

The Speed of US



2025 ACP IMPACT REPORT

ACCELERATED
CurePROJECT
FOR MULTIPLE SCLEROSIS

Science Moves Faster When We Move Together

Accelerating research toward faster diagnoses, better treatments, and a cure.

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Powered by Connection

Message From Our CEO

Dear Friends and Partners,

When I first transitioned from the world of high-tech startups to join the Accelerated Cure Project in 2005, my mindset was rooted in engineering. In technology, “acceleration” is usually a matter of processing power, optimized systems, and raw data. But over the last two decades of building the ACP Repository and working alongside the incredible MS community, I have learned a profound truth: the ultimate catalyst for scientific breakthrough isn’t technology.

It’s connection. It’s *the speed of us*.

Multiple sclerosis does not wait, and neither can we. Every day matters to the people living with this disease. But the fastest path to earlier diagnoses, better treatments, and ultimately a cure isn’t a solitary sprint by an isolated researcher. Real speed happens when we break down silos. When individual studies connect with each other, building on shared data instead of starting from scratch. When researchers connect with the people living with MS day in and day out. That’s what ACP makes possible.

“The Speed of Us” is the theme of this year’s Impact Report because it perfectly captures how ACP is driving the future of MS research.

When we look back at our origins, our goal was simple but revolutionary – build a centralized repository of biosamples and clinical data so researchers wouldn’t have to spend years building cohorts from scratch. Today, that vision has grown into an unparalleled, interconnected ecosystem.

“Us” is the more than **10,000** people who take time out of their lives, while managing a demanding disease, to share their health data, experiences, and insights with researchers through our iConquerMS people-powered research network. “Us” is all the researchers around the world who choose to build their science on a foundation of community drawing on—and contributing to—ACP’s growing body of MS data, samples, and insights. “Us” includes the dedicated members of our **RIDE Council** and the **MS Minority Research Engagement Partnership Network (MREPN)**, who work tirelessly to ensure our research represents, includes, and benefits the full diversity of the MS community. And crucially, “us” includes the donors whose generosity makes all of it possible.

In our ecosystem, people living with MS are the experts and architects working alongside researchers to steer the scientific agenda, not bystanders waiting for answers. By combining the deep, real-world insights of the MS community with advanced cloud-based analysis and world-class biological samples, we are removing the traditional bottlenecks of scientific discovery. We are turning years of independent research into months of collaborative breakthroughs. The next one starts with you.

Sara Loud

Sara Loud
President and CEO | Accelerated Cure Project for Multiple Sclerosis

P.S.—If you are living with MS and haven’t yet joined iConquerMS, I personally invite you.
You could be the missing piece.





The Scale of Our Impact

Accelerating Towards a Cure Since 2001

Your support has helped build something remarkable — a global network of people affected by MS, researchers, and partners working together to accelerate discovery. The numbers below reflect where we stand today and what your investment has made possible.

	10,000+	iConquerMS members
	15%	iConquerMS membership growth in 2025
	50 & 90	Our work spans across 50 states and 90 countries
	3,200+	People who have contributed biological samples and clinical data to the ACP Repository
	150+	Studies conducted using ACP data and samples in partnership with leading pharma, biotech, and academic researchers
	1st	Predictive genetic biomarker for MS treatment response discovered using ACP data

When the MS Community Sets the Research Agenda

The Prioritized Research Agenda Development and Advancement (PRADA) Project

In most research, people living with MS aren't consulted until a study is already underway.

The PRADA Project, a new initiative from ACP, flips that model. ACP's iConquerMS community identifies and prioritizes the most pressing MS research questions, putting people living with MS at the starting line of the research process, where they belong.



The RIDE Council, a group of nearly 30 people living with MS representing communities historically underrepresented in research, plays a central role in the process, making sure those perspectives shape the final agenda, not just inform it. In 2025, the community produced its first agenda, focused on MS symptom management. ACP is actively bringing this agenda to researchers, encouraging them to pursue questions rooted in what the community actually needs. More agendas, on more topics, are in the works.

