



NEWS RELEASE

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LARAIN MESTMAN JOINS WISE & HEALTHY AGING TO HEAD UP THE ACE (ADVOCATES FOR CONSERVED ELDERS) PROGRAM

SANTA MONICA (March 7, 2008) - Laraine Mestman has been named program manager of the ACE (Advocates for Conserved Elders) Program at WISE & Healthy Aging. This program is funded by the California Community Foundation. Her focus is recruiting, training, and supervising this volunteer-based program to visit elderly persons who are under court-ordered conservatorships residing in long-term care residential facilities.

ACE is a new program developed by WISE & Healthy Aging in conjunction with the Los Angeles Superior Court, Probate Division. The program is intended to help reduce isolationism among seniors and other dependent adults by providing the conservatee with a special advocate.

In addition to her certificates as a paralegal and mediator, Mestman holds a Masters of Fine Arts degree and a bachelor's degree in English from the University of California, San Diego. "Laraine's background in mediation, and extensive work experience with the Alternative Dispute Resolution office within the Los Angeles Superior Court system, is an invaluable asset to our clients and the organization," says Grace Cheng Braun, President and CEO of WISE & Healthy Aging, "We are fortunate to have her on our team."

Mestman recruits and trains volunteers specifically to be a friend and visit court-referred conservatees twice a month in a residential care facility, and to provide additional eyes and ears for someone who is alone. Most importantly, ACE volunteers establish a supportive relationship with the conservatee.

ACE volunteer candidates must be over the age of 21, committed to helping a conservatee in a long-term residential care facility, and must have a high school education or equivalent though no special educational background is required. The volunteer must have good communication skills and common sense, will be required to undergo a background clearance and will be fingerprinted. The program is expected to have nearly 150 volunteers by the second year.

Founded in 1915, the California Community Foundation is one of the leading philanthropic organizations in Los Angeles County, managing more than \$1 billion in assets. Each year, it grants over \$100 million as investments in the future of our local communities. The foundation

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partners with individual donors and actively supports non-profit organizations to address diverse and dynamic needs of our communities. CCF makes grants in the areas of health, education, affordable housing, the arts and human development.

For more information about the ACE Program, please call (310) 394-9871, ext. 445.



Laraine Mestman, Program Manager of the ACE
(Advocates for Conserved Elders) Program at WISE & Healthy Aging

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WISE & Healthy Aging, a social services organization, enhances the independence, dignity and quality of life of older adults through leadership, advocacy and innovative services. The Santa Monica-based nonprofit is the result of a November 2007 merger of WISE Senior Services and Center for Healthy Aging. Each organization served the community for more than three decades prior to the merger, earning national reputations for innovative and effective programs and services. WISE & Healthy Aging continues to build on these strengths in serving the greater Los Angeles area.