LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

As we approach the end of 2016, it’s great to look back and take stock of our accomplishments. Together we are stronger than MS. Together we have achieved breakthroughs in the following areas:

A large-scale clinical trial of Ocrelizumab has shown that it could slow progression in primary progressive MS. Ocrelizumab was granted “Breakthrough Therapy designation” by the U.S. FDA for the treatment of primary-progressive MS. This means that once filed for approval, the review process can be expedited. If approved, this will be the first disease-modifying therapy to treat progressive MS. We anticipate notification from the FDA in late March of 2017.

In an unprecedented global effort to end progressive MS, the International Progressive MS Alliance (led by the U.S. MS Society) has awarded three, $4.7 million Collaborative Network Award grants totaling $14.1 million to accelerate the pace of progressive MS research. We are thrilled that among those awardees is Dr. Francisco Quintana of Brigham and Women’s Hospital, working in collaboration with eight investigators from the U.S., Canada, Israel, and Sanofi Genzyme. Dr. Quintana’s goal is to identify candidates for effective therapies for progressive MS that will be ready for evaluation in patients within four years.

During fiscal year 2016, the Society invested $50 million in 380 new and ongoing research projects around the world. The Society pursues all promising paths to drive research breakthroughs in MS to fuel life-changing treatments and everyday solutions that are crucial for people with MS to live their best lives.

Throughout 2016, MS activists helped pass 46 bills in state legislatures across the country—leading to increased MS research, access to quality care, disability rights, long-term services and supports, and awareness and organizational support. The Society is also undertaking a new initiative to “Make Medications Accessible.” The Society is calling on leadership from all involved to work together to focus on getting people with MS the medications they need to live their best lives.

We are so grateful to Mr. Edward M. Dowd for donating the single largest gift in the Society’s history, a multi-year, $3 million gift to establish the Edward M. Dowd Personal Advocate Program. This program expands the Society’s services for people with MS, ensuring that personalized case management can be more consistently available to those who need more in-depth services and support.

All of these successes are possible only because of our success in fundraising. Every connection counts in the movement to create life-changing breakthroughs for people with MS. With your help, we know we can do even better next year!

Lori A. Espino
ANNUAL MEETING, RESEARCH UPDATE, & EXPO
BREAKTHROUGH MS

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 22

More than 500 people attended Breakthrough MS, the 2016 Annual Meeting, Research Update, and Expo on October 22 held simultaneously in Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Rhode Island, and Vermont. Now is the time to do whatever it takes to accelerate breakthroughs that change the world for people with MS—life-changing breakthroughs that enable people to live their best lives today, and research breakthroughs that will ultimately end MS.

Chapter Chairman Piper McNealy opened the meeting from the Massachusetts venue, and then passed the gavel to incoming Chairman David Gladstone. Trustees presiding over local meetings were Michelle Smith in Maine, Ken Jones in N. H., Theresa Molloy in R. I., and Sarah Kelly in Vermont. After years of excellent service, Michael Patterson of Maine stepped down. Three new Trustees were added: Ellen Lathi MD, Director of the Elliot Lewis Center for Multiple Sclerosis Care in Boston; Leanne Moore, Meketa Investment Group, Assistant Vice President, Investment Analyst; and Andrew Slifka, Global Petroleum, Executive Vice President and Board Member.

The Governance Committee presented a slate of officers for election at the December Board meeting: Chairman: David Gladstone; First Vice Chair: Robert Garty; Vice Chairs: Douglas Bryant, Woody Chittick, Theresa Molloy, Eli Rubenstein, and Robert Shapiro; Secretary: Jan Fuller; Finance Committee Chair: Michael Mingolelli; Immediate Past Chair: Piper McNealy.

MS RESEARCH SERIES

Following the business meeting, attendees in each state welcomed a guest research lecturer. In MASSACHUSETTS, the 2016 Stanley F. Waterman Research Lecturer was Timothy Vartanian, MD, PhD, whose topic was Research: From Environment, to Microbiome, to the Newly Forming MS Lesion. In MAINE, Nicholas G. LaRocca, PhD, Vice President, National MS Society, discussed Diet and MS: What’s for Dinner? In NEW HAMPshire, Tanuja Chittnis, MD, gave an update on the MS Natural History study (CLIMB study). Eric Klawiter, MD, MSc, spoke on What We Know About MRI at the RHODE ISLAND meeting. And in VERMONT, Nancy Lowenstein addressed Quality of Life and Behavior Change.

The Annual Meeting was sponsored by Acorda Therapeutics, Genentech, Mallinckrodt Pharmaceuticals, and Sanofi Genzyme.
RESEARCH

THE MS MICROBIOME

BY ELISABETH MARI, PHD

At the European Committee for Treatment and Research in Multiple Sclerosis (ECTRIMS) meeting in October, I enjoyed hearing about an area of investigation that is moving forward quickly — specifically, the gut microbiome and its role in the MS immune attack.

Drs. Yan Wang, Lloyd Kasper and colleagues from Dartmouth Medical School and Eastern Washington University reported that treating mice with the gut-related molecule called polysaccharide A (PSA) expanded specific immune cells called Bregs, or regulatory B cells, which in turn promoted an immune response that prevented the mice from getting an MS-like disease. Partly funded by the National MS Society, this exciting work brings us closer to future studies to explore how PSA may help to stop the immune attack in people with MS.

