

## ENRICHING SENIOR LIVES

### What people ask when researching senior living communities

Moving is one of the top five most stressful life events a person can shoulder (FYI: The other four are divorce, major illness, job loss, and the death of a loved one.) Some of us look at a move as a golden opportunity to start fresh, meet new people, and explore new places. The rest of us feel overwhelmed at the prospect of purging, packing, and reassembling all our stuff in a place where you do not know a soul or have any idea where the nearest grocery store is. While both impressions are certainly true, it's all a matter of perspective.

A well-balanced perspective is exactly what we share with those who are researching the pros and cons of living at Lions Gate. The ultimate goal is to find the best fit between the individual and the culture of a community. At Lions Gate, we educate people about all that a senior living community can and should be, and then help them figure out what is truly meaningful to them so they end up where they will be most comfortable.

Of course, while each person has different interests and every family has its unique concerns, there is one thing they all have in common. They all ask the same question: “What makes Lions Gate unique?”

For being just five little words, that question leaves a lot of information to unpack. I personally think there are three answers to that question, so hopefully this will help all those who are researching senior living communities.

First and foremost, when researching a senior living community, take time to consider if the place has heart. This is going to be your home for many years to come. Take a tour. Walk the grounds. Talk to the concierge. Do you see the residents and staff interacting as you walk around? Do you feel comfortable with the security and Covid protocols in place? Can you picture yourself here?

Close your eyes, and really think about that. Where do you see yourself in five years? That's where you ought to move right now. Why wait to start enjoying the next phase of your life?

Second, consider whether the community you are looking into puts an emphasis on socialization and life-long learning. You may not think you're interested in taking an exercise class or attending a concert, but when you live in a community that provides a full slate of classes, activities, trips, and events, that translates into more opportunities to try new things and meet new people.

Following CDC guidelines, Lions Gate residents are free to enjoy a robust calendar of activities. Our current activities calendar includes these offerings:

- Programming and Dining Services departments partner each month to host a theme night, with a special menu and entertainment. In May, our residents enjoyed a Casino Night, complete with blackjack tables, slot machines, a roulette wheel, and raffles. In June, residents will feel like they're vacationing in the tropics at our Luau Night.

- Lions Gate residents look forward to our monthly happy hour that always includes live music, an open bar featuring non-alcoholic and alcoholic beverages, and butler-served hors d'oeuvres.

- Our programming director has packed the monthly calendar with terrific day trips. Whether going out for afternoon high tea or enjoying a delicious lunch in a local restaurant, our private transport bus provides door-to-door service, and the restaurants have been very welcoming to our private group events. In June, we even

have trips scheduled for Ocean City and the Tropicana.

- Lions Gate also brings plenty of entertainment direct to our campus. In June, we have some amazing headliners scheduled, including a comedy night with Sharon Gellar and three spectacular Broadway cabaret performances.

- If you like live music, our Summer Concert Series showcases some amazing talent. In the past, our residents have enjoyed opera vocalists, jazz pianists, classical string performances, and more. Every concert is better than the last!

- At Lions Gate, we have live classes and lectures on a variety of topics from history to ethics, from opera to Broadway, from Music Appreciation to Art Appreciation, all held in our spacious Commons Hall. We also have a weekly Jewish studies class with Rabbi Schaffer, as well as a Jewish Philosophy class with Spencer Szwabnest. Our professors are all highly respected in their fields of expertise.

- Each month our executive chef hosts a “Taste of Lions Gate” cooking demonstration, where residents can sample new dishes before we debut them in our dining room.

- We have some terrific special interest groups, including a monthly book club, a monthly Men's Chat & Chew gathering, and a bi-monthly Knitting Circle for conversation and crafting.

- We have an extensive selection of resident committees for those who would like to get involved. Whether you're interested in the Environmental Committee, the Dining Committee, or the Finance Committee, there's something for everyone.

- For those who like to stay

physically fit, our gym is open. You can schedule a personal training session with our fitness director, join the “Body, Mind & Soul” group workout class, or take a stroll outside with the Walking Club. Our pool renovation is complete, and soon there will be water aerobics classes twice a week.

- And our specialty rooms are always busy. The Art Studio features both beginning and advanced art classes. And the Media Room is home to our Duplicate Bridge, Canasta, and Mahjongg groups.

And finally, when researching senior living communities, consider whether the community has adequate health services available to meet your needs now and as they change in the future. No one can predict what health challenges he or she might have to face in the years to come, but it is always good to plan ahead. The stress of moving amidst a health crisis can be daunting. Lions Gate is a Life Plan Community, which means that embedded on our campus is a broad spectrum of medical and care services available to all residents as their care needs change. Lions Gate residents have the peace of mind knowing that once they move here, they will always be home. The continuum of care services at Lions Gate's Life Plan Community includes Independent Living (for seniors who want an active lifestyle without the daily responsibilities that come with owning a home), Assisted Living (for independent seniors who need support with personal care services), Skilled Nursing (for seniors who need 24-hour personalized care and assistance with all daily living activities), Memory Care (for seniors with Alzheimer's disease or dementia), and Rehabilitative Services (for anyone who needs short-term care recovering from illness, injury, or surgery before they transition back to their personal

residence). All five of our care settings are accessible under one roof. The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) have awarded Lions Gate a Five-Star rating for Long Term Care.

This continuum of care is not a standard in every senior living community—only a select few provide a variety of housing options that meet the evolving care needs of residents, and promise inclusive, full-service offerings and multiple levels of care on location. It's a key factor that truly sets Lions Gate apart from many other communities.

As I wrap up any meeting with a potential new resident, and their family asks me what sets Lions Gate apart, of course I tell them about the Life Plan health services, and about the amazing activities calendar full of classes and trips and events. But the truth is I always circle back to that one last thing about Lions Gate that is valued most of all—the people. The Lions Gate community is where you meet new friends, and your friends become family. It's quite a unique place, with a culture of warmth and support that is undeniable. To me, it's that genuine connection that shines through. And isn't that what we all want out of life? Genuine connection is the spark that makes a difference.

Interested in learning more about Lions Gate? We'd love to share with you all the amenities Lions Gate has to offer, and talk to you about the many ways Lions Gate would be a good fit for you. We'll meet with you in whatever way you're most comfortable—an in-person tour of our campus, a FaceTime call with a virtual tour, a one-on-one meeting at your home, a Zoom chat with you and your extended family, or any other option you would like to suggest.

Call Donna at (856) 679-4682 or go online to set up an appointment at [Dcoonley@lionsgateccrc.org](mailto:Dcoonley@lionsgateccrc.org) ▲



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