MARCH 2006

NATIONAL MULTIPLE SCLEROSIS SOCIETY
Greater Illinois Chapter

msconnection

MARCH 13-18
has been designated MS AWARENESS WEEK

60 years

The National Multiple Sclerosis Society is celebrating 60 years of leading the fight to end the devastating effects of MS! To celebrate, March 13-18 has been designated nationally by the Society as MS Awareness Week. Across the country, Chapters are planning special recognitions and activities to raise visibility for both the disease and the Society.

This is a chance for us to be proactive and aggressive in our efforts to educate the public about MS, our mission and the role everyone can play in joining our fight against this disease. We have an opportunity to position the Society as the number one resource for MS information, services, advocacy efforts and research into the causes and cures for MS.

Here in Illinois, watch for:

¥Awareness events and information in buildings in your community
¥PSA advertisements on the radio, in newspapers and on TV
¥MS Lobby Day in Springfield, March 14-15
¥MS Day at the Museum of Science and Industry on March 18th
¥The launch of our newly redesigned website and information materials

And stay tuned as the Greater Illinois Chapter provides you with even more opportunities to help contribute to the fight to end MS!

I Fight MS

As the new president of the Greater Illinois Chapter, I have the privilege of being part of a community of individuals who are dedicated to eradicating MS. Over the past few months, I have learned about research studies in areas of immunology, virology, genetics and more. I have immersed myself in learning how our education and service programs address the needs of individuals living with MS. And I have heard your stories and seen how this disease challenges families.

This has helped crystallize exactly *why* I should fight MS and has helped to shape my vision for how this Chapter will cement its place at the forefront of the Society s efforts to achieve victory.

Never before has there been more promise. New, revelatory research indicates that we are truly *so close* to pinpointing answers to decades of questions. We have the resilience of people living with MS who inspire us by refusing to give up hope. And we have the demand from hundreds of thousands of people whose lives have been touched by MS and who are saying enough.

And today, we have a new attitude. Throughout the Society, we have a mandate to do what it takes to end MS *now*. Our mission represents a promise: ending the devastating effects of MS. To keep that promise, we must approach the way we serve people living with MS in new ways.

What we can promise you is this: we will be more visible in educating the public about MS and more vocal in ensuring that this disease gets attention from lawmakers and the medical community. This Chapter will have a place for every person who is outraged about MS and wants to do something about it.

We will involve more volunteers in shaping the battle plan for how this fight will be won. And this Chapter will bring more programs and services into your community —sometimes directly into your homes using technologies available to us.

We will ask boldly for the funding, partnerships and support that are critical to advancing our mission. And our Chapter will focus on you and your stories about how MS has changed your lives. We will find diverse ways to generate funds to ensure that our research, programs and services continue to make a difference. And we will seek out and support the novel research that has been a hallmark of Society-funded projects — and the basis for nearly every major breakthrough seen to date in the treatment and understanding of MS.

I am extraordinarily proud to be a part of this vision. And today, when I m asked what I do, I m just as extraordinarily proud to tell people that I fight MS.

Lynda M. Chott

Lynda M. Chott, President

Team Up with the TeamMS Family!

It just takes one person to inspire hundreds that's the idea behind TeamMS.

TeamMS partners the National Multiple Sclerosis Society with corporations and community groups to help support our mission to end the devastating effects of MS. And it offers the best way to make the biggest impact through special events such as the MS Walk and the MS 150 Tour de Farms!

There are many rewards for building a corporate team. Not only will you be spreading awareness about MS and the many ways that the community can help fight this disease, Team MS also:

teamMS

- ¥Helps employees develop team-building skills
- ¥Helps build community visibility and creates a sense of corporate pride
- ¥Provides employees with a fun social outing at little or no cost
- ¥Makes it easier and more fun to raise money to support programs and research that are improving life for people with MS.

It s simple and fun to be a part of Team MS! Find out about the special recognition and perks corporate teams receive for their fundraising efforts, including team tents, customized decorations, specialty catering and more.

To learn more about how you and your company can join TeamMS, contact Kelley Ligozio at kelley.ligozio@ild.nmss.org or 312-423-1104.

Don't miss the 25th Anniversary MS 150 Tour de Farms. To register as a cyclist or to volunteer visit http://ms150.msillinois.org

register today at ms150.msillinois.org

Research Findings Advancing Fight Against MS

New and increasingly more enlightening breakthroughs are resulting from the research funded by the National Multiple Sclerosis Society. Just last year alone, the National Multiple Sclerosis Society was able to channel more than $35 million of your donations into MS research projects in the U.S. and abroad that are giving us a better understanding of this unpredictable disease.

