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Nonprofit Changes Name to Maintain Quality Support for Alzheimer's Community in Orange County

Countywide Holiday Open House on Dec. 16 will showcase the new, blue, nonprofit

IRVINE, Calif., Dec. 3, 2015 – [Alzheimer's Orange County](#), formerly the Alzheimer's Association, Orange County Chapter, has officially launched today with its new name. While its name may be new, the organization bears the same critical mission it has since 1982: to serve the 84,000 in Orange County affected by Alzheimer's and other related dementia disorders.

"Our name has changed, our mission hasn't," said Jim McAleer, CEO and president of Alzheimer's Orange County. "Orange County families will continue to receive our services, still at no cost, and quite likely they will be better than ever since we will have a completely local focus. Every penny, of every dollar raised, will remain here in Orange County." Prior to this change, 40 cents of every dollar raised went back to the national organization. Now, 100 percent of dollars donated will stay in Orange County.

The public is invited to the new Alzheimer's Orange County holiday open house on Wednesday, Dec. 16, from 5 – 7:30 p.m. at its Irvine location. "Whether you have been with us every holiday season, or you are not yet familiar with us, you are welcome. Come and enjoy some holiday cheer, meet our staff, learn about our programs and services, and see for yourself the heartwarming artwork from our internationally acclaimed *Memories in the Making*® program."

McAleer explained that the name change resulted from a decision made by the national Alzheimer's Association, based in Chicago, to merge all chapters into one centralized nonprofit. That decision elicited a response from the Orange County chapter's Board of Directors calling for an independent path to best serve the people of Orange County. Other chapters also have chosen independent status.

"At the administrative level, yes, there will be changes as we become independent. And visually, our color is now blue, not purple. But so many things remain the same, including our excellent staff dedicated to fulfilling our mission. We still have the spacious, beautiful building in Irvine we renovated in 2013. Since then, we have centralized many of our programs under one roof, and enabled related groups to use our facility as well," McAleer added.

“Our chapter began in 1982, even before joining the national organization. Our move to independence is a return to truly local management of resources for our families.”

Michael Lancaster, Alzheimer’s Orange County Chairman of the Board, explained further why the board chose this path. “Along with forming one organization, the national board is becoming more focused on fundraising for research, potentially placing less emphasis on resources for families already affected by this tragic disease. We absolutely believe that funding research is critical, and certainly here in Orange County we will not stop funding research. But we will be supporting local research laboratories delving into ways to prevent and treat Alzheimer’s.”

Lancaster added, “An Alzheimer’s diagnosis affects not only the person with the disease, but the whole family, particularly family members who are primary caregivers. We do not want any support to leave our Orange County families, particularly as the incidence of this disease continues to climb and we are facing an epidemic. Our local orientation will allow us to continue to support promising local research without diminishing services and support to those who need it most, right here in Orange County.”

Many of the valuable, no-cost services are now available and these will be able to remain in Orange County under the new independent structure. Among these are a helpline, support groups for patients and caregivers, family care consultation, educational materials, workshops and seminars, outreach to local physicians, advocacy and more.

On the fundraising front, much will remain familiar, if not the same. Alzheimer’s Orange County will continue fundraising through walks. Next year will bring the newly branded “*A Walk to Remember*” with two dates and locations: Nov. 5, 2016 in Huntington Beach and Nov. 12, 2016 at Angel Stadium of Anaheim. In addition, the annual gala will be March 19, 2016 and the 10th annual Visionary Women Awards Luncheon will be held May 20, 2016.

Alzheimer’s Orange County is located at 2515 McCabe, Irvine, 92614. More information on the holiday open house can be found at the organization’s website, www.alzoc.org.

About Alzheimer’s Orange County

Alzheimer’s Orange County provides programs and services, free of charge, to Orange County residents with Alzheimer’s and related dementia disorders, their families, caregivers, and the community. Alzheimer’s Orange County began as an independent 501c3 nonprofit in 1982, became a chapter of the national Alzheimer’s Association in 1984, and in December 2015, became an independent nonprofit again with all fundraising going toward care, support and research in Orange County, Calif. Alzheimer’s is a devastating neurodegenerative illness that weakens the memory and other cognitive and emotional functions. For more information, call the Helpline at 1-844-373-4400, or visit www.alzoc.org Find Alzheimer’s Orange County on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#).

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