



together we are  
**STRONGER**

**2015 ANNUAL PROGRESS REPORT**





# OUR VISION

A world free of MS



# OUR MISSION

People affected by MS can **live their best lives** as we **stop MS in its tracks**, **restore what has been lost** and **end MS forever**.

## **ABOUT MULTIPLE SCLEROSIS**

Multiple sclerosis is an unpredictable, often disabling disease of the central nervous system that disrupts the flow of information within the brain, and between the brain and body.

Symptoms vary from person to person and range from numbness and tingling, to walking difficulties, fatigue, dizziness, pain, depression, blindness and paralysis. The progress, severity and specific symptoms of MS in any one person cannot yet be predicted, but advances in research and treatment are leading to better understanding and moving us closer to a world free of MS. Most people with MS are diagnosed between the ages of 20 and 50, with about three times more women than men being diagnosed with the disease. MS affects more than 2.3 million worldwide.

## **ABOUT THE NATIONAL MULTIPLE SCLEROSIS SOCIETY**

The Society mobilizes people and resources so that everyone affected by multiple sclerosis can live their best lives as we stop MS in its tracks, restore what has been lost and end MS forever.

To fulfill this mission, the Society funds cutting-edge research and ensures world-wide collaboration to accelerate discoveries, drives change through advocacy, facilitates professional education, collaborates with MS organizations around the world, and provides services designed to help people with MS and their families move their lives forward. Last year alone, through our comprehensive nationwide network, the Society devoted \$122.2 million to help more than one million individuals connect to the people, information and resources they need. To move closer to a world free of MS, the Society also invested \$56 million to support more than 380 new and ongoing research projects around the world.



together we are  
**STRONGER**



**REBECCA (RIGHT)**  
DIAGNOSED IN 2013



**MIKE**  
DIAGNOSED IN 1983



**ANQUETTE (LEFT)**  
DIAGNOSED IN 2013

## OUR IMPACT

The Society is united in our collective power to do something about MS now, and end this disease forever. In order to better describe the changes we expect in the lives of people affected by MS, we developed four impact statements which help guide our work and more effectively evaluate progress:

- Each person with MS can live their best life with more connections to information, resources, and others with shared experiences
- Accelerated research breakthroughs change lives and end MS forever
- Everyone who wants to do something about multiple sclerosis can fuel progress
- The voices of people affected by MS are heard and drive change wherever it is needed

This impact was achieved through work focused in five key goal areas — see opposite page.

# OUR FY2011–2015 STRATEGIC RESPONSE TO MULTIPLE SCLEROSIS

The FY2011–2015 strategic response to multiple sclerosis reflected a vision of what the world should look like for people affected by MS in the year 2015. Through an extensive outreach to a wide range of audiences, the perspectives and voices of nearly 10,000 individuals informed the plan with their hopes, dreams, concerns, challenges and experiences — what they wanted and expected from their National MS Society.

## FY2011–2015 GOALS

In order to further our progress toward a world free of MS, our work focused in five key goal areas:

1. We are a driving force of MS research and treatment to stop disease progression, restore function and end MS forever
2. We develop, deliver and leverage resources to enhance care for people with MS and quality of life for those affected by the disease
3. We are leaders in the worldwide MS movement, mobilizing millions of people to do something about MS now
4. We are activists
5. We develop and align human, business and financial resources to achieve breakthrough results

## Each person with multiple sclerosis can live their best life with more connections to information, resources, and others with shared experiences.

The National MS Society supports people affected by MS in their quest to live their best lives — to overcome challenges to pursue the things that provide enjoyment and meaning— often beginning with **information**.

Each year, MS Navigators at our Information Resource Center respond to more than 200,000 calls, emails and online inquiries about living well with MS — assisting with questions about symptoms, health insurance, family matters, employment, financial planning, accessible housing and more, and providing referrals to experts in people's own communities.

The Society's website **[nationalMSSociety.org](http://nationalMSSociety.org)** — which provides the most comprehensive information about MS in the world — is accessed by more than 1.3 million users each month. Our email newsletter is enjoyed by nearly 2 million people monthly, sharing news, key research updates, resources available across the country and upcoming events.

Our award-winning lifestyle magazine, **Momentum**, reaches 500,000 people each quarter, with articles dedicated to living powerfully with MS including wellness, relationships, employment, travel, healthcare, advocacy, volunteerism, fundraising and more.