Among the findings that are bringing new hope and clarity to our fight:

- Researchers from the University of California, San Francisco found significant differences when comparing the clinical characteristics of MS in Caucasians and African Americans. For example, the latter are more likely to experience a more aggressive course of the disease.

- A gene known as Olig1 was linked for the first time to repairing damage that occurs to nerve fiber-insulating myelin in MS by a team of researchers (Dana-Farber Cancer Institute, Boston, and Albert Einstein College of Medicine, Bronx, NY).

- The International MS Genetics Consortium (IMSGC) began an international effort to map the genome of MS. The IMSGC is using a DNA chip that enables investigators to test 500,000 individual genetic locations simultaneously for possible involvement in MS.

- Harvard researchers reported that smoking was associated with a moderate increase in the risk of developing MS; they also found an association between smoking and risk of MS progression. This study is the first to show that smoking may be a risk factor for MS progression.

- Harvard researchers reported that women who used oral contraceptives had a 40% reduction in the risk of developing multiple sclerosis compared to nonusers.

- Oregon Health & Science University investigators administered either ginkgo biloba or an inactive placebo for 12 weeks to 39 individuals with MS and cognitive impairment. The ginkgo biloba group showed improvement in a test that measures learning and memory, suggesting that further study is warranted.

Therapies in the Pipeline

In addition, several new drug therapies utilizing varied approaches to combating MS are in the pipeline and are being tested to determine efficacy. Among the examples:

- Early-stage clinical studies are attempting to inhibit immune cells that recognize myelin, including "peptide therapy," research by Arthur Vandenbark, PhD (VA Medical Center, Portland, OR) and a research trial involving a synthetic version of a protein in myelin, MBP8298 (BioMS Medical Corp.) being tested in over 500 persons with secondary-progressive.

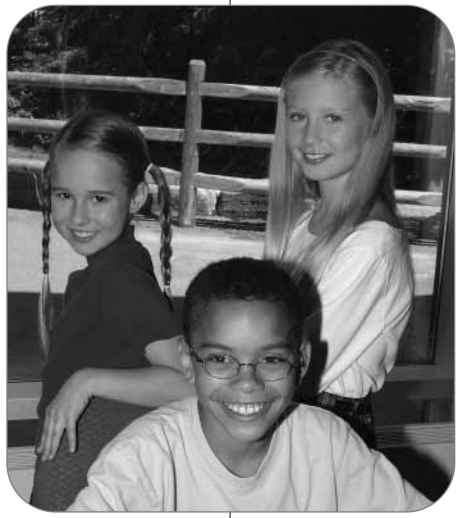
- Two different experimental oral therapies for MS showed positive results in preliminary Phase 2 clinical trials. The results suggest that FTY720 (Novartis Pharmaceuticals Corp) and temsirolimus (Wyeth Pharmaceuticals) warrant further clinical study.

- Investigators, such as Dr. Rhonda Voskuhl, University of California at Los Angeles, have been experimenting with the ability of sex hormones to alter disease activity in MS, i.e. a clinical trial of testosterone in men and sex hormones in MS models.

Promise 2010

The National Multiple Sclerosis Society envisions a world free of multiple sclerosis. To accomplish this, the Society supports an aggressive approach to discovering the causes, developing more effective therapies and finding a cure for MS.
Promise 2010: A National Campaign

Promising Hope and Care is a multi-year fundraising commitment intended to generate more than $32 million to support four targeted research projects that hold promise for unlocking more of the mysteries surrounding MS. In upcoming issues of MS Connection, we will closely examine the four areas of research that comprise Promise 2010 and the ways that you can support these ground-breaking initiatives. We begin with the Initiative on Pediatric Treatment Centers.



Until recently, research and treatment of MS generally overlooked the youngest among those with MS. Today there are 8,000 - 10,000 children or adolescents diagnosed with MS. An additional 10,000-15,000 have experienced at least one symptom suggestive of MS or a related disease and some will go on to be diagnosed with MS.

