

Morrison Senior Living's

Travel the World program enriches lives with a culinary journey



From Cinco de Mayo to Oktoberfest, residents in client communities experienced stimulating dining events every month during this yearlong program

This article profiles the recipient of the 2014 ICAA Innovators Practical Solutions Award. This category of the annual Innovators Awards showcases creative products and services designed to improve wellness for active older adults. Presented in three categories, the Innovators Awards honor creativity and excellence in the active-aging industry. They also highlight innovations that lead the way, set new standards, and make a difference in the lives of older adults.

With Boomers and their elders redefining daily what it means to grow old, many organizations that target the older adult are in the process of adjusting. Providers of aging services and housing, for

example, are paying close attention to the research and trends, and considering what they mean for their organizations. How are their customers changing? What do their customers need, want and expect? And what must change to reach and serve these customers successfully today, and in the future?

Many older adults now seek environments and services that will help them lead healthier, more vibrant lives. In organizations that embrace active aging, professionals challenge themselves to come up with new programs that promote wellness in all the dimensions of life—physical, social, spiritual, intellectual, emotional, vocational and environmental. Innovative products and services are essential to their efforts to advance wellness. And companies that provide these products and services are increasingly in step with the profession-

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Morrison Senior Living's Travel the World program provided food, fun and festivities for Oktoberfest, a German tradition



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Themed décor, music, costumes and food stimulated participants' senses during the Oktoberfest dining event offered to Morrison client communities through the Travel the World program

als. To encourage companies to keep developing and refining offerings that move the industry forward, the International Council on Active Aging® presents the ICAA Innovators Practical Solutions Award each year. This award recognizes wellness products and services that demonstrate creativity and excellence.

In 2014, the Practical Solutions Award went to Travel the World, a dining event program created by Morrison Senior Living in Atlanta, Georgia. A member of foodservice company Compass Group® USA, Morrison provides food, nutrition, hospitality and environmental services to more than 450 senior living communities in 41 states.

“Our holistic approach—which is centered on our purpose of enriching lives—includes integrated offerings that nourish the mind, body and soul,” states

Regan Medzhibzher, Morrison’s director of marketing. “Our dining options are designed with ‘foodies’ in mind; our EmpowerUSSM program combines nutrition and wellness to help residents at all stages of the care continuum achieve success; and our communityworks® peace-of-mind/environmental services program gives residents ease by taking the stress out of routine maintenance items. In tandem with industry trends,” Medzhibzher continues, “we see these pieces connecting to provide the best experience possible for senior living residents.”

With the Travel the World program, Morrison used “high-touch, versatile components” to engage residents in experiences that stimulated all the senses, Medzhibzher says. “Associate engagement, one of our key focus areas, also thrived, as team members worked in

a collaborative, innovative fashion to deliver these dining events. This made the program even more impactful and meaningful,” she adds.

To learn more about Travel the World, the *Journal on Active Aging*® recently asked Medzhibzher to describe how Morrison developed and delivered the program, as well as what impact it had in client communities and for the company itself.

JAA: Please describe Morrison’s Travel the World initiative in brief.

RM: Our 2014 dining program series, “Travel the World,” took residents in our client communities on a culinary journey featuring a different country and its native foods each month. Examples included: Paris, the City of Love, in February; Cinco de Mayo in Mexico in May;

and Safari in Africa in August. Each event was truly an experience, complete with themed décor, music, costumes and dining offerings. Residents received a passport and had 12 stamps available to mark their journeys. Those who received all 12 passport stamps were entered to win a special “Captain’s dinner” in their community.

JAA: *What inspired Morrison to create Travel the World?*

RM: Several things inspired the Travel the World dining event program. These included:

- *Research:* Our Silent Generation research has revealed that residents who are well-traveled, educated, and self-proclaimed foodies are increasingly the new face of senior living.
- *Community without walls & client marketability:* The program was meant to break down the four walls of the community by taking residents on a global tour while also inviting in the public. (Family members and prospective residents attended several events.)
- *Continuum of care:* Each year, we work to create flexible and accessible dining programs that engage all levels of residents—from skilled nursing to independent living—to enhance their overall community experience.

