

fundraising news

Look Beyond Traditional Fundraising—Host an “Ask Event”

by *Lisa Todd*

What’s a simple way to raise MPS awareness and funds to support families and find a cure? Hold a different type of fundraising event—an Ask Event. This free event can be an effective way to raise money for the National MPS Society by exposing potential donors to the impact they can have on those affected by MPS or a related disease.

An Ask Event is approximately a one-hour program. The goals are to educate your attendees about the Society, its mission, how they can help and to inspire lifelong donors. In July 2012, our family held our inaugural Ask Event and raised approximately \$50,000. We received half of our donations the day of the event, with the remainder to be given to the Society over the next three years by attendees joining the *Circle of Hope*.

The Ask Event has a very specific outline and goal. It begins with a welcome and thank you from the emcee. The emcee should be someone who has a direct connection to the Society. After a short downtime to eat and socialize (approximately 10 minutes), the event begins with an emotional hook. This element is essential to the program. It is designed to connect people emotionally to our mission within the first five minutes

of commencement. You want your guests to immediately acknowledge that you have something meaningful and important to share; you did not just invite them to an event. Through a short story and/or a slide show share your personal story of how MPS or related disease has impacted your family.

Next, spend five minutes on the visionary leader talk. This is the anchor element of the event. This presentation shares the past and present, and outlines the future of the Society. It clearly conveys the gap between where we are now and where we need to be in order to fulfill the next phase of our mission. This presentation should be delivered with emotion and can be very powerful. Terri Klein, development director of the National MPS Society, has provided this presentation at our events and other fundraisers. The Society’s board of directors also are terrific resources to present this talk.

Next, present a powerful video. A video is essential at your Ask Event. This should be an emotional video designed to inspire people about the human impact of our work and move them to tears. It brings to light, in an emotional way, the deeper work of our organization. People should be noticeably moved,

not necessarily because they feel sad or upset, but because they have been touched. Perhaps the video made them laugh or reminded them to be thankful for their lives. This video must convey emotion among the audience.

The new National MPS Society fundraising video is an excellent resource. The five-minute video leads into the presentation testimonial. The testimonial should be a three- to six-minute speech and consists of a firsthand account of how the Society has changed someone’s life. It is the most powerful statement of the Society’s impact of their work and mission. The presentation should deeply move those in attendance so they feel compelled to take action. I gave this part of the testimonial myself, speaking to how the Society had provided me access to valuable medical knowledge at the annual family conference that my local doctors could not provide.

After the testimonial part of the Ask Event, the presentation culminates with the pitch. Attendees have been warned this is coming. They know they are going to be asked for money. At this point, research shows that 40–50 percent of the people are ready to give. They want to know how to go about making

>> a financial contribution right now. The remaining 50–60 percent of the people are not ready to give at the event. They may end up giving the next day, the next week or the next year. They may want to go home and talk it over with others. Or, they may decide not to get involved with your organization at all.

The job of the pitch person is to focus on the people who are ready to give and tell them how to go about doing that. The pitch person should not try to convince the majority who have already decided not to give that day to do so. The pitch person is a “credible, school teacher-like” person. They are truly tied to the organization’s mission and will follow a script. They understand that their job is to walk people through the pledge card and help them to give.

The pitch person instructs your volunteers when to pass out the pledge cards, envelopes and pens to each guest. After walking the audience through each line of the pledge sheet, instructing them how to fill out the form and giving them time to complete the form, the pitch person directs the guests to pass their envelopes back to the volunteers.

Volunteers have another essential role during the pitch: they must set the example for their guests by filling out their pledge cards at this time. Even if the volunteers have already made a financial contribution to the organization, they should write something on their pledge cards during the pitch. The guests will glance at volunteers and follow their lead.

Now it is time to wrap up the event. The emcee thanks everyone for coming and for their support of the Society. People are invited to linger, chat and continue refreshments.

The benefit of hosting an Ask Event is that it has been done already. You don’t have to start from scratch. Scripts have been prepared, videos are done and pledge cards have been created. If you would like more information about holding an Ask Event, contact Lisa Todd, board of directors and Fundraising Committee member, at 505.263.9593 or lisa.todd@mpssociety.org.

*Consider hosting your own fundraising event.
Whether large or small, the rewards are endless.*

WAYS TO GIVE

- Renew your membership or sponsor another family
- Gifts in honor of a special person
- Gifts in memory of a special person
- Matching gifts through your employer (check with your human resource office)
 1. Request a matching gift form from your employer
 2. Complete the employee section of the form
 3. Mail to the Society and we’ll do the rest
- Contribute through the Combined Federal Campaign if you are employed by the federal government—CFC #10943
- Designate the Society as a member of your local United Way. You will need to supply them with the Society’s name, address and Federal ID number (FEIN #11-2734849)
- Annual Fund donation
- Major gift (usually 10 times that of your Annual Fund gift)
- Planned gift
 1. Bequest in your will
 2. Charitable remainder trust or charitable gift annuity
 3. Charitable lead trust
 4. Life insurance policy
 5. Gift of appreciated assets (stocks, mutual funds and bonds)
- Gifts may be applied to the Society’s general operating purposes or restricted to one of our designated programs.

CONTACT: terri@mpssociety.org
or 877.MPS.1001

FUNDRAISING REMINDERS

- Don't forget to submit a brief article for *Courage* about your fundraising success stories and suggestions—they are terrific resources for other families planning events.
- Check out the fundraising section on the website for more information or to post your event.
- For free MPS Society brochures and donor envelopes, or to submit information for the website or *Courage*, send an e-mail to Terri Klein at terri@mpsociety.org.

Keep in mind—the Annual 5K Walk/Run and the Annual Fund are great ways to raise money for the National MPS Society.

Fundraising Committee:

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Sponsor A Child For A Cure 2012—Don't Get Left Behind!

This year's Sponsor A Child For A Cure (SACFAC) program included six walk/run events with families and friends from around the country. Each participating child or their family received a courage medallion and a photo of the runner who ran on their behalf. Money raised through SACFAC—more than \$40,000 since the program's inception—will help fund research.

We understand how much it means for families to help the Society raise money for research and to be included in a rewarding experience. We hope that SACFAC has warmed your hearts as it has ours and that others will consider participating next year. It is a terrific way to reach new heights of awareness among communities nationwide.

2012 SACFAC Events:

- **fiVe for V, in memory of Louis Butts V**, New York—hosted by Michelle Storm-Butts
- **13th Annual Run for Erin**, Georgia—hosted by Stacy Peters
- **BioMarin Run for Your Life 5K**, California—hosted by Kathie Ward, BioMarin
- **Run for Their Lives**, Texas—hosted by Scott Hardin and the Holland family
- **Laps for Lucas**, Iowa—hosted by Lew and Stacey Montgomery
- **It Works 5K for MPS**, Florida—hosted by Kate Martin, It Works



Danielle Mamagona participated in the 2nd annual It Works walk/run in Bradenton, FL. Danielle walked the Family Fun Walk in memory of Clinton Szemanski (MPS III).



David Mamagona also ran the 5K at the 2nd annual It Works in memory of Zachary Szemanski (MPS III). David was honored to complete this event with a time of 30:25 and placed second in the 30–39 age group.



At the BioMarin Run for Your Life 5K, recently married couple Maria Torres and Juan Garcia took up the honorable challenge. Maria, a sales representative in Puerto Rico, ran for Sam Caswell (MPS I) with a time of 25:27. Juan ran on behalf of Jennifer Klein (ML III) with a time of 27:05.