



# Environments for health and wellness

*Discovery, ideas and solutions*

International Council on Active Aging

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# “Environment” is...

- Indoor and outdoor spaces, the people within those spaces, and the services and activities available to them.
- The environment is everything that surrounds us, bringing into play all the dimensions of wellness: physical, spiritual, emotional, intellectual, social and vocational.

# What can you apply to your “city”?

Every neighborhood, planned community, community center, rural area, town and village can be thought of as a “city.”

What is your “city” like today? What can it be tomorrow?  
Who are your people today? Who could they be tomorrow?



# Discovery

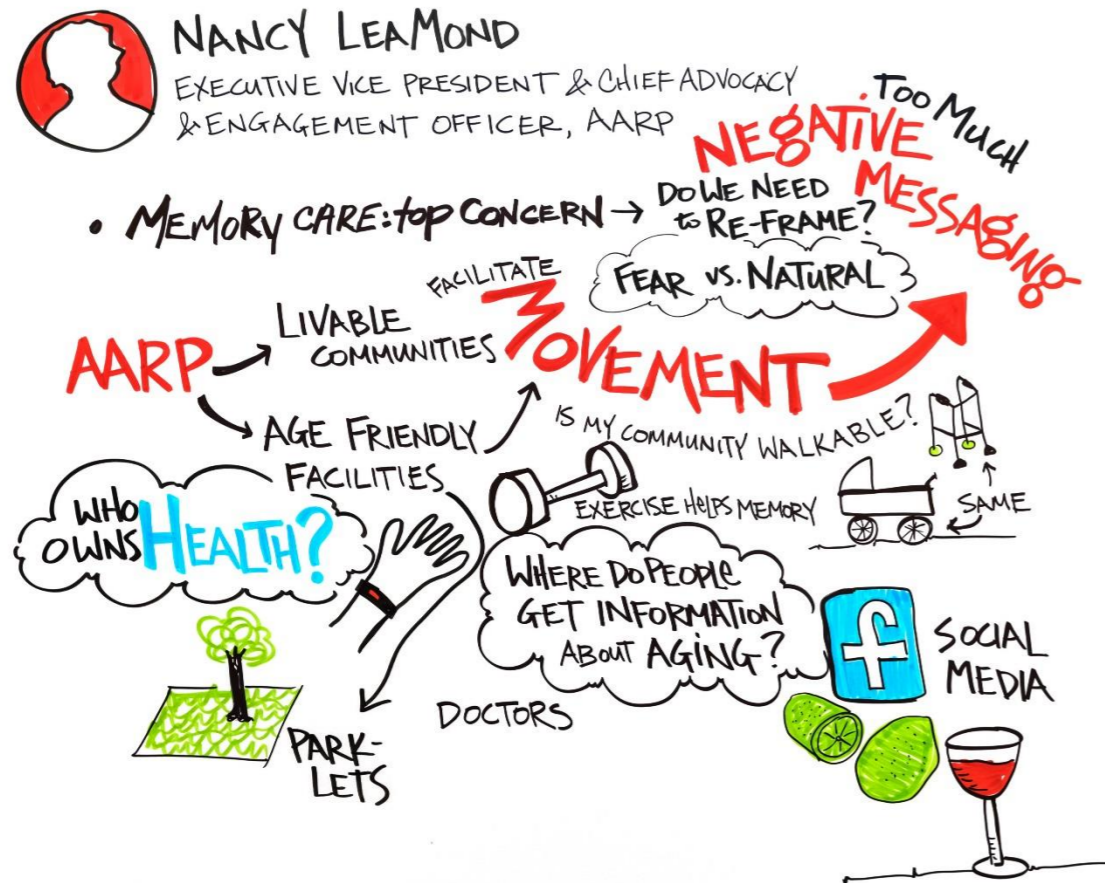


# Wellness dimensions frame environment



Emotional	managing and directing feelings; coping with challenges and behaving in trustworthy and respectful ways
Environmental	ways to use the environment for wellness, as well as eco-friendly and age-friendly products, services and designs
Intellectual, cognitive	engaging in creative pursuits and intellectually stimulating activities; problem solving and reasoning
Physical	choosing lifestyle habits that maintain or improve health and functional ability
Professional, vocational	maintaining or improving skills, abilities and attitudes that help self or others stay productive and satisfied
Social	interacting with others for mutual benefit, awareness of the larger community and participation within it
Spiritual	living with a meaning/purpose in life; exploring beliefs and values that create personal peace and understanding

# People desire age-friendly environments



- Cost of healthcare is top of mind for all economic levels. How can livable communities help?
- Fix the sidewalks, and make the outdoors safe. Walking is huge.
- Wearable technology is a big trend, but barrier is adoption. Technology can increase isolation.

