



Aegis Gardens in Newcastle will be the first assisted-living community in the Northwest designed for Chinese-Americans. The project is under construction. Image courtesy of Ankrom Moisan Architects



The 82-unit First and Vine Apartments in Seattle is one of several properties for low-income seniors managed by Bellwether Housing. Photo by Stephanie Guerrero

In-house 'advocates' help seniors thrive in low-income housing

■ A Bellwether Housing program connects seniors with services like food banks and health care to improve their long-term housing stability and reduce their risk of homelessness.

By **SUE SELMAN**
Bellwether Housing

Seattle is facing one of its biggest crises in the city's history: affordability. Hardly a day goes by without some discussion about what can be done to make housing — and, therefore, living — more affordable for everyday residents.

The dynamics behind the rising costs of housing are complex, for sure, but the crisis seems to be rooted in a thriving economy that spurs strong job growth and greater demand for housing near jobs, schools, retail and other services. Seattle's growing reputation for its overall quality of life, mild weather and natural scenic beauty can't be discounted, either, given the growing number of people moving to this area from places all around the world.

No matter the cause, our local housing crisis doesn't seem to be getting any better. In fact, a recent report from the Northwest Multiple Listing Service has median-home prices inching near \$700,000 in the city, among the highest in the country.

Perhaps more importantly, apartments aren't faring well, either. Earlier this month, Zillow reported that multifamily rents are rising faster in Seattle than any other metro area in the U.S. The situation has become so dire that the mayor has created the Housing Affordability and Livability Agenda, or HALA, to help address the housing affordability crisis we're facing in the city.

While much of the affordability discussion has centered around workers and families, it's the senior demographic that can sometimes be forgotten. Now, more than ever, elders in Seattle are struggling to make ends meet for basic life needs, including safe, affordable housing. And with little to no opportunity to increase their annual income, seniors aren't readily helped by strong economic growth.

The number of seniors in this area is only increasing, too. According to Seattle-King County Public Health, in just the past decade alone the average life expectancy here climbed approximately four years — to nearly 78 years of age.

Local organizations like Bellwether Housing are working to fill the gap. We're collaborating with the city, local advocacy groups and other community partners to help provide affordable housing, among many other critical services, for seniors at or below the poverty line.

For more than 36 years, Bellwether, the largest nonprofit affordable housing provider in King County, has created housing affordability so that people of all incomes, ages and communities can thrive. Bellwether currently houses 3,200 low-income individuals each year throughout Seattle. We strive to be a force against rising income inequality, unequal access to opportunity and geographic class segmentation — forces that undermine the economic, social, environmental and physical health of our communities.

Housing is not enough

Bellwether manages a portfolio of 30 properties throughout Seattle, including three Housing and Urban Development Section 8 properties for seniors and people living with disabilities. These properties — First and Vine and



A Bellwether service coordinator helped 74-year-old resident Tony Foz navigate the process for gaining U.S. citizenship. Photo courtesy of Bellwether Housing

Security House apartments in Belltown, and Meridian Manor in Northgate — have been critical in our ability to house some 500 residents.

While affordable housing is important to low-income tenants, including seniors, conquering other risk factors can have a cumulative effect on enhancing a resident's life prospects. When immediate needs are addressed, residents are less likely to fall behind on rent or be evicted. Additionally, when residents are stable and healthy, they are able to improve their surrounding community by taking part in community activities and by contributing to the economic life of the neighborhood.

One of the ways we've added value to our affordable-housing model for seniors is Bellwether's resident services coordination program.

Launched in 2011, the program is designed to help low-income tenants find and access supportive services and community

See **ADVOCATES** — page 5

Here's what baby boomers will do to senior housing industry

■ The "me" generation wants to make their own choices about their health, wellness, mobility and community. More developers are catering to their diverse needs.

By **JP EMERY and JEREMY SOUTHERLAND**
Ankrom Moisan Architects

As 76 million U.S. baby boomers — more than half of whom are already 65 or older — enter retirement, the senior housing market is responding with a shift in product offerings to accommodate this highly diverse generation. Aside from demographics, the many wants and needs of boomers are driving senior housing providers to find unique, flexible solutions.

Through technology and access to information and resources, baby boomers are the first generation to truly participate in their own health care. They are aware of research regarding the negative health impacts that arise from isolation, and understand the importance of social wellness and community building as they age.

Whether designing new construction or repositioning exist-



Mirabella Seattle is located in South Lake Union, placing the city's urban attractions within easy reach of residents. Photo courtesy of Ankrom Moisan Architects

ing campuses, common themes for attracting the boomers are always focused around choice.

