



National  
Multiple Sclerosis  
Society  
Greater Illinois  
Chapter

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**

## **LONG DISTANCE RUNNER AND MULTIPLE SCLEROSIS FUNDRAISER INSPIRES HOPE IN CHICAGO MARATHON PARTICIPANTS**

*Ashley Kumelin, Who Ran Across the US in 2010 to Fundraise for MS, Will Speak at MS Rally*

**CHICAGO, Friday, Oct. 5, 2012**—Ashley Kumelin likes to run; actually, she loves it. A life-long athlete, Ashley ran for her high school cross country team and later played center midfielder for the University of Wisconsin-LaCrosse's soccer team. Her love of running once led her to train for a half marathon and then compete in a 50-mile ultra-marathon just five weeks later. In 2010 she ran more than [3,200 miles from San Francisco to New York](#) to raise money and awareness for multiple sclerosis, and on Sunday, Oct. 7 she will participate in the Bank of America Chicago Marathon to once again fundraise for MS as part of the National Multiple Sclerosis Society, Greater Illinois Chapter's Race to Stop MS team.

Ashley's mother, Jill, was diagnosed with MS in 1980 and has struggled with muscle strength and vision issues for all of Ashley's life. "It breaks my heart how she's lost the ability to express herself," said Ashley. "She used to be so expressive with her hands and voice—singing while she played her guitar or piano—now she has trouble moving and talking; often times, she can't even write."

Race to Stop MS, the Greater Illinois Chapter's ongoing fundraising opportunity for runners and triathletes, encourages athletes to participate in races and endurance challenges throughout Illinois and pledge to fundraise with the Race to Stop MS team. Participants have the opportunity to fundraise through any organized third-party race—be it a local 5K or the Chicago Marathon—and can manage their fundraising through the Chapter's [Race to Stop MS webpage](#). Proceeds benefit the National MS Society, Greater Illinois Chapter.

**Ashley will speak on Saturday, October 6 at 7 p.m. at Go Roma, 848 North State St., in Chicago** about her coast-to-coast run in 2010, the Chicago Marathon and her upcoming relay, from Los Angeles to New York, stepping off in April 2013.

Every hour in the United States, someone is newly diagnosed with MS, an unpredictable, often disabling autoimmune disease of the central nervous system. **MS interrupts the flow of information between the brain and body, and it stops people from moving**—affecting more than 400,000 people in the U.S. and 2.5 million worldwide.

[The Greater Illinois Chapter of the National MS Society](#) mobilizes people and resources to drive research for a cure and to address the challenges of everyone affected by MS. We envision a world free of MS and move toward that end by driving change through advocacy, facilitating education, collaborating with others and by providing helpful programs and services. For more information, visit [MSIllinois.org](http://MSIllinois.org).

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