# Great cities & towns have a wellness model

**VIVIAN VASALLO**  
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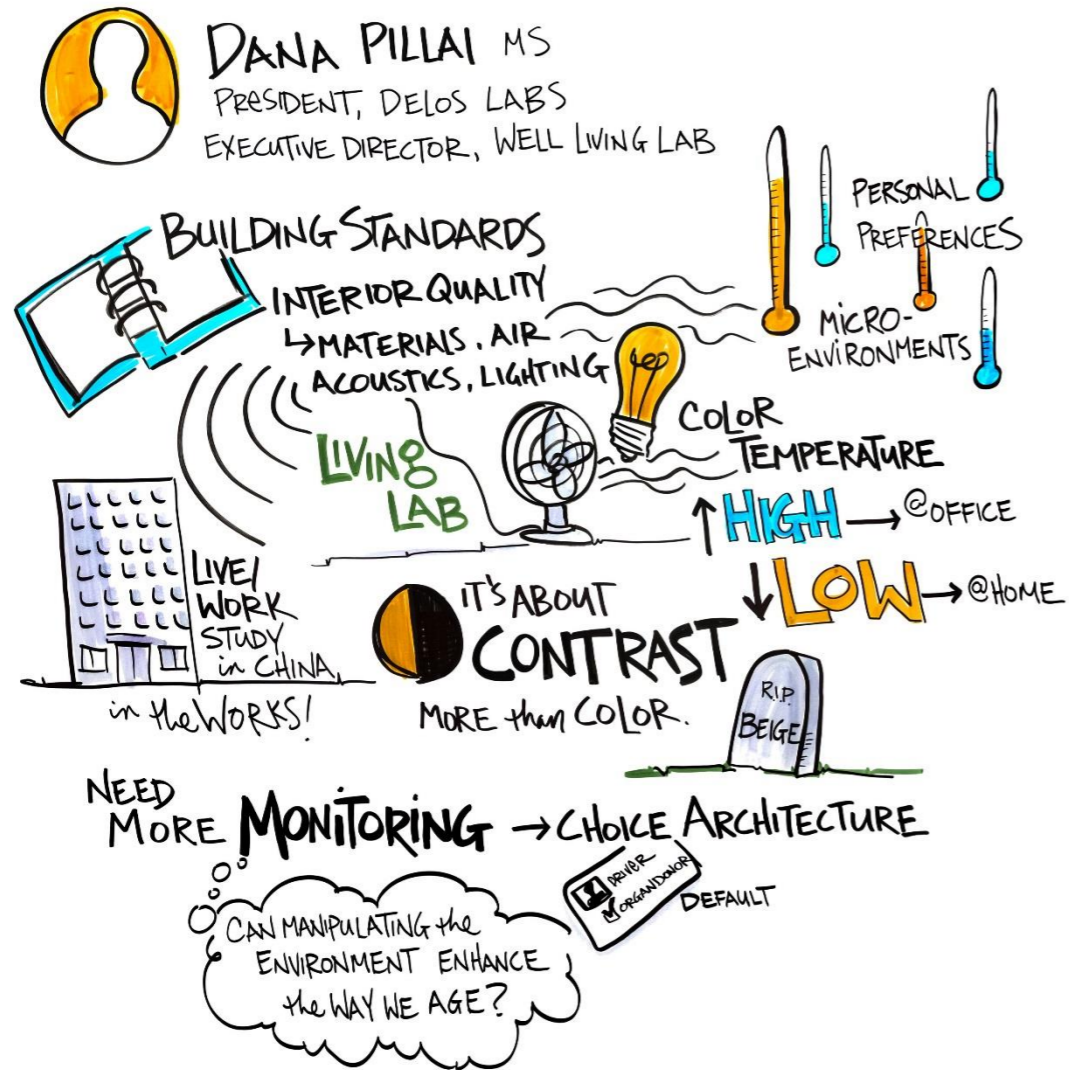
# Rethink and repurpose the built environment