Quality-of-life concerns

Modern medicine has managed to extend duration of life, but quality of life is determined by someone's day-to-day infrastructure. Anxiety and depression, symptomatic of isolation, are some of the fastest-rising epidemics in our aging population. Seniors' use of technology to communicate with family is increasing, but with it may come an isolation resulting from the lack of face-to-face conversation. This is recognized within the industry, and trends are pushing toward social interaction as a critical component of a solid wellness program.

While it might seem counterintuitive, wine bars and demonstration kitchens are being added to the list of wellness amenities in today's senior communities.

Another result of increased life expectancy is that senior housing

is no longer filled with retirees. Many boomers are pursuing new careers, volunteer opportunities, positions in local governments and significant roles in community programs.

The common thread: most of these ventures will occur outside the walls wherever they live. Community connections, proximity to these opportunities, and access to transit or transportation resources are taking on a higher priority. Location is everything, and this retiring population has access to the geographic information they need to make informed choices about where they want to spend their time and resources.

Ankrom Moisan is working closely with clients to incorporate design and programming solutions that pair a strong focus on social interaction and community engagement with flexible options for care. As teams approach the design of new senior housing projects, they

See **BOOMERS** — page 5



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Senior housing that makes you feel like you're in a boutique hotel

■ *New projects in Tacoma and elsewhere are being designed with attractive public spaces that give residents and their families welcoming places to gather.*

By **JERRY McDEVITT**
CGLO

I've been an architect designing senior housing for 20 years, but I developed a fresh perspective during the six years I spent helping my mother move several times as her care needs increased.



McDevitt

My sister and I visited many senior living facilities to find a good fit. Often, we made a quick judgment about whether or not to stay for the tour by watching residents and caregivers interact and trusting our gut. Was this truly a community or simply a place to warehouse people?

Many times, we left without taking the tour.

Those experiences only strengthened my focus and passion to create better options; to create thriving community through a collaborative, human-centered design approach. I've worked with developers, operators and residents



A new senior housing project on Thea Foss Waterway in Tacoma will have a restaurant and lounges where families can cook and watch the big game.

Image courtesy of CGLO

to build innovative spaces for seniors in places as varied as Utah, California, Washington and British Columbia.

Experiences, not structures

At our firm, we have a new vision for senior living centered on creating community. We

believe design stimulates community by creating spaces inside and outside that provide opportunities day after day for new

experiences and shared memories that are forever for seniors, their family, and friends.

What we design isn't senior housing. It's cool, desirable, safe housing that seniors live in.

Our design focuses on integrating a collection of experiences that resonate contextually, cultur-

ally, therapeutically and personally with the residents. By focusing on meaningful experiences rather than structures, corridors and rooms, we are able to realize new and appropriate opportuni-

See **BOUTIQUE** — page 5



Meeting areas in this retirement community in South Jordan, Utah, get used by residents, their families and the wider community.

Photo by Derek Reeves

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Two senior communities, 1,370 miles apart, reflect their distinct settings

■ *Issaquah's Timber Woods and Minnesota's Trillium Ridge differ in style but draw inspiration from nature to create community and draw residents outdoors.*

By **MIKE MILLER**
Rice Fergus Miller

Good senior housing and assisted living offer residents the opportunity to live in dignity and grace in a community setting.



Miller

Two retirement communities — Trillium Woods outside Minneapolis and Timber Ridge at Talus in Issaquah — do just that. They have the same program and the same operator (Life Care Services of Des Moines, Iowa), but each offers a unique approach and a different location-specific architectural interpretation.

Trillium Woods

Trillium Woods is a master-planned continuing care retirement community in Plymouth, Minn. At the heart of the project is a focus on efficiency and comfort for residents, and amenities that contribute to an energetic lifestyle.

The community functions as a village where residents have access to many life-enhancing opportunities. There's a fitness center with personalized wellness plans, a rehabilitation center, a library, a game room, restaurant and cafe, a cocktail lounge, spa, barbershop and salon, chapel, and an auditorium for large events and gatherings.

Phase one is complete, and at full build-out, the community will offer 314 independent senior apartments, 28 two-family homes, and 90 assisted living/skilled nursing and memory care suites.

The architectural context within which Trillium Woods sits is the prairie: rolling hills separated by forests and lakes. These features provide the inspiration for the architecture, creating the canvas from which a new community is created.

