



For Immediate Release

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**Ralph C. Wilson, Jr. Foundation makes lead investment to support the launch of
Rosalynn Carter Institute for Caregivers' national advocacy program**
Organizations come together on National Caregivers Day for shared vision for caregivers

AMERICUS, Ga., Feb. 18, 2022 - In celebration of National Caregivers Day, the Rosalynn Carter Institute for Caregivers (RCI) announced today that the [Ralph C. Wilson, Jr. Foundation](#) has made a lead investment to support evidence-based, equitable policies that center caregivers through RCI's new [national advocacy program](#). The Foundation's commitment is a three-year grant of \$5,140,520.

This latest grant in the partnership between RCI and the Foundation is in direct response to a growing crisis facing caregivers. Over the course of the pandemic, caregivers have grown in numbers, their isolation has intensified, and their physical and mental health has suffered. According to a national survey of caregivers conducted by RCI, [83 percent of caregivers report increased stress related to caregiving since the start of the pandemic](#). As the country moves toward recovery, this investment will support an indispensable and largely invisible part of the U.S. health care system: the country's 53 million family caregivers.

First on RCI's policy agenda is a bold proposal to centralize support for caregivers across federal research, policy, funding, and programming via the creation of an Office of Caregiver Health at the Department of Health and Human Services. In addition to national advocacy, RCI will begin working to advance statewide policies to support caregivers in Michigan, New York, and Georgia.

For nearly 35 years, RCI has provided direct support, resources, and programming to caregivers. In that time, caregivers' responsibilities, stress, and isolation have grown while their support systems have stagnated. Now, under the added strain of the COVID-19 pandemic, caregivers have reached a breaking point.

"History is filled with calamitous events that have propelled historic change, often reshaping policy," said **Rosalynn Carter**, former first lady of the United States and founder of RCI. "COVID has demonstrated how critical caregivers are to a healthy American society, and we must seize this moment to invest in institutions that support them."

With that charge, RCI is expanding its portfolio of work to include advocating for systems-level change to help build a national support system for the country's family caregivers.

"Caregivers are the invisible frontline of health care in America and the past 18 months have proven that we could not function without them," said **Dr. Jennifer Olsen**, chief executive officer of RCI. "Now is our moment to change systems and change lives, and with partners like the Ralph C. Wilson, Jr. Foundation, I believe we can finally get caregivers the support they deserve."

Caregivers are one of the [core focus areas](#) of the Ralph C. Wilson, Jr. Foundation and the partnership between RCI and the Foundation was born out of Rosalynn Carter and Mary Wilson's shared interest in supporting caregivers.



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“Ralph long held a special place in his heart for caregivers, understanding the value and importance of their care in making our communities strong and resilient,” said **Mary Wilson**, board chair and life trustee of the Ralph C. Wilson, Jr. Foundation. “Now more than ever, it is important that the voices and experiences of caregivers be reflected in our state and national policies.”

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About RCI: The Rosalynn Carter Institute for Caregivers promotes the health, strength, and resilience of caregivers throughout the United States. Established in 1987 by former First Lady Rosalynn Carter, the Institute’s priority is the unpaid family caregiver: those individuals who care for a relative, friend, or loved one. To learn more about RCI, its advocacy, how to participate in programs, or build a partnership, visit www.rosalynncarter.org.

About the Ralph C. Wilson, Jr. Foundation:

The Ralph C. Wilson, Jr. Foundation is a grantmaking organization dedicated primarily to sustained investment in the quality of life of the people of Southeast Michigan and Western New York. The two areas reflect the devotion of Ralph C. Wilson, Jr. to his hometown of Detroit and greater Buffalo, home of his beloved Buffalo Bills NFL team. Prior to his passing in 2014, Mr. Wilson provided that a significant share of his estate be used to continue a life-long generosity of spirit by funding the Foundation that bears his name. Based in Detroit, the Foundation began with a grantmaking capacity of \$1.2 billion over a 20-year period, which expires January 8, 2035. This structure is consistent with Mr. Wilson’s desire for the Foundation’s impact to be immediate, substantial, measurable, and overseen by those who knew him best. For more information visit www.rcwjrf.org.

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