



Where devotion meets compassion.

Orange County's Quaker Gardens Senior Living Renames to Rowntree Gardens; Rebrands, Reinvests for the Next 50 Years

*Orange County's five-star Medicare-rated, not-for-profit CCRC
makes ambitious investment in its future and community.*

(Orange County, California – Winter 2015) – Nearly a half-century since its founding as Quaker Gardens Senior Living, the newly renamed [Rowntree Gardens \(www.rowntreegardens.org\)](http://www.rowntreegardens.org) is embarking on the most bold and far-reaching project in its history.

The 335-resident senior living community, founded in 1965 with the belief that community members are and should always be treated like family, is one of Orange County, California's only licensed, not-for-profit, Continuing Care Retirement Communities (CCRC). Rowntree Gardens is retooling nearly everything from its branding to its structures to its menus to its offerings while maintaining its core strength – the exceptional living experience provided by its compassionate, devoted staff.

In late 2013, Rowntree Gardens launched an extensive review to identify what changes would be necessary to flourish during the next 50 years. That review encompassed its internal and external audience perceptions and needs, services, physical infrastructure, brand promise and relevance.

Three far-reaching, major changes

Three key areas of necessary changes emerged from the research and are driving reinvestment in the following:

1. Create a new brand that would: reinforce and leverage the organization's faith-based mission and its positive impact on service, help dispel misperceptions sometimes associated with the former Quaker name, and be welcoming to all.
2. Invest in major updates that simply didn't exist when Quaker Gardens was founded nearly 50 years ago. These include: community-wide Wi-Fi access; modern kitchenettes in apartments; numerous, major interior and exterior design and infrastructure updates; a new, modern entrance; updating the dining rooms; new and larger parking lot; creating a 24/7 coffee/juice bar; increasing energy efficiency through new windows, weatherization and more; and enclosing porches to expand living space in several apartments.
3. Develop additional programming focused on helping community members live healthy and fully, connect with each other and flourish.

Exceptional staff = exceptional care

A key factor that distinguishes Rowntree Gardens from other senior communities is the depth and quality of care community members receive from the staff. The average tenure of a staff member is 13 years, with some serving the organization and community members for as long as 40 years. Many know residents and their families so well that they view them as extensions of their own families – and treat them accordingly. Staff members know the residents' names, habits, histories and preferences – creating a very personal and loving experience for community members.

"This is a very exciting and dynamic time at Rowntree Gardens," explained Chief Executive Office and Board Chair Randy Brown. "We're here to meet the physical, emotional and spiritual needs of people through all seasons of life with compassionate and skilled care. We hope everything we do brings to life our vision statement, 'To be a **daily blessing to all** we encounter.'"



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Brown, who also runs his own financial advisory firm, joined Rowntree Gardens as a non-paid board member in 2010. He later became board chairman; and at the board's request, he became interim (paid) CEO of Quaker Gardens in February 2013.

Seeing the senior-living organization prosper under his direction, the board requested in early 2014 that Brown accept a five-year commitment as CEO through 2019. In March 2014, longtime employee Richard Nordsiek was promoted to executive director.

Benefits of Rowntree's not-for-profit status

- Rowntree Gardens is a not-for-profit, managed by an all-volunteer board of directors whose service is driven by their belief in the organization's mission, not any financial motive.
- Rowntree Gardens is a public-benefit corporation. There are no shareholders, owners or others seeking financial profits from the organization. All actions are taken to benefit the broader organization.
- Revenue first goes to pay all expenses, some is held in reserve and any remaining is directed back into the organization in the form of capital improvements, expansion and other long-term investments.

A faith-based community, Rowntree Gardens provides a full range of integrated, onsite services to meet the changing needs of community members as they age. These include: [independent living \(Acacia Independent Living\)](#), [assisted living \(The Cedars Assisted Living\)](#), long- and short-term [skilled-nursing care \(Elmwood Care Center\)](#), rehab services ([New Leaf Rehab Agency](#)) and [memory care \(Gardens Memory Care\)](#). The organization also offers people [in-home care](#) through its [Faithful Friends Home Care](#) agency.

Rowntree Gardens' eight-acre campus features open paths through landscaped gardens and open spaces, courtyards, a putting green, shuffleboard courts, a fountain, the intimate and non-denominational Heartwood Chapel, and more. Rowntree's Elmwood Care Center skilled nursing earned Medicare's highest 5-star rating and provides 24/7/365 licensed skilled nursing services.

ABOUT ROWNTREE GARDENS

"U.S. News & World Report [BEST Nursing Homes 2014](#)" (based on Medicare data) gave Rowntree Gardens its highest rating of five stars. <http://health.usnews.com/best-nursing-homes/area/ca/rowntree-gardens-555718>. Fewer than 25 percent of the nearly 16,000 facilities examined across the country received five stars.

Two Friends Churches (Quakers) founded Rowntree Gardens in 1965. It is one of Orange County's only senior-living communities that offers a full spectrum of payment / commitment levels, ranging from month-to-month accommodations to lifetime-guaranteed accommodations via its [Life Care](#) plan. The organization is affiliated with California Friends Homes, the Alzheimer's Association, LeadingAge of California, Better Business Bureau and Friends Services for the Aging.

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