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Media Contact:
Mary-Margaret Fox - 229-931-2077 or marymargaret.fox@gsu.edu
Sarah Embro – 404 636 9909 or sarah@alsaga.org

ROSALYNN CARTER INSTITUTE AND THE ALS ASSOCIATION OF GEORGIA ANNOUNCE PARTNERSHIP

Americus, GA - The Rosalynn Carter Institute for Caregiving (RCI) and The ALS Association of Georgia announced today that the two groups are creating a unique partnership to support those that care for people living with ALS in Georgia. Together the groups will help caregivers with their physical and mental well-being and teach them skills to navigate the challenges of their loved one’s illness.

“ALS is an illness that has an increasing toll on the caregiver as they watch their loved one develop the symptoms of the disease. By extending our programs to ALS caregivers, we continue to fulfill the RCI mission of helping more caregivers in more places but also offer these selfless people support and tools that will help them manage their caregiving journey,” said Dr. Jennifer Olsen, executive director of RCI. “Beyond the direct support of the caregiver, this partnership will help RCI shape our programs to better serve ALS caregivers as well as other neurodegenerative disease caregivers.”

As noted by Sarah Embro, Executive Director of The ALS Association of Georgia, “in alignment with our mission to provide resources and community support services to families living with ALS, we are excited about our new partnership with RCI to provide evidence-based care and support, programming specific to the needs of caregivers of people living with ALS. Recognizing the needs of caregivers is one aspect of the Georgia Chapter’s holistic care services programming, and this partnership with RCI further strengthens the support we can provide.”
The partnership centers around supporting caregivers for those with ALS using the RCI programs *Caring for You, Caring for Me* and *Operation Family Caregiver*, increasing awareness of the services offered by RCI for all caregivers, and information-sharing to help RCI tailor their programs to address the specific needs of caregivers for people living with ALS.

*Operation Family Caregiver* coaches family and friends of returning service members and veterans to manage difficult transitions. Veterans are twice as likely to be diagnosed with ALS as the general public.

The partnership includes:
- *Caring for You, Caring for Me*. RCI will train ALS Association of Georgia facilitators to deliver this 10-hour program, which addresses the needs of caregivers by bringing them together in a relaxed setting to discuss common issues, share ideas, and gain a better understanding of each other’s perspective on what it means to be a caregiver for someone living with ALS.

The goals of *Caring for You, Caring for Me* are for caregivers to have the opportunity to:
  - Gain information on various topics related to caregiving
  - Learn ways of coping with the stresses and strains of being a caregiver
  - Learn what resources are available locally, regionally and nationally
  - Discover ways of working together to reduce frustrations and barriers in the caregiving experience
  - Share common concerns and issues.

- A research partnership that will help RCI determine how to adapt the program specifically to ALS. RCI will fund a graduate fellow to do caregiver specific research on the ALS population.

- In the longer-term, RCI and The ALS Association of Georgia are hoping to tailor another of RCI’s signature programs, Dealing with Dementia, to the ALS population.

- RCI and The ALS Association of Georgia will work to support military ALS families through the Operation Family Caregiver program. Veterans are twice as likely to be diagnosed with ALS than the general population.

- The two organizations will share information with each other’s communities and work together to shine a spotlight on ALS caregivers.

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**About the Rosalynn Carter Institute**

The Rosalynn Carter Institute for Caregiving (RCI) is the preeminent organization dedicated to strengthening the over 40 million caregivers in the United States through advocacy, education, research and service. Established in 1987 by former First Lady Rosalynn Carter, RCI works to raise the awareness of caregivers’ needs and to create an environment that supports them.
For additional information about the Rosalynn Carter Institute for Caregiving, visit www.rosalynncarter.org.

About The ALS Association Georgia Chapter

The ALS Association Georgia Chapter is the only nationally affiliated not-for-profit health organization dedicated solely to the fight against ALS. The ALS Association Georgia Chapter provides an array of support through our Care Services Programs such as: one-on-one consultations, an equipment loaner program, support groups, the Sally Panfel In-Home Care & Respite Program, the Paul B. Williams Transportation Program, and support for ALS clinics in Atlanta, Augusta and Macon. The local chapter also joins with chapters across the country to support research and participate in federal advocacy initiatives. To learn more about ALS and The ALS Association Georgia Chapter, visit www.alsaga.org.