JAA: *What were the company’s goals for Travel the World?*

RM: We had three goals for this program: resident satisfaction, client marketability and associate engagement.

JAA: *What were the key components of Travel the World?*

RM: Our dining program included several key components:

- themed menus with the ability to customize to meet residents’ and commu-

nities’ specific needs, including diet spreads and texture-modified menus (for individuals who have trouble swallowing)

- a diverse, adaptable resident and associate experience guide that provided décor and music suggestions, activities and educational information
- a marketing and communications toolkit (invitations to events, flyers, posters, press release templates, etc.) for the community leadership to leverage in order to enhance existing resident engagement and market to prospective residents
- social media tools that included a music playlist on Spotify, video stream on YouTube, community Facebook page and Instagram account

JAA: *What was involved practically in developing and delivering Travel the World events in client communities?*

RM: We interviewed our directors in client communities about their experiences. Here is what we heard from Jon Long, director of dining services at Pine Run Community–The Village in Doylestown, Pennsylvania:

“We took the time to plan these events several months in advance. This allowed us to really dig into the marketing material provided and to source out supplies, room logistics, etc. We built a ‘center stage’ display for each individual event, which typically featured a Chef’s Action Station, a drink station and a dessert station. We used different spaces to hold these events—primarily the dining room for any cooking display, but drinks were served in the bar or auditorium along with hors d’oeuvres. This allowed residents to enjoy several destinations.

“Our budget allows us to purchase a fair share of supplies/decorations each month, and we took full advantage of that. ... Items ranged from tabletop displays, buffet displays, costumes, linens, and a lot more.

“Residents here really looked forward to these special events and to the monthly collection of their passport stamps. We had over 130 fully returned passports! The first-place winner received a full course meal of the person’s choosing,” prepared for up to 8 people in the winner’s cottage by the community’s Chef Matthew.

“Menu items were prepared using all of Travel the World’s recipes. Residents enjoyed some of the more exotic items, and through their feedback we actually added certain items to our core menu.

“Because we planned these events out in advance, we were able to schedule staffing appropriately. Team members had a great time dressing up in outfits and costumes, and we were able to get residents to dress up as well.”

JAA: *How did Morrison roll out Travel the World, and what was the response?*

RM: To roll out Travel the World, we held a series of company-wide webinars. We also loaded materials into our Web-based portal, “My Marketing Plan,” including the marketing and communications toolkit, which included activation materials to foster engagement over the 12-month period.

There was a very positive response to the Travel the World program. We had a record engagement level of almost 80%—meaning nearly 80% of our client communities implemented this campaign. We also saw increased resident satisfaction and enhanced associate engagement.

JAA: *What challenges did Morrison discover in developing and delivering Travel the World in client communities, and how did the organization address them? Also, were there any unexpected opportunities?*

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Developed by Morrison Senior Living, Travel the World menus featured foods native to each country visited on the yearlong culinary journey

RM: With any program, adoption and engagement are always top of mind and can pose some challenges. We worked to be as proactive as possible with our Travel the World program, giving ample lead time for events, providing reminders around materials, and encouraging sharing of success stories for inclusion in internal communications.

While we were very pleased with the 77% engagement rate—up from the 53% rate for previous campaigns—having a 100% rate would have been ideal. That said, we did take the challenge of adoption and used it as a learning opportunity. We conducted post-event focus groups/surveys with communities to gain insights and experiences, taking those lessons learned into account with our current dining program, “Diner Days.” As our industry demands, we are always working to be nimble and adaptable to achieve the best outcomes.

JAA: *In your view, how did Travel the World advance active aging in Morrison's client communities?*

RM: Many individuals that reside in our communities defy the traditional stereotype of a “senior.” The sheer diversity of our residents—from the GI Generation, to the Silent Generation, to the Boomers—creates a rich, dynamic environment. Our purpose is to enrich the lives of our residents, and we take that commitment to heart through our desire to engage and positively impact them. This pledge culminates in our dining program through the interactive components that engage the senses of touch, taste and smell—and, for many, happy memories.