The 40-acre site sits on top of a slight rise in the landscape where the building grows out of the ground, a nod to the "back to nature" movement highlighting the healthful benefits of the outdoors.

The first impression is the low sweeping lines of the entry. Rather than entering the building directly on axis, one is dropped off under cover then taken along the building facade to the lobby entry, where one sees through the building to a forested hill beyond. All of the spaces in the building

are light-filled, and focused on the territorial views.

Daylight and views, coupled with the use of indigenous materials, create a memorable experience for residents and visitors alike.

Offering "something different"

Our design team worked with prospective residents and community members in design focus groups. These meetings were instrumental in guiding the project design concept.

Prospective residents were seeking "something different" for their retirement setting. They wanted a modern community designed in a regional architectural vernacular that would fit the land.

The result of these meetings led the design team to develop "a modern interpretation of Prairie Style architecture" that emphasizes home, hearth, light and sustainability.

Trillium Woods was designed to invigorate those who live there, to create opportunities for vigorous community building and activity. Once in the lobby you are presented with options to socialize, including a grand stair and large fireplace. Outside are sun-filled porches, landscaped terraces and a large fire pit.

Similarly, the interior spaces flow together and are open to each other, offering many chances to socialize. The circulation is purposefully arranged to make people interact. A great example of this is the sitting area at the fitness center entry, a gracious circle in the main corridor affords residents a chance to interact before and after working out, or just the opportunity for spontaneous interaction.

As a continuing care retirement community, we know many of the residents who chose to live at Trillium Woods will age in place. They will create community, make friends, possibly fall in love again. The overriding objective of this community is for the built environment to foster a gathering of people coming together to contribute to the growth of others.

Timber Ridge

Perched on a hilltop in Issaquah, Timber Ridge is a master-planned continuing care retirement community.

Its design draws on natural amenities of the site and environmental elements of its Pacific Northwest setting: wood, plant, stone, water and filtered sunlight.



The prairie-style architecture at Trillium Woods offers a modern look for residents who wants something different.

Photo by Troy Thies Photography

Its first phase opened in 2008 and includes 184 independent-living apartments, 37 skilled nursing beds, a dining room, and a spa and wellness center. A second phase, to be complete late 2016, will add more independent-living apartments as well as assisted living and memory care. Amenities will include an auditorium, swimming and exercise pool, and expanded exercise/fitness facility.

Many areas of Timber Ridge provide residents a unique environment to socialize. The library's fireplace and sitting area is where residents enjoy their morning coffee with the newspaper. The lounge area offers residents a gathering place before and after dinner.

The Cascade dining room is a space in which staff, residents and visitors find great enjoyment. The terrace area provides outdoor dining with beautiful vistas. It is not uncommon to find residents soaking up the sun, enjoying a good book or conversation in these venues.

Set amongst 100 miles of nature trails, residents are invited to get out and enjoy the environment. In the warmer months, a walking group meets and explores the surrounding hills, hiking and enjoying the scenery. The winter months promote cross-country skiing, snowshoeing and fireside relaxation.

Outdoor amenities at Timber Ridge include a putting green, croquet lawn, bocce court, and gardens where residents can grow their own vegetables. The east side of the common area has a large active terrace at the clubhouse and health center levels.

Even though the site slopes over 40 feet from west to east, accessible site access was achieved at



Timber Ridge has outdoor spaces where residents can gather in comfort.

Photo by Doug Scott Photography

multiple locations for both staff and residents.

The large and abundant windows provide a lot of natural light and maximize views, which in turn brightens people's spirits during the Pacific Northwest's rainy season. Wide, welcoming halls and dining rooms allow for great views and are also extremely accessible.

Other features include mailrooms in which the mailboxes are not too high, resident apartment doors that offer both swipe cards and hard keys, and parking that accounts for disabilities. All areas are under one roof, lighting is good and even, and flooring

materials are non-slip and easy to walk on.

Green strategies

LEED strategies were implemented in both communities. While some may cost more in one area, they reduce cost in another.

For example, high-efficiency skin such as windows and insulation reduced mechanical load on the building. Sourcing locally reduced shipping costs, and local artists were used for signage and tile work. Simplicity in detailing was key to keeping costs down while resulting in a beautiful, soft final result. Water- and energy-saving

strategies resulted in significant savings for both. Rapidly renewable and local materials were used throughout.

Both communities, in the Pacific Northwest and the Midwest, offer seniors an opportunity for a high quality of life. The focus on the enhancement of resident centering and the intentional continuous interaction of space and people will keep the communities vibrant.

