

ELEVATE

NEWS FROM 2LIFE

60th

Anniversary Issue



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Aging in community

What we have learned over sixty years

Our organization was founded in 1965 with a clear mission: to provide low-income older adults with safe, affordable housing. Since then, 2Life Communities has grown and evolved with a new name, multiple locations, programs and partnerships. We also expanded our mission. Today, we strive to empower all seniors to pursue lives of purpose, connection, and joy in supportive communities.



Reflecting on the past 60 years, our success is driven by three guiding principles: resident centricity, continuous innovation, and a commitment to operational sustainability.

Resident centricity

Every decision, from budget planning to programming to maintenance, should begin with this question: “How does this advance optimal aging for residents?” If aging in community is the path to aging well, how do we create an environment where residents can pursue their own goals for this stage of life?

Resident Service Coordinators play the most direct role in this, building trusted relationships with residents to understand residents’ needs, and connect them with programs and services to realize those needs. But the imperative to place residents at the center of our work needs to be shared by every staff member.



That means to be sensitive and responsive to a resident’s need at the moment—whether lending an ear, performing a simple act of kindness, spotting an unmet need. It also means supporting the front-line staff who are in immediate contact with residents.

Resident centricity also means providing rich and diverse programming so that each resident can find their own path into the community. It can be music, a discussion group, crafting, or tai chi. A wide range of activities that keep people with varied interests engaged, stimulated, and connected is essential.

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2Life 60-year timeline

<p>Ulin House 1971</p> <p>Leventhal House 1973</p> <p>Kurlat House 1978</p> <p>Golda Meir House 1978</p> <p>Coleman House 1983</p>	1965	<p>1965: 2Life was founded.</p> <p>2Life was started in response to increasing numbers of low-income Jewish elders without adequate, affordable housing. Our founders, Norman Leventhal, Ben Ulin and other Jewish community leaders, created 2Life to build community housing for Jewish seniors. We have evolved to an agency proudly meeting the needs of a diverse senior population.</p>
<p>Shillman House 2011</p>	1995	<p>1995: Technology program launched with first computer center.</p> <p>Today, the program still includes computer centers but has expanded to embrace the changing landscape of digital needs.</p> <p>1996: First Resident Service Coordinator (RSC) hired.</p> <p>The state incorporates the role of an RSC into all funding for senior housing in 2017.</p> <p>2001: Fitness and Wellness program founded.</p> <p>2012: CEP Amy Schectman presents at the White House for the first time.</p> <p>2014: Lizbeth Heyer hired to launch Real Estate Department.</p> <p>Up until this point, development was led by members of the Board.</p>
<p>Golda Meir House Expansion 2018</p> <p>Weinberg House 2019</p> <p>Brown Family House 2020</p> <p>Shirley Meadows 2020</p> <p>J.J. Carroll House 2024</p> <p>Leland House 2024</p> <p>In development: Opus Newton</p> <p>Sollmine House</p>	2005	<p>2017: Gov. Charlie Baker established Governor’s Council to Address Aging.</p> <p>After efforts by 2Life and partners, the commission was created with the goal of promoting healthy aging and making the state the most age-friendly in the country.</p> <p>2018: Design Guidelines for Aging in Community published.</p> <p>Massachusetts adopts senior housing design standards influenced by our guidelines in 2019.</p> <p>2022: Spiritual Care program and department founded.</p> <p>2023: Groundbreaking for Opus Newton.</p> <p>Opus Newton is our first community designed for middle-income seniors.</p> <p>2024: J.J. Carroll opens with a PACE center and as a Passive House.</p> <p>J.J. Carroll is the first 2Life community to include a Program of All-Inclusive Care for the Elderly (PACE) center, operated by Element Care, to provide healthcare services to residents and neighborhood seniors. Once certified, J.J. Carroll will be the largest multifamily Passive House building in Massachusetts.</p> <p>2024: Gov. Maura Healey signs housing bond bill at Golda Meir House.</p> <p>The Bond Bill creates a senior supportive housing commission tasked with making recommendations for the production of safe, affordable, and healthy senior housing. 2Life is a member of the newly created commission.</p>
<p>Brooke House at Olmsted Village</p> <p>Treehouse at Olmsted Village</p> <p>Porter Street Redevelopment</p>	2025 and beyond	<p>2024: Leland House opens</p> <p>A 68-apartment community, Leland House is our first all-electric building and the state’s first all-electric multifamily building.</p>



30 Wallingford Road, Brighton, MA 02135
2LifeCommunities.org | 617-912-8400

Resident profiles

Every day we witness the invaluable contributions elders make to the world when they have a strong community and a sense of security. In celebration of our 60th anniversary, we are sharing stories from the residents who make our communities truly exceptional. Here's a glimpse of what they have to say. Visit 2LifeCommunities.org to read their full stories.



