



## Curiosity—and continued learning

Genealogy and astronomy are just two examples of educational classes Stanley and Carolyn Mitchell have participated in since moving to Touchmark three years ago. “Touchmark brings to us the opportunity to learn new things,” explains Stanley. “With classes held right here, attending is easy and accessible.”

“The astronomy class was one I was excited about, as I always wanted to learn more about it,” adds Carolyn.

Touchmark’s Life Enrichment/Wellness staff regularly schedule educational forums and classes for residents along with the many social and other activities reflecting seven dimensions of wellness.

Twice a year, Touchmark hosts a series of classes dedicated to guest speakers offering more in-depth classes on specific topics. Class offerings have included new media literacy, geology, and habits for healthy living. Often the presenters are professors or professors emeritus from the local university.

“There are lots of learning opportunities for a variety of interests,” says Stanley. “One of the classes we attended was on Alzheimer’s and mental health, which was very helpful.”

### **New experiences create memories**

The couple admit they like to try new things and continually learn. “New experiences we share together create a ‘remember when’ of shared

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history,” says Carolyn. Recently the Mitchells attended a concert at the Meridian Symphony, saw a play at the Idaho Shakespeare Festival, and have plans to visit the Starlight Mountain Theatre in a mountain community outside of Boise.

“The music of the area symphonies is a joy,” exclaims Carolyn. “It’s so uplifting and enriching. Now it’s so easy. The prearranged transportation to the concerts is much more enjoyable, because we don’t have to drive, and when we arrive at the venue, we are warmly greeted as ‘the group from Touchmark’ and led to our reserved seating.”

The surrounding area has no shortage of interesting activities for the Mitchells, whose key interests include art, human rights, geology, travel, and food. Exercise is another area of keen interest, and the couple work out nearly every day in the Touchmark Health & Fitness Club. “This has been vital to our health,” says Carolyn.

### **Like-minded people find each other**

“We’re very social people, and we like to be with our friends,” says Stanley. “That’s what’s happened here at Touchmark. We’ve become real fast friends with people who are like-minded and enjoy new experiences.”

Carolyn adds, “We became involved in the Touchmark Thespians group. It’s fun, a lot of work, and quite impressive: The sound, lighting, and staging are amazing.” Both Carolyn and Stanley have served as stage managers, and Carolyn has performed in the show.

Married 57 years, Stanley and Carolyn moved to Touchmark from another state. The two agree they have found a new group of friends with whom they can enjoy learning new things, sharing a glass of good wine, and savoring a fine meal.

“It’s about having fun, laughing, and sharing,” says Carolyn. “It’s just what we do.”



**Melissa Conrad**  
Vice President, Wellness & Marketing

**“Anyone who stops learning is old, whether at 20 or 80. Anyone who keeps learning stays young.”**

*– Henry Ford*

Because it’s back to school season, we’ve been thinking about the role learning plays in life, whether during our formative or later years. Learning can happen at any age as long as one has the curiosity and commitment to open his or her mind.

Not only does learning new things add more definition and enjoyment to your life, studies also show that it is particularly useful in keeping the aging mind sharp. Researchers from the University of Texas at Dallas recently experimented with adults ages 60-90 to gain insight into how learning new skills affects memory and mental cognition.

The results of the study showed that people who engaged in challenging new activities—such as digital photography and quilting—exhibited improvements in memory and problem-solving, whereas those who participated in activities with which they were already familiar—such as crossword puzzles and listening to classical music—did not.

Furthermore, the researchers observed that a hobby most improved individual brain function when it tapped the working memory, long-term memory, and other high-level cognitive processes at the same time. “The findings suggest that engagement alone is not enough,” says lead researcher Denise Park. “The three learning groups were pushed very hard to keep learning more and mastering more tasks and skills. Only the groups that were confronted with continuous and prolonged mental challenge improved.”

With that in mind, give yourself the gift of learning a new skill this autumn. There’s no better way to improve brain health while having fun at the same time!



## Health & Fitness Club

We welcome the Club's newest certified fitness professional, Pam Bellsmith, to the team! She is teaching a class called Rock 'n' Roll on Tuesdays and Thursdays at 9 am. It is a cardio dance and floor workout with a foam roller.

