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**BUILDING HOPE, CHANGING LIVES: HSRC ANNOUNCES
FUNDRAISING CAMPAIGN FOR NEW ALZHEIMER'S CENTER**

EUREKA – The Humboldt Senior Resource Center (HSRC) today announced the public kickoff of its fundraising campaign to build an Alzheimer's center for Humboldt County.

HSRC has been in the private phase of a fundraising campaign for the New Alzheimer's Center for the past year. During that time, the agency – a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization – directly approached individuals, businesses, grantors and government agencies for support. To date, the campaign has reached nearly \$2.3 million of the \$4.5 million funding plan needed for the project.

“We are so appreciative of those donors who have already stepped forward and helped us reach the halfway mark,” said Joyce Hayes, HSRC executive director.

After receiving Planning Commission approval for the project in May, HSRC is now able to launch its public phase of the fundraising campaign. Under the campaign slogan “Building Hope, Changing Lives,” the agency will turn to more visible community fundraising efforts as well as continued grant writing to raise the remaining \$2.2 million for the new facility over the next year.

The New Alzheimer's Center will be built on California Street in Eureka, across from the main HSRC building and next to the agency's Adult Day Health Services (ADHS) program.

As part of its ADHS program, HSRC has provided day care services for clients with Alzheimer's disease, as well as support services for families, since 1984. ADHS serves adults 18 and older with mental or physical disabilities, including Alzheimer's and other forms of dementia. However, the facility can serve only 25 people with dementia, just 12 of whom may be in the more advanced stages of the disease.

The program has had a waiting list for the past six years.

ADHS Director Maggie Kraft noted that there is a growing need for Alzheimer's support services because seven out of 10 people with dementia are cared for at home. "Adult day care allows family caregivers to remain employed or take care of the normal life details the rest of us take for granted," Kraft said.

Kraft added that additional educational, counseling and support services are also needed to help families deal with the emotional impact of having a loved one with dementia.

HSRC is responding to this need for local Alzheimer's services by planning the New Alzheimer's Center, a facility that will offer adult day care services for up to 60 patients per day – up to 40 of whom may be in the later stages of the disease – in an environment that is specially designed for people with dementia.

The new facility will also allow HSRC to expand its ancillary services for families and caregivers, including support groups, individual and family counseling, caregiver education and a resource library. In addition, the center will offer Alzheimer's education and training for health care providers and professional caregivers, serving as a regional resource.

It is estimated that as many as 2,400 people on the North Coast already may be at some stage of Alzheimer's disease. Alzheimer's and related dementias affect one in 10 people age 65 and older and nearly half of those age 85 and up. Dementia is defined as a loss of intellectual functions such as thinking, reasoning and remembering that is severe enough to interfere with everyday life.

More than mere forgetfulness, Alzheimer's is a fatal disease that begins with the destruction of cells in regions of the brain that are important for memory. The eventual loss of cells in other areas of the brain leads to the failure of other essential systems in the body.

"People live an average of 8 years after diagnosis but may live up to 20 years before dying from the disease," said Kraft. "As the disease progresses, they require more and more care. Family members typically step up as their caregivers."

Kraft noted that family caregivers of people with Alzheimer's face greatly increased rates of depression, stress and their own health problems as well as reduced personal time, work time and income.

The New Alzheimer's Center will help alleviate these issues by serving as a regional resource for all families coping with the disease.

"Since the Humboldt Senior Resource Center was founded in 1974, the agency has always created programs that respond to specific needs of seniors on the North Coast," said Hayes. "It is no small thing for us to raise such a substantial amount of money and build a new facility, but Alzheimer's is an issue that touches so many local families. As a community, we must make sure all families can get the services they need."

For more information, call (707) 443-9747 or visit www.humsenior.org/alz.

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