GERI WEINSTEIN

The go-getter grandma who officiated 1,300 weddings

"I don't like to just sit and do nothing, I'm a doer and get things done."



VLADIMIR ROMANOVSKY

Survival, skydiving & second chances

"I was a pilot for the Soviet Union and I still love to fly. I went skydiving on my 90th birthday and I'm already planning to do it again for my 100th birthday."



SHLOMIT MINTZ

From Hungary to Israel to Massachusetts

"The truth is, with all I went through, I don't regret anything. I grew from it. I grew and I am still growing."



YONG XIN ZHAO

Leading with art, music and kindness

"My art is meaningful because it is my way of sharing what I see and the joy I feel."



KATHERINE WILKINS

Following her grandmother's path to impact

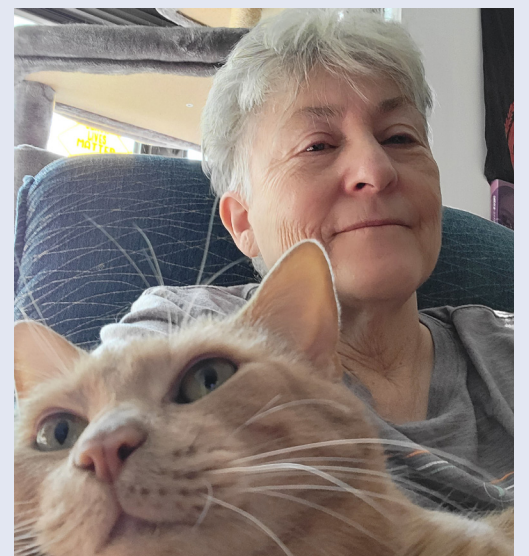
"My grandmother made things happen and I'm a part of her. I'm looking to make a difference and so I will."



RENEE HOLESVOSKY

An individual in community

"Animals and nature sustain me and a good laugh amongst friends."



ANTHONY JAMIESON

A story of survival

"I survived cancer. I survived the streets of Boston. I can hardly believe that I've ended up in this place where I'm safe and I'm comfortable."



DONALD DROURR

A love of musicals, a gift for teaching

"It's funny that I've come full circle. Teaching has always been part of me."



Aging in community

What we have learned over 60 years

Continued from the cover

Continuous innovation

From setting new industry standards for adaptable apartment design to pioneering novel financial models to integrating housing and healthcare, affordable senior housing requires continuous innovation.

At 2Life, you see innovation through the unique partnership to build a Program of All-inclusive Care for the Elderly (PACE) Center on our Brighton residential campus as a response to an emerging and important integration between senior housing and access to high-quality advanced healthcare.

To address the gap in senior housing for the middle market, 2Life created our Opus community in Newton—an innovative new model for community living that's affordable to seniors who fall in the gap



between qualifying for subsidized housing and comfortably affording the high-end-only private market.

In collaboration with Treehouse Foundation, we are building a generationally inclusive community that brings together families adopting children from foster care, young adults aging out of foster care, and older adults eager to be involved with the families and young adults, in a trauma-informed, healing environment.

We are also working with policy-makers to drive awareness and support for new funding models in the senior housing ecosystem.

Commitment to models that will endure

Finally, optimal aging requires sustainable models that address housing, economic, physical, mental, and social needs.

2Life forges relationships with financial institutions, public sector funders, and individual donors, while building emergency reserves to sustain growth in challenging times.

Developing housing that can endure requires managing our portfolio wisely, focusing on operational efficiencies and long-term value. Investing in people and fostering a culture where every employee feels valued is also key to our success.



We've seen progress beyond what was imaginable in 1965 and we are not finished. In addition to sustaining and expanding our work, for every older adult to have the chance to thrive in a caring community, we seek to replicate 2Life's success nationwide. The future of society demands this transformation, and we are proud to lead the way.

Staff and residents thrive together

Seniors cannot live full lives of connection and purpose in dynamic, supportive environments without a staff dedicated to building and nurturing community life. This fundamental truth underscores how our values-centered culture intentionally strives to make 2Life the best place to live for seniors and the best place to work for people who care about seniors.

Our principle of "mutual respect and mutual accountability" drives operating practices that ensure every employee's voice matters. Teamwork flows from a deep individual commitment to our mission. Staff are empowered to make decisions in real time and encouraged to share ideas on how to better serve residents.