The Top 10 MS Symptoms Research Priorities

Through the PRADA Project, the iConquerMS community established a definitive top 10 list of research priorities, pointing science directly at the daily realities of the disease:

1	PRECISION TREATMENT	6	DIET & NUTRITION
2	FATIGUE	7	COGNITIVE BURDEN
3	AGING WITH MS	8	EQUILIBRIUM
4	TEMPERATURE TRIGGERS	9	MENTAL HEALTH
5	VITAMIN THERAPY	10	DIVERSE EXPERIENCES

Explore the full list of questions at: <https://www.acceleratedcure.org/prada-project>





People- Powered Innovation

The MS Community is Guiding the Science and Setting the Pace of Discovery

In the search for a cure, time is our most precious resource. Every day matters. At ACP, we've found that the ultimate catalyst for discovery is connection. When the real-world expertise of people living with MS is brought directly to the scientific drafting table, we accelerate discovery and focus resources on solutions that address what matters most. This is *the speed of us*.

In 2025, that momentum reached a historic pace. Our iConquerMS network grew to more than 10,000 members, transforming daily experiences of living with MS into rigorous science that drives real impact.

“Being part of iConquerMS has given me a sense of connectedness and validation.

I am empowered to speak openly about my journey with MS and have experienced what it truly means to be a patient-partner in research.”

Dimika C., person living with MS

Charting the Path



Science moves fastest when researchers know exactly where to look.

Through our community-led PRADA project, the iConquerMS community handed researchers a direct map: the top 10 research priorities for symptom management, identified by the people living with those symptoms every day.

Accelerating Clinical Trials



Studies often stall because they are too difficult to balance with daily life. We build research differently.

In 2025, we fully activated CAFE-MS, a fatigue intervention trial designed so people can participate entirely from home.

This rapid, community-driven pace secured the largest MS grant ever awarded by the Congressionally Directed Medical Research Programs.

Powering Research in Real Time



Every day, iConquerMS members translate the realities of living with MS into hard, quantifiable science.

Through our ongoing REAL-MS study, the community has completed more than 50,000 surveys, providing researchers with deep, longitudinal insights into quality of life, disability, and overall health.

In 2025, we extended this reach further, launching the Care Partner Connection and expanding our pediatric research agenda through iConquerMS Kids & Teens. The community continues to grow, and so does the data that is powering the next breakthrough.

The Translator



From Person Living with MS to Chief Scientific Officer

At 25, Stephanie Buxhoeveden was a 4.0 student in a competitive nursing program with her career carefully mapped out. Then came an MS diagnosis. Rather than step away from medicine, she leaned in, becoming a neurology nurse practitioner, earning her PhD, and ultimately stepping into the role of chief scientific officer at ACP.

Stephanie holds a rare and powerful position in the world of medical research. She fluently speaks three languages: the empirical rigor of a scientist, the practical care of a clinician, and the daily, unvarnished reality of living with MS.

As chief scientific officer, she uses these intersecting perspectives to align high-level science with lived reality. She ensures that ACP's vast research infrastructure, from the biological samples in our Repository to the patient-reported outcomes of the iConquerMS network, delivers the high-quality data that global researchers need to drive breakthroughs.

At ACP, lived experience and scientific rigor aren't separate things. Stephanie helps us shape the questions that matter most because she's lived them.

“ACP was the first place where having MS felt like a positive thing. It showed me my experience wasn't a liability, turning my diagnosis into my life's purpose.”

*Stephanie Buxhoeveden, PhD, MSN, FNP-BC, MSCN
Chief Scientific Officer, Accelerated Cure Project for MS*

A close-up, low-angle shot of a black compound microscope. The eyepiece is at the top, and the objective lenses are visible below. The background is a blurred laboratory setting with various glassware and equipment. The entire image has a blue color overlay.

Fast Tracking the Laboratory

Giving Researchers a Decade-Long Head Start by Mapping Biology to Lived Experience

Data at Work in 2025

Precision Breakthrough

ACP's Repository provided biological samples and clinical data that supported the discovery of the first predictive genetic biomarker for MS treatment response. See page 15 for the full story.

AI Integration

We provided Repository data to support Biostate AI's work applying artificial intelligence to MS research, exploring hidden patterns in MS progression. The goal: uncovering connections that could open new doors in understanding how MS evolves.

Validating New Tools

Our data played a key role in validating Octave's MS Disease Activity Test, a first-of-its-kind blood test that helps physicians make more informed treatment decisions, without relying solely on MRI.

