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**CONTACT: Jeremy Barewin, V.P., Marketing
and Community Engagement**
Phone: 312.423.1124
e-mail: jeremy.barewin@nmss.org

GREATER ILLINOIS CHAPTER OF THE NATIONAL MULTIPLE SCLEROSIS SOCIETY ANNOUNCES 2013 SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENTS

*Ten students across the state each awarded \$1,000
scholarships to support educational goals*

CHICAGO — The Greater Illinois Chapter of the National MS Society has announced 10 new recipients of \$1,000 college scholarships through its annual Scholarship Program, including one Top Scholar, who will receive a \$3,000 scholarship through the Society's national office.

The program helps students affected by multiple sclerosis pursue a college or technical school education. It is open to high school seniors who live with MS or have a parent who does; or anybody living with MS who has not yet been to a post-secondary school.

The 2013 MS scholarship recipients include:

- **Gail Malecki**, of Lake in the Hills, attends Huntley High School. Malecki was honored as a Top Scholar by the National MS Society and receives a \$3,000 scholarship, which is eligible for renewal each collegiate year.
- **Alaina Beard**, of Springfield, is a senior at Springfield High School.
- **Isabella Furlan**, of Chicago, is a senior at Northside College Prep.
- **Briana Jarnagin**, of Chicago, is a senior at Northside College Prep.
- **Josephine Jose**, of Waukegan, is a senior at Waukegan High School.
- **Anisha Kimble**, of Chicago, is a senior at Roycemore School.
- **Marcin Krzysiak**, of Oak Lawn, is a senior at Oak Lawn Community High School.
- **Alexandra Morgan**, of Barrington, is a senior at Barrington High School.
- **Kyle Neese**, of Naperville, is a senior at Waubonsie Valley High School.
- **Thomas Pelarinos**, of Schaumburg, is a senior at Schaumburg High School

In addition to the emotional toll, MS can have a substantial financial impact on a family. The direct and indirect costs of MS, including lost wages — even for those with health insurance — are estimated at more than \$70,000 annually per household. This makes funding a college education that much harder.

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MS SCHOLARSHIPS, Add One

“Every one of us loves my mother dearly, and she a most-valued member of our family. However, the fact remains that a large portion of our finances go toward keeping her healthy and functional,” explained Gail Malecki — whose mom was diagnosed with MS in 2000 — in her scholarship application essay. “I have seen through my mother that academic accomplishment is the foundation for a prosperous life, no matter what stumbling blocks one may face. It is if not all for this reason that I have made success in academics one of my top priorities.”

Program Continues To Grow Across the Country

The Society established its scholarship program 10 years ago, and it immediately became a source of great encouragement for families concerned that MS might put college out of reach. This year, 423 new awards and 257 renewals totaling \$1,156,225 were presented nationwide. Applications are evaluated on financial need, academic record, leadership and volunteer activities, a statement of educational and career goals, and letters of recommendation. Applicants also provide a personal statement describing the impact MS has had on their life. Scholarships range from \$1,000 to \$3,000 and typically cover one year, although a limited number of awards may exceed this amount.

“For the 20,000 individuals and their family members across Illinois affected by MS and the hundreds of thousands of others across the country, there are very few known sources of scholarship assistance specially targeted for these families,” said Greater Illinois Chapter President John Blazek. “MS shouldn’t stand in the way of an education, and we are hopeful this program will give families some relief.”

Information about scholarships for 2014-15 will be available on the National MS Society Web site on October 1. For more information, call 1-800-344-4867 or visit www.nationalMSSociety.org/scholarship.

About Multiple Sclerosis

Multiple sclerosis, an unpredictable, often disabling disease of the central nervous system, interrupts the flow of information within the brain, and between the brain and body. Symptoms range from numbness and tingling to blindness and paralysis. The progress, severity and specific symptoms of MS in any one person cannot yet be predicted, but advances in research and treatment are moving us closer to a world free of MS. Most people are diagnosed between the ages of 20 and 50, with at least two to three times more women than men being diagnosed with the disease. MS affects more than 2.1 million people worldwide. It is the #1 disabling neurological disease in young to middle-aged adults.

About the National MS Society

MS stops people from moving. The National MS Society exists to make sure it doesn't. We help each person address the challenges of living with MS. Since its founding in 1946, the Society has allocated more than \$761 million to MS research projects around the world. We are people who want to do something about MS NOW. Join the Movement®.

Early and ongoing treatment with an FDA-approved therapy can make a difference for people with multiple sclerosis. Learn about your options by talking to your health care professional and contacting the National MS Society at www.nationalMSSociety.org or 1-800-FIGHT-MS (344-4867).

Join the Movement is a registered trademark of the National MS Society.

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