

# Building Impactful Virtual and In-Person Intergenerational Programs

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/EINPresswire.com/ -- [Sequoia Living](#), a Bay Area nonprofit, recently transformed its intergenerational program, bringing together older adults with younger participants to create healthier and more joyful lives.

Sequoia Living's Community Services team was selected to train service coordinators from across the US at the 2022 National Service Coordinator Conference hosted by the American Association of Service Coordinators (AASC).



Sequoia Living resident preparing a meal

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*Bronwyn Peterson, Sequoia Living's Intergenerational Program Coordinator*

“The pandemic has exacerbated the feeling of [isolation and loneliness](#) in older adults,” says Bronwyn Peterson, Sequoia Living's Intergenerational Program Coordinator in San Francisco. She points out that while one-third of older adults live alone, people living in community housing are also at risk of loneliness, which can lead to an increased risk of mental illness, heart disease, and dementia. “The work we are doing reduces loneliness and helps improve mental and physical health,” says Peterson.

Intergenerational programming is generally defined as two people having at least a 20-year gap between their ages. Research shows the benefits of intergenerational

programs include an increase in feelings of connectedness, a sense of community, an increase in trust across all ages, and a boost in self-esteem.

"They listen to me, and I listen to them," says Zubin Goldman, 80, a participant in Sequoia Living's intergenerational program in partnership with Voice of Witness. "We are building community by having this exchange...Connecting is what makes us whole." Program participants and students engage in relationship building through storytelling and exploring topics such as ageism, history, identity, culture, and more.

Virtual and in-person hybrid programs are a way to maintain service offerings to remote participants while re-introducing in-person programs so that people have a choice on where and how they engage with others.

Virtual programs have helped maximize relationship building and reach a larger audience. Vicky Guan, a Sequoia Living Resident Services Coordinator, leads its virtual program for native English-speaking seniors as well as those who may not be as proficient in the language. "We partner with local universities for people whose English is a second language," explains Guan.

Peterson is especially proud of a program called "Welcome to My Kitchen," a mini-docu series featuring home cooks, their lives, and the story behind their dish. The series features seniors living in affordable housing communities and children, all with different backgrounds and perspectives of the world. The first season will make its debut at the #AASC22 conference and on [Sequoia Living's YouTube page](#).

If you or young people you know would like to enrich the lives of San Francisco older adults through intergenerational programming, please email Bronwyn Peterson at [bhowlett@SequoiaLiving.org](mailto:bhowlett@SequoiaLiving.org).

For media inquiries or questions about Sequoia Living communities, email [LRain@sequoialiving.org](mailto:LRain@sequoialiving.org).

#### Sequoia Living's Community Services

For over 50 years, Sequoia Living's programs and services have improved the quality of life of older adults in the San Francisco Bay Area, regardless of economic status or cultural background. Sequoia Living is committed to helping older adults achieve healthy aging through physical, social, and spiritual well-being. In 2021, Sequoia Living served more than 7,000 older adults through the organization's life plan and affordable housing communities, two senior centers, and community services programs.

Lola Rain

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