

ECS Newsletter

Spring 2026

Investing in our future

The demographic profile of older adults in the United States is shifting rapidly, and with it, expectations for senior living and services. For ECS, a nonprofit, multi-site senior living and services provider, this evolution presents both challenges and extraordinary opportunities.

Adults age 75 and older represent one of the fastest-growing segments of the population. At the same time, today's incoming residents are more educated, more diverse, more technologically adept, and more wellness-focused than previous generations. Many have managed careers, traveled extensively, and maintained active lifestyles well into their seventies and eighties. They are not simply seeking care; they are seeking community, purpose, and autonomy.

Today's seniors often enter our communities later and with greater support needs than in prior decades. Advances in healthcare allow individuals to live independently longer, but they may arrive with more complex medical needs. Additionally, growing racial, cultural, and socioeconomic diversity requires ECS to think more intentionally about inclusive programming, dining options, spiritual services, and culturally competent care delivery. At the same time, expectations around technology are increasing. Reliable Wi-Fi, smart-home features, telehealth capabilities, and digital engagement platforms are no longer amenities, they are baseline expectations.

ECS is uniquely positioned to respond to these changes. Every dollar paid by residents is reinvested in developing and operating our communities. Our mission-driven governance, reinvestment into community improvements, and access to tax-exempt financing create flexibility to invest in long-term infrastructure and programming.

ECS is positioning its communities to be sustainable, future-ready campuses incorporating flexible common spaces, wellness centers, outdoor gathering areas, and hospitality-inspired dining venues. Universal design principles including wider corridors, better lighting, and adaptable units that support aging in place and reduce costly renovations over time. In addition, we are customizing services by expanding home-based offerings, enhancing memory care programs, and strengthening preventative wellness initiatives.

The demographic wave ahead is not merely a trend; it is a structural shift. For ECS, scale offers the ability to pilot innovations at one community and replicate its success systemwide. By aligning design, services, and operations with the expectations of a new generation of seniors, ECS is growing occupancy, having greater mission impact, and ensuring long-term sustainability.

James Rothrock
President and CEO



Highlights

The Canterbury

Enhancements receive city approval

The Covington

Renovations reach every corner of the community

MonteCedro

New homes coming for new residents

Community

An investment in people is an investment in community

The Canterbury Enhancements receive city approval

If you believe the old adage, “the value of something is equal to work you put into it”, then The Canterbury has much to look forward to. After years of hard work, consultation, and preparation, the revitalization plan for The Canterbury has received the official stamp of approval from the city planning commission.

Dave Hone, Executive Director of The Canterbury says it is a milestone in a process that started in 2018. “We began by meeting with both current and prospective residents. Through these focus groups, we heard what people were looking for in our community—which amenities were important to them and how the physical space of the community itself could be improved.”

Almost every aspect of the revitalization plan was inspired by these focus groups. “It’s a multi-phased campus improvement that will take several years to complete,” Dave explains. “In terms of archi-

itecture and design, the community will have a Mediterranean-style feel, contributing to the beauty of the neighborhood.”

Work will begin on a new fitness studio in July. The space will be relocated to the main level, adjacent to the pool. The new fitness studio will have more natural light and better ventilation to improve the overall experience. Refurbishment of the pool itself is planned for later next year.

A large focus of the refurbishments will be on the interconnectivity of the community, including adding access between the corridors. These changes will make movement between the buildings easier and faster. The community will also be adding more elevators – one in Wing A and one in Wing B.

While the physical work is just getting started, Dave says he is incredibly proud of the planning process. “Residents and staff worked together, literally for years, to create a new vision for our community,” he says. “We have such a bright future ahead, in no small part to the efforts

of everyone involved and The Canterbury will remain an asset to the greater community for decades to come.”



The Covington Renovations reach every corner of the community

The Covington is currently in the middle of a refresh and refurbishment that will transform the community.

Cash Benton, Executive Director of The Covington is confident the changes will have a positive influence on the quality of life for residents and the working environment for team members. The project and its timing has been designed to minimize disruption to the community. “Ensuring the ongoing comfort and safety of residents during renovations is paramount,” Cash says.

The first step was a full renovation and a modernization of all elevators. Currently, the hallways and corridors are being refreshed with new carpets, ceiling, wallpaper, flooring and fresh paint. New artwork will also be displayed to complete the transformation. “The refurbishments have been very well received by residents,”

Cash says. The top two floors of corridors have been completed and the remaining two floors will be finished in the coming months. The final part of this phase will be a complete refresh of the common areas.

The next major phase of renovations will be to the former skilled nursing unit. The space will be completely recalibrated to better serve residents' needs. Part of the area will be converted into a new physical therapy and occupational therapy area. Over the years, seniors have developed a much more active lifestyle and these new facilities will be an important addition to how residents live today. There will also be 14 new memory care units and Cash says each suite is designed to feel more like home.