- Explore housing options: very small, green house, social spaces, NORCs, single level, co-housing.
- Design spaces to touch the spirit: art space, handyman space.
- Focus on social connections with younger-older housing, affinity groups, connected spaces.



# Healthy buildings for healthy people

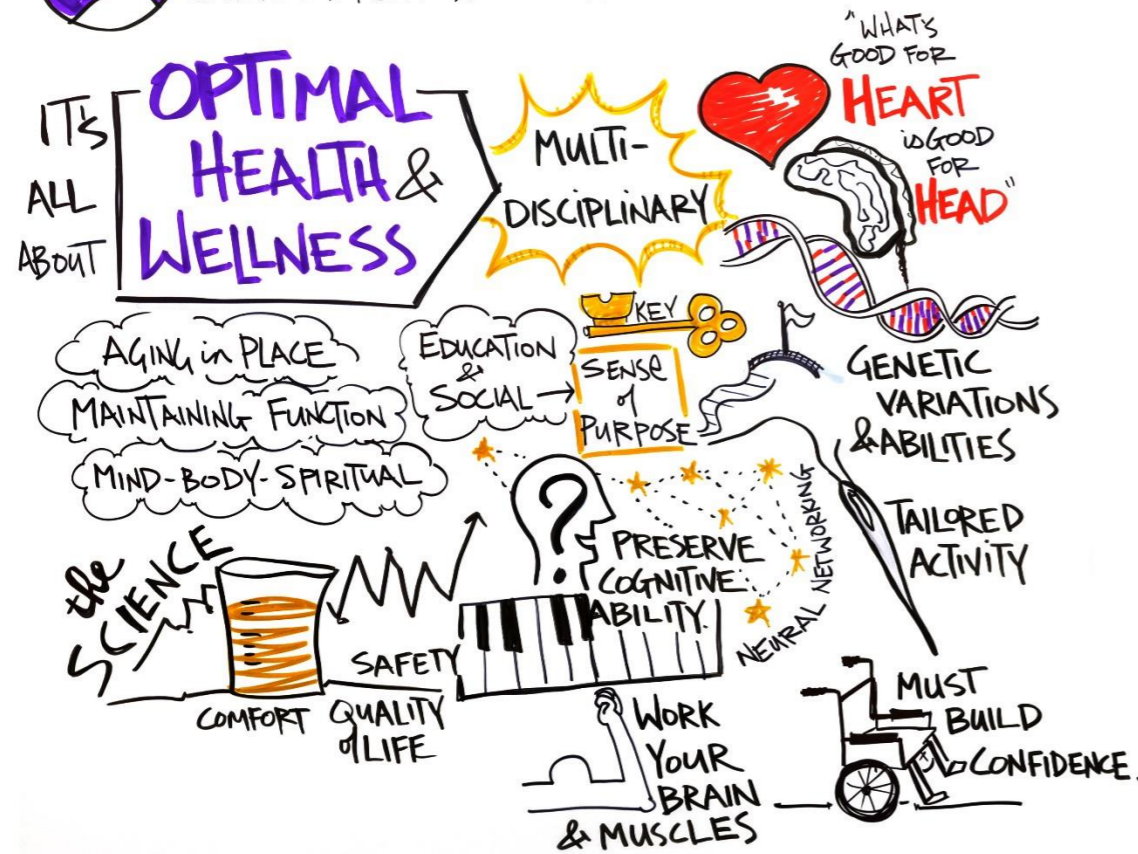


- As people age their senses decline, so variation in environments gives back vibrancy to life.
- Plan micro-environments: quiet or active, spaces for reflection or conversation.
- Most important: daylight, access to nature, common spaces for socialization.

