

## Alzheimer's Association Giving Week Starts Monday

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**Categories :** [Community Organizations](#), [Seniors](#)

**Date :** April 23, 2018

The Connecticut chapter of the national Alzheimer's Association launched statewide efforts on Monday, April 23 to support those who have the disease and their caregivers.

Proceeds will benefit the 77,000 Connecticut residents living with Alzheimer's disease and their 178,000 caregivers.

The [Alzheimer's Association Connecticut Chapter](#) invites the community to participate in the first-ever National Alzheimer's Association Giving Week, from Monday to Friday, April 23 to 27. Money raised this week helps advance disease care, support and research.

Connecticut residents can support the [Connecticut Chapter](#) in three ways:

- [Tickets](#) are currently available for purchase (\$400 each) to attend the upcoming [Celebrating Hope](#) fundraiser to be held at the Riverside Yacht Club on Friday, May 11.
- For those who cannot attend the event, individuals can support the fight to end Alzheimer's by participating in the [Kota Mohegan Sun Golden Ticket Raffle](#) (\$100 per bar/ticket, winner need not be present) and
- by making [donations](#).

The National Alzheimer's Association Giving Week is a virtual campaign. For more information on ways to support the Alzheimer's Association Connecticut Chapter, visit the [Celebrating Hope 2018 event page](#) or call (860) 828-2828.

### **Celebrating Hope Gala, May 11**

Celebrating Hope is the Alzheimer's Association Connecticut Chapter's premier benefit in lower Fairfield County. The event is a lively evening of dinner and dancing. Guests will mix and mingle in a lounge-like atmosphere at the Riverside Yacht Club, while enjoying a buffet dinner and music.

The evening will also include dinner in a lounge setting; Abby Mueller, star of *Beautiful: The Carole King Musical*, will debut the original song *Life Is Beautiful*; dancing to "What Up Funk!"; as well as live and silent auctions items.

Since its inception in 2013, Celebrating Hope has raised over one million dollars to support the Association's programs, services, advocacy efforts and research.

Event sponsors from Darien include Maplewood At Darien, Atria Senior Living and Baywater Properties.

#### **Risk Factors**

- "Experts believe that Alzheimer's develops as a complex result of multiple factors rather than any one overriding cause. The only exception to this is inheriting one of three rare genes that directly cause the disease. These genes account for about 1 percent of all cases. The other 99 percent of Alzheimer's cases are believed to be caused by a wide range of risk factors.
- These include, but are not limited to, advanced age, family history of Alzheimer's and lifestyle factors such as diet, exercise and smoking."

— [from the National Alzheimer's Association](#)

From the state Legislature's "[Report on the Task Force on Alzheimer's Disease and Dementia](#)":

- Alzheimer's disease is an irreversible, progressive brain disease that affects over 5 million Americans. It slowly destroys brain function, leading to cognitive decline (e.g., memory loss, language difficulty, poor executive function), behavioral and psychiatric disorders (e.g., depression, delusions, agitation), and declines in functional status (e.g., ability to engage in activities of daily living and self-care). It is one of the most feared diseases.
- In Connecticut, it is estimated there are over 70,000 individuals age 65 and older living with Alzheimer's disease or another dementia. Unless the disease can be effectively treated or prevented, the number will increase significantly in the next two decades.
- In more than 90 percent of people with Alzheimer's disease, symptoms do not appear until after age 60, and the incidence of the disease increases with age.
- The causes of Alzheimer's disease are not completely understood, but researchers believe they include a combination of genetic, environmental, and lifestyle factors.
- In rare cases, known as early or younger-onset, people develop symptoms in their 30s, 40s, or 50s. A significant number of people with Down syndrome develop dementia in their 50s.
- Alzheimer's disease places enormous emotional, physical, and financial stress on individuals and their family members. Informal caregivers, such as family members and friends, provide the majority of care for people with Alzheimer's disease in the community.
- In Connecticut, family and friends provide an estimated \$2.4 billion in unpaid care to individuals living with Alzheimer's and other dementias. The intensive support required for a person with Alzheimer's disease can negatively impact the caregiver's emotional and physical health.
- Informal caregivers often report symptoms of depression and anxiety, and have poorer health outcomes than their peers who do not provide such care.

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The Alzheimer's Association Connecticut Chapter is the primary source of information and support to the thousands of Connecticut residents dealing with the effects of Alzheimer's disease or a related dementia.

With offices across the state in Norwalk, Norwich, Winsted, Hamden and the main office in Southington, the organization offers 24/7 Helpline support 1.800.272.3900, family training seminars, care consultations, Safe Return training, support groups and educational programs for both healthcare professionals and caregivers.

The Chapter has influenced public policy changes and has provided support to Alzheimer's and dementia research in the hope of finding a cure. For additional information, visit [alz.org/ct](http://alz.org/ct).