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## **MAYOR, SUPERVISOR JOIN COMMUNITY LEADERS AND FAMILIES TO CELEBRATE LAUNCH OF ALZHEIMER'S SAN DIEGO**

Mayor Kevin Faulconer and County Supervisor Dianne Jacob were on hand to celebrate the community launch of Alzheimer's San Diego, which recently formed to provide local education, care and support for people struggling with Alzheimer's and those who care for them –while helping to advance San Diego research for a cure.

The organization was formed earlier this month, when the local chapter [announced](#) it would not be joining the newly consolidated national Alzheimer's Association— a [restructuring](#) that would have ended local decision-making and sent San Diegans' donations to a national headquarters in Chicago.

After years of major progress on local initiatives, San Diego's leadership opted to separate from the national Alzheimer's Association. Alzheimer's San Diego, a new local organization was formed to allow 100 percent of donor dollars to remain in San Diego to help our community.

At today's celebration, Mayor Kevin L. Faulconer praised Alzheimer's San Diego President & CEO Mary Ball's focus on collaborative initiatives to address the needs of the more than 60,000 San Diegans suffering from Alzheimer's and other forms of dementia.

"San Diego is a world-class city of innovation, collaboration and opportunity. We're a city that doesn't just think about our future, we're leaders that choose our own destiny and create solutions for the world," Faulconer said. "The spirit of our city is alive and well here at Alzheimer's San Diego as they search for local cure to a global burden, which is why I'm proud to support Mary Ball and Alzheimer's San Diego on their new journey."

Jacob, who's made improving Alzheimer's care a priority, said the disease is growing rapidly with an aging population and warrants a locally focused organization that can address the specific needs and opportunities here in San Diego.

"We can now focus on fighting Alzheimer's disease and other forms of dementia right here at home, with local dollars going to local needs," said Jacob. "The disease is reaching epidemic levels in San Diego County, and an independent organization means we can redouble our efforts to advance research and help Alzheimer's sufferers and caregivers."

Jacob championed the Alzheimer's Project, which convenes a wide-ranging group of clinicians, researchers, caregivers, law enforcement officials to generate a better

understanding of the disease and improve the response to dementia-related issues such as people wandering from their homes. The initiative includes upgrades to the county Sheriff's Take Me Home Registry, expansion of Alert San Diego to help quickly locate those who wander from their homes and development of a comprehensive set of guidelines for physicians for diagnosing and treating Alzheimer's.

Other recent, local achievements include:

- **ALZ Companion Respite Program:** This first-of-its kind, local program gives family caregivers what they need most: a break.
- **Collaboration4Cure:** An unprecedented local initiative led by the city and county of San Diego, Darlene Shiley and San Diego's premier research institutes to advance local drug discovery for a cure. In October, the initiative announced the eight world-class researchers in San Diego who were been selected to pursue promising drug discovery projects in San Diego.
- **Awarded \$1 million Federal Grant:** The grant will be used to expand services and support for San Diego residents who are living with Alzheimer's disease and their caregivers, as well as to adults with Down syndrome, who have a 50 percent chance of developing Alzheimer's disease before age 50.
- **Co-awarded \$2.5 million Federal Collaborative Grant:** The \$2.5 million co-awarded grant is a recognition of the impressive teamwork in San Diego to address the epidemic of Alzheimer's disease and other forms of dementia. This grant will be carried out in partnership with SDSU, UCSD, the county of San Diego and several community-based organizations.

The services Alzheimer's San Diego provides will gain importance as the disease afflicts more and more families. Alzheimer's is the third-leading cause of death in San Diego, and the number of Americans suffering from the disease and related dementias is expected to triple over the next decade as Baby Boomers age.

Darlene Marcos Shiley, who's known nationally for her philanthropic support of both Alzheimer's care and research, applauded the formation of Alzheimer's San Diego. Shiley, a key benefactor of numerous research and educational efforts targeting the disease, has focused her support for the cause in the San Diego region.

"It's been enormously gratifying to be part of San Diego's unique and innovative local approach to fighting Alzheimer's, and this organization is at the forefront for raising the standard of care and advancing critical local research for a cure," said Shiley. "I hope my fellow San Diegans will join me in supporting Alzheimer's San Diego, knowing 100 percent of donor dollars will stay in our community to help those struggling with Alzheimer's and the people who care for them."

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