Wi$e Up Teleconference Call
Insurance
September 29, 2006
Opening Remarks

Coordinator: Welcome and thank you for standing by. At this time, all participants are in a listen-only mode. After the presentations, we will conduct a question and answer session. To ask a question at that time, please press *1. Today's conference is being recorded. If you have any objections, you may disconnect at this time. I would now like to turn the meeting over to Miss Jane Walstedt. Ma’am, you may begin.

Jane Walstedt: Thank you very much, Laurie. Welcome to this eighth in a series of monthly Wi$e Up teleconference calls this year; and thanks to each of you who are participating today. My name is Jane Walstedt, and I'm the Co-Chair of the Women’s Bureau team that developed the Wi$e Up program.

As most of you know, Wi$e Up is a financial education demonstration project being offered online with an e-mentoring component and in a classroom setting. Seven Women’s Bureau regions are participating. These teleconference calls are a component of the demonstration project.

The theme of today's call -- which will last one hour -- is insurance. We have three excellent speakers who will be introduced shortly.

We chose to make insurance the subject of our call this month because both the U.S. House of Representatives and the U.S. Senate passed resolutions recognizing September 2006 as National Life Insurance Awareness Month.

According to Representative Judy Biggert, a sponsor of the House resolution, “Today only four in ten Americans own an individual life insurance policy, and among those who do have life insurance, the amount is too small to safeguard the financial future of their loved ones.”
With regard to health insurance, in 2005, the percentage of people covered by employment-based health insurance was 59.5%, the percentage of people covered by government health insurance was 27.3%, and the percentage of people without health insurance coverage was 15.9%.

Today we’re going to talk about several kinds of insurance: life insurance, health insurance, disability insurance, renters or homeowners insurance, and flood insurance.

As we say in the first chapter of the Wi$e Up curriculum entitled “Money for Life,” “In evaluating job or career options, it is important to compare overall compensation, not just the salary offer. There is a tendency to focus on salary or wages exclusively; however, it is more important to focus on the value of overall compensation.

Compensation includes your salary or wages and your employer-provided benefits. Your benefits may include a retirement plan….Other important components of a compensation plan may include various insurance options, such as health insurance, life insurance, disability insurance, and long-term care insurance.

Employees should study the costs and benefits of the plans and determine how the plans work with other benefits available through other options, such as a spouse’s insurance plan.”

I know I got a wake up call recently about disability insurance. Several years ago, an advisor from American Express Financial Advisors advised me to purchase disability insurance. I couldn’t understand why because I thought I had disability insurance as a Federal employee, so I didn’t purchase any; however, I recently found out during a financial planning workshop that
although Labor Department employees have disability retirement, we’re not covered by disability insurance.

The format of our call is that we’ll first hear from the three speakers. Then when the speakers have finished, the operator will come on and give us instructions about the question and answer session.