

HOSA's National Service Project – Alzheimer's Association

Submitted by Florida HOSA

“The old woman sat quietly in her rocking chair, staring vacantly out the window into the bright, crisp world that was slowly becoming foreign to her. Her gnarled hands, twisted by arthritis and discolored by age spots, grasped the family Bible tightly. She was not interested in reading the verses or passages within. She could quote most of them from memory. She held the Bible for another reason. It contained the names of her children, grandchildren, and deceased husband along with many other handwritten entries on birth dates, marriages, and other significant family events. Each entry cast a vague light of recollection in the growing darkness of her life. She

would use the entries to jog her failing memory, much like a seamstress uses bits and pieces of colorful fabrics. She would weave a patchwork quilt of memories that defined who she used to be, who she was, and to cover the terrifying fact of who she was becoming.... As her memories, family, and friends gradually faded into obscurity, the walls of her life slowly closed in around her, leaving her cloaked in a near impenetrable shell of isolation from which there was no escape.”

(Excerpt from *A Fate Worse Than Death* by Alan W. Goodson)

It's Not Too Late...Get involved!

Unfortunately many people, maybe even you, can easily identify a special person in their life coping with the challenges of Alzheimer's disease. However, **you can help bring hope to that loved one by getting involved in the HOSA National Service Project.** The Alzheimer's Association is the organization that we have the incredible opportunity to assist for the next two years in overcoming this disease and its frightening effects. HOSA members across the nation have already participated in the Memory Walks sponsored by the Alzheimer's Association, and more members will be getting involved. Many chapters have additional projects they are working on to help this organization. Whatever you and your chapter are doing to help defeat this

frightening disorder - *thank you!* While some of your efforts may be to honor a person in your family, don't forget that your chapter can be recognized for its hard work in battling Alzheimer's disease. If you go to the National HOSA website (www.hosa.org), you can download the guidelines for the National Service Project and complete the forms; by doing so the Alzheimer's Association will be able to contact your chapter members and let them know how much they appreciate their efforts. By working together, as HOSA members have done so well in the past, we can help "Maintain the Brain" and bring hope to the families of those who are afflicted by this disease.



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