Georgetown, Texas

Community Slogan: *Growing a community where all are valued and have the opportunity to thrive.*

With its quaint Victorian storefronts, historic city square and charming restaurants, Georgetown, Texas is home to approximately 47,000 residents. The city is unique in a number of ways: it is the county seat of Williamson County; it has a fault line, called the Balcones Escarpment, that divides the city into a hilly west side and a flat east side; it is the home to Southwestern University, the oldest university in Texas; and it is the site of Sun City Texas, a retirement community whose residents make up one-third of the city’s population. But what really sets Georgetown apart is its commitment to promoting an intergenerational mindset where everyone can feel welcome and wanted.

In Georgetown, no one entity plans or oversees the city’s array of intergenerational activities or initiatives. Instead, the city government, schools, businesses, and religious and nonprofit organizations all work collaboratively to identify opportunities and strengthen existing efforts.

The city government helps sustain intergenerational efforts in a number of ways. Using an Asset Based Community Development

**Description of Community:**
The City of Georgetown is a historic county seat in central Williamson County. The award winning “community” of Georgetown encompasses all geographic areas served by the Georgetown Independent School District, which does include some areas located outside the actual city.

**Demographics (Source: U.S. Census Bureau 2010 QuickFacts):**
- Total population: 47,400
- No. under 24: 11,625
- No. over 55: 18,108

**Websites:** www.georgetown.org, www.georgetownisd.org, visit.georgetown.org

**Current Program Examples:**
- The Georgetown Project – collaboration of many agencies, government
- Jr. Leadership Georgetown and Teen Advisory Boards
- Southwestern University, Civic Engagement and Senior University
- San Gabriel Park and Trails System
- Georgetown Independent School District programming
- Intergenerational dance and music performances

**Intergenerational Fact:**
The Sun City (active retirement community in Georgetown) voters overwhelmingly supported the passage of a 2010 local school bond, at a time when other Central Texas community school bonds failed.
approach, it works to build the often underused “community assets” (talents) of seniors and youth. The city is also a major contributor to the Georgetown Project, which funds social service and youth development organizations that help sustain intergenerational connections. Other city projects include helping to revitalize the historic town square so it now serves as an intergenerational gathering place; overseeing a new public library that includes space to foster intergenerational interactions; and building a new recreation center that includes a teen/senior center.

The Georgetown Independent School District (GISD) leads many intergenerational program efforts. These include: recruiting senior mentors and tutors into the schools; co-sponsoring an annual senior spelling bee; arranging joint performances with the high school and Sun City choirs; inviting veterans to be recognized at school Veterans Day ceremonies; and sending school buses to shuttle the Sun City “Booster Club” to high school ball games. These efforts are having a beneficial effect. In a 2010 vote, Sun City voters overwhelmingly supported the passage of a local school bond at a time when this measure failed in other Central Texas community districts.

Senior adults (50 and older) in Georgetown can take advantage of affordable lifelong learning through the Georgetown Senior University program. Approximately 600 residents currently take classes. Recently, the program’s headquarters relocated from Sun City to the Southwestern University campus to encourage seniors to become an integral part of the university environment.

Georgetown’s commitment to intergenerational understanding means a great deal to residents.

As Stephanie Blanck explains, “I have lived here since 1980 and have seen the changes and growth within our city and our school system. The demographics…and physical footprint have changed, but one thing has not. The heart and soul of caring for one’s neighbor has remained. As my husband and I approached retirement, we decided there was no better place for us to ‘grow old’ than in Georgetown. We know we will be well taken care of here.”

Adds Lizz Stippick, “I have lived in Georgetown for all 19 years of my life…and I plan on growing old here…my ultimate dream would be to teach here in the district that I grew up in…that way I can still be involved in this great blended community!”