

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**MetLife Foundation Awards \$225,000
to Alzheimer's Association for Hispanic Outreach Initiative
Program Promotes Information on Alzheimer's Disease**

CHICAGO, IL – October 18, 2005 – The Alzheimer's Association of America has announced a new initiative, funded by MetLife Foundation, to promote education and awareness about Alzheimer's disease to the Latino population. According to recent reports, U.S. Latinos develop symptoms of Alzheimer's earlier, on average, than white non-Latino people, and Hispanics are also among the fastest growing populations affected by the disease; by 2050, the number of Hispanics in the U.S. with Alzheimer's is expected to increase 600 percent, from the current 200,000 people to 1.3 million. The project will link chapters of the Alzheimer's Association with affiliates of the National Council of LaRaza (NCLR), the Washington, D.C. based advocacy group for the Hispanic community.

The outreach pilot projects will use the *promotores de salud* community model promoted by NCLR. The *promotores de salud*, or Community Lay Health Worker Model, is a grass-roots, community-based program for health education and promotion. *Promotores* are members of the communities they serve—sharing the same culture, values and characteristics. They serve as role models of healthy messages and understand the community needs.

“MetLife Foundation is pleased to support this project, which we believe will provide much-needed resources to the Latino community,” said Sibyl Jacobson, President, MetLife Foundation.

MetLife Foundation funds will support the work of two pilot projects. One will take place in El Paso, TX, and will pair up the STAR Chapter of the Alzheimer's Association with Centro de Salud Familiar La Fe of NCLR. The other pilot project will take place in Miami, FL, and involve the South Florida chapter of the Alzheimer's Association and

Abriendo Puertas of NCLR. In both locations, *Promotores* will be trained in dementia education and brain health to build awareness of the resources available through the Alzheimer's Association. The organizations will also work together to develop culturally appropriate materials in Spanish, with a special emphasis on health literacy. As the pilot projects are tested and strengthened in these two cities, the Association and NCLR will seek to extend this work to other Hispanic communities across the country.

“Like millions of other Americans, I have had direct experience with the challenges of caring for a family member suffering from Alzheimer's,” said National Council of La Raza President and CEO Janet Murguía. “While my family is fortunate to have the resources that led to a diagnosis and enabled us to respond, not every Latino family does. Our partnership with MetLife Foundation, the Alzheimer's Association, Centro de Salud Familiar La Fe, and Abriendo Puertas is designed to make sure that all Hispanic families have access to the information they need to ensure early detection and appropriate treatment of this challenging condition.”

“This exciting partnership between two national organizations with different, yet converging, interests is a first for the Alzheimer's Association,” said Kathleen O'Brien, senior vice president, program and community services, Alzheimer's Association. “It is critical that we increase our efforts to reach the Latino communities. The expertise of the Alzheimer's Association in dementia and elder care, combined with the community contacts and cultural knowledge of NCLR, creates a strong, vital program for providing a greater level of education, resources, and support to the Hispanic community.”

About MetLife Foundation

MetLife Foundation was established in 1976 by MetLife to carry on its long-standing tradition of corporate contributions and community involvement. Grants support health, education, civic and cultural programs. In aging, the Foundation funds programs that promote healthy aging and address issues of caregiving, intergenerational activities, mental fitness, and volunteerism. The Foundation also supports research on Alzheimer's disease through its Awards for Medical Research program. More information about the Foundation is available at www.metlife.org.

About the National Council of LaRaza

The National Council of La Raza (NCLR) - the largest national Hispanic civil rights and advocacy organization in the U.S. and the leading voice in Washington, DC for the Hispanic community - is a private, nonprofit, nonpartisan, tax-exempt organization established to reduce poverty and discrimination and improve life opportunities for Hispanic Americans. Headquartered in Washington, DC, NCLR has field offices in Atlanta, Chicago, Los Angeles, New York, Phoenix, Sacramento, San Antonio, and San Juan, Puerto Rico. Through its community-based efforts, NCLR reaches more than four million Hispanics through a formal network of “affiliates” – more than 300 Hispanic community-based organizations that serve 41 states, Puerto Rico, and the District of Columbia – and a broader network of more than 35,000 groups and individuals nationwide.

About the Alzheimer’s Association

The Alzheimer's Association, the world leader in Alzheimer research and support, is the first and largest voluntary health organization dedicated to finding prevention methods, treatments and an eventual cure for Alzheimer's. For nearly 25 years, the donor-supported, not-for-profit Alzheimer's Association has provided reliable information and care consultation; created supportive services for families; increased funding for dementia research; and influenced public policy changes.

The Alzheimer's Association's vision is a world without Alzheimer's and its dual mission is to eliminate Alzheimer's disease through the advancement of research and to enhance care and support for individuals, their families and caregivers. For further information, call 1-800-272-3900 or visit www.alz.org

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