A frozen vial of blood holds DNA and plasma, but it lacks context. It cannot document the sudden onset of cognitive fog, a shift in mobility, or the subtle neurological changes that unfold across years of MRI scans.

To understand complex, unpredictable diseases like MS, researchers need the biological samples mapped to their clinical data and lived experience.

Usually, gathering that material takes years. We built the ACP Repository to accelerate that process. By providing high-quality biological samples from more than 3,200 people, paired with detailed clinical histories, neurological assessments, and longitudinal outcomes, we give scientists a fully formed map of the disease on day one.

Having the data is only the first step. In 2025, we undertook a major initiative to put it to work.



Velocity in the Cloud

Following a thorough audit of our most valuable historical datasets, we migrated our complex multi-omics and clinical data onto the DNAnexus cloud platform. A researcher in an independent lab halfway around the world can now instantly run the same large-scale analyses as a scientist at a top-tier academic center.

A Compounding Intelligence

Whenever a scientist makes a discovery using our data and samples, their findings feed securely back into our archive—making our collection richer and more valuable with every study.

CASE STUDY:

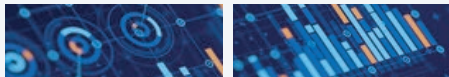
The Breakthrough

How ACP Biosamples and Data Helped Identify the First Genetic Marker for MS Treatment Response

MS treatments are notoriously unpredictable. A therapy that halts disease activity in one person might do nothing for another.

For decades, neurologists have relied on "trial and error," prescribing a medication and waiting months to see if it works. If the drug failed, the disease had kept moving—and that time was gone.

A team of international researchers set out to break that cycle. **They believed the answer wasn't in the waiting—it was in the code.** What if a person's DNA could predict exactly how their body would respond to a drug, before a single dose was ever given?



To prove it, they needed thousands of genetic profiles meticulously tracked against years of clinical history.

To build a cohort like this from scratch would have taken years. But they didn't have to build it. The MS community had already done it for them.



Samples from the **ACP Repository** enabled the researchers to validate their hypothesis and identify the first genetic marker associated with MS treatment response.

Published in *The Lancet's eBioMedicine*, the study found that people with MS carrying the HLA-A*03:01 gene benefit significantly more from one therapy (glatiramer acetate) over another (interferon beta).

Because the **ACP Repository** gave researchers immediate access to a well-characterized collection of biological samples and clinical data, a process that could have taken years was dramatically accelerated. It's a promising first step toward a future where the first treatment is the right one.

[Read the full article](#)





Acceleration for All

Science is Strongest When it Includes Everyone

MS is as unique as the person living with it. To build a cure that works, science must reflect the full, diverse reality of everyone affected by the disease.



At ACP, we accelerate discovery by designing research alongside the communities it serves. The strongest MS research reflects everyone living with the disease. That's not an ideal—it's a scientific imperative.

Reaching Every Community: Through the **COVER-MS** study, we coordinated remote blood collections across 41 states, bringing people in rural areas and underrepresented neighborhoods into the biological map of the disease.

Validating Accessible Solutions: The **STEP for MS** clinical trial found that both at-home and in-clinic exercise programs improved walking speed for people with MS. For those who can't easily access a gym or clinic, that's meaningful news. A coached, at-home program can make a real difference.

Our **CAFE-MS** trial is also evaluating an inclusive, online fatigue-management program, broadening access for those historically underserved by traditional care models.

Designed With, Not For: Every study we support is shaped by our **Research Inclusion, Diversity, and Equity (RIDE) Council**, representing people from historically marginalized populations who help ensure research reflects the full reality of MS, not just a subset of it.



The 2025 Nightingale Award

MS affects women at three times the rate of men. Yet the intersection of MS and distinctly female life events, like menopause, has remained a critical blind spot in both clinical care and research.

In 2025, the International Organization of MS Nurses (IOMSN) honored ACP with the prestigious Nightingale Award, a highly competitive research grant recognizing excellence and innovation in MS nursing. The award supports our recent qualitative study on the impact of menopause on women living with MS, with findings that will inform clinical care, education, and future research.

