Year One Report

May 1, 2018 - April 30, 2019
About Senior Planet Colorado

A project of the national social change organization Older Adults Technology Services (OATS), Senior Planet arrived in Colorado in May of 2018 with the ambitious goal of transforming the experience of aging in our state. Combining free technology training programs and innovative physical and virtual spaces — all thoughtfully designed for people over 60 — Senior Planet is building a movement of digitally empowered older adults who are active, connected, and independent!

Our work here is powered by OATS and is informed by fifteen years of experience innovating solutions at the intersection of aging and technology. It is generously supported by a growing community of local funders, including NextFifty Initiative, Gates Family Foundation, and Capital One. And it is continuously inspired by the tens of thousands of Senior Planet members around the world who insist on aging with attitude.

Our Philosophy

We believe in empowering older adults as change agents — in their own lives, in their communities, and in the world at large! We see technology as a means to this end, not an end unto itself.
Executive Summary

Senior Planet’s first year in Colorado resulted in profound and measurable impact on the lives of older people here. Over 1,250 seniors enjoyed an in-person program experience, and over 27,500 older Coloradans connected with Senior Planet through digital channels, all seeding a growing movement of people over 60 who embrace technology as a tool for personal transformation and collective impact.

Scores of community organizations across the aging sector — from healthcare to transportation, housing to financial security — learned about OATS’ mission, its investment in Colorado, and its vision for Senior Planet. These groups are excited to join hands with OATS in improving the experience of aging in a state that is already ahead of the curve.

Year One Wins

- 1,254 older adults engaged in person with Senior Planet programs.
- Broke ground in April on the Senior Planet Center in Lowry’s Hangar 2.
- 95% of participants would recommend Senior Planet to friends and family.
Program Growth

We delivered 825 total hours of course instruction in collaboration with 6 partners across 11 sites by April 30.
Key Results

As measured in detailed pre- and post-course assessments developed by OATS in partnership with Cornell and Columbia Universities, Senior Planet participants:

- Would recommend the courses: 95%
- Are more optimistic about the future: 77%
- Have more access to health information: 76%
- Are more connected to friends and family: 73%
- Have improved their quality of life: 72%
- Are more confident living independently: 72%

In its first year on the ground, Senior Planet Colorado has achieved powerful results that are on par with the organization's national performance. The positive changes indicated above speak clearly to Senior Planet's deep impact on its participants' mindsets in addition to equipping them with the digital skills they need to fully participate in today's economy and society.
Our Members

Meet the older adults who are aging with attitude at altitude!

We serve a diverse and vibrant community of older adults here in Colorado: 88% of our members have annual household incomes below $25,000 and 57% identify as non-white. In partnering with organizations like the Denver Housing Authority, the GLBT Community Center of Colorado, and the Clear Creek County Library District, among others, we are working to ensure that Senior Planet programs are available to Coloradans over 60 regardless of their zip code, sexual orientation, income, or native language.
Leo Gonzales

"It’s good to be out of the cave!"

Before starting Senior Planet’s Computer Basics course at North Lincoln, a Denver Housing Authority partner site, Leo owned a computer but had never used it before. At work, Leo didn’t know how to enter his time online, so his supervisor had to do it. Now, Leo has an email address and actively uses the internet from home, including to log his own hours. He has also used his skills to pursue a lifelong passion: motorcycles! Leo is buying and selling parts on Craigslist as well as reading up on world news. Leo says, "It’s good to be out of the cave!"
Senior Planet Center

Building a unique community asset in the heart of Denver’s Lowry neighborhood.

OATS conducted an exhaustive search in the summer of 2018 to find the perfect site for its future Senior Planet Center before selecting Lowry’s historical Hangar 2 building.

Working with architect Wid Chapman, a pioneer of modern designs for older adults, we created a one-of-a-kind community space that will be filled with the latest in mainstream technology.

Combining classrooms, co-working stations, lounge seating, and a large event space — not to mention a coffee bar and incubator room — the Senior Planet Center is poised to become a beloved resource for older Coloradans when it opens in August 2019.
Funding

OATS is forging a path toward sustainable long-term funding for its work in Colorado.

In selecting Colorado as a new site for Senior Planet, OATS took on the formidable challenge of serving a geographically diverse state with a rapidly growing population of people over 60. As an organization, OATS is committed to empowering older Coloradans for many years to come and thus worked hard in 2018 to secure additional long-term funding for this project. In December, NextFifty Initiative granted OATS an additional $1.5M to support Senior Planet Colorado through April of 2021, and the Gates Family Foundation contributed $20,000 toward the construction of the Senior Planet Center.

"NextFifty Initiative is committed to collaborating with projects and organizations that change the landscape of aging. Our investment in OATS’ work lies within our charge to fuel innovation and transform generations."
Year Two + Beyond

After a successful first year, OATS will reach new heights in 2019-20.

With the opening of the Senior Planet Center in Lowry in late August, OATS plans to offer more non-course programming across its five impact areas (social engagement, health & wellness, political engagement, economic security, and creative expression). These member experiences will inspire more older adults to embrace technology as a way to thrive in today’s digital world.

After completing a stakeholder tour to listen and learn from older adults across the state, OATS will launch major partnerships in select rural communities, like Mesa County, in the summer and fall of 2019, bringing its existing Senior Planet programs to underserved areas and testing tailor-made solutions like digital program delivery.
Stay in touch!

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