At this time, all participants are in a listen-only mode. Today’s conference is being recorded. If you have any objections, you may disconnect. Now I’ll turn the meeting over to Ms. Sarah Miller.

Thank you, you may begin.

Welcome to the fourth in the 2005 series of Wi$e Up teleconference calls, and thanks to each of you who are listening today. My name is Sarah Miller, and I am a Gen X member of the Women’s Bureau team that developed the Wi$e Up program. As most of you know, Wi$e Up is a financial education demonstration project targeting women ages 22 to 35 that is offered online with an e-mentoring component and in a classroom setting. These hour-long teleconference calls are a part of that demonstration project.

The topic of today’s call is estate planning. Have you ever thought about who you want to inherit your assets? One goal of estate planning is to transfer your wealth to your chosen heirs while minimizing costs and taxes. Many of you may think you don’t have enough assets to warrant developing an estate plan; however,
when you actually take time to figure out the value of your estate, you may be surprised.

Have you ever considered who you would want to care for your minor children if something happened to you and your spouse? Who will handle your financial affairs if you’re ever incapacitated? Who do you want to make medical decisions for you if you become unable to? These are questions you must answer when developing an estate plan.

The last chapter of the WiSe Up curriculum, called “Achieving Financial Security,” introduces some of the tools and terminology you’ll use when you develop an estate plan such as a will, durable power of attorney, a living will, medical durable power of attorney, trusts and a letter of last instruction. When any of your assets or beneficiaries and/or the tax laws change, these documents will need to be updated.

Learning and talking with your family about estate planning now may prevent confusion later. The three speakers on today’s call have experience in financial planning, accounting and the legal aspects of estate planning, and we appreciate them taking their time to share basic knowledge on the topic.
Now let me turn the call over to Cynthia Dawkins, a member of the Wi$e Up team, to introduce our first speaker.