Historically, MS is difficult to diagnose: in children, it is even more difficult because MS is not considered a childhood disease and often mimics other childhood neurological disorders. Most pediatricians have no experience with MS and are confused by the symptoms. Even pediatric neurologists are only now considering MS as the underlying reason for certain symptoms. Too often children go undiagnosed, are misdiagnosed, or are shepherded from doctor to doctor to be treated and sent home. Only later, after subsequent relapses, do doctors realize that these young people had MS all along.

Promise:2010

Even if a child is properly diagnosed, neurologists and other health professionals often have little or no experience treating children with MS. Drugs currently available for MS have not been tested in children and there is very little scientific or medical information to offer parents of children with the disease -- or the children themselves.

Funding for the Promise: 2010 Campaign will establish an integrated network of MS pediatric care centers throughout the United States. These centers are intended to address medical and psychosocial needs of these children and offer a smooth transition to adult MS specialty centers. These regional centers will offer children with MS the opportunity to see pediatric experts including neurologists and psychiatrists —all in one place — and serve as clearinghouses for information and educational resources about childhood MS.

This initiative includes funding for transportation and lodging for families and provides access to specialized support groups and education programs.

As these new facilities set the highest standard for pediatric MS care, they will simultaneously gather critical data to help researchers better understand the course that MS takes from the very beginning of the disease, when symptoms first appear. They will create a framework for future research initiatives, by collecting data in a uniform manner that will be invaluable to MS experts, both in devising early treatment protocols for children with MS and as they attempt to unlock the mysteries of MS in adults. Insights could be gained from the study of the disease s manifestations in young immune systems. Since children s immune systems have had less exposure than adults to viruses, infectious agents and other contaminants, there may be opportunities to uncover the triggers of MS.

The centers will also provide information and insight into the best ways of coping with the effects of MS on a child s educational, physical, and social development.

The Greater Illinois Chapter is supporting the Initiative on Pediatric Treatment Centers through the Jim Cantalupo Memorial Fund, which has been developed to provide funding for Pediatric MS Centers. If you are interested in supporting this component of the Promise 2010 Campaign through the Cantalupo Fund, please contact Jan Rohacik at jan.rohacik@ild.nmss.org or call 1-800-FIGHT-MS and press 2 for more information.

CALL FOR ACTION

Studies show that early and ongoing treatment with an FDA-approved therapy can reduce future disease activity and improve quality of life for many people with multiple sclerosis. The National MS Society s medical advisors recommend that people with MS talk with their health care professional about using one of these medications and about strategies and effective treatments to manage symptoms. The National MS Society is committed to ensuring that people with MS have the information and quality care they need to live healthy, productive and independent lives. If you or someone you know has MS, please contact the National Multiple Sclerosis Society today at www.nationalmssociety.org or 1-800-FIGHT-MS to learn about ways to help manage multiple sclerosis and about current research that may one day reveal a cure.

Chapter Introduces Physical Therapy Legislation

People living with MS should never have to worry about being denied coverage for physical therapy services from a private insurer. That s the position taken by the Greater Illinois Chapter of the National Multiple Sclerosis Society. Unfortunately, private insurers do place caps on this type of coverage — even though maintenance physical therapy has proved clinically effective in helping people with MS maintain their mobility and quality of life.

A bill recently introduced in the Illinois state legislature by the Chapter addresses that inequity by requiring that private insurers pay for physical therapy at a level equal to Medicare, which is considered the standard for insurance company coverage.

House Bill 4799, sponsored by Rep. Robert Rita (D-Blue Island) and Senate Bill 2447, sponsored by Sen. Maggie Crotty, are currently moving through State House. Volunteer Maureen Linehan Howard also provided testimony at hearings.

Insurers generally only pay for physical therapy for restorative purposes, recovery from surgery or broken bones, said Jackie Guthrie, Manager of Advocacy and Outreach. Once a patient stops improving, insurers start to decline coverage. For people living with MS, the goal of physical therapy is simply to maintain current mobility functioning. Since there may not be any improvement at all, coverage is deemed unnecessary.

But without physical therapy, joint and muscle contractures can form which are painful and require costly surgical intervention to repair. In the end, a person with MS could become more disabled at a huge cost to themselves, their families and taxpayers, Guthrie added.

We need your support for House Bill 4799 and Senate Bill 2447. **Call your state legislators today** and let them know that, until there is a cure for MS, insurers should provide equal coverage for the therapies and treatment options that help people living with MS best manage their symptoms.

To find out more about these bills or other advocacy initiatives, become an Advocacy Action Alert member by visiting www.msillinois.org or by calling 800-FIGHT-MS.

