



CONTINUING TO INNOVATE WITH THE GENERATIONS LAB

Avenidas has long been an innovator in the field of aging. Much more than a senior center, Avenidas has designed pioneering programs that have been replicated across the nation. We developed the first Health Insurance Counseling and Advocacy Program, now known as HICAP and offered statewide under the auspices of the State of California. In the 1980's, recognizing that many seniors were cash poor but lived in homes with substantial equity, Avenidas formed a financial services nonprofit to make reverse mortgages, years before the banking industry developed its own product. And we were the first community-based nonprofit to launch a village in the early years of what is now a thriving national movement.

Today Avenidas is a vibrant and innovative community center helping older adults live longer, healthier, more active and more independent lives. And Avenidas is poised to fully participate in the rapidly expanding field of aging innovation. Our participants are aging in place and represent the largest segment of the older adult marketplace. As researchers, product developers and investors respond to the world's changing demographics, there is unprecedented interest in older consumers, retirement, health and wellness, and aging in place. These designers seek meaningful engagement with thoughtful, articulate older adults who are aging in place – exactly the people who make up the vibrant Avenidas community. This community can be a laboratory for testing ideas and products for older adults, and a clearinghouse for information about promising research and new products. And Avenidas can be the place to go to try new gadgets, engage with young entrepreneurs and learn about emerging technologies.

That place will be the Avenidas **Generations Lab**.

Inspiration for the Generations Lab began a few years ago when Avenidas provided focus group participants for global design firm IDEO to inform teams working on a drug applicator device and a public healthcare website. Later, Avenidas Village members served as ethnographic study subjects with the Palo Alto Medical Foundation to guide development of an online engagement and support community. More recently, Avenidas staff has provided expertise to Stanford Business School entrepreneur students, and Avenidas participants have been subject matter experts for a Fortune 100 company, several start-ups and Stanford Design School students in their early testing of products for the older adult market.

This collaborative work will augment the activities of Avenidas Computer Learning Center. One of the first computer labs for seniors in the country, the CLC has offered countless computer classes for over twenty years. In its next phase, it will introduce seniors in Silicon Valley to the wide range of newer digital technologies – smart phones, tablets, wearables, e-readers, even 3D printers and robots – that can help them live richer, more independent lives.

The idea seems so obvious to us now. Our large community encompasses people with wide-ranging life experiences and interests who welcome opportunities for purposeful engagement that utilize their skills and opinions. We have a culture that encourages trail-blazers and we are located in Silicon Valley, near Stanford University, major medical centers and a growing constellation of corporate innovation centers.

The Avenidas Generations Lab. An idea whose time has come.