This research is community-led. The study is co-directed by Dawn Morgan, a person living with MS and dedicated iConquerMS member. Through in-depth interviews with women navigating menopause with MS, the team is gathering firsthand data on how symptoms change during menopause, how women manage those changes, and where healthcare systems fall short.

This recognition validates a core truth of our work: the fastest path to better care starts with the people actually living the experience.

[Read more about the menopause study:](#)



The Changemaker



Dawn Morgan, Researcher and iConquerMS Member

Dawn Morgan was just looking for answers.

As a woman navigating perimenopause, she wanted to know what menopause might mean for her MS. When she couldn't find answers, she did what iConquerMS members do: she brought the question to the community.

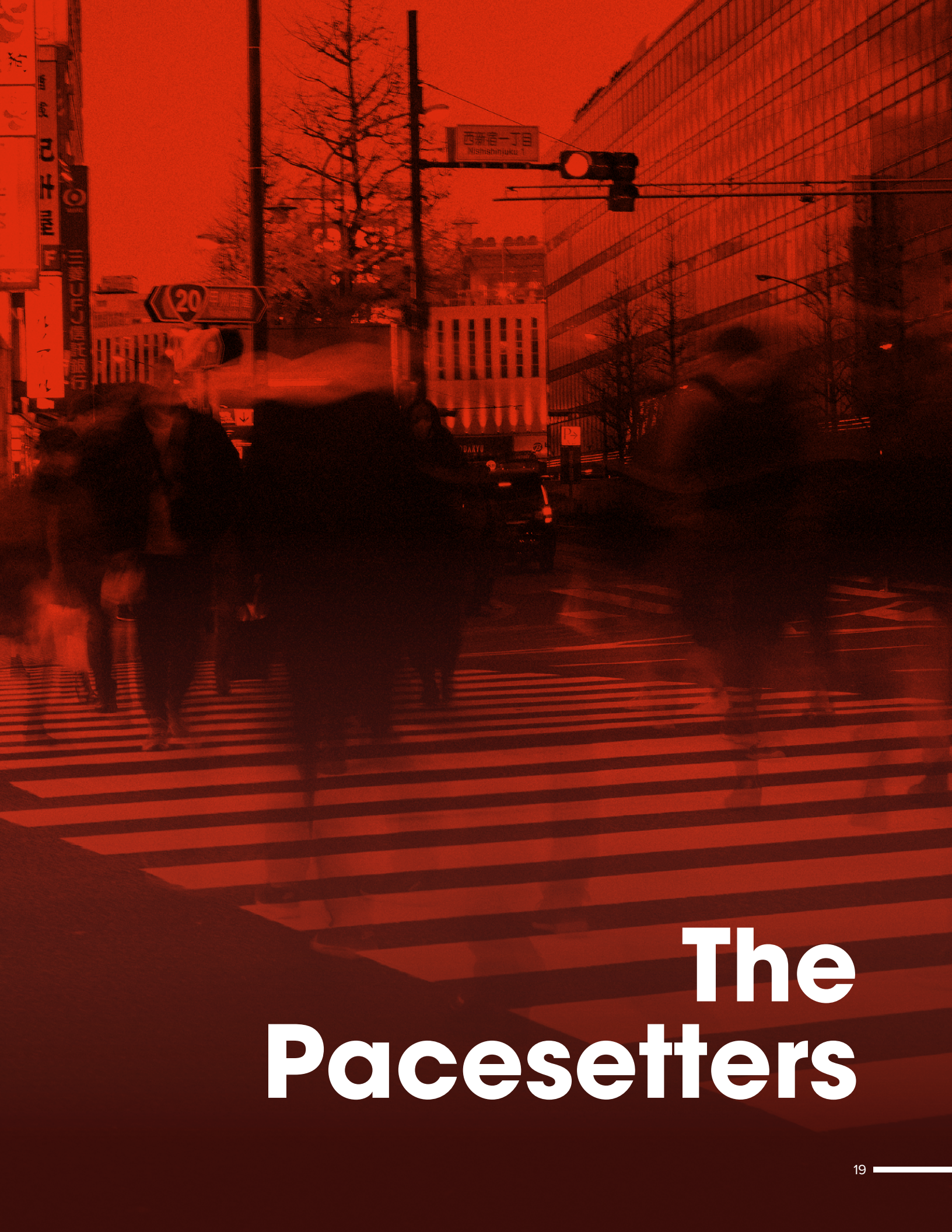
ACP followed her lead. Together, we conducted a scoping review, led by Dawn and published in the journal *Maturitas*, that confirmed a striking gap: of 19 studies examined, none had explored how women actually experience the menopausal transition with MS. The research was measuring biology, but not listening to women.