# Wellness is mind - body - spirit

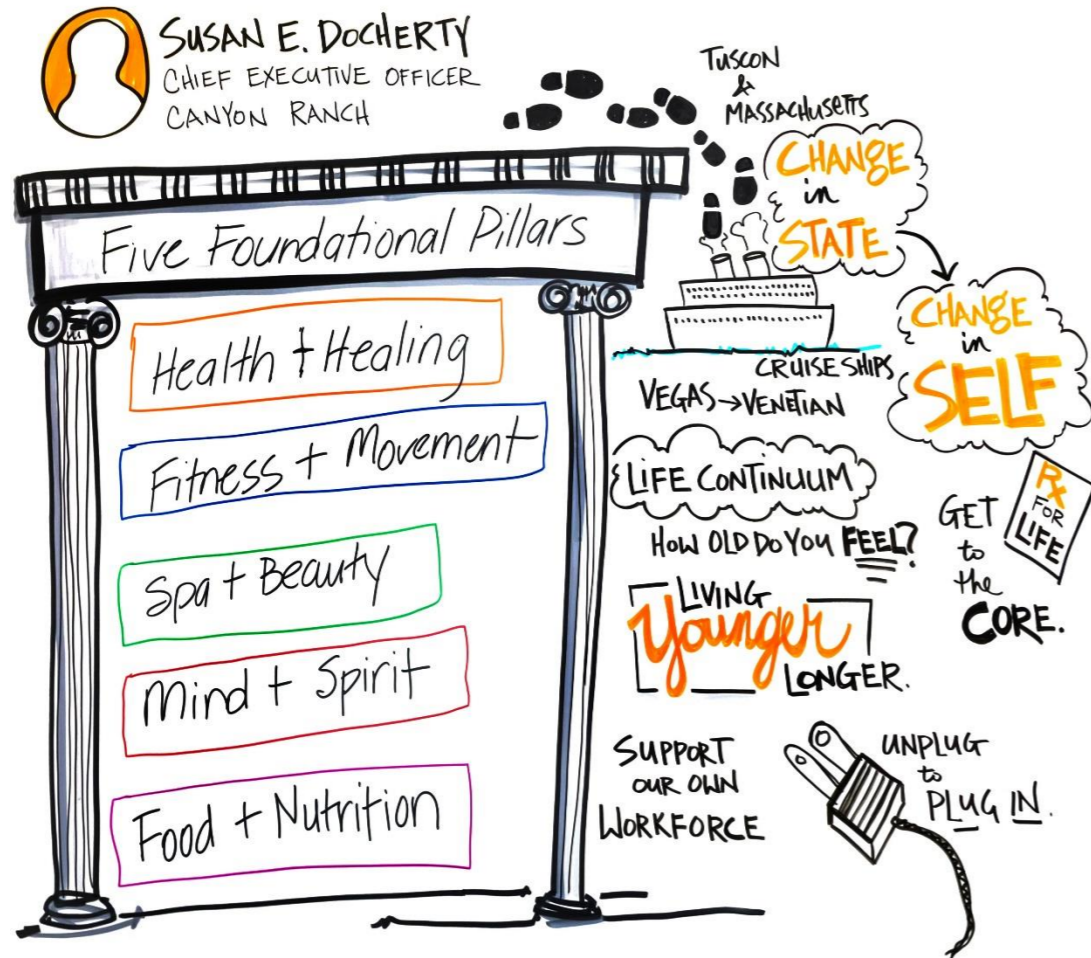


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UNIVERSITY OF ARIZONA & CANYON RANCH INSTITUTE



- Bring together multiple disciplines to offer options, no one discipline has the answer.
- Evidence shows that what you advise is working.
- Well-being derives from mind, body, spirit—all three.
- The mind, like the body, needs new challenges. The spirit needs a purpose.

# The whole person needs many opportunities



- Disconnect from the stresses and time pressures of everyday life to focus on health.
- Many types of activities work together, and all interconnect.
- Allow people to choose what is of interest or importance, and guide them to additional options.



# Ideas



# Big ideas

## **Environment circles the individual— everything is tailored to the person.**

- Make older adults, staff and families part of the solution. People need purpose.
- Stop telling people what we think they need.
- Form organizational structure around dimensions of wellness.
- Maximize social connections.