Drs. Egle Cekanaviciute, Sergio Baranzini and other collaborators in the MS Microbiome Consortium analyzed bacteria in stool samples from 64 people with MS who had received treatment, and 68 people without MS. They found that certain bacteria were increased in people with MS, and that those bacteria increased immune T helper 1 (Th1) cells — major players in the MS immune attack. Meanwhile, another type of bacteria — which was reduced in people with MS — induced cells that could turn down the immune attack. This research may open the door to novel therapeutic approaches based on manipulating these gut bacteria.

The interaction between the gut and the immune attack in MS may begin quite early, says Dr. Helen Tremlett (University of British Columbia) and collaborators from the U.S. Network of Pediatric MS Centers. They examined gut bacteria and immune markers in 15 children with MS and nine children without MS, and found links between types of gut bacteria and specific immune markers in the children with MS. Studying MS in this early stage is important to identify early gut microbiome involvement in the disease.

The microbiome is a relatively new area of research for the MS community — but I’m excited to see how far this field has already come. I’m eager for this progress to be propelled into treatments and solutions that will stop the disease.

Dr. Elisabeth Mari is director of Biomedical Research at the National MS Society.
LIVING WITH MS

FIVE WAYS TO HEALTHIER HOLIDAYS

BY MARCELLA DURAND

Staying on a diet can be tough even under the best of conditions—which holiday gatherings of family and friends definitely aren’t. But there are ways to stay strong. Following are some tips that may help you steer toward healthier holiday eating.

1. Plan ahead. Look at your schedule for the next month or so, and identify where you’d most like to be and what you’d most like to do, keeping in mind what will be easiest on you and your eating needs. If you’re hosting, plan a simple menu that includes fruits and vegetables—which can be easier to prepare than other dishes. For instance, prewashed salad can just be put in a bowl with some olive oil and vinegar on the side, while grapes make a sweet and easy after-dinner treat.

2. Control your environment. Try skipping that large holiday party in favor of a small potluck gathering of friends and family. That way, you’ll have more control over what food will be in front of you. Bring a salad or plate of raw-vegetable crudités to ensure that a healthy and delicious option will be available. Fill your own plate to ensure you’re not overserved. If you must go to the large party, snack on something healthy ahead of time so you don’t arrive starving.

3. Say no. It’s OK to say no to second servings, desserts, another glass of wine or even staying too long. If you find yourself sticking close to the food table and stuffing yourself because a party is too loud and conversations too difficult to follow, don’t feel bad about leaving early—your hosts will appreciate the time you were there.

4. Manage expectations (and be easy on yourself). If you eat something you shouldn’t, it’s not the end of the world—everyone lapses occasionally. Take control by selecting special treats that you’ll really enjoy, such as a bit of cheese or a special dessert. And then balance them out with more salad or other healthy options.

5. Substitute. Swap olive oil for butter, fish for meat, vegetables for stuffing, and fruit and nuts instead of dessert. The possibilities are endless for healthy and delicious alternatives!

To learn more about healthy eating and MS, visit nationalMSsociety.org/diet.

Marcella Durand is a writer and editor who lives in New York City.
PROGRAMS AND SERVICES
Because MS affects more than just the individual diagnosed, our programs welcome friends and family members unaccompanied by a person with MS.

PROGRAMS WITHOUT BORDERS

MS Learn Online - Free webcasts, podcasts, and online conferences.

Keep S’Myelin - Activity book for kids who have a loved one with MS

Knowledge is Power - Free, at-home educational series for people who are newly diagnosed, and their families. Receive six weekly mailings of current, accurate MS information. Call 1-800-344-4867 for more information.

MS Next Step

Kids Get MS Too & Facebook Pediatric Alliance

MS NAVIGATOR®
Our MS Navigators are highly skilled professionals who can help you navigate the challenges of MS by providing:

- Up-to-date Information
- Practical Resources and Referrals
- MS Navigator® can help you:
- Find information about MS
- Deal with a crisis
- Connect with others living with MS
- Find what you need to maintain independence
- Access comprehensive educational programs, and more

Call Monday through Friday, 800-344-4867.

COMPUTER OUTREACH PROGRAM
Stay connected! COP provides simple computers to individuals isolated in their own homes or living in long term care facilities without access to a computer.

SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL SUPPORT

Café Con Leche: Conversación y Apoyo para Personas Viviendo con la Esclerosis Múltiple (EM)
Un grupo telefónico, totalmente en español. Aproveche la oportunidad para hablar de sus preocupaciones y conozca a otras personas que enfrentan su situación. Además, invitaremos a expertos de diferentes ramas de especialidad en la EM para conversar sobre temas importantes para Ud. Para más información o para inscribirse llame al 1-800-344-4867, opción 3. Horario: 2:00p.m. – 3:30p.m. Un martes al mes (Recurso - Julio – Septiembre)

MS CONNECTION.ORG
Share what you know at www.MSConnection.org. You can share information about the topics that are most important to you, connect with people, and have expert MS information and opinions right at your fingertips. Join today!

