Dunedin, Florida:
Living and Breathing the Intergenerational Mission

The 35,000+ residents of Dunedin, Florida don’t just enjoy a warm and sunny physical environment; they delight in a warm and sunny mental outlook, as well. No matter what your age, you’ll find plenty of ways to be an integral part of this community on Florida’s Gulf Coast.

Dunedin formalized its efforts to connect generations in 1992. That’s when the community’s Committee on Aging formed an Intergenerational Subcommittee “to bring public awareness to the value of intergenerational relationships by supporting and promoting recreational, educational and service projects that bring together people of all ages.”

Today, intergenerational awareness in Dunedin is free-flowing and seamless. This mindset resonates from the city leaders through staff and into the community. Each year since 2006, the mayor has issued a formal proclamation to bring awareness and commitment to the community’s celebration of Intergenerational Week. During that week – the first full week in December – the city celebrates activities to cap off all the events and programs that brought generations together throughout the year. Yearly, there are 29 events in the city that bring together multiple generations, along with ongoing programs, ranging from teenagers visiting nursing homes, intergenerational activities at senior centers and holiday festivals.

Dunedin says it exemplifies a community where individuals of all ages are integral and valued. It currently has 30 boards and committees comprising volunteers who are residents and dedicated to service in the community, including a Youth Advisory Board.

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ISHAN MANDANI, HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT
that offers a youthful perspective on policies and practices, as well as city infrastructure.

This is a place where groups like the Rotary Club support a program called, “Sing, Spell, Read and Write”, to assist children in grades K through 2 improve their reading skills. It’s also a place where third grade students and older adults spend time talking and stitching together a quilt that represents the younger and older generations with regard to what they enjoy or believe is important.

The emphasis on valuing residents of all ages has made Dunedin a truly desirable place to live. In 2008, Money Magazine named the community one of the “Best Places to Retire in the USA.” The State of Florida designated it among its “Communities for a Lifetime” in both 2009 and 2007. And this year, it reigns as one of the “Best Intergenerational Communities in America.”

Dunedin has certainly come up with a winning formula for making every resident feel good about themselves and about living in this gem of a city.

“THERE ARE BOTH ACTIVE AND PASSIVE PROGRAMS WITH FACILITIES FOR EVERYONE IN DUNEDIN....ALL OF THESE PROGRAMS ENABLE INTERGENERATIONAL EXPERIENCES THAT GROW FAMILY AND COMMUNITY VALUES AND COMMUNICATION. THANK YOU DUNEDIN.”

ROGER L. NIPPER, OLDER ADULT