Today, that community question is a funded research study. Dawn now leads the **iConquerMS Women's Health Committee**, helping ensure the research catches up to the questions women have been asking all along.

That's what the iConquerMS community makes possible—a single question, asked by one person, can change the direction of research.

“Seeing patient-powered advocacy translate into funded science is exactly why this work matters.”

*Dawn Morgan,
person living with MS*



The Pacesetters

The Leadership Turning Community Momentum into Scientific Reality

Our staff is a deliberate blend of clinical experts, seasoned operators, and dedicated people operating with the agility of a startup and the rigor of a major medical institution.

Our Team

Sara Loud
MS, MBA, Chief
Executive Officer

Hollie Schmidt
MS, Vice President of
Scientific Operations

David Gwynne
PhD, Director of
Alliances &
Collaborations

Mark Gilliland
Program Manager,
Data Analytics

Lindsey Santiago
Development
Associate

**Stephanie
Buxhoeveden**
PhD, MSN, FNP-BC,
MSCN, Chief Scientific
Officer

Cristal Balis
MEd, Director of
Marketing &
Communications

Jordan Caines
Program Manager

Jennifer Hill
Program Manager

Grace Okafor
MS, Clinical Trial
Manager

Our Board of Directors

We are grateful for the strategic oversight that keeps our mission sustainable, scalable, and focused on what matters most.

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Board Chair, Curley Law
Firm, LLP

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Anchor Consulting, LLC

Kristy dosReis
City of Providence

Melanie Drayton
Vaxart, Inc.

Aakruti Gorde
Trames Bio

Linda Kanner
(Retired) Orchard Group

Michael Middlebrook
Holocene Advisors

Pamela Saussy
(Retired) Literacy
Council of Montgomery
County



Ensuring Scientific Rigor and Person-Centered Impact at Every Level

Rigorous collaboration is at the heart of everything we do. Our insight structure blends clinical researchers, data scientists, and individuals living with MS to ensure every initiative is ethically sound, scientifically rigorous, and directly relevant to the global MS community.

ACP's Scientific Steering Committee (SSC) was established in 2025 to vet our scientific priorities and shape our research roadmap.

Farren Briggs

PhD, ScM, Associate Professor,
Division of Epidemiology,
Department of Public Health
Sciences, Leonard M. Miller School
of Medicine, University of Miami

Stephanie Buxhoeveden

PhD, MSN, FNP-BC, MSCN, Chief
Scientific Officer, ACP

Melanie Drayton

MS, Vice President Regulatory
Affairs, Vaxart, Inc.

Mark Gilliland

Program Manager, Data Analytics,
ACP

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Centaur Labs

Unsong Oh

MD, Associate Professor, Department
of Neurology, Clinician-Researcher,
Virginia Commonwealth University

Amy Olex

PhD, Senior Bioinformatics Specialist,
Wright Center for Clinical and
Translational Research, Virginia
Commonwealth University

Chase Spurlock

PhD, Chief Executive Officer &
Co-Founder, Decode Health

Gregory Tranah

PhD, Senior Scientist, Sequoia Center
for the Science of Aging, Sutter Health

The Power of “With”

