



NEWS RELEASE

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WISE & Healthy Aging Receives Major Federal Grant to Administer City of Los Angeles Senior Companion Program

Program Supports "Aging in Place" for Challenged Seniors, Also Enhances Program Volunteers' Lives

Santa Monica (October 31, 2012) – The federal **Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS)**, through its SeniorCorps branch, has awarded senior social services agency **WISE & Healthy Aging (W&HA)** a three-year grant to administer its City of Los Angeles **Senior Companion Program**, announced Grace Cheng Braun, W&HA president and CEO.

The Senior Companion Program contract to serve Los Angeles began October 1, 2012 and provides \$242,000 per year for a dual purpose: to engage volunteers aged 55 and older as companions to seniors who need extra assistance in order to remain living in their own homes, and to provide a high-quality experience that also enriches the lives of the volunteers.

"We were extremely pleased to be entrusted with the responsibility of administering this important program that benefits both the volunteers and seniors striving to stay in their own homes," Cheng Braun said. "A 2009 survey conducted by the American Association of Retired Persons (AARP) revealed that almost 90 percent of Americans aged 50 and older plan to remain in their homes as long as they can. The concept of 'aging in place' is very much a part of our mission.

"In addition, the experience that WISE & Healthy Aging already has in administering another significant SeniorCorps program, RSVP, and the fruitful collaborations we have established with other community organizations through RSVP, makes this an exceptionally good fit," she said.

When fully implemented, the grant will bring together mainly low-income senior volunteers who will receive a modest stipend for their 15 or more weekly work hours, ten partner agencies whose clients will be served by the companions, and 150-plus homebound elderly persons receiving the individualized, supportive in-home visits.

Federally funded programs such as those of CNCS are especially helpful in addressing the needs of seniors at a time when state, county and city budgets have suffered numerous cuts, Cheng Braun noted. They come at a time when the senior population is rapidly increasing as Baby Boomers reach age 65.

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WISE & Healthy Aging is the result of the 2007 merger of WISE Senior Services and Center for Healthy Aging. With a combined 70 years' experience serving older adults, the nonprofit organization brings together a synergy of services, information, programs and support for seniors, those who care for them and the professionals who work with them. For more information, call (310) 394-9871 or visit www.wiseandhealthyaging.org