter will hike about 115 miles across the highlands of Scotland.

Young's Advice for the Rest of Us

Young's advice for the rest of us as we mature is to "Stay joyfully active in body, mind, and spirit, [and] to remain engaged in community affairs." He also suggests that all of us help make the world a better place through volunteer activities and we should "include as much active time as possible immersed in nature."

In summary, Young encourages all of us to engage in activities and practices that "get us out of bed each morning impatient for the next adventure and determined to continue to do our part in this ultimate trek-adventure we call life."

Congratulations Winner of May 1 Newsletter Subscription Drawing

H. Ni Aodagain of Murphy, Oregon was the winner of the May 1 newsletter drawing. She received a copy of Jo Ann Jenkin's 2016 book, *Disrupt Aging*.

Subscribe by May 31 for June 1 Drawing

Anyone who subscribes to our [newsletter](#) by May 31 will be entered in our drawing for a *Tai Chi for Beginners* DVD with master Chris Pei.

We'll draw the winner on June 1 and will announce the winner in the June 15 newsletter. Note: You can unsubscribe using the same newsletter link.

Is an E-Bike Your Ticket for a Great Ride?

When I was still teaching, my commute was about 12 miles to the community college where I taught. On more than one occasion, I thought about riding my bike to work. I didn't like driving the car all the time and thought that riding my bike would not only allow me to get additional exercise, but it would also be a much more environmentally friendly way to commute.



What stopped me from my grand plan? I tried to imagine riding up a long hill for

the final mile of the commute. Yes, I could do it, but I realized it would take additional time to make it up the hill. Further, I would likely be covered with sweat and would be overheated—not the way I'd want to start my teaching day.

Had I known about e-bikes, I may have considered making the investment in this type of power-boost bike ride while I was still commuting to work.

According to David Reeck, the marketing director for an e-bike company called Out & EBout, we can ride electric assist bicycles like any other bike.

The difference is that when you need an additional boost (like going uphill), you have electrical power to give you a boost.

As reported in a recent [article](#), some research has suggested that e-bikes can offer health and other benefits for those who have various neurological impairments such as Parkinson's. People using e-bikes can experience the benefits of exercise without overexerting themselves. Also, they may experience an increased sense of empowerment.

E-bikes do have appeal for a number of reasons including environmental and health benefits. I suspect we'll see more of them on the roads in the future.

An Uplifting Film for Older Adults

Recently, I watched *Finding Your Feet*, a delightful 2017 British comedy. The film included themes of re-invention, empowerment, class divisions, and healing.



The main characters participated in weekly dance lessons. As they practiced together, they grew and discovered that life still offered all kinds of opportunities for those who were open to new possibilities.

The [reviews](#) for this film have been positive. I watched it on Amazon Prime.

Interested in Sharing Insights with Our Community?

If you'd like to share insights about positive aging or standing against ageism, we'd love to hear from you. If interested, check out [Guest Submissions](#). Also, your [feedback](#) is always appreciated.