Mike Miller is a senior principal at Rice Fergus Miller. He has been active in the design of senior living and healthcare facilities nationwide for the past 35 years.

Homebuilder focuses on wellness to attract active seniors

■ *Shea Homes' Trilogy at Tehaleh has a 14,000-square-foot clubhouse that offers its residents a place to meet, exercise and play.*

By **MARK GRAY**
Shea Homes

Shea Homes established a new division in 1999 to create resort communities geared to the baby boom generation. Baby boomers helped change their world, and we knew they would demand a new breed of community as they become empty nesters and retirees. Our Trilogy Active Lifestyle Communities provide a lifestyle that is centered on exploration, wellness and connection.



Gray

Shea Homes' Trilogy brand is focused on meeting the needs of boomers and those who have the desire and means to enjoy an exceptional lifestyle. Our typical homeowners are empty-nest baby boomers age 50 to 69 — part of a generation that values positive change and living life on its own terms.

With parenting responsibilities and careers largely behind them, Trilogy homeowners recognize that this is a time to focus on enhancing their own lives.

Trilogy at Tehaleh, located within the 4,200-acre master-planned community of Tehaleh near Bonney Lake, offers resort-style living in a private setting. This new community features three home collections and 10 floor

plans ranging in size from 1,454 to 2,445 square feet.

Nestled in the shadow of Mount Rainier, Trilogy at Tehaleh offers natural beauty and an abundance of recreational opportunities. Trilogy at Tehaleh's location takes advantage of its natural surroundings by offering more than 1,000 acres of parks and open space as well as 10 miles of community trails that connect to Mount Rainier National Park's 300-mile regional trail system.

A choice of floor plans

We took a different approach in the design of Trilogy at Tehaleh. From the inside and out, our goal was to create a truly unique environment.

It starts with a core belief that the source of vibrant living is health. As a result, we focus our energy on building homes that also build community.

We want to ensure that life at Trilogy at Tehaleh is about connecting — as much with the people you love and the new passions you discover as with the new neighbors who share in this rejuvenating time of life.

In recent years, Shea Homes has introduced a new approach to home design and homebuilding with our "Shea3D" plans. This patent-pending approach to building homes provides buyers with a decision that they've never had before — the opportunity to design their floor plan to match their lifestyle. The level of personalization Shea3D offers is spe-



The clubhouse at Trilogy at Tehaleh has 6,000 square feet of covered outdoor patio space.

Photo courtesy of Shea Homes

cifically geared to today's boomer homebuyers that are as distinct as the options available.

The Shea3D plans are based on an open-space concept that enable homebuyers to participate in the design of the most vital part of their new home — the central activity core where we spend most of our time. This flexibility and customization in one's future home presents an entirely new purchase experience. Traditionally, homebuyers may have the option of choosing a fourth bedroom or an open loft, a third garage space or a home office, or an expansive master suite or an additional bathroom.

Shea3D allows customers to choose from three unique main living spaces — entertainment-centric, kitchen-centric, or

outdoor-centric — empowering customers to select the one that best fits their lifestyle. Whether the buyer is looking for a home that offers an expansive living area for entertaining, comes equipped with a kitchen for the gourmet chef, or promotes a complete indoor-outdoor living experience, Shea3D homes can be tailored to their specific needs.

Meet the "Zoomers"

Trilogy at Tehaleh offers residents the opportunity to maintain wellness and fitness as part of a healthy and enriched life. Created as the centerpiece of the community, the 14,000-square-foot Seven Summits Lodge is an amenity-rich lodge that makes wellness a fun and integral part

of homeowners' lives.

The members-only Seven Summits Lodge includes an additional 6,000 square feet of outdoor covered patio space, with areas dedicated to relaxation, fitness, dining, a pool, games, outdoor recreation and more. We envisioned the lodge as a place where lives are enriched, neighbors become personal friends, established relationships are rediscovered, and personal interests are pursued in a welcoming environment.

Recent studies have found that nearly 80 percent of boomers surveyed expressed a desire to stay physically active, and two-thirds said they already prioritize their physical fitness. At the same time, three out of every five boomers are concerned about

their health. These trends have become so prevalent that a new term has been coined to describe these active adults: Zoomers.

With health, wellness and exploration a primary focus for these Zoomers, Shea Homes relies on extensive consumer research to understand these trends and build communities that offer the amenities necessary for our resident to pursue their goals. Trilogy at Tehaleh is specifically intended for those who want to enrich their lives, nourish their souls, feel great and have fun.