## **Partner with developers on building projects.**

- Incentivize repurposing of vacant mall structures, schools.
- Develop an ROI for repurposed and affordable housing.
- Join community planning groups to advocate for livable community infrastructure.
- Need a variety of housing options.

# Big ideas

## **Identify outcomes and use data to show evidence for personalized wellness.**

- Use evidence to prove effectiveness of programs and recommendations.
- Create a database of building models to discover best practices that appeal to the aging population.
- High-touch, person-to-person contact is primary.
- Balance evidence-based with experience-based approaches.
- Judge the comfort level of people with technologies; use it to their advantage.

# Big ideas

**Workplace culture and staff must embrace wellness for it to become the culture.**

- Staff need training and permission to help individuals “do” for themselves instead of “doing for” them.
- C-suite at corporate and property level must understand and promote wellness.
- All day, every day, reinforce wellness.

**Create environment for everyone, wherever they are along the functional continuum.**

- Easy access to outdoors.
- Intergenerational contacts for mutual benefit.
- Educate on benefits that balance with the costs.
- Think health span instead of life span; thriving in place instead of aging in place.

# Solutions to prototype





# ideas



PEER-LED  
ACCOUNTABILITY  
PROCESS

1 = JOB DESCRIPTIONS =  
that EMPOWER CARE  
GIVERS, DEMOLISH SILOS,  
& ↑ FLEXIBILITY 9-5+



KELLY & SARA

W/HELP FROM THERESA

2 TRANSCENDENT  
DESIGN

BEVERLY  
KATE  
BJ  
KAROLEE

3 APP to CAPTURE  
& FORMALIZE  
PERSONAL PREFS

NEED TECHNOLOGY PARTNER

INBOARDING

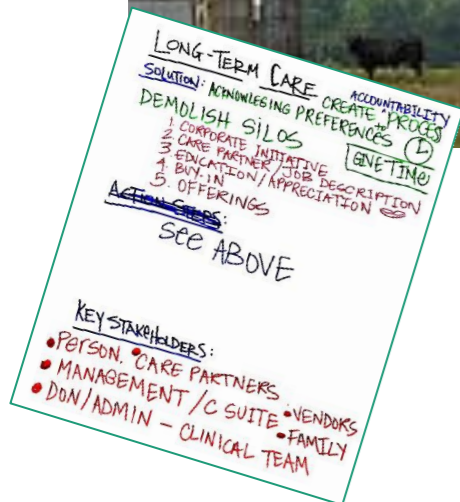


STACEY  
KIM  
THERESA  
LAURIE

4 COGNITIVE HEALTH  
PREVENTATIVE PROGRAMS

3MATTER  
ENTREPRENEURIAL  
TECHNOLOGY

# Forge connections to break down silos



Setting: longterm care

“It all comes down to staffing”

- Write job descriptions based on being a care partner.
- Value is working with and helping staff in other roles to focus on the resident.
- Reward staff for contributions.
- Educate executives about the benefit of flexibly scheduled, empowered staff.

# Design beyond the ordinary



ASSISTED LIVING - Strategic Model  
SOLUTION:  
TRANSCENDENT DESIGN  
DRIVEN BY PEOPLE & OUTCOMES.  
NEURODIVERSITY  
ACTION STEPS:  
EDUCATION & BEST PRACTICES & ROI  
FRAMEWORK & TRY IN & DELIVERY  
EVIDENCE  
WHAT PEOPLE SAY!  
VISION - RESEARCHERS  
KEY STAKEHOLDERS: \$\$\$\$  
EVERYONE - tool  
STORY TELLER - tool  
current & Future.

Setting: assisted living

“Bring the space to life”

- Life is our experiences. Create experiences with design that transcend the ordinary.
- Intentionally create a space that enables a more immersive experience, as in a modern museum or the Nature Immersion Room at Villa at Terracina Grand. (see Report for website)

# Capture personal preferences



Setting: independent living

“Find each person’s spark”

- Get to know residents much better with robust inboarding.
- Develop an interview or assessment to understand likes and dislikes, discover each person’s passion.
- Build an app to hold individual’s preferences and auto populate activities or allow them to search for what interests them.