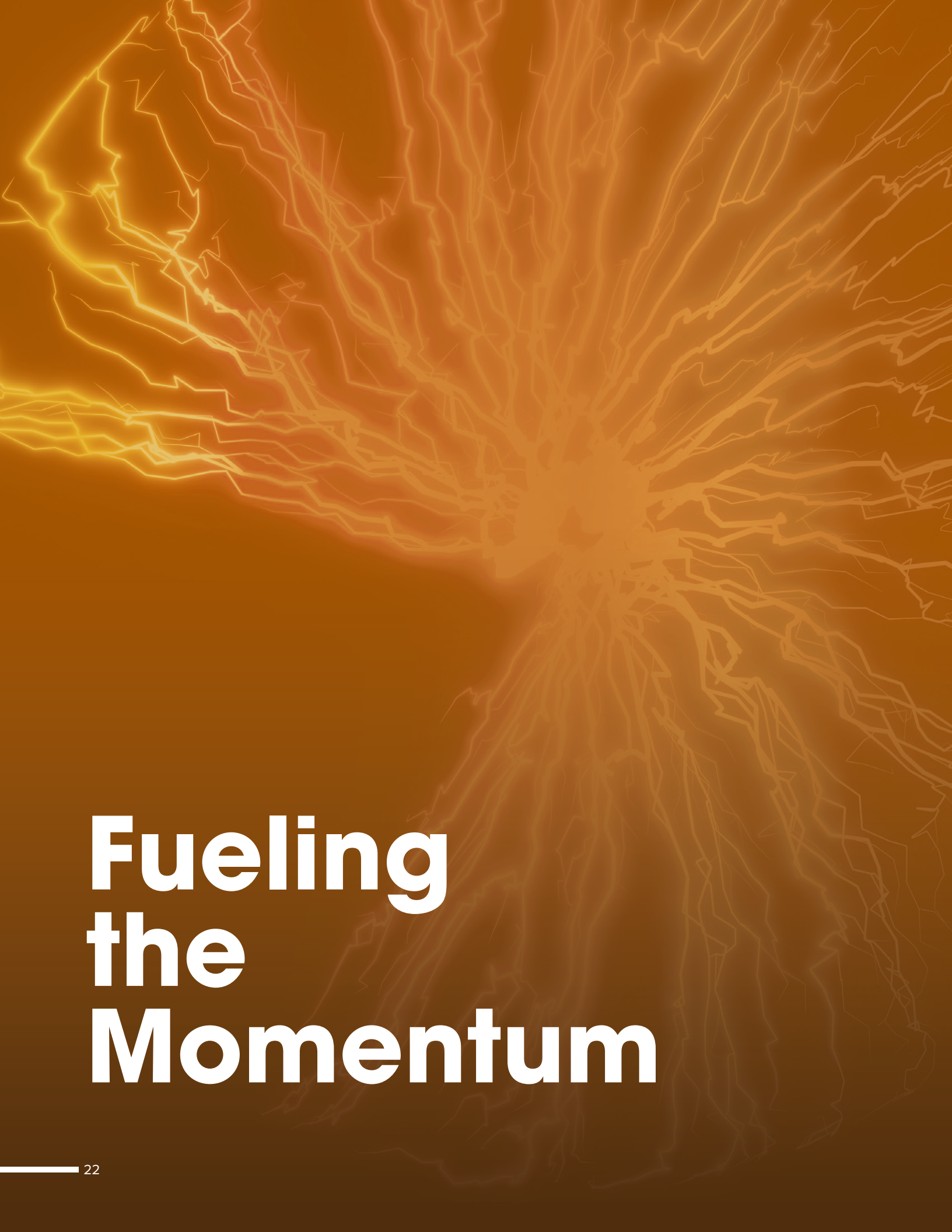
iConquerMS operates under the direct guidance of those who know the disease best. Across our governance boards, more than half of the members are individuals living with MS.

- **Governing Board:**
Oversight of strategic direction and impact.
- **Research Committee:**
Reviewing and approving all research activities.
- **Engagement Committee:**
Driving inclusive recruitment and community growth.

Additional Patient-Led Councils

Driving our Mission:

Caregivers Steering Committee |
Pediatric Steering Committee |
Research Inclusion, Diversity, and
Equity (RIDE) Council



Fueling the Momentum

Transparent Stewardship of Every Dollar Entrusted to Us

ACP operates at the intersection of philanthropy, research, and industry. Our diversified funding model supports stability, independence, and maximum scientific impact.

We are deeply grateful to our donors, whose generosity makes this work possible.

Their contributions play a critical role in accelerating progress toward a cure for MS and advancing research that improves the lives of those affected.

In 2025, we received **775 gifts** from donors totaling nearly **\$450K** in support of our mission.

That generosity is a reflection of the trust our community places in us—a trust we work hard to earn. ACP maintains a perfect 100% score on Charity Navigator and a Gold rating on Candid.