We want older adults to feel empowered, not constrained, because of their age. Our Travel the World program not only provided an experience, it brought out previous experiences and stories, and best of all provided a forum for connectivity between other residents and associates. As Dale Carnegie said, “The royal road to a man's heart is to talk to him about the things he treasures most.”

JAA: *Is there anything you would like to add about Travel the World?*

RM: We are very pleased by the response from both associates and residents to this program and, most of all, around the collaborative process involved to create the dining theme. There is something rewarding about working alongside chefs, nutritionists, marketers and field managers to achieve a meaningful and impactful program. The Travel the World program is an example of how collaborative work can yield great outcomes. 🍷

The Journal on Active Aging thanks Regan Medzhibzher for her help with this article. For more information about Morrison Senior Living, visit www.morrisonseiorliving.com.

Images courtesy of Morrison Senior Living



Morrison's five key steps for providing a successful culinary journey

1. Ask for feedback along the way.
2. Be sure your program is adaptable to individuals at various stages of the care continuum/levels of function.
3. Include integrated and interactive elements.
4. Create opportunities for associates and participants to engage.
5. Share your success and lessons learned.



Culinary is Key to Engagement & Growth

Flexible, Accessible Programs Deliver 'A Passion for Life's Flavor'

The kitchen is the heart of every home, and for senior living communities and the evolving industry, a world-class dining program is key to engaging residents of today and tomorrow. The new senior living landscape spans GIs and Silent Generations as well as the coming wave of Baby Boomers. Each group has unique expectations, ideas and traditions of what creates a 'home.' Fresh, flavorful, wholesome food is a community benchmark for every generation and every level—from independent living to skilled nursing. A robust, flexible and accessible dining program is the bridge that helps a diverse population of seniors (and their families) connect with and commit to a community.

The Ultimate Yes

Making the move to senior living is a huge commitment for most seniors. Arriving at the decision can be a multi-step process that's made easier when prospective residents have opportunities to visit, explore, and engage in activities that build trust in a community. According to a recent article by Senior Housing News: "Marketers and senior living providers, alike, must guide customers and prospects along through a series of smaller decision points, or micro-yeses, to get to the ultimate yes."

A Proper Welcome

Dining is integral to that ultimate yes, and it sets the tone for a welcoming, comfortable community. Events such as Dine and Discover, Stay and Play packages and Gold Card perks for those on wait lists create excitement, opportunity to engage and a level of comfort that leads to commitment. Morrison Community Living leads the industry in innovative dining programs and events that can be scaled for communities of every size to delight current and prospective residents. In 2015, there is more opportunity than ever to connect with seniors and build engagement and growth in the community.



Marketing Matters

Programs include a professional marketing and communications toolkit that leverage the power of each offering to enhance resident experience and engage prospective residents. Tools include event invitations, flyers, posters, press release templates and social media suggestions.

Customization

Themed menus can be tailored to resident and community needs, including texture-modified menus and diet spreads.

Engagement

Comprehensive yet adaptable resident and associate experience guides for each program include décor and music suggestions, activities and educational information.

Enriching the Lives of Seniors Every Day

At Morrison Community Living, we are dedicated to enriching the lives of seniors every day. We commit to helping our communities achieve excellence and enhancing resident satisfaction through comprehensive offerings that include our core dining programs, nutrition and wellness, hospitality and EVS/POM. Tied to each of these is our legendary Morrison Community Living focus on extraordinary quality and customer service that delivers resident satisfaction and measurable results. Experience the Morrison Community Living difference; visit www.morrisoncommunityliving.com or call 1-800-2Client.





A Program for Every Personality

TRAVEL THE WORLD

JOIN US ON A 12 MONTH DINING JOURNEY



This unique, interactive program won the International Council on Active Aging's 2014 Innovators Practical Solutions Award. "The company's Travel the World dining event program took residents in client communities on a culinary



journey, showcasing a different country and its native foods each month," the ICAA wrote. "From music and costumes to activities, the program's high-touch, versatile components engaged diners in these experiences. For example, residents each received a Travel the World 'passport.' To mark the journey, they could collect up to 12 passport stamps in their passports throughout the year—and enter to win a special Captain's dinner."

