

Accelerated Cure Project for MS

June 2018



Accelerating research towards a cure for multiple sclerosis

Fundraising For a Cure

Volunteers make a huge difference in ACP's success. 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, both in the office and remotely. Some of our volunteers give of their time and talents to host third party fundraising events to benefit ACP. Highlighted below are recent fundraisers, organized by remarkable people who had fun and made a difference at the same time!

Exercising For a Cure – Cressey Sports Performance Boot Camp

Anna Sweeney was diagnosed with MS 17 years ago, when she was 15 years old. According to Anna, "I was playing basketball one day, and I thought I had dislocated my shoulder because my hand went numb." She and her family went to a neurologist, who recommended an MRI. After reviewing the scan results, the neurologist informed Anna that the cause of her numbness was MS. In trying to learn more about the disease, Anna's family became very involved with what was then the Boston Cure Project (later renamed Accelerated Cure Project (ACP)). They did a significant amount of outreach to other newly diagnosed families, fundraised for BCP, and her father served on the Board of Directors.

Today, Anna is a registered dietitian. Exercise is an important part of her regimen. With the guidance of her personal trainer, Frank Duffy, she works out at the gym four times each week. Her determination and hard work are an inspiration to Frank. In his words, “It’s been really humbling and inspiring to see what she does... She does all of the work. She’s making the difference. I’m just trying to give her the tools to make forward progress... For someone with such a bad hand dealt to them, she’s one of the most positive human beings I know.” [Cressey Sports Performance](#) holds Charity Strength Camps for organizations that are meaningful to the individuals who participate in their Strength Camps program. Frank states, “Since Anna’s been working with us, she’s come a long way. I suggested we put a fundraiser together for whatever she wanted to do... ACP is the organization she wanted to work with. It’s the very least we could do as a group to try to give back.”

The boot camp event to benefit ACP took place on 4/28, and raised over \$3,000. With 60 people attending, participants rotated between 4 stations (each directed by a coach), at which they did different exercises.

When asked about the event, Frank said, “It pretty much doubled our biggest charity event to date... With our charity events, we have a decent amount of new people come in for the first time, so we try to keep it as simple as possible. We do a decent amount of body weight exercises and we throw medicine balls. We keep it simple, so people understand what we do, but also keep it fun and make sure nobody gets hurt in the process.” In Anna’s words, “The event was lovely. I’m super-grateful that it happened.”



When asked why she chose ACP as the organization to receive donations, Anna shares, “I would never spend time raising money for any other organization... I appreciate where the ACP started. I appreciate the space that you are moving us into. I feel like organizations like the ACP are going to be at the helm and the impetus in finding a solution for those of us who are living with this disease.”

Paddling For a Cure – The Essex River Race

Patrick Curley is a Certified Elder Law Attorney with Curley Law Firm LLP in Wakefield, MA. His love of rowing started when he joined the lightweight crew team at Dartmouth College. According to Patrick, “I had never heard of crew. In the first few days of freshman year, the crew coaches were at the cafeteria doors looking for people that fit the body shape for rowing...I was lean and tall so I fit the bill.” More than 25 years later, Patrick still loves rowing and paddling.

Over the last few years, Patrick has turned that athletic passion into a fundraising opportunity to benefit ACP. Patrick chooses the athletic competition, and ACP sets up a fundraising page so that his sponsors can easily support him and donate to ACP.

In 2014, he competed in the Essex River Race for the first time in a one-man rowing scull and raised thousands of dollars for ACP. Over the last two years, Patrick has paddled the race in a sea kayak. He raised more than \$4,380 for ACP from this year’s race.



The race itself is a grueling six-mile race on a tidal river out of Essex, MA to the ocean and back. Patrick said, “I like challenging athletic events that aren’t traditional... It attracts a very interesting breed of participants. Many racers work or live by the sea – not always traditional athletes but tremendous competitors. I am in awe of my fellow competitors, most of whom are older than me. Part of the

camaraderie and fun of the race is all of the different water crafts and people from different backgrounds.”

When asked why he fundraises for ACP, Patrick stated, “Because I’m an elder law attorney, many of my clients have MS and other chronic illnesses, and so it means a lot to me and my clients to raise funds for this important charity. No matter how hard the race is, it’s nothing next to what those living with MS may have to go through in their day-to-day life... I think ACP is the best organization to drive research toward better treatments and a cure, plain and simple... I think there are a lot of nonprofits in the MS space, but none of them have the fixation and focus and mission that ACP has to really accelerate toward treatments and a cure.”

Patrick hopes to participate in even more challenging rowing competitions in the future. In his words, “The Essex River Race is a lead-up to what’s called the [Blackburn Challenge](#). Blackburn is a famous character in Gloucester, MA history. He was fishing in an open dory off Newfoundland in 1883 when he and his fishing partner were separated from their mother ship by a blizzard. Blackburn rowed five days without food or water towards shore. He made it but his hands had frozen to the oars. He lost all his fingers to frostbite but the Blackburn Challenge is raced every year in his honor. It is a 22-mile race around Cape Ann in open water, and a very tough, tough race. It’s on my bucket list for a future fundraiser for ACP!”

Scholarship and Fellowship For a Cure – The Medeiros Family Scholarship and Annual Event

Five members of the Medeiros family have been diagnosed with multiple sclerosis, including Nancy Medeiros and her late brother, Edmund. For the last 16 years, Nancy and her sister, Judy, have organized two charitable events in memory of their brother.