Mark Gray is area president for Shea Homes, America's largest privately owned homebuilder with communities in Arizona, California, Florida, Nevada, North Carolina, Virginia and Washington.

Boomers

Continued from page 2

work to minimize the interruption of the social wellness developed over a resident's time of residence in the facility, offering options of increased care with minimal disruption to the resident's place in the community.

Narrower target groups

Because the boomer generation is so diverse, many senior housing developers are targeting specific groups to provide for a narrower set of wants and needs.

Addressing the desire to age in place, Ankrom Moisan is currently designing a community for seniors with strong, shared cultural experiences. This facility will allow residents to remain connected to one another, families, and their established neighborhood, while strengthening connections to their heritage.

Unique spaces — including a mahjong room, amphitheater and tea rooms — differentiate the facility and directly appeal to the resident base. The design also incorporates shared spaces with opportunities for day care, community gatherings, art events, and other uses that encourage residents to interact and participate within the larger community.

Aging in place

To further limit the amount of transition faced by seniors as their health care needs change, Ankrom Moisan is a proponent for flexible living units within senior communities.

This new business model utilizes portable licensing to allow for units to transition from independent living to assisted living. In order to provide residents with multiple options upon move-in, Ankrom Moisan designs unit sizes that are highly varied. Residents may start in a large unit with a full kitchen and bedroom, but can transition to a small studio unit to suit evolving needs and preferences.

While patient care remains a pertinent requirement for any successful senior housing project, flexibility and adaptability are crucial within today's senior care models. Like their approach to lifestyle and amenities, boomers demand choice and the ability to influence the delivery of their care.

Increased acuity capabilities in assisted living and dedicated memory care households keep residents on site and in close proximity to the relationships they have established. Portable licensing and "acuity-flexing" from independent living to assisted living makes aging in place a reality.

Amenity spaces can also be designed to remain accessible to those with greater care needs, based on what is most comfortable for the resident. In a high-rise tower, this might include the main dining area staying open for residents with assisted-living licenses, but also providing a dining facility designed to accommodate their specific care needs.

Part of the community

Today's senior communities are responding directly to the unique opportunities that arise from the site's location, and may incorporate cooperative programming with art museums, institutions of higher learning and community groups.

Meanwhile, the public connections to these senior living communities are being strengthened with retail venues inside lobby spaces. Flexibility in lounge spaces and meeting rooms allows for a variety of functions, the content of which will be shaped by the population of active and involved residents. All of these changes work to promote impromptu intergenerational and multicultural interactions.

The community at large — those not typically associated with senior housing — is taking notice of the changing trends as well, and is seeking to further integrate with retiring boomers.

Arizona State University is at the forefront of this movement, opening a retirement community on their campus. Partnering with Pacific Retirement Services and Ankrom Moisan, the university is in the beginning stages of planning. Their vision for the community includes easy access to classes, the ASU library, and a Mayo Clinic within the complex.

Such intergenerational unification is mutually beneficial, aiding the improvement of residents' social wellness by contributing to and interacting with a broader community.

The successful senior housing models of the future will find a way to provide opportunities for meaningful interactions and promote a sense of purpose not only for their residents, but also for the surrounding communities.

JP Emery, senior associate, joined Ankrom Moisan Architects in 2006. JP has more than 13 years of experience in architecture and design, specializing in senior communities and affordable housing. Jeremy Southerland brings 18 years of experience to Ankrom Moisan Architects as a project manager. Throughout his career he has been a market leader in senior living and health care design.

Boutique

Continued from page 3

ties that define a community's unique spirit and identity.

Close collaboration with clients is an essential part of our design process. Each time we dive into a project, we look for the essence — the story — that drives design and fulfills our shared vision.

We design our projects to make you feel like you're entering a boutique hotel. They have interesting and attractive exterior features with elegant finishes and details. They are easy to navigate on the inside with pleasing public spaces. We create the sense of a welcoming home with a community of care, connection and individual integrity.

The Patrician

At The Patrician, a renovation of a community in La Jolla, California, we immersed ourselves in the community, talking with residents, staff members, and the owner, sampling their meals, and observing their activities to understand the culture and the key needs of the community.

We created two tranquil courtyards: one with cafe tables for outdoor dining, and a highly used poolside garden.

Residents now enter into a bright lobby with a fireplace where a chorus group meets regularly to sing around a piano played by a resident.

