



Commit to the Cause.

Commit to the Care. Commit to the Cure.

Volume XV, Fall 2015

Concluding the NOW Campaign

Launched in 2010, the No Opportunity Wasted (NOW) Research campaign will conclude in December of this year. Leadership and investment in the NOW campaign has fueled MS research progress and momentum unlike any other time in history. In fact, this campaign is responsible for nearly a quarter of the \$900 million that have been raised since the National MS Society was founded. To date, NOW has raised over \$235 million, which has enabled the launch of 779 cutting-edge research projects.

Lisa Sailor lives with MS and has contributed to the NOW campaign. "It's exciting to live in this time because I think we will soon see some major breakthroughs in MS research. There's hope on the horizon and that in itself is huge," she states.

There is indeed hope on the horizon, as is evidenced by the 5 new treatment options that were approved in the last five years and the fact that there are currently more potential therapies and trials than ever before, including myelin repair treatments. Plus, over 100 genetic variants have been identified over the last five years and several risk factors, including smoking and childhood obesity.

The NOW campaign also marks an era where the outlook for advances in progressive MS has taken a dramatic turn. The Society has made significant progress in galvanizing and supporting experts both locally and internationally around finding answers to progressive MS. Focus on progressive MS has risen to the top as a Society priority with currently half of the Society's research portfolio related to finding answers to progressive MS.

There is great urgency to find solutions for all people living with MS, and the National MS Society has the track record and momentum to achieve results. While we have made great progress through contributions to the NOW campaign, we still have further to go. Your support of Golden Circle will guarantee that we reach our \$250 million NOW campaign goal by December 31, 2015 and accelerate research breakthroughs. Together, we can change lives and end MS forever.



Golden Circle Year End Challenge

\$575,000
Contributions needed
from Golden Circle Donors



\$575,000
Match by the
Power & Kaufer Families

\$1.15 million
for Golden Circle
this quarter!

For the ninth year in a row, the Power family's Kenrose Kitchen Table Foundation and the Steve and Caroline Kaufer family have partnered to fund the most promising MS research projects and encourage others to join them in funding the cure. This year, they are challenging the Golden Circle campaign to raise \$575,000 between October 1st and December 31st. All Golden Circle gifts contributed between these dates will count toward the challenge, regardless of restriction or giving level. If Golden Circle donors are successful and the challenge is met, these two families will match the original goal and contribute an additional \$575,000, ensuring the campaign raises at least \$1.15 million this quarter!

BREAKING NEWS IN MS RESEARCH

Recent Progress and New Leads

Researchers are tracking down exciting leads and making headway in virtually every field related to MS, leading to insights and significant progress toward stopping MS progression, restoring what's been lost, and ending MS forever. Here are some recent examples:

NERVOUS SYSTEM REPAIR:



New York University scientists have uncovered a new approach to stimulating the body's own resident stem cells to repair nerve-insulating myelin, which is damaged by MS. The researchers found that by blocking a molecule present in specific stem cells, they were able to stimulate myelin repair and some recovery in mice with an MS-like disease. In the process they also uncovered a new pathway for stimulating myelin repair and are now working to refine the approach to develop a therapy that may be used to repair myelin in people with MS in the future.

THE MELATONIN LINK:



A study funded in part by the Society in Buenos Aires and Boston suggests that melatonin is one of several factors that might play a role in MS immune responses. In this study, higher levels of melatonin in fall and winter were linked with lower relapse rates in people living with MS. The hormone was also tied to reduced symptoms of an MS-like disease in mice.

VITAMIN D AND MS:



Another genetic factor that has recently been linked to MS development is vitamin D. Researchers at McGill University suggest that low levels of vitamin D can increase an individual's chance of getting MS. In fact, those with gene variations that were linked to low vitamin D were found to be two times likelier to develop MS.

For more on these projects and other breaking news in MS research, visit nationalMSSociety.org/research.

California MS Research Forum Brings Together the Best & Brightest

August was an exciting month for MS researchers in California as they were able to come together and share their work during the California Multiple Sclerosis Research Forum that occurred in San Francisco on August 6th and 7th. More than 100 researchers dedicated to finding answers to MS listened, presented, and discussed current projects and preliminary findings related to various aspects of the disease. The forum provided a fantastic opportunity for attendees to connect and network, resulting in abundant possibilities for future collaboration. The event was also successful in attracting investigators relatively new to the field, which is extremely promising for the future of MS research.



Dr. Lawrence Steinman, Professor of Neurology, Neurological Sciences, and Pediatrics at Stanford University was the keynote speaker at the event. Dr. Steinman's research focuses on what provokes relapses and remissions in patients with MS and

neuromyelitis optica (NMO), as well as the quest for antigen specific therapy. Dr. Steinman's speech centered on thinking outside of the box in regards to possible next steps in MS research.