As always, the community’s Resident Committee has worked closely with Cash and his team to ensure residents’ needs and concerns are incorporated into the planning. This includes a recent refresh to the dining menu and the planned expansion of the dining spaces.

Other areas to be updated will be the care suites, designed for residents transitioning back from the hospital and a refresh of the assisted living area to expand residential life. All work is anticipated to be complete by early 2028.

By reinvesting in the community, The Covington will continue to provide residents with the amenities they need to live the life they want.



MonteCedro New homes coming for new residents

The new villas of MonteCedro are nearing completion, and the excitement is starting to build. “We recently hosted a downsizing event for the future residents,” says Adam Peña, Executive Director, MonteCedro.

Fortunately, MonteCedro has several resident-led committees to assist and advise new residents, making the transition easier, and many were on hand at the downsizing event.

Members of MonteCedro’s Art Committee answered questions about how future residents could donate their art, so it’s available for the entire community to enjoy. Members of the MonteCedro Kennel Club were also there to discuss what to expect when moving with a pet. In addition, the Gardening Club provided

insight into how to get the most from the grounds.

Currently, the 40 new homes are being completed, with flooring, painting, and cabinets being installed. They will eventually be home to about 60 new residents. “We expect people will move into the new villas gradually, starting in the summer,” Adam says.

In addition to the new residences, the community will also welcome more amenities, including Julia’s, a new restaurant offering lunch and dinner, a new dog park for our four-pawed residents, and a new terrace with a speaker system for community-wide gatherings.

Later this year, work will begin on other enhancements that will add to the amenities at MonteCedro. The Memory Care Courtyard is being redeveloped. In addition, the lobby area will be refreshed, Station 8 restaurant will be renovated, and the auditorium will be expanded. Many of MonteCedro’s events and activities are so popular that they reach capacity. The additional seating will ensure more people can enjoy the music, plays, lectures, and films that happen throughout the year.

By reinvesting in the community, residents can enjoy even more of what MonteCedro offers, including those who are looking forward to moving in starting later this summer.

New venues, new people, and new ideas equal a fresh new outlook for MonteCedro.



An investment in people is an investment in community

As a nonprofit organization, ECS proudly reinvests in those who dedicate their careers to our mission to deliver exceptional communities and services for seniors. The generous contributions of donors funds a breadth of programs.

Staff Assistance Fund for Emergencies (S.A.F.E.) is a program designed to provide monetary assistance to team members in times of immediate need. MonteCedro recently raised \$380,000 for the SAFE program for Fire Relief. This money was used to support a number of team members who lost their homes in the Eaton fire.

The **Employee Education Fund (E.E.F)** was created to benefit team members pursuing higher education by paying for college, certification courses or classes, or helping to repay student loans. Supporting these educational pursuits results in greater job fulfillment, commitment, and professional growth.

Over the years, many of our residents have contributed to these two important programs, helping both the recipients and their communities.

The Wendy Shiba and Lawrence Pittman Scholarship

Residents have also undertaken their own initiatives, including Wendy Shiba and Lawrence (Larry) Pittman, who have called MonteCedro home for more than ten years. Together, they established a scholarship fund to help team members in their community looking to advance their careers through higher education.

The first scholarship was awarded this year to Belinda Martinez, currently Assistant Director of Environmental Services at MonteCedro. Belinda began working at MonteCedro almost seven years ago as a Concierge. She was soon promoted to Housekeeping Supervisor before moving into her current role. Belinda says the scholarship will help her pursue a career in nursing. "During COVID, I saw the work the nurses were doing to help people, and I realized, that's what I want to do —

help people," she says. When she is finished with her studies, Belinda will have both a Registered Nursing certification and Bachelor's of Science in Nursing.

We spoke to Wendy about what motivated her and Larry to create the scholarship fund. "I firmly believe that we reach a point in our lives when we think about legacy," Wendy says. "We begin to ask ourselves: what were my decades on this planet all about?"

Wendy says she and Larry are big believers in the power of intergenerational relationships, especially because their five grandchildren are in their 20s and 30s. "We appreciate the younger generation who work at MonteCedro so much and we want to be supportive of them," she says. "Helping them pursue higher education is a tangible way of providing support and encouragement."

They are not involved in the choice of recipient – Wendy and Larry leave that to ECS – however, she was very pleased that they know the person selected. "We were delighted to learn that it was Belinda who received our inaugural scholarship."

Wendy says she and Larry had been thinking about funding a scholarship award for a few years when they approached Charlie Rahilly, CFO of ECS, with the idea. With Charlie's assistance, they were able to set up an annual scholarship so it could be managed in a professional and equitable manner. "It's been a very rewarding experience that validates our decision to live in a community under nonprofit ownership."



ECS is proudly founded on four commitments

Choice. Your life, your way.

Creativity. Live beyond your daily needs.

Connection. Community is at the heart of all we do.

Confidence. A century's worth of senior living expertise.

