ALZHEIMER’S ASSOCIATION TO HONOR LEGENDARY UNIVERSITY OF TENNESSEE LADY VOLS HEAD COACH EMERITUS PAT SUMMITT AND SON TYLER AT NATIONAL ALZHEIMER’S DINNER

- Meredith Vieira, Special Correspondent, NBC News, to Host; Senator Debbie Stabenow, Representative Mike Burgess, M.D., and Colonel Karl E. Friedl, Ph.D. to Receive Honors -

WASHINGTON, D.C., April 23, 2012 – The Alzheimer’s Association will present University of Tennessee Women’s Basketball Head Coach Emeritus Pat Summitt and her son, Tyler Summitt, with its Sargent and Eunice Shriver Profiles in Dignity Award at the Alzheimer’s Association National Dinner on Tuesday, April 24. Senator Debbie Stabenow (D-MI), Representative Mike Burgess, M.D., (R-TX), Colonel Karl E. Friedl, Ph.D. and advocate Garrett Davis will also be honored for their critical work in the fight against Alzheimer’s. The evening will be hosted by Meredith Vieira, Special Correspondent for NBC News, whose brother is currently living with Alzheimer’s disease.

Leader in the Alzheimer’s movement and former first lady of California, Maria Shriver, whose father Sargent Shriver passed away from Alzheimer’s, will present the Alzheimer’s Association Sargent and Eunice Shriver Profiles in Dignity Award. This honor recognizes an individual, organization or company whose actions have promoted greater understanding of Alzheimer’s disease and its effects on diagnosed individuals, families and caregivers. Coach Summitt, the winningest coach in NCAA basketball history, publically shared her diagnosis of early onset, Alzheimer’s type, last August at the age of 59. She and her son Tyler Summitt then created The Pat Summitt Foundation Fund, a fund of the Community Foundation of Middle Tennessee, to provide grants to nonprofits like the Alzheimer’s Association that raise awareness of the disease, support families and advance research, all while leading the Lady Vols to an impressive 27-9 season.

“Pat Summitt and Tyler Summitt are grateful to be honored at the Alzheimer’s Association National Dinner,” said Danielle Donehew, Representative of The Pat Summitt Foundation Fund. “We are on the same team as the Alzheimer’s Association; we are committed to supporting the millions of Americans impacted by Alzheimer’s while we race toward better treatment and an eventual cure.”

According to Alzheimer’s Association 2012 Alzheimer’s Disease Facts & Figures, 5.4 million Americans are currently living with Alzheimer’s. Approximately 200,000 of those people are under the age of 65 and living with younger-onset, also known as early onset, Alzheimer’s. One of the benefits of early detection of Alzheimer’s is the ability to remain active, plan for the future and become an advocate for the cause.

“The Alzheimer’s Association applauds Coach Summitt for courageously sharing her diagnosis and helping to raise awareness of the sixth leading cause of death in the U.S.,” said Harry Johns, President and CEO of the Alzheimer’s Association. “The courage and dignity with which she lives on and off the court will help eliminate the stigma often associated with the disease.”
The event will bring together advocates from across the country who will be in Washington D.C. for the Alzheimer’s Association Advocacy Forum to advocate for added attention and resources for Alzheimer’s care, support and research efforts. The Alzheimer’s Dinner will continue to address this rapidly growing health crisis, bringing together influential and respected political, business, philanthropic, entertainment, media, social and advocacy leaders and now the broader Alzheimer’s advocacy community, to rally around and inspire others to join the growing movement to end the disease.

The Alzheimer’s Association also presents several other distinct honors at the National Dinner. Senator Debbie Stabenow (D-MI) and Representative Mike Burgess, M.D., (R-TX) will receive the Alzheimer’s Association Humanitarian Award, annually bestowed upon public officials who have made significant policy contribution to advancements in research and enhanced care and support for people with Alzheimer's disease. Senator Stabenow introduced the Health Outcomes, Planning and Education (HOPE) for Alzheimer’s Act in the Senate. She was a champion of the National Alzheimer’s Project Act and continues to work for a strong National Alzheimer’s Plan. During health care reform, Senator Stabenow worked to ensure that the Medicare Annual Wellness visit included the detection of cognitive impairment. She is also a member of the Congressional Task Force on Alzheimer’s Disease. Dr. Burgess has been a key leader on Alzheimer’s issues. He was a critical voice in support of the passage of the National Alzheimer’s Project Act and is an original cosponsor of both the Alzheimer’s Breakthrough Act and the HOPE for Alzheimer’s Act in the House of Representatives. In addition, he introduced the “Making Investments Now for Dementia (MIND) Act” that the Alzheimer’s Association has endorsed.

The Alzheimer’s Association Ronald and Nancy Reagan Research Award, reserved for those who make significant advancements in Alzheimer research, will be presented to Colonel Karl E. Friedl, Ph.D., Director, Telemedicine and Advanced Technology Research Center (TATRC) at the U.S. Army Medical Research and Materiel Command, located at Fort Detrick, Maryland. COL. Friedl has been a stalwart leader in supporting innovative, outcome-oriented research programs, including the Peer-Reviewed Alzheimer’s Research Program. Under his leadership, the Peer-Reviewed Alzheimer’s Research Program concentrates on groundbreaking research relevant to both the military and the Alzheimer's community, particularly better understanding traumatic brain injury and its association to Alzheimer’s disease. The program also invests in new strategies dedicated to improving the quality of life for those affected by the disease.

Garrett Davis, an Alzheimer’s Association Ambassador from North Carolina, will receive the Alzheimer’s Association Advocate Award, presented annually to an extraordinary Alzheimer’s advocate who has shown outstanding leadership. A playwright and an actor, he created the “Forget Me Not Project” as a tribute to his grandmother, who died of Alzheimer’s while Garrett was in college, and the family members who cared for her. The play explores one family’s experience with Alzheimer’s and aims to raise awareness of the disease and the need for increased support, services and federal funding. In the course of researching the play, Garrett learned how underfunded Alzheimer’s research is and was spurred to become involved with advocacy.

For more information about Alzheimer’s disease or the Alzheimer’s Association National Dinner, visit www.alz.org.

About the Alzheimer’s Association

The Alzheimer’s Association is the world’s leading voluntary health organization in Alzheimer care, support and research. Our mission is to eliminate Alzheimer’s disease through the advancement of research, to provide and enhance care and support for all affected, and to reduce the risk of dementia through the promotion of brain health. Our vision is a world without Alzheimer’s. Visit www.alz.org or call 800-272-3900.

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