

Advocates Called to Action on Legislative Day

On May 9, 2007, more than 100 Alzheimer advocates from around the state gathered on the lawn of the Michigan State Capitol for a very successful Legislative Day.

The program was moderated by Doug Chalgian, Michigan Great Lakes Chapter (MGLC) board member and public policy committee chair. Participants heard inspiring remarks from Rep. Morris Hood III (D-11) whose grandfather died of Alzheimer's disease. Michael Splaine joined us from the Alzheimer's Association's Washington D.C. public policy office to encourage advocates to share their stories and make their issues known. Walter Rist, a member of the early stage support group in Kalamazoo, shared his own story and inspired advocates to fight for the programs and services provided by the Alzheimer's Association to support people with Alzheimer's disease and their families. Following this call to action, a bell was rung three times during four minutes – every 72 seconds – to recognize the rate at which Americans are developing Alzheimer's.

Throughout the day, advocates met with their legislators during office visits and in the Alzheimer's Association tent to discuss maintaining funding for key dementia programs and improving quality of care for people with dementia.

“Our advocacy team – volunteers and staff united – made great strides in educating our lawmakers about the critical need for Alzheimer services in our state,” said Elizabeth Longley, president and CEO, Alzheimer's Association, Michigan Great Lakes Chapter. “We are grateful to Walter Rist and all the advocates who stepped forward to share their personal stories – together we are making a difference in the fight against Alzheimer's.”



Several legislators stopped by the Alzheimer's Association tent on the front lawn of the Capitol to meet with advocates. Here, Senator Mike Prusi (D-38) (center), talks with Michigan Great Lakes Chapter advocates (from left) Sue Davis, Elizabeth Longley, Kim Walsh, and Sara Holmes.

Thank you to everyone who helped to make Legislative Day a great success!