

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE November 12, 2015

CONTACT: Robyn James, Public Relations Manager

PHONE: 334-353-9273

EMAIL: robyn.james@adss.alabama.gov

ALABAMA'S HUMBLE HEROES — THE FAMILY CAREGIVER How Alabama Department of Senior Services Provides Support to Family Caregivers

Part Two: Four Part Weekly Series

November is National Family Caregiver Month. Currently, there are over 818,000 family caregivers in Alabama who provide more than 783 million hours of care to a loved one saving the state and federal governments over \$7 billion dollars annually. The number of caregivers providing care to children with disabilities alone reflects similar cost savings to the state.

The theme for National Family Caregivers' month is "Respite: Care for Caregivers". Respite is a break or temporary relief for a caregiver to sustain their own quality of health and emotional well-being. Although the role family caregiver can be very rewarding, it can also present many new challenges.

Families need information and strong support services to preserve their critical role as caregivers. Unfortunately, many family caregivers do not know where to turn for assistance.

The good news is, there is help. The Alabama Department of Senior Services and 13 Area Agencies on Aging, who serve as Alabama's aging and disability network offers an array of support services through the Alabama CARES program to caregivers. The Alabama CARES Caregiver program offers key support services including education, counseling, support groups, caregiver training, respite care, and on a limited basis, supplemental services.

For family caregivers taking care of a loved one with Alzheimer's disease or other forms of dementia, Senior Services offers a free Dementia Resource Guide which includes information, help, and resources for caregivers. Senior Services also offers support and access to programs and services through AccessAlabama, their aging and disability resource centers.

All caregivers are encouraged to come and be a part of the many local events in and around the state that will be held to honor them during National Family Caregiver Month to learn more and connect with those who may be going through some of the same experiences as they care for their loved ones. A list of the local events can be found on the Alabama Department of Senior Services website at www.AlabamaAgeline.gov.

Family caregivers or anyone interested in contacting AccessAlabama at their local Area Agency on Aging can call (800) AGE-LINE or (800) 243-5463 to get information and help.

####