SEEKING SELF-HELP GROUP LEADERS
Interested in meeting and networking with others? Create a vibrant MS network in your community. The Chapter is seeking individuals to lead affiliated MS self-help groups throughout the Chapter area. Self-Help Group Leaders of affiliated MS self-help groups are valuable volunteers for the National MS Society. For more information, email aarushi.malhotra@nmss.org

IN TOUCH PHONE GROUPS
Professionally facilitated phone groups meet monthly. You can listen, learn and talk to other people with MS from the comfort of your own home. For those who cannot attend a traditional support group. Three from which to choose:

1 2nd Monday/month Time: 11:00a.m. – 12:00p.m.
2 2nd Tuesday/month Time: 12:00p.m. – 1:00p.m.
Contact: aarushi.malhotra@nmss.org or 1-800-344-4867
UMASS MS Center Group for people diagnosed with MS regardless of symptoms or disease course. Friends and family invited as well.

**Contact facilitator:** Carolyn Griffin RN, MSCN at 508-856-5006 or at carolyn.griffin@umassmemorial.org

**Location:** UMASS MS Center, University Campus, 55 Lake Ave North, Worcester, MA

**Time:** Every 3rd Wednesday 5:45p.m. – 6:45p.m. (September thru June)

- MS Center’s waiting room
- Parking: $2 handicap access or garage rates

### COFFEE AND CONVERSATION

Join others with MS for a coffee break! People with MS and their friends and family are encouraged to socialize and meet people in the area who are living with MS. Food and beverages are available for purchase or you can just come for the conversation. Groups meet in Maine, Massachusetts, and New Hampshire. Check the website for times and locations.

- **Location:** R&R Chocolate, 913 Post Rd Rt. 1, Hannaford Shopping Plaza, Wells, ME
  **When:** Second Friday; 10:00a.m. – 11:30a.m.

- **Location:** Auburn Public Library Cafe LA, 49 Spring St., Auburn, ME
  **When:** Last Tuesday; 10:00a.m. – 11:30a.m.

- **Location:** Pats Pizza, 292 State St., Augusta, ME
  **When:** 1st Thursday; 12:30p.m. – 2:00p.m.

- **Location:** Hatchet Mountain Publick House, 42 Hatchet Mountain Road, Hope, ME
  **When:** Second Thursday; 5:30p.m. – 7:00p.m.

- **Location:** St Mary’s Hospital, LePage Conference Ctr, Potvin Room, 99 Campus Ave, Lewiston, ME
  **When:** Second Wednesday, 6:00p.m. – 8:00p.m.

- **Location:** Panera Bread, 11 Main St., Westbrook, ME
  **When:** Last Friday; 10:00a.m. – 11:30a.m.

- **Location:** Lobster Cove Restaurant, 756 York St, York, ME
  **When:** Second Saturday; 9:30a.m. – 10:30a.m.

### MASSACHUSETTS

- **Location:** Lickety Split at Mass MoCA, North Adams, MA
  **When:** 2nd Sunday; 3:30p.m. – 4:45p.m.

### NEW HAMPSHIRE

- **Location:** Panera Bread, 7 Colby Court, Bedford, NH
  **When:** First Tuesday; 10:00a.m. – 11:30a.m.

- **Location:** Panera Bread, 52 March Ave., Manchester, NH
  **When:** Second Thursday; 6:30p.m. – 8:00p.m.

- **Location:** Panera Bread, 75 Fort Eddy Rd., Concord, NH
  **When:** Third Thursday; 6:30p.m. – 8:00p.m.

### VERMONT

- **Location:** Panera Bread, 1184 Shelburne Road, South Burlington
  **When:** First Saturday; 9:30a.m. – 10:30a.m.

Want to start a Coffee and Conversation in YOUR area? Contact: Aarushi at aarushi.malhotra@nmss.org

### HEALTH & WELLNESS

#### GET FIT! HAVE FUN!

Studies show that regular exercise can increase muscle strength, reduce fatigue and depression, improve bladder and bowel control, and is an important element in managing MS.

### PHYSICAL WELLNESS REIMBURSEMENT

If an instructor is part of our network of trained providers, you are eligible for reimbursement to help pay for your classes or membership! Check our website for providers and reimbursement. Don’t see your instructor on the list?

Have your instructor visit ntl.MS/fitwellpros to take a FREE online training course, receive CEU credits, and become part of our network!
CONTINUED FROM PAGE 7

WHEELCHAIR HEALTH IN MOTION (WHIM)
Wheelchair Health In Motion (WHIM) is a free peer-driven program. WHIM provides the tools for increasing quality of life and promoting wellness in individuals living with a physical disability through innovative chair exercise and peer support. For more information, contact WHIM at 603-938-2562 or WHIM4wellness@gmail.com.

MS ENCOMPASS AT THE YWCA OF CENTRAL MASS
At the YWCA of Central Massachusetts, Worcester. In collaboration with the YWCA of Central Mass. to make available their accessible pool, cardio equipment, weight training equipment, and aerobics classes. Childcare is available for a nominal fee. Registration is required through the National MS Society. $10 per month. To register: Aarushi.Malhotra@nmss.org or 1-800-344-4867.