Join Us for MS Lobby Day

On March 14-15, there won t be a lawmaker in Springfield who doesn t know that Illinoisans whose lives have been touched by MS expect them to do the right thing in protecting the health and rights of people living with the disease. That s the goal as more than 50 advocates from the Greater Illinois Chapter will be on the state capitol as part of MS Lobby Days.

During legislative meetings, advocacy ambassadors will educate lawmakers about a series of pressing issues affecting the MS community. These include the Chapter s recently proposed legislation mandating insurance coverage for maintenance physical therapy services, the need to maintain state funding for stem cell research, the lack of accessible and affordable transportation throughout Illinois, and funding for community-based living programs. In addition to the legislator visits, our advocacy ambassadors will offer a legislative reception.

The Chapter is looking for committed volunteers to become our MS Advocacy Ambassadors. If you are interested in learning how to better use your voice to educate lawmakers and others in the community about issues important to people living with MS, the Chapter can provide you with the training you need to be an MS Advocacy Ambassador.

MS Lobby Day is made possible in part by the generous support of Skydive for MS fundraising efforts.

If you are interested in becoming an MS Advocacy Ambassador, please contact 800-FIGHT MS and request a volunteer application or ask to speak with Danielle Estler, Manager Volunteer Development.

Focus on Stem Cell Research in Illinois

In the ongoing efforts to uncover the cause and course of multiple sclerosis, one topic tends to incite more discussion, uncertainty, and emotion than any other: stem cell research.

Stem Cell Overview

Stem cells can be thought of as the most basic building blocks in our bodies. Specialized cells (muscle, blood, bone cells, etc.) develop from stem cells. As their names imply, what differentiates the three main types of stem cells (embryonic, fetal, and adult) is the point in the body s development at which you find them. The capabilities of any given stem cell largely depend on which developmental phase they are taken from.

Harvesting adult stem cells sparks the least controversy and poses few, if any ethical problems. But these cells provide the least amount of flexibility in research. They are the most difficult to collect, require genetic compatibility (like organ donations), and generally are restricted for use in the area of the body from which they came.

Fetal and embryonic stem cells can be coaxed into producing a number of specialized cells and are less susceptible to immune rejection problems. The controversy arises from their source, which can include, but is not restricted to, terminated fetuses and cell cloning techniques.

Thus far, MS research has focused mostly on adult stem cell studies. While an ultimate objective may be to generate usable stem cells from adults, the National Multiple Sclerosis Society supports all stem cell research which is done in the strictest ethical fashion and within the bounds of federal, state, and local regulations - using any human cell types that might further the development of treatments and a cure for MS.

What Do Stem Cells Mean for MS?

Stem cell research is particularly interesting to MS researchers because of these cells' ability to recreate more specialized cells. With a more comprehensive understanding of stem cells, it's possible that tissue in the central nervous system (i.e., myelin on nerve fibers and the fibers themselves) which has been damaged or killed by plaques could be replaced with tissue that functions normally. But because so much is still unknown about how and why MS attacks myelin cells in the first place, the application of any potential cell repair therapy may not be enough, as the new tissue may be just as vulnerable to attacks as the tissue it replaces.

Success in Current Research

Encouraging evidence has validated the continuation of stem cell research. A research team in Italy has shown that mice could recover from an MS model disease when they were injected with adult mouse neural stem cells. The cells migrated from the bloodstream into the brain, where they concentrated on the many damaged areas, and eventually the mice regained their former ability to move normally. Inbred laboratory mice do not have the immune rejection problems of human beings, but this study suggests that some stem cells "know" where to go and how to respond to specific repair needs.

For more detail on this subject, you can read Martha King's MS Connection article (http://www.nmss.org/IMSOct03-StemCell.asp).

Threats to the Continuation of Research

Recognizing the need to continue to support ethical and legal stem cell research, the Greater Illinois Chapter is currently monitoring political action that threatens or restricts any avenue of research that could benefit people living with MS.

In direct contradiction to Governor Blagojevich's 2005 executive order which appropriated $10 million in Illinois funds to support stem research, there are two proposed state bills that threaten to undermine the Illinois Department of Health's ability to distribute these grants. If passed, House Bill 4156 and Senate Bill 2344 would ban public funds for the use of stem cell research and criminalize a cell cloning technique essential to the work of MS researchers.