Join us for our Wellness Wednesday lecture on Wednesday, September 19, at noon. Presenter Donna Manning, MS, will discuss *Empowerment Through Mind-Body Connection* and teach you about stress reduction, peace of mind, happiness, and optimum quality of life.

Don't miss out on our Massage Therapy special. Buy five massages and get the sixth one at no charge! Conducted by licensed massage therapist Mona Marpol.



## Inspiring wellness

Every September, Touchmark joins with the International Council on Active Aging and celebrates Active Aging Week. This year, the theme is *Inspiring Wellness*, which encourages older adults to get excited about discovering new and engaging activities. By focusing on the seven dimensions of wellness—emotional, environmental, intellectual, occupational, physical, social, and spiritual—everything we do benefits residents' and members overall health and well-being. Active Aging Week is September 24 through 30. Be sure to watch the calendar so you can join us for Active Aging events and offerings.







# TEAM MEMBER

## *Spotlight*

**Name:** Ashley Nunez

**Position:** Life Enrichment/Wellness Director

**How would you describe yourself?**

Easygoing, fun, and loving!

**Share a bit about your family and growing up.**

I grew up in Sacramento, California, as the second of five children, with two brothers, two sisters, and three dogs. I was born and raised in Sacramento until venturing to Arizona to attend college.

**What are some of the most significant events in your life?**

Participating in a sponsorship opportunity to be a camp counselor for two summers in high school for children with developmental disabilities; attending Grand Canyon University where I studied health care administration and met my future husband; and buying my first house in March 2018!

**How long have you worked at Touchmark?**

Just over six months. I started in February 2018.

**What do you enjoy most about your job?**

My daily interactions with residents, where they share their hobbies and interests for future events and activities. And, of course, field trip day!

**What Touchmark value do you most closely relate to?**

I am an Ally. Through my family experiences and studying health care administration, the best feeling is knowing that you have a team behind you to support you with whatever you need. Whether it is personal or professional, the team here at Touchmark exemplifies that they are always allies.

**Outside of work what are your favorite ...**

**Activities:** Hiking with my dog Louie, spending time with friends and family, and making my new house a home.

**Food:** Thai food.

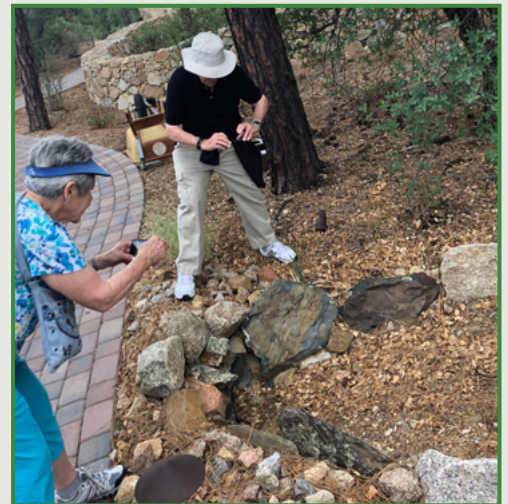
**Movie:** *The Princess Bride*.

**Music:** I will listen to anything!





*Communitywide events included the Touchmark Trekkers hike to Goldwater Lake, a night out to The World's Oldest Rodeo, groundbreaking and move-in celebrations, Photography Club hike to Highlands Center for Natural History, and winetasting at the Southwest Wine Center.*





# Save the date!

## INTERNATIONAL FOOD AND DRINK FESTIVAL

**Tuesday, September 18 • 2 - 4 pm**

Join us for an event to travel the world through your taste buds! This event will feature light snacks and beverages from several different countries around the world. Booths representing countries from Germany to Japan will offer a brief cultural history of the nation and food item at no cost. We will also feature the top beer and cocktails from around the world. Guests are welcome to attend happy hour at The Finn™ Restaurant & Pub following completion of the event. RSVP by September 10.

*[View our {FULL} Life calendar online for a complete list of events: TouchmarkPrescott.com](http://TouchmarkPrescott.com)*

## Construction update



*Exterior finishes on the Grand Lodge include pouring concrete for the sidewalks, building retaining walls, and steam washing the decks and balconies. Move-in day is drawing closer.*

## What others are saying ...

*“After four months of Long & Strong class, my long-suffering morning backache is 100% gone!”*

*- Don Swetlik, Health & Fitness Club member*

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