A more open bistro with flexible hours has become a gathering place for parties and extended family meals. It hosts a weekly happy hour, heavily attended by residents and their adult children. Design creates community.

Sagewood at Daybreak

On a 6-acre site at Sagewood at Daybreak in South Jordan, Utah, we created neighborhoods spanning four options — from independent living to households for residents needing more personal care — connected by planted courtyards and common areas.

Since the project was completed, the indoor pool, spa, dining room, salon and the shared meeting house have been used not only by residents, but by their families and the greater Daybreak community. A senior neighbor drops by to use the pool. A church group gathers in the shared meeting room.

That's just what we wanted: multiple generations from within and without Sagewood coming together. Community.

I was there one day when an extended family gathered in the family living room, talking and laughing while they were waiting for the rest of the crew to arrive. Young children were running

around, even borrowing grandma's walker. It wasn't the kind of scene you'd expect at a typical senior home. But it was exactly the kind of joyous, impromptu community we create with our designs.

Thea Foss Waterway

At Thea Foss Waterway senior living in Tacoma we've designed a seven-story, urban, waterfront project.

The building, expected to be completed in 2019, features a waterfront restaurant that will be open to the public as well as a public esplanade along the Foss Waterway. There will be lounges where a family of 20 can have a Thanksgiving dinner or gather to cook together and watch the big game on a 70-inch television. There will be a large common area, penthouse units, a Sky-Lounge and Bistro Cafe and a rooftop garden.

Seniors today expect independence, choice and amenities like fine dining offered on flexible hours, pools, spas and pleasant outdoor spaces. They don't want to be isolated behind walls. They want to be part of a vibrant and diverse community.

I've learned over many years that the subtle nuances of designing senior living involves more than hospitality and housing skills. They include the complex interplay of the client's preferences and the needs of the residents. No one building fits all. Every client and every project is different.

While visiting communities looking for the right spot for my mother, I often observed poorly designed places and staff inefficiencies that led to unhappy residents. That's a vision of senior housing past.

Our vision is of senior living future. It's for active, engaged people who want to be part of a community. Design stimulates that community. Design creates thriving places where people go to live, places where they create and share new, energizing experiences.

Successful projects require not only deep design and technical expertise, but also an understanding of human needs and interests. They demand seeing and doing things in a new ways.

Jerry McDevitt is a principal at GGLO, an integrated design firm committed to creating thriving communities across all of their markets including senior living, housing, mixed-use development, hospitality and campus environment.

Advocates

Continued from page 2

assets that foster positive outcomes, support long-term housing stability and reduce the risk of homelessness. While we don't provide direct services, Bellwether is committed to helping residents be as stable and successful as possible in their affordable apartments by working with social-service partners and our own property management staff — a cooperation that can be critical to underserved seniors.

Overcoming barriers

Our resident service coordinators wear a variety of hats. On any given day, they act as advocates, liaisons, mediators, language interpreter and concierges. Typical tasks include clarifying Social Security Supplemental Income benefits; supporting residents who are grieving the loss of a spouse; helping to identify potential scam letters; and connecting residents with resources like food and clothing banks, health care, employment services and counseling.

Sometimes, the needs of seniors are more specialized. Many of our residents face language- and cultural-based obstacles that range well beyond the typical needs of low-income residents. To that end, there are at least nine foreign languages spoken by residents across our apartment portfolio. And, in Bellwether's HUD Section 8 apartment buildings, some 30 percent of our residents have limited English proficiency.

For tenants like Tony Foz, access to translators and other

service providers has been a key to successful affordable living. Foz, a Meridian Manor resident, is a 74-year-old man who years ago immigrated to Seattle from the Philippines. Foz had always dreamed of gaining his citizenship, but could never afford the \$680 fee, much less navigate the complicated naturalization process.

In 2014, our resident service coordinator aligned Foz with citizenship classes through Asian Counseling and Referral Services, and arranged for a tutor to come and educate him and other residents about written and oral requirements. In 2014, Foz fulfilled his lifelong dream of becoming a U.S. citizen.

Seattle's affordability crisis is impacting hundreds of thousands of residents, including countless seniors with limited income, and language and other cultural barriers that make life here a daily challenge. With nonprofits like Bellwether, working with city of Seattle leaders and community-based service providers, we are helping low-income elders to live happy, healthy and productive lives and realize a future they once thought impossible.

Sue Selman is the director of property management at Bellwether Housing, a Seattle-based nonprofit that serves low-income working people, their families and independent seniors in Washington state through the development and management of affordable apartments.

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