We also **connect people** affected by MS to life-changing services and resources, and to one another.

The number of healthcare providers across the country who have developed expertise in MS has expanded as a result of Society investments. More MS specialists, including MS nurses, are providing holistic, high-quality care for each person living with MS. We are closing the gap in care for people with MS in rural and otherwise under-served regions.

Nearly 60,000 people affected by MS visit discussions and groups at **MSconnection.org** each month to celebrate a triumph, express frustration or just chat. Community members read and share thoughts, experiences, and ideas on managing MS symptoms like fatigue, mobility challenges and cognitive issues, and other important matters like parenting (or growing up!) with MS.

Thousands of members of the MS movement connect at in-person events like self-help groups, education programs and Walk MS®. On social media, the Society's 650,000 followers interact and support each other. Reaching out, connecting, and sharing are at the heart of living one's best life with this unpredictable disease.

We develop, deliver and leverage resources to enhance care for people with MS and quality of life for those affected by the disease; the National MS Society offers more services than any other MS organization in the world. As people with MS move forward to live their best lives, we move forward with them toward a world free of MS.

Yours truly,



Cyndi Zagieboylo  
President and Chief Executive Officer



**LEARN MORE ABOUT THE SOCIETY'S  
RESOURCES AND SUPPORT**



## Accelerated research breakthroughs change lives and end MS forever.

When I was 5 years old, my father was diagnosed with primary progressive MS, just as his brother had been in the late 1930s. At the time, the newly formed National MS Society had begun reaching out, raising money and making certain that research on MS was being conducted.

Some 20 years later, my older sister was diagnosed with primary progressive MS, though somewhat less aggressive than our father's. Here it was the 1970s — almost 40 years after my uncle and 20 years after my father had passed — and there were still no treatments for this disease, still no real understanding of the disease process, and no answers about its cause. There was, however, the Society: raising funds to support research, raising greater public awareness of MS, and providing programs and services in many areas of the country.

Since then, the speed at which we are making progress toward a world free of MS is increasing each year — it's truly astounding. The breakthroughs we've made have already changed so many lives, and promise to change many more as we build on discoveries.

As the global leader in MS research, the National MS Society has been the catalyst for all major advancements and, as the largest private funder of MS research, we have invested \$896 million since our founding. We have provided early career support and funding to nearly 1,000 new MS researchers, including every recognized MS expert.

Our leadership in the International Progressive MS Alliance is driving the charge to achieve the breakthroughs necessary to end progressive MS, bringing together the world's leading experts in MS and funding dozens of grants to urgently speed solutions.

We are increasing investments in wellness research, including diet, exercise, and complementary and alternative therapies.




The groundbreaking \$250 million **NOW: No Opportunity Wasted MS Research** campaign led to more promising MS research and drove more progress toward life-changing solutions for people with the disease than has occurred at any other time in history. Treatment options increased — getting more potential treatments in trial than ever before. Our understanding of the causes of MS also dramatically advanced; there are now nearly 160 genetic variants identified and several risk factors confirmed.

We are a driving force of MS research and treatment to stop disease progression, restore function and end MS forever. There is still much to be done, and I'm proud to be a part of such a successful organization moving closer every day to achieving our vision of a world free of MS.

Thank you.

Sincerely,



Eli Rubenstein  
Chair, National Board of Directors



**READ ABOUT THE PROGRESS  
WE ARE FUELING IN MS RESEARCH**

## Everyone who wants to do something about multiple sclerosis can fuel progress.

The National MS Society heightens awareness of multiple sclerosis to facilitate understanding, engagement and action to fuel the movement. Our programs are powerful connection points and offer rich opportunities for anyone who wants to do something about MS to do so — today. We invite all people, no matter where they live or who they are, to join the movement to raise awareness, connect with others and end MS forever. We aim to increase the number and impact of Society volunteers, engaging and cultivating people at all levels and in support of every critical function of the organization.

Thanks to the ongoing hard work and dedication of these thousands of participants, volunteers and supporters, Bike MS® has become the largest fundraising bike event in the world, the fifth top fundraising event of any kind in the United States and it continues to grow. Walk MS® is now the seventh largest walk event in the country. More than 500,000 volunteers make these fundraising events possible, and more than 318,000 individuals donate over \$33 million each year through our individual giving programs.

