

For Immediate Release

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The ALS Association Golden West Chapter to Honor Ismail Tsieprati with the 2017 Walk Hero Award at 14th Annual Ventura/Santa Barbara County Walk to Defeat ALS®

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The ALS Association Golden West Chapter is proud to announce that **Ismail Tsieprati** will be the co-honoree of the **2017 Walk Hero Award** at the **14th annual Ventura/Santa Barbara County Walk to Defeat ALS** on **Sunday, October 29, 2017**. The award is presented to those who are making courageous and inspirational efforts in the areas of advocacy, fundraising, and public awareness while living with ALS. Tsieprati will be honored along with Chris Chergoski.

Amyotrophic lateral sclerosis (ALS), also known as Lou Gehrig's Disease, is a fatal, neurodegenerative disease that attacks nerve cells in the brain and spinal cord. ALS does not discriminate -- women and men of all ages and backgrounds are at risk, though for unknown reasons veterans are diagnosed with ALS twice as often as civilians. People with ALS lose their ability to move, speak, swallow, and eventually the ability to breathe, while all five senses continue to function normally. At this time, there is no known cure.

A former film and video editor, producer, director, and writer with more than 25 years of experience in the business, Ismail was diagnosed with ALS in 1987. For the past, 30 years, he and his wife Cheryl have dedicated themselves to raising awareness and support for the ALS community. Ismail wrote and produced several promotional and educational videos including, ***It's Your Choice***, which presents information and options to people facing respiratory failure; ***Caring for the Caregiver***, with accompanying training materials for family caregivers; and ***What is ALS?***, an informational video for the National ALS Association. He and Cheryl co-wrote the book, ***One Blink at a Time***, in which they each share their experiences living a happy and productive life despite the challenges of ALS.

Even though Ismail has lost the ability to eat, speak, or move, he doesn't let that stop him from having his voice heard and living his life to the fullest. Since 2005, the Tsieprati's have been active in the Golden West Chapter's Walk to Defeat ALS events. In recognition of his efforts, Ismail has also received the "Superheroes of the Year Award" along with Cheryl at the Los Angeles County Walk to Defeat ALS as well as the Les Turner "ALS March of Faces- Vice President's Award" for his outstanding achievements in advocacy and public awareness of ALS.

"I am proud and honored to be named as a Walk Hero for the Ventura/Santa Barbara Walk," said Ismail. "It means a lot to me, because I love participating in the Walks and will continue to do whatever I can to advocate for others like me who are fighting ALS. I want to be helpful and informative for other people in situations such as mine and to educate the general public about this deadly disease. "

The 14th Annual [Ventura/Santa Barbara County Walk to Defeat ALS®](#) will be held on Sunday, October 29, 2017 at Plaza Park, in the heart of Ventura. Registration opens at 9:30am, followed by opening ceremony at 10:30am and Walk beginning at 11:00am. The 2-mile walk starts and ends at Plaza Park, wrapping around through the Ventura/Santa



Cover of the Tsieprati's book, which shares their experiences with ALS

Barbara area. This special community event is open to the public and all funds raised support the interdependent mission priorities of The ALS Association Golden West Chapter in Care Services, Public Policy, and Research. This year's goal is to raise \$125,000 to advance the search for effective treatments and a cure for ALS and to serve the diverse, urgent needs of the ALS community in Ventura/Santa Barbara County.

About The ALS Association and the Golden West Chapter

The mission of The ALS Association is discover treatments and a cure for ALS, and to serve, advocate for, and empower people affected by ALS to live their lives to the fullest. We are a member of the National Health Council and the only National organization solely dedicated to fighting ALS on all fronts while directly serving the ALS community. By leading the way in global research, providing assistance for people with ALS through a nationwide network of chapters, coordinating multidisciplinary care through certified clinical care centers, and fostering government partnerships, The ALS Association builds hope and enhances quality of life while aggressively searching for new treatments and a cure. The Golden West Chapter serves more than 1,600 people with ALS and their families in the state of Hawaii and in 31 counties throughout California.

For more information about ALS please visit www.alsagoldenwest.org. Walkers can register for the 2017 Ventura/ Santa Barbara County Walk to Defeat ALS at Ventura-SBWalktoDefeatALS.org. For more information about sponsoring, covering, or attending the event, please contact Jessica Partida, Regional Director of Community Outreach at jpartida@alsagoldenwest.org or (818) 865-8067.

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