# 7-Dimension programs inspire cognitive health

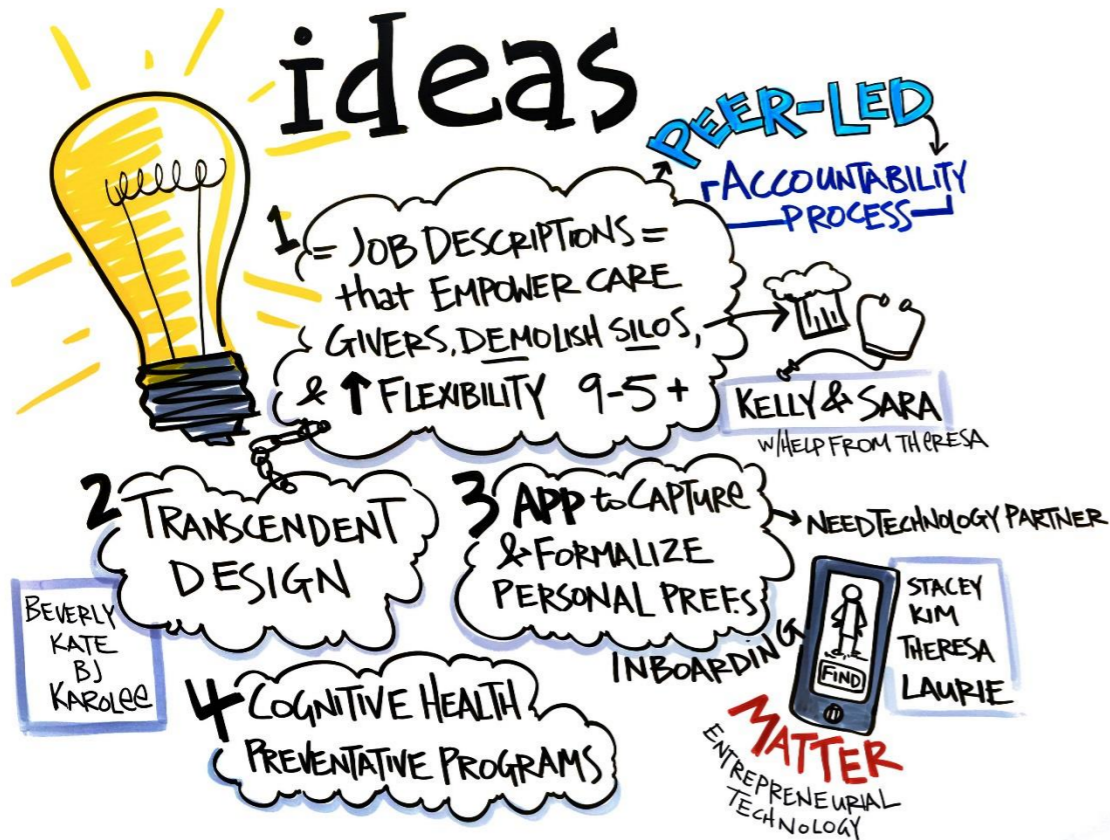


Setting: independent living

“Plant the seeds, water, and watch the garden of programs flourish”

- Lifestyle choices and many types of programs help maintain cognitive health or delay decline.
- Educate on why and how programs in each dimension support cognitive health.
- Need all stakeholders: residents, resident leaders, family, volunteers, staff.

# What's next?



Will you prototype one of these solutions?

Join with others to do so?

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colinmilner@icaa.cc



## **The ICAA Forum**

The ICAA Forum brings together thought leaders from many organizations—both private and public—in a think tank that develops strategies to turn the challenges facing senior living providers into opportunities. Launched in 2005, the Forum forges connections among industry leaders while promoting cohesive action around the ultimate goal: health and quality of life as people age.

The ICAA Forum on May 24, 2017, hosted 65 senior managers in the fields of design and development, senior living, rehabilitation services and wellness to develop a framework for merging concepts of health and well-being into the built environment and the spaces within and outside the buildings.

**International Council on Active Aging®**

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