The Greater Illinois Chapter is part of a broad coalition of health and research organizations working to protect one of the few state-funded programs in America. Now is your chance to tell your elected representatives where you stand on the issue of stem cell research. To learn more, or to get involved in our Advocacy Action Alert Network, please visit www.msillinois.org or call 1-800-FIGHT-MS and press 2 to reach the Chapter.

Chapter Fights Paratransit Hike

Before she was diagnosed with MS, Stephanie s favorite thing to do was to hop on the bus and head downtown to do a little retail therapy on the weekends. She still loves to shop, but now that she relies on a scooter to get around, hopping on the bus just isn t as easy any more.

Thousands of women and men just like Stephanie rely on public transportation to maintain not only their independence, but also their sense of self. That s why a plan to increase paratransit fees when PACE takes over the city of Chicago s paratransit program in July poses such a threat to people living with MS.

PACE, which is currently responsible for suburban paratransit programs, charges $3 per ride, an 42% increase over what Chicago s paratransit riders pay.

Working with the National Multiple Sclerosis Society, Greater Illinois Chapter, people living with MS have rallied to call attention to this proposal and how the proposed increase disproportionately penalizes disabled riders.

PACE would be asking the riders who are the most vulnerable and the least able to absorb the financial impact of this fare hike to bear the brunt of this switch, said Jackie Guthrie, Manager of Advocacy and Outreach. It s unfair and we re partnering with other organizations to make sure that the fare proposal simply doesn t happen.

The Society has signed on as a member of a coalition backing a proposal that would increase the Americans with Disabilities Act paratransit fare to $2.

This is more in line with fare increases that have been implemented for all public transportation users, Guthrie says. We recognize that the costs of providing paratransit services can be significant, but we also know that cost-effective measures can be taken to protect the availability of the service without hurting disabled riders. We urge everyone who relies on public transportation to continue to fight for affordable access to this service — for all riders.

To voice your support for the Society s proposal, be sure to join our Action Alert Network to stay abreast of the issue and to get involved in our Fight! To join, visit www.msillinois.org or call 800-FIGHTMS and press 2 to reach the Chapter.

May 15th Enrollment Deadline Approaching for Medicare Part D

The deadline to enroll in a Medicare Part D prescription drug plan is May 15, 2006. All individuals who are eligible for Medicare must sign up for a Medicare Part D prescription drug plan unless they have coverage that, on average, is as good or better than Part D plans.

To make sure that you are covered:

1) Determine whether or not your current prescription drug coverage is as good or better than Part D. Contact your insurance provider who will be able to answer that question for you.

2) If you DO have comparable coverage, request a copy of that confirmation in writing and save a copy in your files. You may be required to submit this if at some point in the future you wish to sign up for a Part D plan.

3) If you DO NOT have comparable coverage, you must be sure to enroll in the Part D prescription plan by May 15, 2006. If you miss this deadline you will receive a lifetime penalty and your premium will increase by 1 percent for every month that you were eligible and did not sign up.

After May 15, 2006, enrollment for Medicare Part D prescriptions drug plans will not be available again until November 15th, 2006. For more information on Medicare Part D, call Medicare at 1-800-633-4227 or the National Multiple Sclerosis Society, Greater Illinois Chapter s Information and Referral line at 1-800-FIGHT-MS.

Feel Good About Doing Your Taxes!

Money donated to the Multiple Sclerosis Assistance Fund, at Section 10, Line F on your state tax form, helps people with MS access transportation to medical appointments, home modifications, medical devices and supplies and other goods or services needed to help them effectively manage their MS.

This year, 17 charities are included in the campaign -each required to collect a minimum of $100,000 to appear again on next year's form. We're competing with even more good causes for the public's generosity. But like the battle against MS, this is a fight we're determined to win. Make a donation today!

Multiple Sclerosis Assistance Fund
2006 Illinois Income Tax Check-Off

Volunteer Opportunity Highlight-The MS Walk

Come join the fight against multiple sclerosis as a volunteer at the 18th Annual MS Walk on Sunday, May 7, 2006. Hundreds of volunteers are needed in 11 communities throughout Illinois as 15,000 walkers take steps towards finding a cure. Help this walk become the most successful event ever by volunteering as:

A Greeter: Be the first to welcome walkers, help them find where they need to be, keep registration lines moving quickly and get them excited about the event.
Breakfast or Lunch Volunteer: Help set up, prepare and serve morning or afternoon meals to hungry walkers.
Tent: Set up the National MS Society information table and answer any questions that walkers may have about multiple sclerosis. Help remind walkers of the ultimate mission: to end the devastating effects of multiple sclerosis.
Special Skills Crew: Nurses and individuals certified in first aid, massage therapists, cheerleaders at the finish line, truck drivers, and volunteers able to lift heavy boxes are needed through the day.
Groups: Volunteering as a group is a perfect way for families, friends, students and co-workers to come together and share the experience.

