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'Creating Hope' Gala Raises \$378,770 for Orange County Alzheimer's Care and Support Services

Local nonprofit event honors supporters and inspires Alzheimer's community

IRVINE, Calif., March 23, 2016 – Hosting its first gala since becoming a newly independent organization, [Alzheimer's Orange County's](#) (AOC) 18th annual 'Creating Hope' gala at [AV Irvine](#) was a rousing success. The nostalgic Broadway Memories theme evoked the past as AOC looked to the future during the elegant event presented by The Argyros Family Foundation. In support of its mission to help all those affected by Alzheimer's disease, AOC's March 18 gala raised \$378,770 for local programs and services – the most successful AOC gala to-date.

Following the organization's split last year from the national Alzheimer's Association, AOC held its finest and most inspirational gala yet – attended by nearly 350 supporters and highlighted by a powerful video featuring individuals and families served by the nonprofit. Guests participated in silent, live and fund-a-need auctions, generating thousands in proceeds. With 100 percent of all funds raised staying in Orange County, AOC is able to direct all funds toward its no-cost care and support programs and services for the 84,000 Orange County residents affected by the disease, as well as accelerate local research to find treatments and prevention.

"This year's gala celebrates the transformation we've undergone as an organization and the direction we are heading," said Jim McAleer, president and CEO of AOC. "We've been an Orange County institution since 1982, and gathering with our supporters – and knowing for the first time that all the money we raise will go directly back to the same community that's been our home for more than 30 years – was truly magical."

AV Irvine, Orange County's newest and most technologically advanced venue, was adorned with Broadway-themed décor as iconic show tunes supported the theatrical ambiance. The evening began with a cocktail hour, hors d'oeuvres and a silent auction filled with sought-after items, including Demi Lovato and Nick Jonas concert tickets, Disney on Ice suite tickets, a ride on the Honda Center Zamboni, restaurant gift cards, a gold ring from Mardi Jewelry and Disneyland passes. Later in the evening, guests enjoyed a three-course gourmet meal, a live auction and music by The [ChickBand](#), a popular Las Vegas cover band.

During the festivities, AOC recognized four community partners for their unwavering commitment to the organization:

- **Philanthropy Partner: Diane Mondini, CEO, [Caring Companions at Home](#)**
Recognizing the need for the elderly to stay at home while receiving quality healthcare, Mondini created Newport Beach-based Caring Companions at Home. An advocate for



Alzheimer's
ORANGE COUNTY

seniors and caregivers, Mondini began volunteering with AOC in the late 1990s and has been a tremendous supporter of the nonprofit ever since.

- **Corporate Partner: [Farmers & Merchants Trust Company](#)**
A business staple in Orange County, Farmers & Merchants has continuously given back to the community for more than 100 years. The organization became involved with AOC when a longtime trust client donated her entire \$27 million estate to the nonprofit in appreciation for the outstanding treatment of her mother.
- **Volunteer Partner: Pat Soldano**
A volunteer for 10 years, Soldano sits on the advisory board of AOC and lobbies for family tax issues in Washington, D.C. She became involved with Alzheimer's when her aunt and mother were stricken by the disease. As an influential supporter of AOC, Soldano reinvented the policy committee. It has become one of the nonprofit's largest areas of focus.
- **Community Partner: The Sanchez Family**
The Sanchez children have been battling for the betterment of Alzheimer's patients and their caregivers since their beloved father was diagnosed with the disease. With daughters Loretta, Martha and Linda fighting for policy changes and funding on a state level, and younger brother Michael raising awareness in Orange County, the Sanchez family is a force in the Alzheimer's community.

Gala proceeds were generated through sponsorships, underwriting, ticket sales, donations and silent, live and fund-a-need auctions. The spirited live auction was headlined by Angels and Ducks luxury suite tickets, a two-night stay at the posh Montage Resort and a Tesla day rental, dinner at the Wilcox Manor and airfare from Alaska Airlines.

The gala was chaired by Jacqueline Dupont and Marc Carlson, and Eydie and Dave MacInnis. In addition to the presenting sponsor and chairs, donors included Lia and Victor Assad and the Iacocca Family Foundation, Farmers & Merchants Trust Company, Tony and Ginger Allen, Debi and Tom Pavlik, Sid Petersen and Sycamore Chiropractic, Assured In-Home Care, Diane Mondini of Caring Companions at Home, Alison Hahn, Catherine Beaumont, Atria Senior Living, Barry Hoeven, CareCHOICES, Debbie and Mel Benner, Nancy and Mike Deschenes, KPMG, Linda and Burton Young, Paul Hastings, LLP, Robin Strasser, Silverado, Frances and Richard Gadbois and Sloane Street, The Frome Family Foundation, The Sanchez Family, United Healthcare, Vista Gardens Memory Care, First American Trust and JLC Associates Inc.

About Alzheimer's Orange County

Alzheimer's Orange County provides programs and services, free of charge, to Orange County residents with Alzheimer's and related dementia disorders, their families, caregivers, and the community. Alzheimer's Orange County began as an independent 501c3 nonprofit in 1982, became a chapter of the national Alzheimer's Association in 1984, and in December 2015, became an independent nonprofit again with all fundraising going toward care, support and



Alzheimer's
ORANGE COUNTY

research in Orange County, Calif. Alzheimer's is a devastating neurodegenerative illness that weakens the memory and other cognitive and emotional functions. For more information, call the Helpline at 1-844-373-4400, or visit www.alzoc.org Find Alzheimer's Orange County on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#) and [LinkedIn](#).

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