

Housing community puts latest research on senior living into practice

Palisades at Broadmoor Park residents will benefit from business-UCCS partnership

By Jeanne Davant

Construction will begin in mid- to late May on The Palisades at Broadmoor Park, a senior housing community that is the result of a unique partnership between a developer and the University of Colorado at Colorado Springs.

Jeff Dunn, president of Dunn & Associates of Colorado Springs, projects that the community will open in June 2008. It is located at Broadmoor Bluffs Drive and South Academy Boulevard.

Dunn worked with UCCS faculty and staff to design both the luxurious living facilities and the innovative services and programs that will be offered to residents. The university will receive 1 percent of The Palisades' gross revenues.

Residents at The Palisades will live in homelike units ranging from one- and two-bedroom apartments and fourplexes for independent seniors over 55 to studio and one-bedroom apartments for assisted living. The apartments feature upscale amenities such as private patios and balconies, solid-



Model cottages at The Palisades at Broadmoor are open for tours at 4547 Palisades Park View. Besides these models, the campus will include independent living and assisted living apartment buildings. To

surface countertops, baths with heated tile floors and walk-in showers, and 9-foot ceilings with crown molding. Some units have fireplaces.

But what is truly unique about The Palisades is the partnership between Dunn and the university.

UCCS Chancellor Pam Shockley expects the project to have "impacts far beyond this community. It is a model for the future."

Residents will benefit from the collaboration every day. For example, they'll have access to an onsite health clinic with a focus on maintaining wellness.

The clinic will be created and staffed by nurse practitioners and students from the Beth-El College of Nursing and Health Sciences, based on the crucial link between health and quality of life.

"We are fortunate to have developed some health clinics in the past," says Amy Silva-Smith, assistant professor of nursing at Beth-El. "This partnership will allow us to do something that has never been done: to create a clinic equipped with nurse practitioners who will interact with the residents." Residents who are sick will be able to immediately see a nurse practitioner who can contact and work with their primary care physician. The

nurse practitioners also will help residents manage chronic conditions and achieve optimum health.

One of the goals of the project is to develop a culture of wellness for older people, says Mary Ann Kluge, associate professor of health sciences.

"We are thinking about how we could engage people in exercise, nutrition and rehabilitation," she says.

Technology will flow throughout the community to improve residents' quality of life, says Toby Gannett, vice president of Dunn & Associates.

In most senior communities, residents get a printed activity sheet, Gannett points out.

"We want to have an integrated system where people can schedule their own activities."

For Sarah Qualls, director of the UCCS Gerontology Department and professor of psychology, The Palisades is a dream come true.

"When the needs of an aging person are matched to an environment with a sense of control built in and can engage in activities according to his or her interests, you can maximize mental and physical health," Qualls says. "We know this from literature. Now we are trying to make it a reality."

Three years ago, Qualls spoke at an economic development conference about the burgeoning population of older people and the lack of facilities and trained personnel to serve their needs. The impending crisis was the impetus for the UCCS gerontology program, the first in the United States to offer a Ph.D. and is nationally known for leadership in the field.

Dunn was in the audience.

"When I heard about the gerontology program, it became clear that we needed to see if the university had any interest in doing some kind of collaboration," Dunn says.

Dunn, who first developed a senior housing facility in Aurora in 1978, began talking with Qualls about what would constitute an ideal retirement community.

"The idea of a clinic and a sports wellness component and all of the aspects that were originally described have all expanded dramatically," Dunn says. "It was an exploration of how special is this and how far can and should we go. We've already blown through any kind of norms in the industry. Everyone's goal is to improve physical and mental capacity, but nobody is attacking it."

"Certainly there are retirement communities on campuses, but to my knowledge, nothing with the depth and breadth of this collaboration. We think the level of mental and physical stimulation and the resources for physical and mental wellness we intend to provide will be truly significant."

The Palisades will be a "remarkable place to live, learn and age," Qualls says. But it will be much more than that. The community will put into practice and evaluate the latest research in aging. Student education will be integrated seamlessly into the complex.

"Drawing on research, we are inviting residents and families to participate in training future leaders"

to help seniors live with vitality, Qualls says.

Though Dunn and Associates is making a huge investment in upscale construction and technology, Dunn expects rents will be comparable to or less than other luxury retirement communities.

Independent-living units start at \$2595 a month, an all-inclusive price that includes 30 meals a month, weekly housekeeping and linens, transportation, Internet connections and two special events per month such as a session with a personal trainer or a pedicure.

Base rent for assisted living units starts at \$2795; residents will purchase additional services, such as medication reminders, according to their need. Base rent for single-occupancy efficiencies in the memory unit starts at \$4045 per month. Three meals a day are included in rents for assisted living units, and semi-annual health checkups are included in all base rents.

The Palisades is offering a limited number of Founders Club memberships that will enable residents to lock in their base rental rate for nine years. Founders Club members will be able to choose carpet and floor coverings, cabinets, countertops, and tile and accent wall colors. They will automatically move to the top of the waiting list for available apartments in the assisted living building.

Membership costs \$45,000 (plus a \$1,000 application fee), fully refundable after the first two years. At the end of nine years, members' rents will increase to the then-going rate.

For more information about The Palisades, call 226-2273 or visit www.palisadesatbroadmoorpark.com.