These are a few ways to help out at the MS Walk, but log on to mswalk.msillinois.org to register and find out more about how you can make a difference.

The National Multiple Sclerosis Society, Greater Illinois Chapter thanks our volunteers for helping us fight MS.

Volunteer Spotlight: Living Positively in the Present

Nearly twenty-five years ago, Liz Stein found herself newly diagnosed with multiple sclerosis and attending her first self-help support group meeting in Park Ridge. At the meeting, emotions hit and she melted into tears. The group s facilitator reassured Liz that she would get through this. Comforting words from someone who had been in her shoes made a world of difference during the first months of Liz s personal fight against MS.

Two years ago, Liz became a volunteer facilitator for the Elmhurst self-help support group. Drawing on her career in pharmaceutical sales, Liz arranges an annual agenda of informative, interactive and valuable speakers and programming.

I see the year as 12 opportunities to present new ideas or information, she said. In providing programs and guidance to the group, Liz focuses on living positively in the present.

This year, the Elmhurst self-help support group will participate in the Mission Stars program. As one of the more than 20,000 people in Illinois living with MS, Liz knows that she has a unique, interesting and inspirational story to share. Mission Stars will connect Liz, support group members and other individuals living with MS with event participants to foster greater education and awareness about MS, gratitude, and most importantly, hope, all symbolized by the signature green Mission Stars bandana.

Liz Stein — Chapter Programs Volunteer and Mission Star

Although Liz volunteers each year at the MS Walk in Naperville, along with her kids, Lauren and Eric, she says that the Mission Stars program enables people living with MS who cannot attend the MS Walk or MS 150 Tour de Farms to still be a part of the events. As Mission Stars, the members of the Elmhurst group will continue to help spread the message of living positively in the present, while looking forward to a future without MS.

> **“I see the year as 12 opportunities to present new ideas or information”**

If you are interested in participating in the Mission Stars program or want more information about volunteer opportunities, please contact the Chapter at 1-800-FIGHT-MS.

Upcoming Volunteer Opportunities at a Glance

MS Day at Museum of Science and Industry
Saturday, March 18, 2006
Come volunteer as people with MS and their families enjoy a day at the Museum of Science Industry. Feel free to explore afterwards!

MS Half Court Classic
Saturday, April 8, 2006
Spend a day in the legendary United Center at our 4-on-4 basketball tournament.

MS Walk
Sunday, May 7, 2006
Choose from 11 different sites to volunteer at the 18th Annual MS Walk, our largest volunteer event.

MS 150 Tour de Farms
Saturday & Sunday, June 24-25, 2006
As our cycling event is growing, we need even more volunteers to help the bike tour run smoothly.

For more information about the volunteer opportunities profiled here or to find out about how you can become more involved as a volunteer at the National Multiple Sclerosis Society-Greater Illinois Chapter, please call 1-800-FIGHT-MS and press 2 to reach the Volunteer Department, or email at volunteers@ild.nmss.org.

Saturday, April 8, 2006 7:00AM - 2:30 PM United Center, Chicago, IL

MS Night at the Chicago Bulls
Chicago Bulls vs. Philadelphia 76ers
Saturday, April 8, 7:30pm
Get your tickets today!

Register now at
events.msillinois.org/bball

Congratulations to Multiple Solutions!

Congratulations to Multiple Solutions! The Board of Trustees recently voted to make the Chapter s young professionals group the official Junior Board and auxiliary group of the National Multiple Sclerosis Society, Greater Illinois Chapter. Multiple Solutions was formed five years ago by Mary Jo Viero and her husband, George to encourage young professionals to raise money to fight multiple sclerosis, a disease that affects George s father.

Over the years, Multiple Solutions fundraising efforts have grown. They have raised hundreds of thousands of dollars to fight MS and have reached thousands of young professionals to promote MS awareness. Multiple Solutions currently hosts three signature fundraising events each year: MS Slugfest Against MS, a co-ed 16-inch softball tournament; MS Half-Court Classic, a 4-on-4 basketball tournament; MS Cocktail N For The Cause, a semi-formal dance and auction. In 2005, these events raised over $163,000 for MS research and programs and services for people living with MS. The group also hosts several social events throughout the year.

