

June 2021 Newsletter



Fishing For a Cure

Volunteers make a huge difference in ACP's ability to accelerate and advance MS research. We are grateful for hundreds of donated hours that support our work each year. Our volunteers help us with a wide variety of important tasks. Some are a tremendous help with administrative tasks and other projects. Others have hosted fundraising events to raise money that enables the work that we do. We are very grateful for these remarkable individuals who have freely given of their time and talents!



Michael Austin is from Alexandria, VA. His mother was diagnosed with MS just after he was born. When asked how MS has impacted his life, he states, "I'm very lucky to say that the impact has been minimal. I've seen my mom have flare ups in the past, her last one was six or seven years ago. It definitely worries you because you're not used to seeing your parents, at least my mother, not able to do regular things or needing a lot of time to herself and time away from work or what she's doing. You need to have a greater sense of responsibility in those moments and also patience."

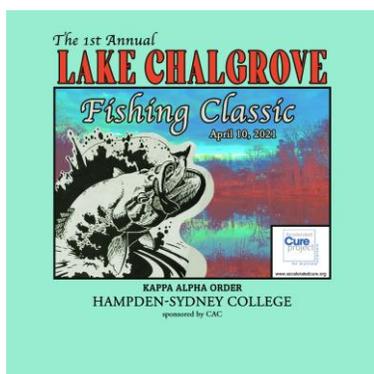


Michael is a rising junior at [Hampden-Sydney College](#), studying economics and business. When asked about his aspirations for the future, he shares, “I’d like to pursue a career in commercial development. I’m interested in manufacturing abroad, the import/export business, and how companies use resources on a global scale.” Michael is also active in Greek life at school and serves as the philanthropy chair and treasurer of his fraternity, [Kappa Alpha Order](#). In his free time, Michael is a big reader. In his words, “I like to stay informed. I love playing sports. Anything where I can be active and have fun. I love getting outside. I’m a big music person. Now that COVID restrictions are easing, I’ll definitely be going to a lot of concerts this summer.”

As an actor and officer of Kappa Alpha Order, Michael recently organized a fishing fundraiser on behalf of the fraternity to benefit ACP. On Saturday, April 10th, approximately 25 fellow students and fraternity brothers gathered on campus for the first annual Lake Chalgrove Fishing Tournament. It was a beautiful day and all in attendance enjoyed a day of fellowship, while seeing who



could catch the most fish! Hampden-Sydney College is located in a rural area and outdoor activities are popular with the student body. Lake Chalgrove is located near the main dining area and also backs up to some of the residence halls. Michael shares, “I’m in a community of people that are really big into the outdoors. The fishing tournament, for me, was understanding the target market, demographic of the student body, what people are interested in and the resources we have on campus. I’m not the biggest fisherman, I’ll admit. I’m just the man with the idea.”



Michael asked Baker Haviland, a fraternity brother with experience in graphic design, to make a t-shirt for the event. In his words, “We found an old article from the school newspaper with a graphic of a fish coming out of the water, did a different color scheme and used a tournament font to follow the theme.” Michael and his fellow students raised approximately \$1,100 to benefit ACP, primarily from t-shirt

sales. When asked why he chose ACP as beneficiary, “I started googling, searching what foundations and associations exist for MS causes. I contacted a few and really liked ACP’s transparency and focus on MS research. I think it’s important that any money that is raised goes towards the actual research and development of MS cures and treatments.”

Michael states that he hopes this is the start of a long and successful partnership with ACP. He would like to make this a reoccurring event and expand on his ideas in the future. In his words, “One of our intentions was to establish a relationship and a reputation with a philanthropic organization that we can work with over the next couple of years. Being able to fundraise on a consistent basis... I’ve marketed it so people will know it will happen again. I’d like to get the staff out there and other people associated with the school. I want to make it something that the entire fraternity can get involved in.”

When asked what his biggest challenge was in organizing the fundraiser, Michael states, “I think just the timing and trying to make it line up with other events on campus. The space where we had it will be updated in the next year. They’re going to put in a stage for bands, so it’s going to look a lot better and, hopefully, attract more people for future events.” When asked what his favorite part of the day was, “Seeing people getting outside and doing what they want to do while also taking interest in what Accelerated Cure does and why I was raising money.”



We appreciate the contributions that Michael, and many others, have made in support of our work. Funds raised from events like these help us to continue our work to improve diagnosis, optimize treatment and find a cure for MS. If you have a favorite activity friends and family members enjoy doing or talents you would like to share, hosting a fundraiser is a great way to reach out to your community, raise funds for ACP and have fun while doing



it. For more information on hosting your own fundraiser, please contact Lindsey Santiago by phone (781) 487-0013, or by email lsantiago@acceleratedcure.org. We make it easy to support ACP in this way!