



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

MARCH 7, 2016

**ALZHEIMER'S ALLIANCE OF SMITH COUNTY MOURNS
DEATH OF FIRST LADY AND ALZHEIMER'S ADVOCATE**

TYLER – The Alzheimer's Alliance of Smith County is saddened to learn of the death of former First Lady Nancy Reagan this past weekend. Mrs. Reagan was a tireless advocate for Alzheimer's disease after the public announcement in 1994 that her husband, U.S. President Ronald Reagan, had been diagnosed.

In an open letter to the American people, President Reagan wrote that, by sharing his diagnosis, he hoped it "might promote greater awareness of this condition" and "a clear understanding of the individuals and families who are affected by it" and the "heavy burden" placed on caregivers as the disease advances. After President Reagan's death from Alzheimer's disease in 2004, Mrs. Reagan continued to champion for additional research toward finding a cure.

"When the Alzheimer's Alliance was founded in 1982, there was very little information available because of the stigma around the disease," said Jana Humphrey, Executive Director of the Alzheimer's Alliance of Smith County. "President Reagan's announcement brought Alzheimer's disease out of the shadows and showed how it can affect anyone, and Mrs. Reagan's care for her husband in his final years is an incredible legacy for caregivers. The Alliance is proud to play a small role continuing their work as we support families, friends, and neighbors in our community touched by this devastating disease."

The Alzheimer's Alliance of Smith County offers sincere condolences to the Reagan family and our lasting admiration for Mrs. Reagan's service to those touched by Alzheimer's disease.

About the Alzheimer's Alliance of Smith County

Founded in 1982, the Alzheimer's Alliance of Smith County is a local, non-profit organization committed to walking alongside all of those affected by Alzheimer's disease and related dementias. Our services include personal consultations, education and awareness, caregiver support and resources, and advocacy in Smith County.

###

Contact: Leslie Lindsey, Community Outreach Coordinator
(682) 365-3294
leslie@alzalliance.org