The Medeiros family annual event is a wonderful gathering of family and friends held at the Dante Club in Somerville MA. For a small entrance fee, everyone gathers to enjoy a buffet dinner, drinks and music. They offer over 30 raffle prizes and gift certificates. The proceeds from the evening benefit the [Medeiros](#)

[family scholarship](#) and ACP. According to Nancy, “I never really thought about MS until I got it... My brother and I were diagnosed with MS at the same age, when we were 35 years old. He passed away 17 years ago in June... My sister wanted to do a scholarship in his memory and I wanted to do something for MS... We give two book awards of \$500 each to Somerville high school students to use toward a college of their choice.” The remaining proceeds from the event are donated to ACP.

This year’s event was held on 4/21 and has raised over \$1,800 to date. In Nancy’s words, “I promised my brother we were going to do this until we have a cure and I believe we will ... we had a good crowd this year. I’d say at least 75 or so. Since day one we never know how many people are coming because maybe 5 or 6 people buy a ticket in advance. Everybody buys them at



the door. It's family and friends mostly ... I tell people all the time, 'it's never too late to donate!'"

Nancy also volunteers for the National MS Society. She and her sister began fundraising for ACP when it was known by its initial name, Boston Cure Project. According to Nancy, "The MS Society is wonderful. I give them my time, I volunteer... But, I wanted to give money to ACP." When asked why she raises money for ACP, Nancy said, "I wanted to choose something that was a small non-profit that didn't make a lot of money... I liked the idea of ACP's founder starting it himself ... just knowing the passion he had and he focused on research... that's why I chose ACP."

We'd also like to let you know about some fun upcoming events this summer and fall. Stay tuned to future newsletters for updates!

Driving For a Cure – Rally North America

Hollie Schmidt, our VP of Scientific Operations, and David Gwynne, our Director of Alliances and Collaborations, will be participating in [Rally North America 2018 US 50 West Rally](#) this summer (July 8 – 12) to support and promote our efforts to treat, diagnose and cure MS. The Rally is an automotive scavenger hunt event that traverses three states. Rally teams will navigate their way to secret checkpoints & collect points for finding unique items/pictures along the way. Over 50 cars will be traveling from Pueblo, Colorado to Carson City, Nevada as part of the Rally.



Rally North America was founded in 2009 and has raised over \$825,000 for charity since its inception. In 2014 Rally North America raised \$110,000 for ACP. This year the rally's main beneficiary is [Concerns of Police Survivors \(C.O.P.S\)](#), but ACP was invited to participate in the rally to raise funds for our important work and to be featured in a documentary style TV production to be aired on MAVTV in 2019.

Please consider supporting Hollie and David as they participate in the Rally and help them reach their fundraising goal by becoming a [sponsor](#) or by [donating](#). Sponsorship levels are available to fit every budget!

Sing For a Cure - Sing to Cure MS concert

Marion Leeds Carroll is an experienced opera singer and stage director who lives in Arlington, Massachusetts. Since 2003 she has applied her talents and love of music to raising funds for ACP, a disease she has lived with since 1988. Every year on the last Sunday in October, Marion and a group of colleagues perform a concert at a local church, donating all proceeds to ACP. The Music



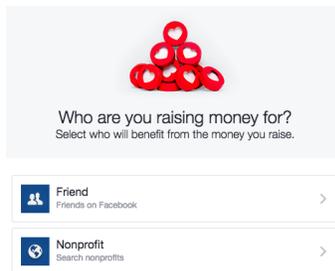
to Cure MS concert features solo instruments and chamber music ensembles as well as singers. These professional-level musicians (all friends of Marion) perform a diverse repertoire of classical music. This year's concert will be held on Sunday, October 28, 2018,

from 3 -5pm at the Park Avenue Congregational Church in Arlington MA. Admission to the concert is free of charge.

The power of music is undeniable. It can relieve stress, bring back pleasant memories, or just help you smile. Mark your calendar and treat yourself to an afternoon of music. Please also consider making a donation to [ACP](#) on Marion's behalf. Help the power of music accelerate our progress toward a cure for MS!

Post For a Cure – Create a Facebook Fundraiser

Do you have a birthday, wedding, or other special celebration coming up? Consider creating a fundraiser on Facebook to benefit ACP. It's quick and easy to do, and can have a significant impact! On the top right corner of your Facebook profile there is a small arrow pointing



downward. If you click that arrow, you will see “Create Fundraiser” in the drop down menu. Click “Get Started” and follow the prompts to create your fundraiser. In order to raise funds for ACP, you will need to select “Non-profit” and then search for Accelerated Cure Project for MS. Enter how much money you hope to raise, and the date your fundraiser will end.

Add a title and cover photo for your fundraiser, and include why you are raising the money.

That's all there is to it! Your friends will receive a notification inviting them to support your cause in honor of your special day.

We appreciate the hard work of our volunteers making these events possible. As you can see, the possibilities are endless for fundraising events! We are happy to work with you to organize an event around your favorite activity. Or, if you have a talent you would like to share with the community, we can help streamline the donation process so it can be a fundraiser for ACP, too. Funds raised from events like these help us to continue our work to improve diagnosis, optimize treatment and find a cure for MS. For more information on hosting your own fundraiser, contact Lindsey Santiago at lsantiago@acceleratedcure.org or (781) 487-0013.