MS WELLNESS PROGRAM: HOCKOMOCH AREA YMCA
Developed specifically for people with MS, the program focuses on regular physical activity and improved nutrition. Program available at these three branches, Foxborough, North Attleboro, and Franklin, MA. For information: Contact the PHI (Prescription for a Healthy Lifestyle) Coordinator, 508-772-1310, Email: phl@hockymca.org

BFIT! AT THE BOSTON HOME, DORCHESTER, MASS.
An innovative wellness program for adults with MS and other advanced neurological diseases. Socialize and access outstanding care and assistive technology. A sliding fee scale is available. Contact: Glory Wideman-Hughes, 617-825-3905, x300 or gwideman@thebostonhome.org.

EMPLOYMENT AND BENEFIT RESOURCES:

Ask the Employment Specialist: Are you curious about workplace disclosure, social security benefits, need a reasonable accommodation or are you thinking about returning to work? If so send your employment issues questions to: EmploymentQuestions@nmss.org. An Employment Specialist will respond within 48 hours.

SSDI Questions??? Do you have questions about SSDI? If you are interested in checking in with our “expert,” please call 781-693-5155 to schedule a phone consultation.

REGISTER NOW!

Teleconference Series Continues
Telelearning provides information and guidance on current matters essential to living one’s best life with MS. Register online or call 800-344-4867 http://www.nationalmssociety.org/Resources-Support/Library-Education-Programs/Telelearning-Program

ADVOCACY:
Take Action! Join the MS Action Network. Together, we represent the interests of people with MS as important policy decisions are made in both the public and private sectors. The MS Action Network works on important issues at the federal, state and local levels. For more information or to join the Action Alert network, email: GNEadvocacy@nmss.org

Sign up to receive National MS Society emails at www.nationalMSsociety.org/signup

FREE ONLINE COURSE

Introduction to MS for Fitness and Wellness Professionals
0.4 continuing education credits provided by the American Council on Exercise (ACE). Designed for fitness and wellness instructors, including aquatics instructors, yoga teachers, coaches, personal trainers, and others who want to learn more about MS. Encourage your instructor, gym or local providers to join our network! Visit ntl.MS/fitwellpros for information about online wellness instructor trainings.
PARTNERS IN MS CARE
COURTNEY CAPWELL—PROVIDING LEADERSHIP IN MS CARE

Providence, RI—Courtney Capwell, DPT, MSCS, a leading provider of care for people living with MS in Providence, RI has been officially recognized as a Partner in MS Care, Rehabilitation Provider through the National Multiple Sclerosis Society’s Partners in MS Care program. This formal recognition honors Courtney’s commitment to providing exceptional, coordinated MS care; and a continuing partnership with the Society to address the challenges of people affected by MS.

“We are so proud to partner with Courtney to enhance comprehensive physical therapy for the people who live with MS in Providence,” said Lori Espino, president of the Society’s Greater New England Chapter. “In earning this recognition, Courtney has demonstrated extraordinary leadership in MS care, making a tremendous impact on people affected by MS in our community,” Ms. Espino continued.

“I’m so grateful to the MS Society for their ongoing support and efforts to treat patients with MS, I’m excited to be working with Lifespan and other providers in treating MS and expanding the services we have available to those with MS,” said Courtney.

For more information, please visit www.nationalMSsociety.org/partnersinMSCare or call 1-800-344-4867.

DAVID YOUNG-HONG, COURTNEY CAPWELL, DPT, MSCS, AND MEREDITH SHEEHAN

The Society’s Partners in MS Care program recognizes committed providers, like Courtney, whose practices support the Society’s initiative of affordable access to high quality MS healthcare for everyone living with MS — regardless of geography, disease progression and other disparities.

MS AWARENESS WEEK
MARCH 5-11, 2017

Make Your Connection Count
MSconnection.org

WAYS TO CONNECT:
Visit MSnewengland.org
■ Be an MS Activist. Sign up for Action Alert. nationalMSsociety.org/MSActivist
■ Sign up today! walkMS.org, bikeMS.org, challengewalkMS.org or muckfestMS.org
■ Wear orange or an orange ribbon to raise MS awareness.
■ Tweet @MS_newengland
■ Hold a program or event in your community!
■ Volunteer!
■ Distribute bookmarks to local libraries and book stores.
To request bookmarks, email communicationsgne@nmss.org
FAMILY MATTERS

DONNA AND MARK, THE STORY OF OUR LIFE WITH MS

The story of our life with MS begins on July 4th, 1997 in New Britain, CT. I am the Assistant General Manager of the New Britain Rock Cats, a Minor League Baseball Team Affiliate of the Minnesota Twins.

My wife Donna works with me for the Rock Cats. Donna is the Food Service Director for the Ballpark and the Sky Boxes. She is responsible for the Mascot “Rocky” and the Autograph Booth, where players such as David “Big Papi” Ortiz signed autographs and took pictures with our Fans of all ages. During the Off Season, Donna is a Salesperson responsible for Scoreboard, Scorebook and Giveaway Sales.