Multiple Solutions membership has grown, too. Last year alone the group grew from 15 members to over 40. Their membership is composed of young professionals dedicated to fighting MS. Many of their new members were recently diagnosed with MS and refuse to take their diagnosis standing still. Becoming a Junior Board is an important step for Multiple Solutions. As Mary Jo Viero, the Junior Board s first President says, with this new structure comes new and exciting possibilities. In addition to our ambitious fundraising goals, we are actively partnering with the Greater Illinois Chapter on initiatives in advocacy, marketing, corporate sponsorship and mission delivery.

If you are interested in getting involved in Multiple Solutions, please contact our Volunteer Department at 800-FIGHT MS (312-423-1136 in Chicagoland). There are a number of ways to get involved and join Multiple Solutions in the fight against MS. As Mary Jo Viero says with confidence, it s a fight we will win.

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Walgreens Specialty Pharmacy

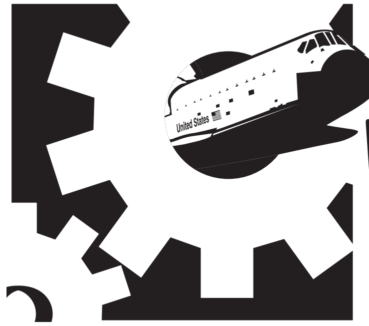
Walgreens Specialty Pharmacy provides care and support for people who are living with MS. As a part of Walgreen Co., a longtime partner in the fight for an MS cure, Walgreens Specialty Pharmacy has the pharmacy expertise and resources to help you easily get your medications, adhere to your medication regimen, and make the most of your insurance benefits.

Walgreens Specialty Pharmacy serves as a single source for prescriptions and supplies, with access to a comprehensive line of medications. Getting those medications is easy, either by mail (as your insurance coverage allows) or by picking them up at any Walgreens pharmacy. With more than 5,000 locations across the country, you know you can have the necessary medications where and when you need them whether you re at home or traveling. Because all Walgreens pharmacies are linked to one secure database, your prescription profile is available to every Walgreens pharmacist, significantly reducing the risk of medication interactions.

To help you with your medication regimen, Walgreens Specialty Pharmacy provides toll-free telephone consultation with specially trained pharmacists 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Additional services include educational materials, refill reminders, compassionate and confidential counseling to support managing your MS, and an informative web site featuring an online health library at www.walgreensspecialtyrx.com.

Insurance issues related to MS can be complex. Dealing with prior authorizations, verification of eligibility, and claim filing can produce unnecessary stress in an already challenging situation. Walgreens Specialty Pharmacy s team of insurance advocates has experience working with all types of insurance, including Medicare and Medicaid, allowing you to focus on the most important thing your health.

Walgreens Specialty Pharmacy understands the challenges involved in living with MS and goes the extra mile to meet those challenges. Contact Walgreens Specialty Pharmacy Center s Care Team at 1-800-782-8443 (phone) or 1-866-617-6685 (fax) for more information.



JOIN US ON

SATURDAY, MARCH 18, 2006

MS DAY AT THE MUSEUM OF SCIENCE AND INDUSTRY

REGISTER TODAY BY CALLING 800-FIGHT MS OR ONLINE AT MSILLINOIS.ORG

Mission Stars Welcomes New Sponsor

Walgreens Specialty Pharmacy is making it possible for the Greater Illinois Chapter to connect hundreds of event participants to people with MS this year through the Mission Stars Program.

Mission Stars builds awareness and understanding about the impact this disease has on those living with MS by creating a direct link between those who are raising money to end the devastating effects of MS and those who will directly benefit from the programs, services and research our fundraising supports.

Walgreens Specialty Pharmacy s generous underwriting of the Mission Stars program makes it possible for more individuals to receive the program s signature green bandanas this year.

If you would like more information about the program please contact us at 888-343-1179.

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Information provided by the Society is based upon professional advice, published experience and expert opinion. Information provided in response to questions does not constitute therapeutic recommendations or prescriptions. The National Multiple Sclerosis Society recommends that all questions and information be discussed with a personal physician. The National Multiple Sclerosis Society is dedicated to ending the devastating effects of MS.

MS National Multiple Sclerosis Society
Greater Illinois Chapter

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