**775
Gifts**



**\$450K
Raised**



The Advocate



Stubhy Pandav, Lead Singer of Lucky Boys Confusion

When Stubhy Pandav was diagnosed with MS in 2018, he didn't retreat from the stage. He decided to use his microphone for something bigger.

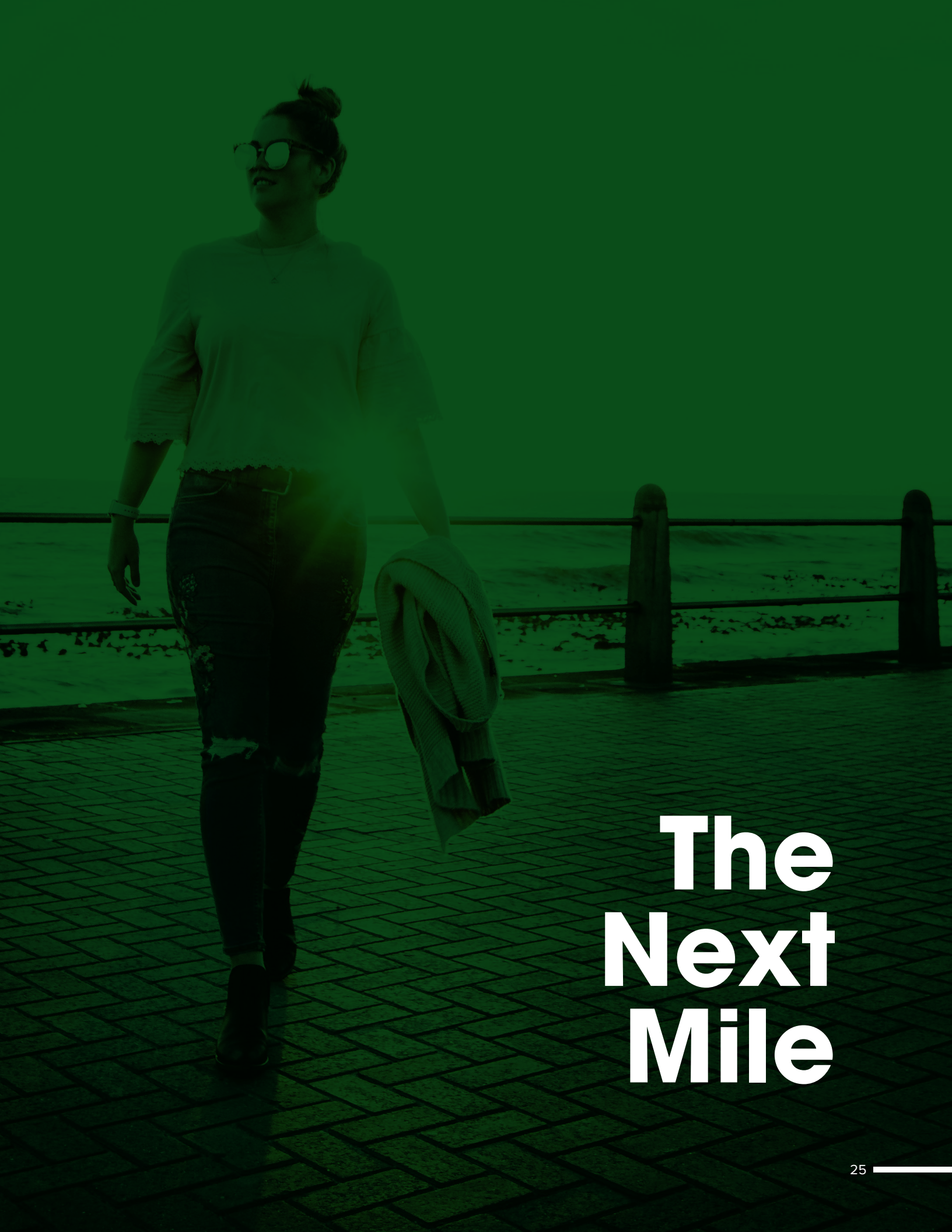
Stubhy wanted to fight back, but he didn't just want to raise "awareness." He wanted to fund scientific momentum. Seeking a partner dedicated to accelerating research, he found ACP.