Following a Rock Cats win, fireworks were going off as a part of the Fourth Celebration. Donna was securing food service doors and windows, when she had a slip and fall. We treated this at first as a Workers Comp Case, as the concourse floor was slippery at the time of the fall. Nine months later the insurance carrier requested further tests and for Donna to see a Neurologist. The test results were in and a we went to the Neurologist for some answers.

It was there that we first heard the Words “You have MS.” We sought a second opinion which confirmed the diagnosis of MS. We went home armed with information about each of the A,B,C drugs, and a date for a MS Support Group meeting two days later.

We contacted Cousin Eric, who is a Doctor of Pharmacology, and our go-to guy for all things Medicine. Eric laid out our options of each drug, and we started shortly on Avonex.

We attended our first MS Support Group the next day, going around the room telling our MS Stories. First up was Donna telling her MS information. Next up, my turn, my name is Mark and I have MS. Oh my gawd someone in the group said, you both have MS? Yes, I answered, my wife Donna does, so I do as well. And so it began.

Three years later we were off for a New Baseball adventure outside of Philadelphia, PA. I went to work, and Donna went to work as a Volunteer at the Greater Philadelphia NMSS Chapter. We had volunteered in CT for MS Walks, but Donna wanted to give back more, to say Thank You to the NMSS for sponsored events such as Adaptive Yoga and Tai Chi. NMSS of Philadelphia also gave Donna a Scooter so that she could ride as I walked the neighborhood. They also started Donna on Hippotherapy, the use of horseback riding as a therapeutic treatment.

Throughout the years, wherever we lived, NMSS has been an important part of our lives. We moved back to Maine in 2011. The Maine Chapter of NMSS continues to offer that familiar support by offering solutions and timely programs that help support our day to day lives.

Support such as Alpha One. Through Alpha One we were able to purchase two “All Season, Heavy Duty Rubber Mats.” The mats were designed specifically to the height of our apartment building door and secondary stoop down to the parking lot. Donna and her wheelchair can now exit the building on her own. Our Apartment Complex reimbursed our purchase of the two mats.

Donna and I have enjoyed two programs offered this Summer by Jaye Vandussen of the Maine NMSS. The programs were called “Managing Fatigue” held in Freeport, and “Everyday Matters” held at KVCC in Fairfield, ME. The programs helped us reorganize how our apartment and our daily routines could be better managed, The programs also showed how People in our lives, are Inside, or Outside our circle. Jaye and NMSS are definitely Inside Our Circle.

Mark David Mogul of Portland, ME, Co-Owner of “Sweetreats,” and former professional minor league baseball Assistant General Manager.
STRENGTH IN NUMBERS

TEAM ORANGE GROWS THEIR WALK MS TEAM THROUGH LOCAL NETWORKING

Families rally around each other in tough times. That circle of support often reaches beyond immediate family to friends and coworkers. For a family in Winchendon, Mass., it feels like the whole town is on their side. Melissa Hunt’s mom, Cindy LeBlanc, was diagnosed with MS in June 2000, when Melissa and her sister were teenagers. Cindy lost most of her vision diagnosed with Optic Neuritis. Legally blind, she had to stop driving. That was one example of the impact on the family, not having mom to rely on for rides here and there. But Melissa and her sister took it in stride and when they got their licenses, they stepped up to the plate taking their mom to appointments, running errands, and so much more. Melissa also had to learn how to give her mother injections, but that was a different kind of challenge. “I did it once. Dad gave the injections,” said Melissa. Difficult though they were, those experiences strengthened the family bonds.

“Mom’s one of the toughest people I know…she’s never given up,” said Melissa. Cindy is able to continue working using magnification software, low vision tools and equipment provided by her employer and Massachusetts Commission for the Blind.

“I believe a positive attitude makes the world of difference. The support from my family and friends keeps me going, one day at a time,” says Cindy.

Walk MS was something the family engaged in early on, almost without discussion. It was a natural choice to raise money to fight MS. Although they live in Winchendon they walked in Boston each year. They walked as individuals and did well at fundraising, but in 2011 Melissa had an idea. “What if we made the team bigger and started raising more money?” She knew that whatever they raised would go to help people affected by MS and their families and for research. And so “Team Orange” was born.

Melissa found that it wasn’t difficult at all. “At first, I spoke to my friends, they all knew my mom. People in town started reaching out...people who were affected by MS.” And there were a lot of people in the small town of Winchendon who were affected by MS, including the father of her husband’s best friend. Team Orange gave them all an opportunity to take action.

Members of Team Orange solicit donations individually, but they also work together to have a benefit each year with a DJ or a live band, raising over $5,000 on average. This year, the local networking by Melissa and her teammates paid off big. The captain of a MuckFest MS team, “Fight the Good Fight,” showed up at one of Team Orange’s fundraising events and introduced themselves. The jist of the conversation went sort of like this, “Do you want to join my team?” “Sure. Do you want to join my team?” “Sure.” Suddenly the impact of both teams skyrocketed. The two teams collaborated on fundraising events, like paint night and lottery calendars, and split the proceeds. Fight the Good Fight had 58 team members and raised nearly $10,000. And, Team Orange recruited 76 members, and raised more than $11,000 for Walk MS, close to double their fundraising total for last year.

