



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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**Community Encouraged to Nominate Local Employers
For the Caregiver-Friendly Workplace Award**

Caregivers Matter...Conejo Cares, a partnership between Senior Concerns, The Greater Conejo Valley Chamber of Commerce, and The Cities of Thousand Oaks, Westlake Village and Agoura Hills, is inviting the community to nominate local employers who demonstrate leadership by accommodating and recognizing family caregivers for the *Caregivers Matter...Conejo Cares Caregiver-Friendly Workplace Award*. Nominations will be accepted until January 8, 2016 and award winners will be announced January 30, 2016. Nomination forms and further information can be found at www.seniorconcerns.org or www.conejochamber.org

Today, as our elders are living longer with more complex health conditions, family caregiving is increasing in numbers and challenges. Nationally, almost 66 million people report being a caregiver for someone over 50. Family caregivers provide 80% of the long-term care services in the United States today, valued at \$577 billion or more than the total cost of Medicare. Those caring for loved ones are often thrust into unexpected roles that can be demanding, costly and stressful.

According to a recent public policy study, more than half of the nation's unpaid caregivers are in the workforce. And 60 percent of those caregivers work full time.

Working caregivers are struggling. According to a recent AARP study, many family caregivers are taking leaves of absence, turning down promotions, reducing work hours or even leaving their jobs due to the demands of family caregiving.

"Caregivers, by their own self-admission, are feeling less productive as they juggle competing concerns," says Andrea Gallagher, CSA, President of Senior Concerns. "On one hand, they are concerned about the person they are caring for and are trying to manage their loved ones often complex needs. At the same time, they are dealing with their personal stress, trying to identify resources and finding it hard to ask for help."

Nominations will be judged on the following criteria:

- 1) Celebration: The nominee recognizes caregivers by raising awareness for their needs within the workplace, society and the family, and celebrating them for the important role they play in the community.
- 2) Accommodation: The nominee supports caregivers by offering flexible hours, extended leave, suitable accommodations, caregiver education programs and other best-practice support policies or practices.
- 3) Innovation: The nominee demonstrates creativity and innovation in the ways that caregivers are supported and recognized, through the range and delivery of workplace accommodations, education programs, means of celebration and/or offers unique services through benefits such as caregiver support referral center or education resources.

Caregiver-Friendly Workplaces will be recognized at **Caregivers Matter...Conejo Cares**, a half-day program and luncheon honoring family caregivers who are caring for aging loved ones. Caregivers Matter...Conejo Cares will take place Saturday, January 30, from 9:30-1:30 p.m. at Los Robles Greens, 209 Moorpark Road in Thousand Oaks. For more information, or to make a reservation, please visit www.seniorconcerns.org or call (805) 497-0189. Admission is free. Reservations are required.

About Senior Concerns

Senior Concerns is a Thousand Oaks-based private, non-profit organization dedicated to serving seniors young and old, caregivers and families by offering a wide-range of services, programs and resources, including a professionally managed Adult Day Program, Meals on Wheels, Caregiver Support Center, free legal, financial, advocacy and care management services, support groups and community education and training. Senior Concerns also operates the Bargain Boutique & Thrift Shop and hosts two major fundraisers—the Love Run and the Ultimate Dining Experience—and receives invaluable community support from more than 800 volunteers.