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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

## ***Girls Night Out Tackles Women, Healthcare and Aging WEL Foundation Hosts An Empowering Discussion To Explore Women's Role in the Aging of America***

**Philadelphia, Pa., October 1, 2009-** This evening, The Wesley Enhanced Living (WEL) Foundation, the private foundation which advances the WEL continuing care retirement communities' (CCRC) vision and mission through philanthropy, will host *Girls Night Out*. *Girls Night Out* will be an empowering discussion about women, aging and healthcare. The WEL Foundation will host a diverse, intergenerational group of 120 women from across the greater Philadelphia region to address the hot button topics that are affecting every woman and their families in the United States.

The WEL Foundation understands that women face a wide spectrum of challenges when it comes to aging and healthcare. Everything from caring for aging parents, saving for retirement, navigating the healthcare system, considering long-term care options and offering emotional and spiritual support for loved ones. As the healthcare and Medicaid/Medicare landscape rapidly changes, women are expected to make quick, informed decisions that will affect the future well-being of themselves and their families. They are the key decision makers in most cases and carry the burden while still maintaining a well-rounded work/life balance.

*Girls Night Out* will provide all attendees- who range in age from 23-87- with the opportunity to talk about the aging and healthcare issues that "keep them up at night." And most importantly, be able to learn from one another's triumphs and struggles. While discussing these challenges, this evening will embrace the fun spirit and collaborative, supportive nature of a "girls night out" that many women all over the country enjoy with their female friends and relatives.

According to Dawn George, Vice President of Development and Government Relations at WEL, the non-profit organization created *Girls Night Out* because they understand that women have a primary role in all of the decisions surrounding aging,

healthcare and retirement for themselves and their loved ones. This heavy responsibility creates serious challenges for women today, and, WEL wants to provide them with a forum and platform to have a conversation about what women need to do and, how they can learn from one another and ultimately impact the future.

“*Girls Night Out* is going to give women an opportunity to explore their relationship with aging and delve deeper into, what Wesley Enhanced Living calls, the three-legged stool of aging: financial, health and emotional/spiritual,” she said. “During the evening the *Girls Night Out* participants will realize what a powerful voice they have, and when they join forces, they could enact real change on the policies that directly affect them and their family. As the healthcare debate rages on in Washington, D.C., *Girls Night Out* is proof that women in Philadelphia have the insight and foresight to take charge of these complex issues.”

*Girls Night Out* will feature a panel discussion led by esteemed leaders in healthcare and media. The discussion, which will involve all of the *Girls Night Out* attendees, will be anchored by moderator Ronnie Polaneczky, *The Philadelphia Daily News/Philly.com* columnist. Ronnie will be joined on the panel by Lu Ann Cahn, NBC Philadelphia (WCAU-TV) Reporter; Anne Tumlinson, Vice President of Avalere Health, LLC and Nathalie Bartle, Professor, Department of Community Health & Prevention at Drexel University School of Public Health.

Ronnie Polaneczky has been an award-winning columnist for *The Philadelphia Daily News* since 1999, reporting on a wide spectrum of topics and forging a personal connection with her readers that is rarely found in journalism. Like so many working mothers, she is constantly being pulled in different directions and is sometimes overwhelmed with that feeling of “I’m not doing this all well enough.” According to Polaneczky she was drawn to *Girls Night Out* because of the sense of community and camaraderie that it will provide to its attendees.

“With so much going on in my life, I am always turning to my girlfriends for support, advice and the all important laughs and good times that we need to get us through what can be a very hectic life,” she said. “I find my own girls night outs to be so therapeutic. It is comforting to know that every woman my age is going through a similar roller coaster. This *Girls Night Out* will bring the issues that affect women to the forefront, but still, doing it in a fun intimate way that will create an atmosphere that women would feel comfortable sharing their stories, passions and struggles.”

The WEL Foundation plans to continue the *Girls Night Out* conversation beyond this evening event. A report on the salient issues in the discussion will be compiled and provided to members of the government in Harrisburg and Washington, D.C. Attendees

will be encouraged to continue to share on the WEL Facebook Page and at future *Girls Night Out* events sponsored by the WEL Foundation.

“This first *Girls Night Out* is only the beginning,” said George. “It is my hope that these women will continue to foster the relationships that are sparked this evening and spread the word to their girlfriends and female family members. It is such a powerful thought- thousands of women uniting under one concept to advocate for their financial security in healthcare and retirement and support each other.”

*Girls Night Out* will take place on Philadelphia’s iconic Boathouse Row on the Schuylkill River. The event will occur in Boathouse #2 from 6-9 p.m. Cocktails and networking will start at 6 p.m., with the discussion portion of the evening beginning at 7 p.m. Limited tickets will be sold at the door for a price of \$75. Free parking is available at the Lloyd Hall parking lot and on Kelly Drive.

The proceeds from this year’s *Girls Night Out* will support a capital campaign that is currently underway at the WEL at Evangelical Manor CCRC in Northeast Philadelphia. The WEL at Evangelical Manor Capital Campaign aims to raise \$3.1 million to support the \$23 + million renovation project at the community. This extensive renovation project will secure affordable healthcare and housing services for middle-class senior adults in Philadelphia.

For more information on *Girls Night Out* and the WEL Foundation, please visit [www.wel.org](http://www.wel.org) or [www.facebook.com/wesleyenhancedliving](https://www.facebook.com/wesleyenhancedliving).

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#### **Wesley Enhanced Living Foundation**

The Wesley Enhanced Living Foundation (WELF) seeks to advance the Wesley Enhanced Living continuing care retirement communities’ vision and mission through philanthropy. Charitable gifts to the Foundation are directed to a variety of purposes: benevolent care for residents, community enrichment, innovation through technology, growth and expansion, capital improvements and endowment funds. [www.wel.org](http://www.wel.org) and [www.facebook.com/wesleyenhancedliving](https://www.facebook.com/wesleyenhancedliving)

#### **Wesley Enhanced Living**

Wesley Enhanced Living (WEL) continuing care retirement communities are non-profit, faith-based living environments with a mission to deliver a purposeful life to residents. Serving over 1,000, with more than 600 employees throughout Pennsylvania, Wesley Enhanced Living in Doylestown, Hatboro, Pennypack Park, Burholme and Brodheadsville provide various combinations of independent living, personal care services, dementia care, and skilled nursing services. The organization also manages two HUD subsidized housing facilities for seniors, Meadow House and Manor Glen, in the Philadelphia region. Wesley Enhanced Living is headquartered in Southampton, Pennsylvania. For more information, please call 215.354.0565.