“It was awesome to see everyone pull together,” said Melissa. Cindy added, “I am so proud of Melissa, Team Orange, and Fight the Good Fight, their efforts are making a difference in the fight against MS!”
ADVOCA CY

FEDERAL

With the 2016 election over, we encourage all activists to identify and contact their elected officials to congratulate them on their victory. To find your Federal elected official visit: www.house.gov/representatives/find/

We would like to thank the following candidates who signed the candidate’s pledge on access to medications from our region:

- Max Abramson; Governor of New Hampshire
- Maggie Hassan; U.S. Senate, from New Hampshire

To read the Society’s recommendations report on Access to Medications, visit the following page:

http://www.nationalmssociety.org/Treating-MS/Medications/Make-MS-Medications-Accessible/Recommendations-Access-to-Meds

VERMONT

State Action Day! The Vermont State Action Day will be held March 14, 2017 in the Vermont State House.

For information, contact Jacob.Krilovich@nmss.org

RHODE ISLAND

SB 2294, a bill requiring insurers to give 30 days’ notice before making changes in preferred or tiered drug formularies passed the legislature before the end of session and was signed by Governor Raimondo on September 26, 2016. Public Law Chapter 541 will take effect January 1, 2017.

State Action Day! The Rhode Island State Action Day will be held in early March. Date TBD. For more information, contact Jacob.Krilovich@nmss.org

MAINE

ATTENTION ALL MAINERS!!

Would you or somebody that you know living with a disability benefit from making a home modification to make their home more accessible?

As a result of the Chapter’s successful advocacy efforts on LD 365 (now Public Law Ch. 503) a home modification tax credit, Mainers who have an income of under $55,000 are eligible to claim a portion of the expenditures to make your home more accessible beginning in the 2017 tax year.

Home modifications include but are not limited to: changes to flooring to mitigate tripping hazards, installation of grab bars, installation of access ramps, and widening of doorways, etc. This program will be administered by Maine Housing Authority and is launching in early 2017. If you or anybody that you know would be interested in more information on how to qualify for this tax credit, contact Jacob.Krilovich@nmss.org or 1-800-344-4867 option 2.

State Action Day! The Maine State Action Day will be held March 7th, in the Maine State House. For more information, contact Jacob.Krilovich@nmss.org

COALITION MEMBERS MET IN PORTLAND, ME, TO CELEBRATE REP. ARCHIE VEROW, WHO CHAMPIONED LD 365, THE ACCESSIBLE HOME MODIFICATION TAX CREDIT BILL
MASSACHUSETTS

The Chapter submitted testimony on the recent Massachusetts Attorney General’s report on the cost of specialty pharmaceutical drugs.

The Chapter is also reviewing a separate state report regarding continuity of care for providing MS Disease Modifying Drugs.

The Chapter has joined forces with PCA activists to ensure adequate coverage in the workforce amid new State overtime regulations.

State Action Day! The Massachusetts State Action Day will be held May 16, 2017, in the Massachusetts State House.

For more information, contact Jacob.Krilovich@nmss.org

SUSAN NUTILE RECEIVED OUTSTANDING ACTIVIST AWARD FOR HER EFFORTS IN MASSACHUSETTS ADVOCACY.

STATE GOVERNMENT RELATIONS COMMITTEES

NEW MEMBERS WANTED!

The chapter is seeking committed individuals to join our monthly meetings in person or by teleconference to help determine our priority issues and activities. Are you a person with MS or have a connection to the disease? Do you have professional expertise in the area of law, medicine, insurance, disability, fundraising, policy, or community organizing? Are you willing to speak before government officials, at public hearings or with the media? Are you committed to working as a team and working on projects?

Please contact Jacob.Krilovich@nmss.org or 1-800-344-4867, option 2 for all Advocacy questions and concerns.

DISTRICT ACTIVIST LEADERS NEEDED

Have you ever met with your elected officials and shared how MS affects you? Are you interested in growing this relationship to keep people with MS at the front of legislators’ minds as they consider legislation? Take charge in your community by becoming a volunteer District Activist Leader and build these critical relationships with your elected officials. You will serve as a liaison between these officials and the Society in order to build a reliable grassroots movement across the state and country. If this interests you, contact Jacob.Krilovich@nmss.org or 1-800-344-4867 option 2.

NEW HAMPSHIRE

The chapter recently submitted public comment to the New Hampshire Insurance Department on their recent annual report of cost drivers.

State Action Day! The New Hampshire State Action Day will be held February 16, 2017 at 11:30 a.m. in the cafeteria of the New Hampshire State House. For more information, contact Jacob.Krilovich@nmss.org

Learn how to have your say and become an MS activist at: www.nationalMSsociety.org/advocacy.
WAYS TO GIVE
MANY WAYS TO VOLUNTEER

BY ALICIA GUILFORD

I met a unique set of people I now call my friends because of my volunteer activities with the National MS Society. Without these folks, I never would have found the Challenge Walk MS* event this fall in Cape Cod, Massachusetts. And what an amazing event it was! More than 600 people came together all for the same purpose: to end MS forever.