Presentations during the forum focused on a variety of topics, including environmental risk factors for MS and susceptibility, immunology, clinical MS, imaging related to MRIs and blood-brain barrier breakdowns, and neurobiology. Additionally, presenters spoke on novel research that included the capabilities of astrocytes, exploring cerebrospinal fluid B cells, and further investigation of the microbiome in MS.

The Northern California, Southern California & Nevada, and Pacific South Coast Chapters of the National MS Society joined forces to organize this successful event, which would not have been possible without the help of the California Collaborative Multiple Sclerosis Research Forum Committee.

Closer to a Cure Event Recognizes Fundraisers and Donors

On June 6th, nearly 200 top fundraisers and donors celebrated a year of accomplishments at the Del Rey Yacht Club in Marina Del Rey, CA. This outstanding group of individuals collectively raised and donated over \$4 million in 2014, supporting nearly half of the Southern California & Nevada Chapter's fundraising.



The commitment of these individuals to go above and beyond in their contributions of both time and money has been immensely important to the Chapter. The money that these dedicated individuals have raised will serve nearly 105,000 people and their families affected by MS in our communities over the next year via life-

changing programs, vital services and resources, and critical MS research.

Following an awards ceremony, Dr. Mark Morrow, Chairman of Neurology, Program Director of Neurology, and Professor of Neurology at Harbor UCLA Medical Center, shared remarks related to the incredible ways that the National MS Society helps people with MS live their best lives, as well as some exciting progress coming down the research pipeline.



Stepping Into Fall Style

On August 5th, the third annual "Step into Fall Style" fashion show took place at Bloomingdale's in Sherman Oaks, CA. The show was led by Chapter Trustee Sheri Safan and Bloomingdale's own Sima Songhorian. Nearly 100 fashion enthusiasts and friends of the National MS Society gathered to enjoy light refreshments, a fabulous runway show, and an all-around fun evening of shopping.



The exclusive fashion show launched DKNY's Fall 2015 collection and was hosted by Vogue Market Stylist Cara Crowley and DKNY executives Peggy Kitsch and Heather Bogen. These three inspiring ladies provided insightful commentary during the show and shared how MS has personally impacted each of them.



Thanks to the generosity of Bloomingdale's, DKNY, and Vogue, the Society received 15 percent of sales from the event, which totaled \$10,500. The Bloomingdale's Fund of the Macy's Foundation provided an additional \$3,000 scholarship for The Marilyn Hilton MS Achievement Center at UCLA. "Step into Fall Style" was a huge success, and the money raised from the event will benefit those affected by MS living in Southern California and Nevada.

40th Annual Dinner of Champions

The 40th Annual Dinner of Champions took place at the Hyatt Century Plaza in Los Angeles on August 27th. The dinner honored Emmy Award-winning actor, and star of *Criminal Minds*, Shemar Moore. Moore's mother, Marilyn Wilson-Moore, lives with MS and was also recognized at the event with the Dorothy Corwin Spirit



of Life award.

Over 500 guests attended the dinner and speakers included previous honoree, Pam Kehaly, Dr. Nancy Sicotte, and renowned actor, Joe Mantegna. The evening was hosted by local radio personality, Jillian Escoto, and entertainment was provided by the charismatic comedian, Anthony Griffith, both of whom live with MS.

Every year, the Dinner of Champions recognizes a philanthropist who has made a significant impact in the MS community. The funds raised from the event support the National MS Society's research initiatives, programs, and services. Shemar Moore is an avid contributor to the Society and has participated in the Southern California & Nevada Chapter's Bike MS Coastal Challenge for the past 10 years, raising money in support of his mother and



Named for the Society's founder Sylvia Lawry, the Lawry Circle honors donors who have informed the Society of their intention to help create a better future for the MS community through their will, trust or estate plans.

Planned and deferred gifts provide a strong foundation of funding for the Society. Because all gifts represent an expression of lifetime commitment to the Society, there are no minimum gift levels and membership is for life. Please inform the Society if you have named the National Multiple Sclerosis Society, Southern California & Nevada Chapter in your estate plans by calling Kate McIntosh, Vice President of Development at 310.481.1124.

Leading by Example: An Interview with New Chapter President Julie Kaufer

The Southern California & Nevada Chapter of the National MS Society welcomed Julie Kaufer to the position of Chapter President in April 2015. Julie has been involved with the Society for nearly two decades. She discusses her various roles over the years, her association with the Golden Circle campaign, and her excitement about research breakthroughs.

GC: Why did you first get involved with the National MS Society?

