



NEWS RELEASE

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WISE & Healthy Aging Honors Dr. Monika White

SANTA MONICA (July 14, 2009) - A crowd of over 100 well-wishers greeted Dr. Monika White, retiring CEO of WISE & Healthy Aging at a recent reception held in her honor at the Ken Edwards Center in Santa Monica.

Grace Cheng Braun, current president and CEO of WISE & Healthy Aging said, "I was moved by the outpouring of appreciation of people there whom I personally hadn't seen for a number of years. Monika's expertise and knowledge have contributed to WISE & Healthy Aging for many years and she will be sorely missed."

Former WISE & Healthy Aging Board Co-Chair Don Cohen, a colleague and friend for more than a dozen years said, "She is one of the nicest people I know. "She is always there on behalf of someone in need."

Interviewed in her warm and inviting office at WISE & Healthy Aging, Dr. White was candid. "I've paid my dues and many years ago I decided I would retire at 70." But although retiring from WISE & Healthy Aging, Dr. White will continue her work as an adjunct professor in Gerontology and Social Work at USC and offer assistance to her former colleagues at WISE & Healthy Aging.

Surrounded by dozens of plaques from civic, government, and professional associations in recognition of her work, she admits to being happy about the growth of her work in case

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management. “I’m especially gratified by how many people I have influenced or trained to work with older people and their families. No one gives us a manual on how to be old.”

Dr. White says she “was deeply touched by the diversity of comments from the community and colleagues.” She is particularly proud of WISE & Healthy Aging’s Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program that has been protecting the rights and dignity of residents in skilled nursing and residential care facilities throughout Los Angeles County since 1980. With a flash of her brilliant smile she noted, “This program is the largest in the United States, larger than any state’s program.”

Founding board member of the National Chronic Care Consortium, Dr. White also serves on many boards, including the board of directors of the American Society on Aging; National Association of Geriatric Care Managers; California Social Welfare Archives; National Academy of Certified Care Managers; National Conference of Community and Justice; and the Santa Monica Community College Associates.

Acknowledging his respect for her expertise in the field of aging, Don Cohen said, “You often have to make tough decisions. Monika has no hidden agenda. She is such a wonderful person, happy, practical and easy to work with.”

For more information on WISE & Healthy Aging, please call 310-394-9871.

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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. This nonprofit is the result of a Nov. 2007 merger of WISE Senior Services and Center for Healthy Aging.



Photo Caption:

(L to R) Monika White receives a commendation from Minh-Ha Nguyen, assistant director; and Otto Solórzano, chief deputy director, Community and Senior Services, County of Los Angeles Area Agency on Aging.