

Kisco Senior Living

This national senior care company wants to lead the industry with innovative programs of exceptional quality.

Living Well

Geriatrics is quickly becoming one of the biggest growth sectors in healthcare today, and not only because the number Americans aged 65 and older will double in the next 10 years. People are reassessing what senior care is and what it should be, and companies like Kisco Senior Living are leading the way.

“Our driving focus is one question: if my parents were, or I was, to live in a retirement community, what would I want

it to be like?” said Andy Kohlberg, president of the California-based company.

Kisco began in 1990 when Kohlberg bought his first senior living community. Today, it is still a family-owned company with locations in California, Nevada, North Carolina, Virginia, and



Andy Kohlberg,
president and founder

www.kiscoseniorliving.com
HQ Carlsbad, Calif.
Employees 1,400
Locations 18



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Florida. Kohlberg said, however, that growth comes second; people come first.

“We treat people with kindness and respect; we work to create environments that are inviting to residents, their families, and friends. We aren’t aiming to be the biggest. We are aiming to be the best,” he said.

Community of care

He explained that he and his team aim to define for the senior care industry what it means to live well, citing the company’s vision statement: to create communities where people share passions, live in balance, and leave a legacy. Kisco specializes in full-service senior living communities ranging





from independent apartments and assisted living facilities and continuing care retirement communities (CCRCs).

The idea behind CCRCs is to create a vibrant community with many levels of care. Instead of keeping residents with different levels of care far apart from each other, they are integrated and residents in all levels have access to a variety of programs and amenities.

“These are mixed-use properties that keep seniors involved in a variety of dynamic programs instead of isolated until they feel useless and unvalued,” Kohlberg said.

Leihano will be an active adult and continuing care community on the island of Oahu, Hawaii, located next to the Kapolei Regional Park. It is a joint project of Brookfield Homes Hawaii and Kisco, and construction is slated to begin next year. Kohlberg said they decided to wait for more favorable market conditions to start such a major undertaking.

It will include 344 independent-living condominiums, 240 independent apartments, 52 age-restricted garden homes, 78 assisted living apartments, and 70 private and semi-private skilled nursing units. The development also includes a 20,000-square-foot clubhouse and fitness room, four dining

venues, and multiple pools. A tree-and-shoplined “Main Street” will be one of the most important features because it will connect the seniors to the planned town center of Kapolei, which will have its own shopping center, retail areas, park, office towers, residential area, courthouse, and juvenile rehabilitation center.

“The goal is to expose the seniors in our community to the typical daily life of a wide cross section of people while providing whatever level of service and care they require,” Kohlberg said. “We aren’t providing a sterile environment where people wait to die but an exciting place to live the next phase of their life.”

Leading the pack

Living well doesn’t require a huge mixed-use development project however; every Kisco community across the country offers a holistic wellness program. They employ full-time wellness directors who coordinate the company’s proprietary and award-winning Art of Living Well programs.

The program, Kohlberg explained, aims to strengthen and enhance the mind, body, and spirit through the primary aspects of a healthy lifestyle: emotional, intellectual, physical, social, spiritual, and vocational. The program is much more



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than just a fitness room in every facility; it includes lifelong learning programs, spirituality and meditation, and intergenerational activities.

For this program, the International Council on Active Aging recognized Kisco as the 2005 Industry Innovator of the Year. "We look at wellness as a part of everything we do; it's not supplemental to the care component but integral to it," said Kohlberg.

Kisco has earned a number of other awards such as the 2005 Interactive Council of Active Aging Industry Innovator award and the California Awards for Performance Excellence (CAPE) award in 2007 and 2008.

The CAPE program employs the principles of the Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Program to evaluate business performance over the course of 1000 hours of review and on-site visits in leadership, strategic planning, customer and market focus, measurement and knowledge management, human resources, process management, and business results.

Kohlberg said that although it's gratifying to be recognized for the hard work, the real reward comes in providing a model of senior living that will help thousands of people. "We're looking into the future, trying to determine what the next generation is going to want and need in terms of living environments. It's a challenge every day, but it's rewarding," he concluded. +

—Meghan Flynn



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