I made my first connection to Society through a Walk MS* event in 2003, less than a month after my official diagnosis. We raised a ton of money and raised awareness throughout the community. My husband and I volunteered at the next seven out of eight Walk MS events (I got sick one year and had to stay home). I was soon asked to join the Walk MS committee, and I recruited friends to help whenever possible. We made community connections by adding a silent auction and raffle to the walk to raise more money and give folks something fun to do when they returned from walking.

Once I was established on the Walk MS side of things, I was recruited for the Programs Committee.

ALICIA WITH HER HUSBAND, JEFF

We worked together to connect with other people with MS to create fun and informative events about MS. I still help plan and attend as many programs as I can.

More recently, I connected with Vermont state legislators during MS Awareness week, wrote a letter of support for a bill proposed by the Vermont Government Relations Committee to provide tax breaks for Vermonters who make accessibility modifications to their homes, and was a volunteer photographer at the past two annual MS Education Days. I am also a member of the Home LINKS Committee in Greater New England.

Volunteering gives me the opportunity to make connections with so many wonderful people. I feel strongly that I have been given much more than I give. Everyone needs connections in their lives and I have more because of volunteering. I encourage everyone to call the National MS Society at 1-800-344-4867 and find out how you can help — you never know where it might lead.

Also visit nationalMSsociety.org/volunteer to get involved.

Alicia Guilford lives in Cambridge, Vermont, where she recently built her forever home with her husband.
WAYS TO GIVE
A BREAKTHROUGH GIFT

Some gifts provide the recipient with a moment of delight and pleasure, a warm glow in feeling loved and recognized by the giver. Other gifts are practical, fulfilling a need in someone’s life, or are a chance to foster a connection, a chance to nurture a bond between giver and receiver.

Then, there are the gifts that do all of these things and more. They continue to give, empowering people for years to come and helping them to live their best lives with a chronic and unpredictable disease.

This is the sort of breakthrough gift that the National MS Society received in June 2016, from Edward M. Dowd, a successful philanthropist and financier who was diagnosed with multiple sclerosis himself in 1993. His $3 million multiyear gift (the largest gift the Society has ever received from an individual) will make a difference in the lives of those most severely affected by MS through the establishment of the Edward M. Dowd Personal Advocate Program. Dowd says he considers his diagnosis “one of the best things that has ever happened” to him as it helped him to slow down and re-evaluate his priorities.

Challenges and solutions
Dowd’s gift is transformative; it will greatly expand the Society’s nationwide network of trained case managers who are knowledgeable about MS and provide extra support to thousands of people nationwide who are living with the most complex challenges of MS.

“I realize the value of services for people with limitations. I have help navigating life with MS, but I often wonder how people without sufficient resources manage even the day-to-day tasks,” says Dowd. “My overall focus is to help improve the quality of life for people with MS who do not have the financial means to get the support they need. To learn more about the Edward M. Dowd Personal Advocate Program, call an MS Navigator at 1-800-344-4867, or email ContactUsNMSS@nmss.org.

EDWARD M. DOWD
To support programs and services that help people with MS and their loved ones, visit nationalMSsociety.org/donate.

MS Navigator®

Call an MS Navigator® today to find the information you need about multiple sclerosis when you need it, and to locate helpful resources in your area. MS Navigators are highly skilled professionals, who can help you navigate the challenges of MS and maintain independence.

Call Monday through Friday 9 a.m. - 5 p.m.
1-800-344-4867
2016 EVENT RECAPS

AUGUST 15. Link Up for MS Golf Tournament was a great day at beautiful Ipswich Country Club. Dave Goucher, voice of the Boston Bruins on 98.5 The Sports Hub, played alongside nearly 100 golfers and hosted the evening award presentations. The tournament raised $80,000. Thank you Lou Caputo, Eric Caputo, and the Link Up Committee for your hard work.

AUGUST 19-21. The MS Benefit Auction led the 35th MS Harborsfest with over 300 people and over 350 auction items, raising $46,000. On Saturday, 68 sailboats raced in Casco Bay. And Sunday. 64 Lobster Boats raced alongside 6 tug’s for the Tugboat Muster. Altogether, Harborsfest raised over $100,000.

AUGUST 20. Run MS 5k Rhode Race ran through beautiful Bristol, Rhode Island. About 75 runners participated in this evening run as the sun set, together raising $6,500.

SEPTEMBER 10-25. The Walk MS season wrapped up with eight walks this fall in Maine, Mass., N.H., and Vermont. More than 700 walkers came together to support their friends and family members with MS which joined our spring Walk MS events to raise $2,511 million!

SEPTEMBER 11-13. The 15th annual Challenge Walk MS had more than 350 walkers and over 150 crew and one-day volunteers! Together, Challenge raised close to $800,000.

SEPTEMBER 13. Over 275 community leaders turned out to honor Donald L. Baker, KeyBank Vermont Market President, with the MS Hope Award at the Dinner of Champions, sponsored by KeyBank and National Life Group. The MS Community Champion Award was presented to National Life Group. Co-Chairs were Sara Byers, President of Leonardo’s Pizza, and Tom Torti, President of Lake Champlain Regional Chamber of Commerce. $85,000.

