

Jane Rohde has more than 22 years of experience designing spaces for seniors. Among her most noteworthy efforts, she developed Continuing Care Retirement Communities, which provides long-term care for seniors in Maryland and Michigan, while serving as the Vice President of Design for Erickson Retirement Communities, a company based in Catonsville, Md., that developed and managed retirement communities.

Growing up in a farming community in Eden, N.Y., Rohde says it gave her a different set of values. "You always knew the older people in the community," she says. "That definitely impacted me."

In 1996, she founded JSR Associates, Inc., in Ellicott City, Md., which provides consulting services for senior living, healthcare and sustainability across the nation, to integrate the gap between operations for senior living care models and the designed environment, an issue she witnessed earlier in her career.

She says she chose her current profession "because elders and children are the most vulnerable populations; they are the ones who are least designed for in a purposeful manner."

Since then, Rohde has won several awards for her designs, including the 2009 AIA Design for Aging Award, which honors innovative design and execution of senior living facilities, for an intergenerational community she co-designed in Rantoul, Ill. She also received the 2008 Innovative Product Award from *Long-Term Living* and *Healthcare Design* magazines for her

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patented Access Table, which frees elders from using a bib while dining and allows them to share the table with those in wheelchairs and chairs simultaneously.

"She's a leading expert in senior living design," says Amy Lopez, IIDA, AAHID, Principal at Houston-based WHR Architects, Inc. "She has influenced it greatly through her activism and her education of the public."

A champion of seniors, Rohde has impacted Interior Design with her work as a member of the 2010 and 2014 Health Guidelines Revision Committee for the *Guidelines for Design and Construction of Health Care Facilities*, which is used as a reference standard by federal agencies, architects, engineers and designers in 42 states when reviewing, approving or developing their own codes. She was instrumental in improving the long-term care nursing portion of the *Guidelines*.

But it's not just designers, architects and engineers that Rohde has influenced. She has also improved the daily lives of many seniors, such as Jane Heald, a resident of a senior living community in Pleasant Hill, Tenn.

Heald reached out to Rohde for advice when reconstruction was taking place at the Wharton Care Center nursing home. Rohde offered suggestions on care models and later became responsible for the center's senior living consulting, programming, Interior Design and space planning.

"We have a gated courtyard, so now people will be able to go outdoors when they want to and be safe," she says. "And instead of one big nursing home, we now have four unique households."

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