Our 2015 dining program takes residents down Route 66, through the Jukebox Days, Disco Days, Pop and Rock, all the way to modern day. The program incorporates fun memories that pay homage to the nostalgia of classic diners and favorite foods such as scratch-made soups, blue plate specials, sandwiches and shakes. Along the way, there will be plenty of music across eight decades, and interactive elements of social media as well as good, old-fashioned socializing with show and tell, film screenings and sock-hop events.



CELEBRITY CHEF SERIES

America can't get enough of celebrity chefs! In 2014, we brought sizzle and star power to 11 communities by hosting appearances with Bal Arneson, Fabio Viviani, Jose Santaella and Jet Tila. Residents, clients and members of the larger community flocked to these Morrison

accounts, which garnered local and national media attention. In fact, Westminster-Canterbury increased sales by some 64 percent during an event, while also raising \$15,000 for the Westminster-Canterbury Foundation. The momentum has continued into the current year with more celebrity chef appearances, interactive demonstrations and special chef-inspired events and menus!



morrison
Community Living

We enrich the lives of seniors every day

Horse (Wu)

Physically attractive and popular, you like the company of others.



1906, 1918, 1930, 1942, 1954, 1966, 1978, 1990, 2002, 2014

Sheep (Wei)

Aesthetic and stylish, you enjoy being a private person.



1907, 1919, 1931, 1943, 1955, 1967, 1979, 1991, 2003, 2015

Monkey (Shen)

Persuasive, skillful, and intelligent, you strive to excel.



1908, 1920, 1932, 1944, 1956, 1968, 1980, 1992, 2004, 2016

Rooster (You)

Seeking wisdom and truth, you have a pioneering spirit.



1909, 1921, 1933, 1945, 1957, 1969, 1981, 1993, 2005, 2017

Dog (Xu)

Generous and loyal, you have the ability to work well with others.



1910, 1922, 1934, 1946, 1958, 1970, 1982, 1994, 2006, 2018

Pig (Hai)

Gallant and noble, your friends will remain at your side.



1911, 1923, 1935, 1947, 1959, 1971, 1983, 1995, 2007, 2019



MENU

Soup

Egg Drop Soup

Appetizer

Chicken and Vegetable Potstickers with a Sweet Plum Sauce

Entrées

Chicken Teriyaki

and

Shrimp Lo Mein

Sides

Brown Fried Rice

Stir Fried Vegetables

Egg Rolls

Desserts

Green Tea Cheese Cake

What Zodiac Animal Are You on the Chinese Zodiac Calendar?



1. Find your birth year
2. See what animal corresponds with your birth year
3. Look up the personality traits
4. Ask your friends and neighbors which animal they are

ZODIAC ANIMALS

BIRTH YEARS

Rat (Zi)

Ambitious and sincere, you can be generous with your money.



1900, 1912, 1924, 1936, 1948, 1960, 1972, 1984, 1996, 2008

Ox (Chou)

A leader, you are bright, patient, and cheerful.



1901, 1913, 1925, 1937, 1949, 1961, 1973, 1985, 1997, 2009

Tiger (Yin)

Forthright and sensitive, you possess great courage. You have the ability to be a strong leader capable of great sympathy.



1902, 1914, 1926, 1938, 1950, 1962, 1974, 1986, 1998, 2010

Rabbit (Mao)

Talented and affectionate, you are a seeker of tranquility.



1903, 1915, 1927, 1939, 1951, 1963, 1975, 1987, 1999, 2011

Dragon (Chen)

Robust and passionate, your life is filled with complexity.



1904, 1916, 1928, 1940, 1952, 1964, 1976, 1988, 2000, 2012

Snake (Si)

Strong-willed and intense, you display great wisdom.



1905, 1917, 1929, 1941, 1953, 1965, 1977, 1989, 2001, 2013

MOON
FESTIVAL
in
CHINA