When I was a child, my mother was diagnosed with progressive MS. At that time, there were no MS medications and very little support available. She faced numerous challenges, and watching her endure them had a lasting impact on me and my family. Shortly after her diagnosis, we became involved with the Society and regularly, and enthusiastically, participated in the Dinner of Champions, Walk MS: Greater Los Angeles, and Bike MS. In 1996, as a young professional, I was asked to join the Chapter Board of Directors, and in 2010 joined the National Board of Directors. Now I serve as the Southern California & Nevada Chapter President.



Julie Kaufer with National President & CEO Cyndi Zagieboylo

approximately 65% of that amount to fund research. Together, with other Society investments into research, we have seen the number of disease modifying therapies on the market grow from zero to 16 over the last 20 years. Everyone can appreciate the huge impact these therapies have had on the lives of people with MS and can feel the momentum of our research campaign.

GC: What attracted you to the Golden Circle campaign?

When we first began to brainstorm around the Golden Circle campaign, our objective was to create a revenue stream that focused around direct giving and was separate from our special events. The campaign quickly evolved into a research focused effort, mostly because our major gifts donors wanted to hear more about the promising and innovative research investments being made by the Society.

GC: Can you share how Golden Circle impacts research, and what advancements you have seen while involved?

Over the course of the last decade, the Golden Circle campaign raised over \$14 million, and donors have directed

GC: What do you find to be the most exciting or interesting areas of research to arise in recent years?

This is a tough question! We are funding so much promising research. I am particularly attracted to research focusing on the genetic causes of MS. Research suggests that MS occurs in individuals and in families whose genes make them susceptible, and that many genes contribute to MS susceptibility. In addition, individuals who are genetically at risk must encounter some other triggering factor in their environment to actually develop MS. Dr. Philip De Jager of Harvard Medical School will be speaking to this very subject at a research reception in Los Angeles on December 2nd [invitation on Page 6]. Research in this area is evolving quickly and I am eager to hear more about his work.

GC: What excites you most about moving forward with the Society?

I'm thrilled that we are nearing completion of the NOW research campaign this year, having raised \$250 million and funded 779 new research projects, and that we will begin our new research campaign in the spring of 2016. I'm elated that the Society has made progressive MS a priority, and is funding large clinical trials RIGHT NOW in progressive MS. I'm also proud that the Society is a leading member of the International Progressive MS Alliance, an ever-expanding alliance of organizations from around the world funding research studies in nine countries as part of a \$30 million global effort to end progressive MS.

Understanding the Role of Genetics and the Environment in MS: Toward Personalized Treatment and the Prevention of MS



FEATURING
Philip De Jager, MD, PhD
Harvard Medical School
Brigham and Women's Hospital

DECEMBER 2ND
6:00 PM – 9:00 PM
BRENTWOOD COUNTRY CLUB
LOS ANGELES, CA

Please join us for a cocktail reception and
research presentation.

For questions or to RSVP, contact Elicia Lopez at
310.481.1111 or elicia.lopez@nms.org.

Calendar of Upcoming Local & National Events

December 15, 2015, 11am – 12pm

Research Webcast:
Living Your Best Life with MS in 2016 and Beyond

January 23, 2016, 9am – 12pm

Pomona, CA
Chapter Annual Meeting
Featuring Research Presentation

January 27 – 28, 2016

New York, NY
Research Programs Advisory Committee Meeting

Golden Circle: Supporting the MS Cause

Golden Circle is a nation-wide community of leaders who share a passion for a world free of MS and fuel progress by donating \$1,000 or more annually to the National MS Society. Each year, Golden Circle members generously give millions of dollars to find solutions and to change the world for people affected by MS. A leading benefit of membership is the opportunity to connect with these remarkable individuals, at both the national and local level. Additionally, members receive invitations to special donor receptions and research events where they have an opportunity to hear from the top minds in MS research and clinical care. Golden Circle gifts support breakthrough MS research and provide critically-needed programs and services that change the world for people affected by MS.

You can take advantage of tax-saving strategies as you begin to think about your year-end charitable priorities. Donations can reduce your taxable income and lower your tax bill. Cash, real estate, personal property, and stocks are among the most popular types of charitable gifts and can be donated directly to the National MS Society.

Please consider making a special year-end gift this year! Your contribution will help meet the important needs of community members with MS and their families while funding important scientific leads in discovering the cause, advancing therapies, and finding a cure for multiple sclerosis. **If you have any questions about planning your charitable gift, please contact Elicia Lopez at 310.481.1111.**



National Multiple Sclerosis Society
Southern California & Nevada Chapter

The Southern California & Nevada Chapter has seven offices serving 20,000 people with MS and their loved ones in Southern and Central California and Nevada. For more information, call (800) 344-4867 and visit www.nationalMSSociety.org/cal.