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## Moldaw Family Residences at 899 Charleston Design Team Exercises Fresh Ideas in Senior Living

### Senior Living Community Will Be Far From Typical Campus Blueprint

**PALO ALTO, Calif.** – From the first sessions that brought the design team of the Moldaw Family Residences at 899 Charleston together to discuss elements for a new senior living community on the Taube Koret Campus for Jewish Life, it was clear the community would be anything but typical. Now under construction and scheduled to open in fall 2009, the community is being built around the concept of inspiring older adults to remain in motion and to connect with others on a multi-generational campus.

Instead of a group of experts saying, “This is how senior living communities are built,” the team started its design process with asking questions such as “What if?” and “How can we?” The resulting answers produced a community and campus concept that sets the Moldaw Family Residences, located at East Charleston and San Antonio Road in Palo Alto, apart from the myriad senior living options across the country. The final design produced something more like a series of small townhouses, with apartment homes in small groups rather than in a standard grid.

“The first five meetings focused on what the campus could and should be,” said Lorraine Hiatt, Ph.D., a New York-based architectural psychologist and consultant who has worked on nearly 500 senior living projects. “There is a connection between motion and thought. Movement produces a social life, encourages recollections and develops new, alternative neural pathways in the brain. Since research illustrates that exercise helps with longevity of life and lifestyle changes, the team started thinking of ways to create a lifestyle fitness program. We asked, ‘How do you add variety and diversity?’”

The answers to that question alone played a major role in shaping how the Moldaw Family Residences will integrate with the larger Taube Koret Campus for Jewish Life. The community, being designed with 193 maintenance-free apartment homes, will intersperse its private residences mostly on the upper floors of the various buildings that will also serve other functions within the Taube Koret master plan, instead of clustering all residences in one area. The design concept is eight buildings, or ‘eight houses,’ around a Midrachov, a central pedestrian walkway.

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“We want to create places to journey or to go, which is much like European or Israeli designs,” said Hiatt. “We think of the resident’s apartment as a springboard to what goes on beyond. We’re offering people a vista to what they might do on campus. And the campus is an invitation to discover or rediscover interests.”

This decision allowed designers to capitalize on the pedestrian-friendly, scenic and social campus atmosphere, which will feature an easy-to-navigate layout with short pathways, central garden courtyards and scenic cross bridges that promote accessibility to all buildings.

“The distances between buildings are being reduced so residents can enjoy walking,” said Hiatt. “The campus walkways and bridges are being designed to motivate residents to get more exercise. The campus will offer a variety of building scales, which aids in creating interesting vistas and scenery – it’s very Northern California. It was decided to vary the grid (of the buildings) to add more interest for better sun, shade and views. And we’re fully integrating the marvelous pedestrian walkways so they all end up in one common area, which is called an *agora* in Greek.”

Beyond ensuring the campus would be easily and enjoyably walkable, the next step was to create interesting destinations for residents to visit as part of the overall community lifestyle. Integrating senior living residences as well as community spaces into various buildings of the larger Taube Koret campus will put attractions, amenities and social connections around every corner.

The design team is working to provide welcoming spaces that will create interaction between both senior residents and the wide variety of different generations who will also be utilizing the campus. This premise leads to a senior living community that will offer opportunities for residents to volunteer with children’s programs, mentor young adults and spend time with people of all ages, as they participate in all the activities and programs on the campus.

“Many of the first floors in the buildings won’t be residences, but instead will have a place for things like children’s programs to spill out into the large main areas,” said Hiatt. “We’re creating specialty spaces for music, programs and other interests. We want ‘intelligent’ spaces that help keep the mind busy, maintaining an environment for good, healthy aging.”

In addition to Moldaw Family Residences, plans for the Taube Koret Campus for Jewish Life include the new Oshman Family Jewish Community Center. The JCC will feature the Richard and Rhoda Goldman Center for Adult Living and Learning with the Albert and Janet Schultz Performing Arts Center, social/cultural hall, and studios/meeting rooms/classrooms; the Goldman Sports and Wellness Complex featuring a state-of-the-art fitness center, indoor and outdoor pools and gymnasium; a pre-school; a teen center; a café and a gift shop. Additionally, there will be offices on the campus for local Jewish organizations and a daycare center for children.

“Dining is just one area where there will be a lot of choices — fine dining, central dining or al fresco. All over the campus will be various options, many with outside dining,” said Hiatt. “So many senior living communities are inward-oriented, but Northern California living is inside and outside.”

Moldaw Family Residences will offer private residences in one-, two- and three-bedroom floor plans to seniors of all faiths. The community's maintenance-free lifestyle will include services and amenities such as a concierge, housekeeping and linen services, underground valet parking, scheduled transportation, a salon, and access to campus features such as a fitness center, swimming pool, business center, arts studio and performing arts center.

As a continuing care retirement community, Moldaw Family Residences at 899 Charleston also will provide for residents' future health care, if ever needed. Personalized assisted living services will be available, and the community will include 11 memory support residences on campus. Residents will also have priority access to skilled nursing care through an affiliation with the Jewish Home of San Francisco.

Anyone interested in learning more about the active lifestyle available at Moldaw Family Residences can visit the community's Preview Center, located at 366 Cambridge Avenue in Palo Alto. Preview Center appointments can be scheduled by calling (650) 321-3188. Information on Moldaw Family Residences at 899 Charleston and the Taube Koret Campus for Jewish Life is also available on the Internet at [www.899Charleston.org](http://www.899Charleston.org) or [www.campusforjewishlife.org](http://www.campusforjewishlife.org).

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