Working from a universal assumption of good intent, all employees are given the tools to shape their roles in ways that enhance their personal satisfaction and our collective impact.



From founding mission to lasting impact

Reflections from CEO Amy Schectman



Anniversaries are a chance to celebrate, reflect, and look ahead. 2Life's 60th anniversary is no exception!

Our founders were determined to ensure everyone would have access to safe housing, even as housing prices escalated across the city. We take that imperative to heart and, over the years, have expanded both the number of apartments for older adults in financial need and the support services and opportunities to connect within our communities.

Our approach blends loving-kindness with intentionality. As an organization committed to reflective practice, we constantly study our own experiences, conditions for optimal aging, and the housing market, implementing best practices and sharing them with the field.

Here is what we have learned:

- On average, 2Life residents live more than 8 years longer than the national average—proof that stable housing and a loving community impact longevity and vitality.
- There is a huge gap for older adults who earn too much for subsidized housing but cannot afford market-rate options. This inspired Opus, our first middle-income retirement community, staying true to our founders' imperative to leave no one out.
- 2Life's success lies in attracting and retaining extraordinary staff deeply committed to our mission. We create a supportive environment where employees celebrate each other's achievements and grow professionally.
- Being prepared is crucial. 2Life had built enormous trust and flexible financial resources, enabling us to protect the lives of our 1,600 vulnerable residents during the COVID pandemic. Harvard University even wrote a case study documenting our response.

We will continue to serve and advocate relentlessly for every older adult to have the opportunity to live fully and joyously. As a Jewish organization, we are values-driven and hold ourselves to very high standards. We cast a wide net to serve everyone in need and do so to honor the life experiences, wisdom, and dignity of all of society's elders. In this way, we pass along the meaning of community from generation to generation, and go from strength to strength.

Onward!

Our supportive culture is reflected in the meaningful ways we prioritize the well-being of our staff.

Compensation philosophy based on fairness, equity, and justice.

Our minimum wage has long been far higher than the state's minimum wage and we structure our benefits to recognize that lower-paid professionals pay a lower percentage of health insurance premiums. Everyone has an employer contribution to a retirement account.

Professional development opportunities abound.

We offer training and seminars, as well as learning opportunities that employees can pursue at no cost to them to learn about alternative career paths within the organization. We pay for continuing education

when relevant to professional growth in their roles. Sometimes we just have fun educational sessions to learn together about something irrelevant to our jobs, but fascinating.

Care for the whole person.

We have generous time-off policies for rejuvenation and make some of our resident services available to staff. Everyone can use our well-equipped fitness centers, attend resident classes or concerts, and benefit from our excellent spiritual care department. We supplement that with an Employee Assistance Program that provides counseling, referrals, and access to wellness opportunities. In 2025, we will launch a series of programs to help staff plan for financial goals like college education for their children and retirement for themselves.

When people feel supported, they are able to form a community where both employees and residents can connect, grow, and enjoy a sense of purpose.



Design for life

2Life design principles

Well-designed senior housing emphasizes adaptability and comfort. For 2Life residents, apartments are designed to accommodate changing health or mobility issues so there is no need to find a new, more accommodating home as people age. Similarly, our community and program spaces are designed for flexibility and connection. Getting a wheelchair does not require getting a new address.

The design principles we pioneered are influencing senior living beyond 2Life's developments. They became the basis for the Massachusetts Executive Office of Housing and Livable Communities' requirements for all senior housing projects applying for state affordable housing funds, reflecting a growing recognition that inclusive and adaptable design plays a significant role in enabling people of all ages and abilities to thrive.

Adaptable apartments with thoughtful conveniences

Homes are designed to maximize natural light, long-term usability, and comfort. Thoughtful details support seniors' independence while ensuring each apartment is safe, accessible, and aesthetically pleasing.

All kitchens and bathrooms have plenty of space for a wheelchair or walker and under-sink cabinets are easily adaptable for wheelchair users.

Grab bars that double as towel racks or toilet paper holders add both style and function.



More than multipurpose

Home extends beyond each resident's door to the full campus and community. Our multipurpose rooms are designed to encourage socialization and engagement from crafting to concerts to exercise.



Multipurpose space has enough room to host every resident, and partitions can divide the space for concurrent events.

Acoustical features enhance participation and soft seating allows for longer events or extended use. These spaces foster an environment where seniors feel connected and supported.

Lobbies that welcome and connect

Senior living design should treat lobbies as much more than entryways.

ADA-compliant front desks are designed to make everyone feel welcome from the moment they arrive, including multilingual information on upcoming activities and available onsite services.