In 2019, Stubhy launched the first **MS Sucks: Singing for a Cure** concert in Chicago. Despite a pandemic-forced hiatus, he kept the momentum alive, bringing the concert back bigger and louder. Hosting his fourth event in October 2025, the impact is undeniable: Stubhy and his fans have raised over \$130,000 in their four concerts for ACP's research.

His story is a powerful reminder of how *the speed of us* is funded. Scientific acceleration is driven by grassroots momentum and individuals turning their diagnosis into action.

"I felt a drive to increase awareness and to raise money to find a cure. I landed on ACP because it was the most research focused."

*Stubhy Pandav,
Lead Singer of Lucky Boys Confusion,
person living with MS*

A woman with glasses and her hair in a bun is walking on a paved path. She is wearing a light-colored long-sleeved top and dark jeans with a tear at the knee. She is carrying a light-colored jacket over her shoulder. In the background, there is a body of water and a railing. The entire image has a green tint.

The Next Mile

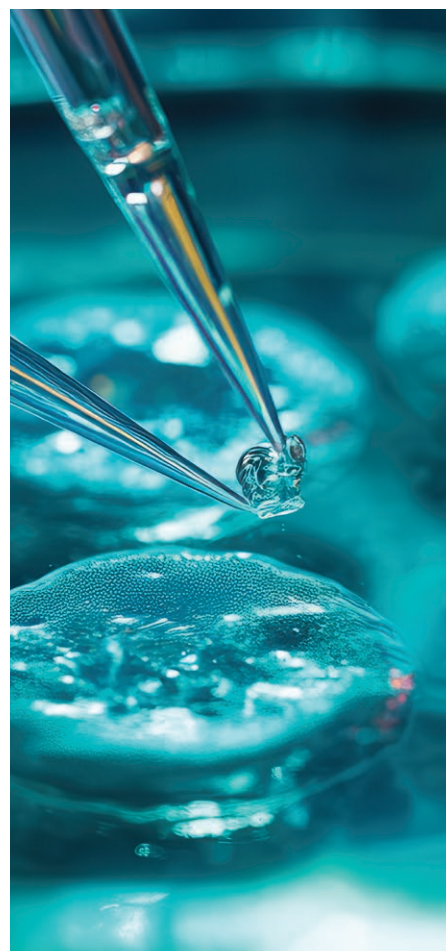
Where Our Momentum Takes Us in 2026

The speed of us is both a reflection on what we have achieved, as well as a mandate for what we must do next.

Because we have built an ecosystem where the MS community helps steer the scientific agenda, informs trial design, and provides the data and insights to power it, we are entering 2026 with unprecedented momentum.

With our Repository and 10,000-strong iConquerMS network, we are setting our sights on the most urgent, under-researched frontiers of the disease.

In 2026, we are accelerating work across three critical areas:



Precision Medicine

The first predictive genetic biomarker was only the beginning.

We are expanding our AI partnerships and capabilities to ensure the right drug reaches the right person, the first time.



Aging with MS

People with MS are living longer than ever.

We are launching longitudinal studies to understand how the disease evolves with age, so that research reflects MS across a full lifetime.



Women's Health

MS affects women 3:1.

Building on our Nightingale Award-winning research, we are expanding community-led studies to close the data gap on how pregnancy, menopause, and hormones intersect with MS.

Our Momentum

Our speed is powered by you.

Every breakthrough in this report was powered by the collective “us”: people affected by MS, dedicated researchers, and generous supporters. ACP has built the engine. Your support is what drives it forward. Scan the QR codes below and help us keep the momentum.



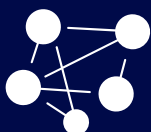
Donate

Every dollar translates directly into scientific velocity—supporting complex data analysis, launching inclusive trials, and driving new solutions for the people who need them.



Join

Whether you're living with MS or supporting someone who is, your experience is data that doesn't exist anywhere else. Join 10,000+ members of iConquerMS to share your insights, participate in research, and set the scientific agenda.



Collaborate

Partner with ACP to accelerate your research by accessing biological samples, clinical data, our community of 10,000+ people living with MS, and insights from a diverse network of people affected by the disease. Tap into our full research ecosystem to keep people affected by MS at the center of every stage of your work.





2025 ACP IMPACT REPORT

THE SPEED OF US

Accelerating the Cure for Multiple Sclerosis

AcceleratedCure.org