

# Westminster Village

Scottsdale, Arizona

Bud Hart  
Executive Director  
[www.wmvaz.com](http://www.wmvaz.com)

## Category: Community Without Walls

**Westminster Village in Scottsdale, Arizona, is so alive with activity that it can be hard to tell who is (or is not) a resident. The elegant, five-star Donnelly's Restaurant is regularly filled with well-dressed diners from both the internal and external community. Executive Director Bud Hart comes across more like everyone's favorite cohort than "corporate management." For example, an 83-year-old woman on the Activities Committee said that she'd jump out of an airplane if Hart would do it, too. He didn't hesitate – and the Westminster Skydiving Club was born. In fact, Westminster Village offers such a vibrant environment that a popular "Future Residents Club" enables people to attend events, enjoy campus amenities and make friends before they are ready to live there full-time.**

### A Community of Connections

Hart explains that Westminster Village was designed to be an active, engaged community. "This is not where people go to die," he says. "This is where people come to have great days. Lots of great days." One can certainly imagine that the campus' high-quality restaurants, spa, six-hole putting green, fitness facilities and classes like Tai Chi, yoga and water aerobics make that goal easy. Highly attractive amenities are also part of why so many people have joined the "Wowed on Westminster" Future Residents Club.

Hart says that the WOW club brings an exciting dynamic to the community, adding that the relationships between residents and future residents is similar to the mentor-protégé relationships fostered in businesses, or the big brother-big sister programs at universities. "We all find so many similarities that connect us to each other," says Hart. "That keeps us all young."

case study: 8

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Type of Units	# of Units	% Occupied
Independent Living	250	92%
Assisted Living	23	100%
Skilled Nursing	60	98%

These kinds of relationships form an important element of the “Community Without Walls” concept, which is proving so attractive to the newest generation of seniors, the “Silent Generation.” At the same time, the team at Westminster Village didn’t want to define the community by one or two specific age groups. “We wanted to be an attractive community for a wide range of people,” remarks Hart.

### A Growing Range of Engaging Activities

With that in mind, the community’s energetic Activities Committee (which includes 15 residents) creates a continual stream of social, educational and other popular events. When the “H1N1” flu was in the news, they brought in a practitioner from the Mayo Clinic to present facts, dispel myths and answer questions. Other guest professionals have included a nuclear engineer, an economics professor and a local city planner.

Events like these have been so successful that Westminster Village is exploring ways to expand their educational opportunities by bringing Arizona State University classes to the campus – either via visiting professors or virtual classes over the Internet. Hart expects that these classes will be so desirable that Westminster Village might have to create a new auditorium to support external as well as internal community interest.





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### Measures of Success

Clearly, Hart is encouraged and energized by the programming Westminster Village offers and by his residents’ response to it. “Success,” he notes, “is a fairly intangible thing. Do we measure it by the number of programs we offer? By the number of people who attend? Personally, I think that the feedback of our residents is a great measure of success – and we have gotten very good feedback so far.”

Hart’s desire for feedback is why he began conducting regular “Let’s Talk” sessions with small groups of residents. Additionally, residents often stop to talk with Hart when they see him in his office or walking around on campus. This gives him even more opportunities to gauge what residents are thinking and respond as necessary by adjusting offerings.

Creating a community as connected and involved as Westminster Village is a very big, highly intensive job. But Hart says that his job doesn’t feel much like work. “Work is when you have to learn something difficult or do extensive physical labor. But I’m fascinated by the fact that I get paid for doing something I know how to do and enjoy.”

Hart’s advice to other communities is to be open and flexible. “Listen to everyone from your residents, employees and board of directors to your prospective residents and staff. Be willing to try new things. And make as many opportunities as you can to put smiles on everyone’s faces. That’s probably the best success metric of all.”

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## AMENITIES

- Gym
- Wellness Center
- Education
- Pool
- Walking Trail
- Spa
- Golf
- Home Health Agency

## RETAIL

- Grocery Store
- Dry Cleaners

## DINING

- Grill
- Five-Star Restaurant
- Main Dining Room
- Additional Dining Rooms (7)

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