



the compassion to care, the leadership to conquer

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**“ALZHEIMER’S DISEASE: EARLY DETECTION MATTERS” PROJECT
RECEIVES MOST VOTES IN MEMBERS PROJECT FROM AMERICAN EXPRESS
Alzheimer’s Association Receives \$1.5 Million to Fulfill**

(CHICAGO) October 14, 2008 – The “Alzheimer’s Disease: Early Detection Matters” campaign has been selected as the top campaign in the Members Project from American Express and will receive \$1.5 million. The Alzheimer’s Disease: Early Detection Matters campaign received more than 24,101 votes from American Express card members as the project they would most like to see funded.

The project was initially submitted by Jay Smith, whose wife, Patty, was diagnosed at the age of 51 after two years of uncertainty. According to the Alzheimer’s Association *2008 Alzheimer’s Disease Facts and Figures* report, there are approximately 5 million Americans living with Alzheimer’s and as many as 500,000 living with early onset Alzheimer’s Disease and other dementias. About half of the people who are currently living with Alzheimer’s have not been diagnosed.

“It took more than two years for my wife to obtain a correct medical diagnosis, so we decided to do everything we can to increase early detection of Alzheimer’s, stop the progression of the disease and help others along the way,” said Jay Smith, American Express card member who submitted the Early Detection Matters project. “The final stages of the disease are ravaging for the patient and caregiver. We can reduce that suffering by increasing knowledge about the early warning signs and importance of early detection, so people have the opportunity to plan for their future and take advantage of the resources that are currently available to them.”

Many Americans don’t know the 10 warning signs that signal memory loss might be a serious medical problem. The Alzheimer’s Disease: Early Detection Matters campaign was designed to create and implement an education program informing the public about the 10 warning signs of the disease along with the importance of an early diagnosis of Alzheimer’s, a progressive and fatal disease. One of the many benefits of early diagnosis is the ability for the person living with Alzheimer’s to be a part of the solution and help their family in making care decisions.

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The Alzheimer's Association will receive the \$1.5 million to implement the Alzheimer's Disease Early Detection Matters campaign. Funds from the American Express Members Project will enable the Alzheimer's Association to:

- **Collaborate with other health leaders** and combine resources to get the word out about the importance of early detection of Alzheimer's disease.
- **Engage people with Alzheimer's to be advocates** allowing them to tell their story about how early detection of Alzheimer's changed their lives.
- **Increase public education about the importance of early detection** of Alzheimer's via advertising, public relations and other forms of proactive communications.
- **Promote participation in clinical trials** of ground breaking treatments.
- **Empower those who suspect they may have Alzheimer's** to find the help and hope they need.
- **Educate physicians about the 10 Warning Signs** and patient support services.

The Alzheimer's Association

The Alzheimer's Association is the 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. For more information, visit www.alz.org.

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