



Brookdale Senior Living Solutions Newsroom

Entrepreneur Moves into Brookdale Senior Living to Test Innovation

National journalist creates digital storytelling platform to improve dementia care

When **Jay Newton-Small** sought care for her father, who was living with dementia, she wanted his caregivers to understand him as well as she did. So Newton-Small, then a correspondent for TIME Magazine, did what came naturally: she wrote down his life story. Its impact on his care was so positive that in 2016 she left her job to launch **MemoryWell**, a company that preserves the life stories of people living with the dementia and uses them as a resource for caregivers.

From Jan. 8 – 11, Newton-Small will move into **Brookdale Fort Collins**, a dementia care community in Fort Collins, Colo., to participate in the Entrepreneur in Residence program. The program allows entrepreneurs to temporarily move into a senior living community to help test and adapt the products they have innovated. Brookdale developed the program to help those creating products and services for the aging to better understand what seniors want and need.

While at Brookdale, Newton-Small will live among the seniors, eating, participating and socializing with residents. This experience is designed to give her an up-close and personal look into the daily lives of senior residents and the caregivers she wants to help.

MemoryWell is based in Washington, D.C. and uses a national network of over 400 journalists to interview families and write about the seniors. The stories are posted on MemoryWell's **website**, along with personal photos and videos. These details help caregivers get to know residents as whole, well-rounded people with life stories that residents may otherwise have trouble telling on their own.

“At TIME, I used my talents to tell the stories of the powerful, the rich and the infamous and those stories were read by millions,” said Newton-Small. “Now I’m using those same skills to tell the stories of everyday people, and it might only be read by 20 or 30, but it has a much deeper impact on that life. And that’s really rewarding.”

“MemoryWell meshes well with Brookdale’s person-centered approach,” explains Juliet Holt Klinger, senior director of dementia care for the nation’s largest senior living provider. “It’s important to understand that a dementia diagnosis does not change a person’s identity. Stories of one’s past help us honor the whole person and everything that made them who they are today.”

MemoryWell, with its professional journalists and multi-media approach, complements Brookdale’s own practice of interviewing residents and their families to learn about their life experiences and long-time pursuits.

Established in 2015, Brookdale’s Entrepreneur in Residence program is part of the company’s “Rewiring Aging” initiative, which enriches seniors’ lives through technology. It allows entrepreneurs and businesses developing products and services for seniors the opportunity to move into a Brookdale community for a free multi-day residency so they can gain a better understanding of the aging population. Since the program began, over a dozen entrepreneurs have participated at Brookdale locations in various parts of the country; Newton-Small’s stay is the first in Colorado. For entrepreneurs interested in learning more about the program, send an email innovations@brookdale.com.

<http://newsroom.brookdale.com/memorywelleir>