



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

February 26, 2007

For more information, contact:

Brandi Towns, GlynnDevins, 913-754-2384

btowns@glynndevins.com

**GROWING “SANDWICH GENERATION”
SQUEEZED BETWEEN CHILDREN AND AGING PARENTS**

In Between Two Generations, Adult Children Seek Future Peace of Mind

OLATHE, Kan.: At a time in life when middle-aged adults should be raising their families, enjoying life and planning for their own retirement, many are instead finding themselves focusing more of their time and energy on their aging parents. Caught between meeting the needs of two generations, adults in the growing “sandwich generation” are seeking future peace of mind.

“A new category of adults is emerging, nicknamed the ‘sandwich generation.’ These adult children are squeezed between traditional responsibilities of caring for their children and keeping a cautious eye on their aging parents,” said Pam Grisafe, director of marketing at Santa Marta. “They are doing this while balancing their own careers, saving for their retirement, maintaining relationships and taking care of their own well-being.”

The sandwich generation is the product of an aging U.S. population and soaring life expectancies. Since 1990, the number of Americans age 65 and older has increased 13 percent, and today there are nearly 4 million people age 85 and older, according to the U.S. Census Bureau. While their parents are living longer, Baby Boomers are waiting until later in life to begin their own families. The result can be a couple who are in their 50s with children who are in their late teens and parents who are 75 plus.

JoAnn Mendenhall is part of the “sandwich generation.” She is 48 years old, a full-time facilities manager at her family-owned business, a volunteer at a local advocacy group, a wife of a loving husband, a mother of three college students, and a daughter of her aging parents Leo and Katy Zahner.

~ more~

“I have a full plate of responsibilities. I worry from both sides. With children in college, I’m trying to help them achieve their future goals. At the same time, I help care for my father, assist my mother and am looking out for the future needs of both,” said Mendenhall.

As their parents age, many adult children find themselves in similar roles as JoAnn: caring for their family while assisting their parents with activities such as preparing meals, maintaining their homes, and providing transportation to and from activities, along with helping their parents make life decisions including living arrangements, health care and financial matters.

“What most people in the ‘sandwich generation’ want is peace of mind knowing their parents are aging well and that any needs they do have are being met,” said Grisafe. “Many adult children are finding security and certainty of future care at Continuing Care Retirement Communities (CCRCs).”

CCRCs attract seniors who lead active, independent lifestyles, because they offer a wide variety of services and amenities that foster physical, social, spiritual and intellectual growth. They also provide a continuum of care including access to on-site long-term health care for residents, if ever needed. One such CCRC is Santa Marta, a *Life Care* community now under construction in Olathe that will provide adults age 62 plus with a unique lifestyle experience, a variety of residential options, and priority access to on-site assisted living, skilled nursing and memory support, as needed.

“Santa Marta provided the solution I was looking for because it answered both my needs and my parents’ needs,” said Mendenhall. “I have been very busy balancing all my responsibilities. Finding Santa Marta has taken a lot of pressure off of me. When my mother and I made the decision regarding Santa Marta, it was a huge relief!”

A CCRC was a solution for JoAnn’s mother Katy, a vibrant senior, who wants to maintain an active lifestyle, yet needs on-site care available for her husband Leo. Instead of relying on her daughter and other family members to care for him, Katy researched communities with JoAnn and signed up to move to Santa Marta.

“I’m excited about Santa Marta! The people, the camaraderie, the activities available...like bridge, church services, exercise classes and the pool. I like the idea of the yard work being taken care of and utilities being paid for, and also living in an area where we are safe.

I like the fact that I can decorate my own home the way I want to. And, most importantly, that there is a good, safe place for my husband to receive on-site care," Zahner said.

"It was great having conversations about future living arrangements with my mother. I encourage everyone in the 'sandwich generation' to initiate those conversations and help your parents research the future, because it's so important," said Mendenhall. "Instead of sitting back and watching time pass by and having to make a rushed decision due to illness or other reasons, get involved with your parents now on their needs. Visit them over a weekend and discuss options with them. Listen and offer to help out early regarding planning their future."

By starting conversations early on, by doing homework and by considering all options, both generations can have peace of mind knowing their parents will be happy and cared for, should the need arise.

Santa Marta, under construction and scheduled for completion in fall 2007 at 13800 W. 116th Street across from St. Thomas Aquinas High School, is sponsored by the Archdiocese of Kansas City in Kansas. It will provide adults age 62 plus with a unique lifestyle experience and a variety of residential options, including spacious apartment homes and The Villas at Santa Marta, Tuscan-inspired private homes located in an exclusive setting on the grounds of Santa Marta. The Life Care community will also provide residents priority access to on-site assisted living apartments, skilled nursing suites and memory support suites. Santa Marta residents will enjoy a full range of services and amenities such as maintenance-free living, restaurant-style dining, heated underground parking, chapel, arts and crafts studio, and a fitness and aquatic center.

More information is available by calling Santa Marta at (913) 906-0990 or by visiting the Information Center, located at 11960 Quivira Road, Suite 100, in Overland Park, KS. Additional information about Santa Marta can be found at www.santamartaretirement.com.

The Archdiocese of Kansas City in Kansas is comprised of 21 counties in northeastern Kansas, covering more than 12,500 square miles. The Archdiocese serves more than 180,000 Catholics through its agencies, departments, parishes, schools and institutions.

###