



**For Immediate Release**

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## **Front Porch Center for Technology Innovation and Wellbeing Receives Grant for the Model eHealth Community for Aging (MeHCA)**

*Project Will Use Broadband-enabled Technology to Support Health and Wellness Needs for Underserved Older Adults in Los Angeles' Koreatown*

**Burbank, Calif. Oct. 25, 2011** – The [Front Porch Center for Technology Innovation and Wellbeing](#) (Front Porch Center), a 501(C)(3) founded on the belief that technology innovation plays a vital role in enhancing wellbeing, was awarded eHealth equipment valued at approximately \$207,000 through the Model eHealth Communities initiative at UC Davis Health System and the California Telehealth Network (CTN), and received a \$50,000 grant from United HealthCare for the Model eHealth Community for Aging (MeHCA) project.

The MeHCA project will use broadband-enabled technology to proactively support health and wellness needs and improve access to care for underserved and low-income older adults at affordable housing communities, community health clinics and other anchor institutions in Los Angeles' Koreatown neighborhood. The project will also leverage broadband-enabled technology – video conferencing, health kiosks with peripherals, Wi-Fi, a mobile computer lab, the [Dakim Brain Fitness](#) program, L.A. County Safety Net eConsult Program and electronic health records (EHR) – to empower a community of providers to extend existing business models and services to create a coordinated and comprehensive ecosystem of health/wellness resources.

“The underserved, low-income older adult population is at a tremendous disadvantage when it comes to health and wellness,” said Kari Olson, president of the Front Porch Center for Technology Innovation and Wellbeing. “The MeHCA project will strive to close the gap by bringing innovative technological solutions to this group to enhance digital literacy, increase access to resources and help older adults proactively manage their own health and wellbeing. With the support of our partners, we envision the creation of a new model of care to effectively serve this population.”

The MeHCA project will focus on four activity areas:

- **“Self-Health Knowledge” Computer Literacy** – To increase awareness of and the ability to access online health resources and promote brain health through broadband technology, the MeHCA project will train older adults on navigating the internet, offer in-language health resources, provide mobile computer training and offer the Dakim Brain Fitness program.
- **“Big Screen Health”: Distance Health & Safety** – The MeHCA project will coordinate, schedule and deliver health- and safety-related education and public safety video conferencing workshops at partner site locations.

- **“Know Your Health!” Teleconsultation/RPM** – Using remote patient monitoring and video consultations, the MeHCA project will strive to empower community members to understand and manage their own healthcare needs. To do so, the project will deploy remote monitoring mobile kiosks and remote patient monitoring technologies.
- **“Pass on the Paper”: EHR in Community Clinics** – The MeHCA project will place five student interns in partner community clinics to support the planning and implementation of EHR projects.

“We must rethink models of care that go beyond hospital, clinic or ER visits, to home and community-based care models that allow for prevention, early detection, behavior change and social support. This initiative with the Front Porch Center for Technology Innovation and Wellbeing is aimed at accelerating just that,” said Brian Egan, CEO of [Advantage Home Telehealth](#), a MeHCA partner. “Controlling health care costs while bringing quality care to an increasingly aging population is one of our nation’s most significant challenges.”

Added Gilbert Varela, M.D., CEO of the [Central City Community Health Center](#), another MeHCA partner, “Providing health services in this fashion allows timely access to care in a non-traditional setting, which ultimately results in better patient outcomes.”

The Front Porch Center will work with partners including [CARING Housing Ministries](#), [Vista Towers](#), [Pilgrim Tower](#), [St. Barnabas Senior Services](#), [Korean Health Education Information and Research Center](#), Central City Community Health Center, [L.A. Care Health Plan](#), Dakim, Advantage Home Telehealth, [East Los Angeles College Health IT Workforce Training Program](#), [USC Davis School of Gerontology](#), [LAC+USC Medical Center](#) and [AgeTech CA](#).

“The impact of this project is significant – we’re talking about meeting important health and wellness needs in underserved senior and disabled populations through education and behavior change, leveraging broadband and technology in ways that we’ve never before imagined,” said Nancy Spring, president of CARING Housing Ministries. “This project brings together partnerships and community groups to truly define the ‘Model eHealth Community’. I really believe that what we learn from this collaboration will give us important lessons and inspiration to use these sorts of technology solutions in other communities.”

The Model eHealth Communities project and its related eHealth Broadband Training Program are funded by the U.S. Department of Commerce’s Broadband Technology Opportunities Program. The initiative has received matching funds from the California HealthCare Foundation, National Coalition for Health Integration, University of California and UnitedHealthcare.

### **About the Front Porch Center for Technology Innovation and Wellbeing**

The Front Porch Center for Technology Innovation and Wellbeing is part of [Front Porch](#), one of Southern California’s largest not-for-profit providers of retirement living communities and affordable housing. The Front Porch Center for Technology Innovation and Wellbeing strives to harness technology solutions that support and enhance wellbeing in older adults. The Front Porch Center’s core initiatives focus on how technology can: assist in maintaining brain health; enhance social connectedness; promote engagement and growth; empower control over health and wellness; prevent emergencies or serious events; and increase resources and support for formal and informal caregivers. More information is available at [www.fpctiw.org](http://www.fpctiw.org).

**About Front Porch**

Front Porch is a not-for-profit support system for a family of companies that serve individuals and families through full-service retirement, active adult communities, affordable housing communities through CARING Housing Ministries and related management and development services. Front Porch active adult and full-service retirement communities offer a full range of options from independent living to continuing care, including memory support. Specialized programs like the Front Porch Center for Technology Innovation and Wellbeing, Front Porch Gallery and affiliated Centers for Spirituality and Aging support the Front Porch belief in understanding and meeting needs so that residents can live life their way. With innovative communities and programs that meet the changing needs of people as they age, Front Porch represents a leading-edge approach to wellness in aging. Front Porch is comprised of 10 full-service retirement communities in California and three adult living communities: one in Louisiana, one in Florida and one in Nuevo Vallarta, Mexico. Front Porch also serves individuals and families through more than 20 affordable housing communities managed by Front Porch's affiliate, CARING Housing Ministries. Front Porch, based in Burbank, Calif. and founded in 1999, is a not-for-profit organization that gives back to its residents and the communities it serves. More information is available at [www.frontporch.net](http://www.frontporch.net).