

# March 2020 Newsletter



## MS Sucks: Singing For a Cure – “The entire day and night was filled with so much love...”

[Lucky Boys Confusion](#) is an American rock band from Chicago. The band consists of lead singer Kaustubh Pandav ("Stubhy"), guitarist and vocalist Adam Krier, bassist Jason



Schultejann, and drummer Ryan Fergus. Since the group formed in the late 1990's, they have recorded several albums, including [Growing Out Of It](#), [The Soapbox Spectacle](#) and, most recently, [Stormchasers](#). Stubhy and Adam write the majority of the band's songs. Music plays a big role in Stubhy's life, it is one of his greatest passions. In his words, "I was a poet before I realized I had a gift for melody. It's my release, it's my outlet, it's my go-to when everything else is failing."

At the end of 2015, Stubhy noticed he was having difficulty walking, his leg started dragging and hitching. According to him, "I figured I needed to stretch it out, but that didn't help." He underwent extensive testing and tried a number of remedies over the next two years, including chiropractors, massage and physical therapy, to no avail. Eventually, Stubhy's neurologist ordered an MRI and found lesions on his brain and spinal

cord. On Black Friday 2018, Stubby was diagnosed with MS. The timing of his diagnosis was especially difficult as his wife was three months pregnant with their first child at the time. Fortunately, he is taking an effective MS treatment and is feeling better. Stubby shares, “MS is with me everywhere I go, but I’m doing well. All my MRIs show there’s no more progression. When I found out my MS treatment was working and I didn’t have any more progression, I said the only thing that could be better right now relative to my disease would be a cure.”

Stubby wanted to do something to advance MS research toward a cure and help other people living with the disease. He decided to use his musical gift toward this end and organize a charity concert. After doing extensive research into possible beneficiaries, he decided to give the proceeds of the event to ACP. In his words, “I wanted to focus on a charity that is focused on research and cures... ACP is a

patient-founded organization fully focused on raising funds for a cure.” Stubby added, “It makes getting through this a little bit better knowing that you’re doing something that does some good for people. My dad was a real big philanthropist in his own right. He was really big into charity and donations, giving of his time more than anything else. I think I just picked up on that growing up, I just didn’t have a cause until now.”



[MS Sucks: Singing for a Cure](#) was held on Saturday, December 21<sup>st</sup> at the [Bottom Lounge](#) in Chicago. The event was split into two portions, with concerts in the afternoon and evening. Over 500 people enjoyed

performances by Lucky Boys Confusion and other groups like [AM Taxi](#), [Plain White T's](#), [Scissors](#) and [Ike Reilly](#), all of whom donated their time and talents. The evening concert featured raffles for prizes like [Riot Fest](#) passes, dinners around Chicago, as well as [House of Blues](#) and Bottom Lounge tickets. The proceeds from both concerts will support ACP’s work to accelerate research in MS to improve the health, healthcare, and quality of life for those affected by MS.

The concert raised an impressive total of over \$30,000, which far exceeded expectations. For Stubby, it was successful in other ways, too. He states, “People came up to me and said they were at the show because what I brought up made them realize they probably had something going on, too. I got a couple of people to go to neurologists, I got a couple of people to join me in the fight... In the MS community, they call me an invisible. If I’m walking down the street nobody would ever look at me and say, ‘Oh, he’s really sick.’ So that’s why I think it’s so important to tell people what’s going on. I’m fortunate I have this platform I can use to help people... Accepting MS as a part of my life has been pretty hard, but this wasn’t about me. I wanted to champion this celebration to raise awareness for other survivors that have it much worse than me... I hope to do this annually so don’t fret if you didn’t make this year’s concert!” The MS Sucks team is hoping to hold the 2020 concert in November. Stay tuned!



*With ACP staffer, Lindsey Santiago, at the Bottom Lounge*

The concert reached the hearts of many people in the MS community. Those in attendance felt the love and support that was the spirit of the event. According to Lindsey Santiago, Development Associate at ACP, “The concert was an amazing experience. It brought together so many groups of people from musicians, fans, those affected by MS, and so many more to all support a cause that is so important to Stubby.” Jennifer Kurz, photographer at the concert shares, “The ENTIRE day and night was filled with so much LOVE... you could literally feel the energy bursting from that entire building!!! It was overwhelming. This was one of my favorite moments of this entire year. Everyone coming together, whether it be volunteering your time or donating and coming out to support, is wonderful... I’ll be honest, until my friend Kaustubh was diagnosed with MS last year, I didn’t know much about it, nor did I realize how many lives are affected by this awful disease. I’m so proud of him for organizing this event and using his resources to help give back to a community that has supported him. I’m more than happy to have donated my time and photography, too.”

The MS Sucks concert had a tremendous amount of support behind the scenes. Alex Zarek and, as mentioned above, Jennifer Kurz donated their talent as photographers throughout the event. Alex also made two videos for the event, including this [recap](#) of the

concert. The raffle was a resounding success thanks to the efforts of Anisha Gawriluk and Sam McHale. Anisha helped to secure raffle items and both she and Sam sold raffle tickets. Sam also helped organize volunteers for the concert and assisted with logistics the day of the event. We are grateful to all who helped to make the concert as successful as it was, both named and unnamed. We'd also like to thank [Genentech](#) for their generosity as sponsor, the Bottom Lounge for providing the venue for the event, [350 Brewing Company](#) for donating refreshments and [Car Con Carne](#) Podcast for hosting the show.

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, contact Lindsey Santiago at [lsantiago@acceleratedcure.org](mailto:lsantiago@acceleratedcure.org) or (781) 487-0013.

