



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Hillcrest's Whole-Person Approach to Healthy Aging Includes Healthy Eating, Blue Zones Education and a Focus on Wellness

La Verne, Calif., September 29, 2026 — September is Healthy Aging Month, a time to recognize the importance of healthy habits at every stage of life. At Hillcrest, a nonprofit continuing care retirement community in La Verne, Calif., living well is not a once-a-year focus. It is woven into daily life through nutritious dining, wellness programs, education and opportunities for residents to stay active, connected and engaged.

One of Hillcrest's distinctive approaches is its focus on brain-healthy nutrition. Its MIND Diet program, which stands for Mediterranean DASH Intervention for Neurodegenerative Delay, emphasizes foods that support brain health and overall well-being. Hillcrest stands apart from other senior living communities in its commitment to making MIND Diet foods and meals available to residents every day so they can maintain cognitive strength through targeted nutrition.

"Healthy aging is about much more than adding years to life. It's about building an environment that helps people continue to live with energy, purpose, connection and enjoyment," said Ryan Harrison, PsyD, Certified Wellness Professional and Director of Resident Life and Wellness at Hillcrest. "Food is an important part of that equation. We want residents to have access to nutritious choices that support their health while still making every meal something to look forward to."

Hillcrest recently welcomed Chef Rick Garcia as its new executive chef, adding more than 19 years of culinary leadership experience spanning restaurants, hotels, banquets, catering and high-volume food service. A graduate of Le Cordon Bleu College of Culinary Arts in Pasadena, Garcia has held leadership positions including Corporate Task Force Executive Chef for Hilton Hotels and has experience in restaurant ownership, culinary consulting, menu development and food quality.

Bringing healthy choices to residents is another way Hillcrest lives its pledge every day. Its recent Good Thyme Farmers Market Block Party, a special community-focused farmers market

featuring fresh finds, artisan goods and live entertainment, was part of Hillcrest's ongoing activities to make healthy living engaging, social and enjoyable.

"We want to help our residents to live better, not just longer," explained Harrison. As part of its dedication to be a center for optimal cognitive care and healthy brain education, Hillcrest hosted a Blue Zones event, exploring the lifestyle and dining habits of communities around the world known for longevity and lifestyles that support health. The event invited participants to consider how they might incorporate some of those principles into their own lives.

The community prioritizes physical health, mental engagement, emotional wellness, social connection and purpose. Residents can have multiple opportunities to take part in fitness, educational, creative and social opportunities on campus.

Hillcrest also launched its inaugural biannual magazine, "*Elevate*," which shares fresh perspectives on life, wellness and aging. Designed as the "Un-Retirement" magazine, the publication features articles covering nutrition, financial planning, hobbies, lifelong learning and finding purpose at every stage of life.

"Aging well allows us to think differently about what the years ahead can look like," said Harrison. "At Hillcrest, we work to create an environment where people can continue learning, trying new things, building relationships and choosing options that support their health and happiness."

Hillcrest offers a variety of living options, including independent living in homes, cottages and apartments, and a full continuum of care with assisted living, skilled nursing and memory care. Community amenities include dining services, a fitness center and a swimming pool.

About Hillcrest

Hillcrest is an upscale 501(c)(3) nonprofit continuing care retirement community (CCRC) centrally located in the San Gabriel Valley, less than 30 minutes from Los Angeles, Anaheim, Pasadena and San Bernardino and at the gateway to the Inland Empire. Located in a quiet residential neighborhood just off Foothill Boulevard in La Verne, California, Hillcrest offers independent living, assisted living, memory care and skilled nursing with an emphasis on wellness and health. For more information, visit <https://livingathillcrest.org/>.

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CAPTION:

Hillcrest's health and wellness initiatives include programs focused on cognitive health, brain-healthy nutrition and education to help residents understand how daily choices can support brain health.