Benefits to the University of a Near-Campus CCRC for Retired Faculty & Staff

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This draft summarizes a number of the benefits to NCSU of having an on-campus or near-campus Continuing Care Retirement Community (CCRC) that is intended for retired faculty and staff. The items listed generally came from conversations with personnel at current university sponsored CCRC's or from a 1995 survey of retired faculty at twenty-three academic institutions. Many of the activities cited don't require a CCRC for implementation, however, the presence of a large group of retired faculty near the university would make it easier to realize the identified benefit.

- University programs related to older adults could use volunteers at the CCRC as a data base. Examples of this use are the Colonnades at the U. of Va. where medical faculty provide medical services, the CCRC under development at Texas Tech which is located next to the nursing school to allow practical training of nurses, and the units under development by East Carolina U. which will be staffed by students in the hotel management and food services curriculum. Oak Hammock at the University of Florida has included special rooms for fitness testing and other studies by university faculty.

Since NCSU lacks a medical or food services program, it is less obvious which departments would be interested in working with geriatrics residents. The programs involving adult recreation, adult education, Encore, psychology, ergonomics, and psychology would appear to be possible choices. Once it becomes clear that the university desires to collaborate in building a CCRC, there should be an effort to identify interested academic departments.

- Retired faculty can (and do) serve in a number of supporting roles at some universities. These include student mentoring, advising, and teaching of regularly scheduled or special academic courses. Retirees can host visitors to campus and staff visitor centers. They monitor student elections, provide review of university strategic plans, serve on faculty senate, and assist departments in organizing libraries and courses. They serve on special committees to evaluate issues related to the university. They teach classes through the benefits program on what to expect in retirement and how to stay involved. Recent retirees can
continue in research or informally consult on research programs.

None of these activities require a CCRC to implement but they would be a lot easier to introduce if large numbers of retirees were available in one location.

- Retired faculty can be guest lecturers at Centennial middle school. The location of a middle school on a Centennial is a natural for involving faculty in science demonstrations, teaching students about learning, and introducing new concepts. Since the University has already made a commitment to this school, the addition of a CCRC would support this commitment.

- A CCRC supports the university’s commitment to diversity. Chancellor Fox has repeatedly emphasized this obligation along with a stated obligation to the community. A CCRC supports both of these objectives.

- A CCRC is an excellent recruiting tool as well as a demonstration of a university commitment to retirees. A faculty member being recruiting by State is going to be more interested if he sees the university making a commitment to his life after work. Current faculty will also see the facility as evidence that the university cares what happens to them when their work days are over. Younger faculty can also see the facility as an appropriate place for their parents. A highly-recruited faculty member is going to be less likely to leave if his/her parents live across campus from where he works.

- Retirees become customers for university products. Some would enroll in courses, providing a perspective that complements the younger students. They would attend university plays, lectures and concerts. Because of the competition for tickets to major athletic events, you would likely find them in greater numbers at minor sports such as gymnastics, baseball, wrestling, and women’s basketball, all events that need greater support.

- A CCRC would provide a needed boost to Encore. The university sponsored program of adult education in McKimmon has grown dramatically over the years but is now showing signs of leveling off in enrollment. A campus-based CCRC could produce a dramatic increase in Encore membership.

- A theme for a campus based CCRC would likely emphasize fitness for both the mind and the body. The facility could become a showcase for both mental and physical fitness in older adults. An academic and physical fitness emphasis with studies of the results could demonstrate to other non-university retirement centers how these two qualities can be combined to produce a better life for older adults.
Retirees in university sponsored CCRC's tend to become major financial supporters of the university. This point is listed last because it should not be the driving force for a CCRC but it is an open secret that residents of CCRC's often tend to leave estates to the university or else provide large annual contributions. An alumna of Iowa State U. was so interested in moving into the Green Acres Retirement community at ISU that she made a forgivable $500,000 loan to the university to finance a new road that would speed construction of new units. There are undoubtedly other stories like this one at other universities with CCRC's.