



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Jeffrey D. Klein

## Alzheimer's Association Expands Medic-Alert + Safe Return Program

JEFFREY D. KLEIN April 15, 2010

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Senator Klein presents \$25,000 grant to Alzheimer's Association - Hudson Valley/Rockland/Westchester, NY Chapter

NEW YORK, NY - State Senator and Deputy Majority Leader Senator Jeff Klein (D-Bronx/Westchester) presented a \$25,000 grant to the Alzheimer's Association - Hudson/Valley/Rockland/Westchester, NY Chapter on Thursday at Sunrise Senior Living of

Fleetwood.

The money will be used to expand the Alzheimer's Association MedicAlert® + Safe Return® program, a 24-hour nationwide emergency response service for individuals with Alzheimer's or related dementia who wander or have a medical emergency.

According to the Alzheimer's Association Hudson Valley/Rockland/Westchester Chapter approximately 40,000 residents in the chapter territory currently suffer with Alzheimer's disease, with 22,000 individuals residing in Westchester alone. Estimates are that nearly sixty percent of individuals with Alzheimer's or related dementia will wander at some point and if not found within 24 hours have a 50% chance of being seriously injured or never located.

Since 1993, the Safe Return program (now called MedicAlert® + Safe Return® ) has provided bracelets or necklaces for people with Alzheimer's or related dementia that indicate the person is memory impaired and include a 24-hour crisis number to call. When people register for the program, their information is entered into a database, making it easy to identify a person who is found wandering.

According to the Alzheimer's Association - Hudson Valley/Rockland/Westchester, NY Chapter, more than a dozen local residents a year are found thanks to the MedicAlert® + Safe Return® program, resulting in a 100% success rate. The Alzheimer's Association New York City Chapter currently has more than thirteen thousand individuals enrolled in the program and also reports a 100% success rate.

The Alzheimer's Association - Hudson Valley/Rockland/Westchester, NY Chapter will use Klein's grant to further educate families about the MedicAlert® + Safe Return® program as well as other programs within the association.

“Alzheimer’s disease already creates a stressful, challenging and heartbreaking situation for victims and their families. As we fight to find a permanent treatment for this debilitating disease, we must support programs such as MedicAlert® + Safe Return® that help victims and their loved ones survive the day-to-day obstacles,” said Klein (D-Bronx/Westchester).

“We would like to thank Senator Klein for his generous support of the Alzheimer’s Association. Thanks to Senator Klein, more families will become aware of the dangers of wandering and the benefits of enrolling in the MedicAlert® + Safe Return® program,” said Elaine Sproat, President & CEO of the Alzheimer’s Association - Hudson Valley/Rockland/Westchester, NY Chapter.

“Sunrise Senior Living strongly commends the Alzheimer’s Association for their ongoing work to educate the public, provide safety and give peace of mind to persons and families affected by Alzheimer’s Disease. Sunrise Senior Living specializes in dementia care and we are always looking for enhanced programs and services focused on the overall safety of our residents. We would like to thank Senator Klein for his leadership in supporting these programs,” said Victoria Miller, Executive Director of Sunrise Senior Living of Fleetwood.

“Programs like MedicAlert + Safe Return® are very important because when a loved one wanders, you don’t know where he/she is and that’s very scary. Sometimes people don’t just wander next door. They end up in cities far away. I think the public needs to know this program is available and I am very happy Senator Klein is helping by providing funding for this program. I think it will help save a lot of lives,” said Gwendolyn Cahill, a former Mount Vernon resident whose mother suffered from Alzheimer’s.

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