

UC San Diego Intergenerational Housing

Business Case Analysis

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A structural change due to the demographic shift has transformed American culture and with it, our UC San Diego campus and the greater San Diego community. Current projections show that by 2040, the United States population, over the age of 65, will surpass 20 percent and individuals, under the age of 18, will be greater than 23 percent, which will equate to over 40 percent of the total U.S. population. Consequently, the significant increase in our older and younger populations, coupled with economic upheavals of the 2008-2009 recession, historically low wages, increased housing costs, increased health care costs, and escalations in college tuition costs have disrupted the economic balance that stimulate healthy economies. Moreover, the unprecedented challenges have altered time-to-graduation rates and interrupted the natural flow of graduates entering into the workforce and succeeding independent of social/familial support.

[Generations United](#), a national nonprofit organization, whose mission it is to improve the lives of children, youth, and older adults have consistently shown that intergenerational programs and housing improve lives and communities of all ages. They improve academic performance, confidence, time management skills, and financial planning of youth and college students. Furthermore, older adults have shown increased brain function, physical activity, improved health, as well as reduced disability, isolation, and depression. Notably, many older adults/students desire to work with students/older adults in an intellectual and emotional capacity, as demonstrated by the success of the intergenerational programs the UC San Diego undergraduate/graduates and medical students have created within the San Diego community. In these settings, all generations share ideas and lives, as well as learn empathy, care, and compassion. Moreover, older generations are offered an opportunity to use their wisdom and experience to guide and empower youth and youth have an opportunity to expose older adults to scientific advances and novel life experiences. Further promising, is the ability for older adults to offer youth financial, political, and social capital they need to master leadership roles.

The UC San Diego Intergenerational Collaboration Effort (IGCE) began in 2014, when students engaged local retirement communities, which have currently grown into three successful intergenerational programs: The Intergenerational roundtable discussion, the intergenerational walking club, and the Intergenerational Music Program, which includes the Early Childhood Education Center. These programs focus on community engagement and include the UC San Diego undergraduate/graduate/medical students, local independent senior communities, and the UC San Diego Early Childhood Education Center. The programs have proven to be enriching for all ages and at virtually no cost or low-cost. Dr. Lori Montross Thomas and the UC San Diego Intergenerational club, formed this year, are also in the process of championing a new intergenerational program between the UC San Diego students and the Salvation Army's Silvercrest low-

income senior community. This growth further supports both the need and the sustainability of Intergenerational programs and housing.



Many older adults protest the idea of living in “facilities” and instead proclaim they wish to live in communities. Thus, intergenerational housing models are prevailing across the nation. Albeit, they have not been seen on college campuses, yet have the potential to be an innovative twist on the national model. Doing so will increase UC San Diego’s prestige, publically, and reputation as a leading edge learning institution. For nearly 50 years, co-housing/intergenerational housing projects, which emphasize shared site use between multiple age groups, have effectively addressed the needs and challenges of dramatically growing communities. [Intergenerational Shared Sites: Saving Dollars While Making Sense](#) by Dr. Shannon Jarrott et al, revealed that operational costs of shared sites per participant were equal or less to non-shared sites. Jarrott et al. also found rent and personnel costs have the most cost savings potential as integrated, intergenerational, shared sites have mutual financial and emotional benefits, due to youth and older adults acting as interpersonal resources to each other.

Intergenerational programs and housing developments clearly demonstrate significant success in shifting the cultural idea of aging in place to an idea of aging in integrated communities. The concept of intergenerational interdependence provides a platform to bridge the gap between young and old. They have shown to improve health, reduce overall housing/medical care costs, and act as effective training sites for medical residents. Intergenerational housing on the UC San Diego campus makes economic and academic sense. These communities can further support the efforts of the UC San Diego School of Medicine Simulation Training Program such as: history taking and physical exams. They also offer the perfect platform to have difficult discussions within real life situations, as evidenced by Ohio State Universities, [Champion Intergenerational Enrichment and Education Center](#) in Columbus, OH. The OSU Champion Center houses an early childhood education and adult day program, which is supported by purposeful, faculty and student training programs of the College of Medicine, nursing, and social work departments. The Intergenerational model fits seamlessly within the goals of the UC San Diego Early Childhood Education Center, the School of Medicine and Public Health, Stein Institute for aging, anthropology, environmental science, human

development, language, linguistics, science, sustainability, technology, and urban planning departments, etc.

In 1988, Charles Durrett and his wife Kathryn McCamant began building co-housing/intergenerational housing and currently have built/consulted on more than [50 communities across the country](#). According to Durrett “the value of co-housing, especially for older adults, comes more from the intangible social connections of residents and the nurturing of empowered interdependence...and captures the spirit of what many retirees want.” Further examples, are the Pat Crowley Intergenerational Housing Community in Chicago, which opened in 1983. This senior community offers reduced rent for seniors and free room and board to “resident assistants around the age of 20” if they agree to provide services, such as light house keeping and cooking to seniors. In another example, in 2015, the city of Lyon, Rhone-Alpes, France, financed 12 independent living communities and invited college students to move in for reduced room and board if they provided one hour of socialization a week. The program was initiated by the National Safety Directive, which aimed to prevent older adults from living alone on top floors of apartment buildings. The initiative also encourages “empty nesters” to rent out rooms to college students or professionals for very low rent or free rent. A city agency educates the students on aging issues and regularly checks in with them. Currently, Lyon has approximately 1,000 apartments in the 12 city-owned intergenerational residences, which house 100 students in apartments.

Researchers project Americans will surpass the age of 100 by the end of the century and with that will be a surge in population growth, as well as a rise in the cost of housing and health care. The intergenerational housing initiative is an affordable housing model that will address complex societal issues and enhance the diversity of UC San Diego and a global society. It will engage our communities and create cohesion, awareness, and understanding, which is required to achieve the short and long term goals of our youth, students, older populations on our UC San Diego campus, within our communities, and throughout our world.

Benefits to UC San Diego:

- Improve the health and well being of all ages
- Increase access to UC San Diego medical care
- Expand UC Care medical insurance program for retirees
- Foster faculty and student medical training programs
- Increase research opportunities
- Reduce vehicles on campus (shared vehicle program, biking, walking, campus shuttle, public transit, lite rail).
- Increase mass transportation
- Improve time-to-graduation rates
- Utilize public/private partnerships
- Could qualify as affordable housing and receive state tax incentives

Extra Note:

Both Front Porch, who develop and manage senior living communities in California and Charles Durrett, an intergenerational/co-housing architect located Denver, CO have expressed interest in discussing a public/private partnership agreement.

- Front Porch, juweber@frontporch.net
- Charles Durrett, Charles.durrett@cohousingco.com

Additional information:

- [San Diego County Health & Human Services Agency – Aging and Independence Services](#)
- [Intergenerational Houses Bring Seniors, 20-Somethings Together](#)
- [Intergenerational Cohousing](#)
- [In Retiree Housing, Talking About Multigenerations](#)
- [Housing That Mixes Young and Old Benefits Both](#)
- [Intergenerational Shared Sites: Saving Dollars While Making Sense](#) (PDF)
- [Charles Durrett on How 'Intentional Community' Can Help Us Get This Aging Think Right](#) (PDF)
- [What Happens When We All Live to 100?](#)