SEPTEMBER 24. MS Jet Pull had 17 teams gather at TF Green Airport to pull a 757 FedEx Jet, raising over $31,000. There were kids activities, a DJ, and barbecue, plus trophies for fastest pull, top fundraising, & team spirit.

NOVEMBER 4. More than 650 people turned out for the 12th annual Fashion Plates Fashion Show and Luncheon in Boston, presented by The Luongo Family. Eighteen models, who are all everyday women who have MS, walked the runway and told their stories of MS. The luncheon raised $140,000 and was hosted by Anthony Everett of WCVB-TV’s Chronicle. Fashions were compliments of Portes & Company and Lynn Evans. Hair style and makeup were by Ronit Enos and Beauty For A Cure.

NOVEMBER 24. More than 830 runners burned off a few calories on Thanksgiving Day morning at the annual Boston Volvo Village 5K Road Race in Allston, Mass. The brisk race raised more than $50,000, thanks to the generosity of the dealership’s owner Ray Ciccolo.
2017 WALK MS
WALK WITH US TO CREATE A WORLD FREE OF MS

REGISTER TODAY!  walkMS.org or 1-800-344-4867

Every step. Every person. Every second spent and dollar raised. They all add up to an experience unlike any other: Walk MS. This is our time to unite and stand strong. Register now; together we will change lives.
2017 EVENTS

BIKE MS
REGISTER AT BIKEMS.ORG

RIDE THE VINEYARD
SATURDAY, MAY 6
Martha’s Vineyard High School,
Vineyard Haven, MA
- 15, 30 & 60 mile scenic routes featuring quaint charm and beautiful ocean views

RIDE THE RHODE
SATURDAY-SUNDAY, JUNE 10-11
Rhode Island
- 35, 75 & 100 mile route options on Saturday,
  75 miles on Sunday
- Ride over the Newport Bridge as you enjoy beautiful coastline and winding country roads

CAPE COD GETAWAY
SATURDAY-SUNDAY, JUNE 24-25
Blue Cross Blue Shield of Mass.,
Quincy to Provincetown, MA
- 75 & 100 mile route options on Saturday,
  75 miles on Sunday
- Largest MS Ride in New England with more than 2,000 riders

MINUTEMAN RIDE
SATURDAY, JULY 15
Concord-Carlisle High School,
Concord, MA
- 25 & 60 mile route options through Metro-West towns

GREEN MOUNTAIN GETAWAY
SATURDAY, AUGUST 5
Community Drive Business Park,
South Burlington, VT
- 25, 60 & 100 mile options

GREAT MAINE GETAWAY
SATURDAY-SUNDAY, AUGUST 12-13
University of New England, Biddeford, Maine
- Saturday routes include 25, 50, 75 & 100 mile options
- Sunday choose between 25, 50 & 75 mile routes

NH SEACOAST ESCAPE
Saturday, August 26
Stratham Hill Park, Stratham, NH
Route options include 25 & 60 mile options

CLIMB TO THE TOP - BOSTON
MARCH 4
REGISTER AT CLIMBMSGNE.ORG

200 CLARENDON
New England’s tallest building – 61 stories.
Race for time, climb for pride, celebrate your victory.
Open to elite climbers and casual striders.
Chip-timed. Fundraising prizes.

AUTHORS’ LUNCHEON
MARCH 10
REGISTER AT 802-871-5231 OR MSNEWENGLAND.ORG

BURLINGTON, VERMONT
Meet renowned, best-selling authors Gregory Maguire, Molly Stevens, and Casey Sherman. Books available for sale and signing.

Be a Hero
Join the national MS Society to make a difference.
www.BeaHero.org
3 DAYS. 50 MILES. CONNECT TO END MULTIPLE SCLEROSIS

Cape Cod, Mass.
September 8-10, 2017

Register now: challengewalkMS.org or 1-800-344-4867

Once in a while, a challenge calls that you simply must answer. Challenge Walk MS is the perfect way to embrace a personal challenge of spirit and strength, while making an important difference in the lives of people living with MS.

REGISTER TODAY & GET A HEAD START ON FUNDRAISING
As soon as you register, you’ll have access to our online fundraising tools that make fundraising easier and more convenient than ever! A minimum fundraising goal of $1,500 is required, but we’ll be with you every step of the way.

THANK YOU TO OUR PREMIER NATIONAL SPONSOR

MuckFest® MS Boston is the FUN mud & obstacle 5K. No special training required! We’re also on a mission to end multiple sclerosis. 100% of your fundraising dollars benefit the National MS Society. Have a blast and make a difference!

MAY 20 & MAY 21, 2017
REGISTER AT MUCKFESTMS.COM

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**STAY INFORMED. READ MS CONNECTION ONLINE AT MSNEWENGLAND.ORG**

You may request a printed newsletter if you have impaired vision or if you do not have Internet access. Call 781-693-5133

### CALENDAR - EVENTS

**March**
- March 4
- March 5-11
- March 10
- March 17
- March 22
- March 29

**April**
- April 1
- April 2
- April 8
- April 9
- April 17
- April 22
- April 29

**May**
- May 6
- May 7
- May 13
- May 20
- May 20-21
- May 31

**June**
- June 10-11
- June 24-25
- June 24-26