The Society is recognized as the most trustworthy source of information about MS, evidenced by the fact that, on average, we are mentioned by name in more than 80 percent of all articles published about the disease. Whether people create a Do-It-Yourself Fundraising MS event, join a Walk MS or Bike MS team, write or call their legislators, make a one-time gift or volunteer their time and expertise to help, they are an essential part of our progress.

We are leaders in the worldwide MS movement, mobilizing millions of people to do something about MS now. Every contribution, no matter how large or how small, moves us closer to a world free of MS — faster.

Sincerely,



Richard A. Knutson  
Treasurer, National Board of Directors



**READ THE SOCIETY'S FULL 2015 FINANCIAL STATEMENTS**

**FIND OUT HOW TO GET INVOLVED AND MAKE AN IMPACT**

## The voices of people affected by MS are heard and drive change wherever it is needed.

Each person affected by MS experiences the disease in their own way. However, together, the collective power of their stories drives needed change. It is this collective power that allowed MS activists from across the country to secure an additional \$33 million in MS-specific government research funding over the last seven years. Our shared research means that we now better understand the scientific mechanisms that lead to disease progression and we accelerate the development of new therapies. We seek systems and solutions that will help us identify risk and triggering factors that cause MS, and understand the biological interactions that lead to its development so that MS can be prevented. In short, we expand and strengthen the quantity and quality of MS research worldwide to accelerate new discoveries and treatments for people with MS.

Activist power also resulted in the introduction of three bills with 65 cosponsors to benefit people affected by MS after activists made 390 visits to Congressional offices during the public policy conference.

More than 110,000 activists take online action each year to connect with their elected officials, raising their awareness of MS and urging them to support issues important to people living with MS, such as MS research funding, accessible transportation and housing, and access to quality healthcare. We continue to engage in the implementation of the Affordable Care Act, providing information to policymakers about its implications for people with MS, as well as MS-specific education, materials and trainings.

We are activists. No matter what an individual's story is, it reflects an important and unique facet of the experience of MS. Every voice is essential, and valued. It is our voices together that affect change and drive progress.

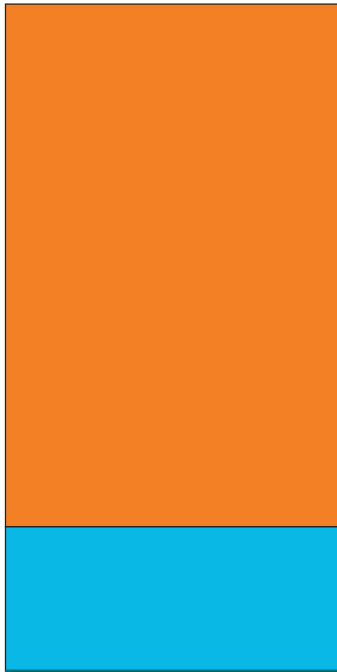


**FIND OUT HOW YOU CAN  
ADVOCATE FOR CHANGE**






# 2015 FINANCIALS

## 2015 HOME OFFICE INCOME









Total Income: \$117,020,890

-  Contributions from Chapters: \$91,161,989
-  Contributions from Members & Others: \$25,418,783
-  Interest & Miscellaneous Income: \$440,118

## 2015 HOME OFFICE EXPENSES



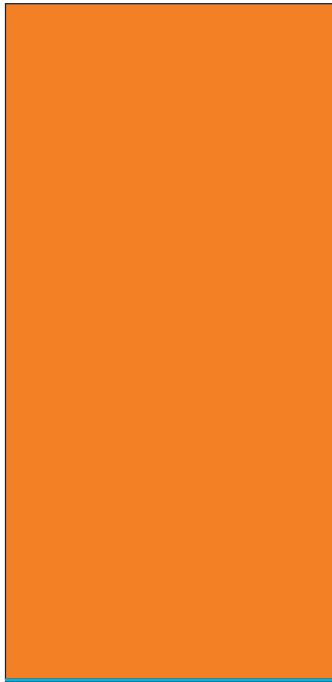
Total Expenses: \$123,032,050

-  Research: \$56,081,336
-  Public & Professional Education: \$13,738,510
-  Services to Chapters: \$25,678,490
-  Client & Community Services: \$10,431,273
-  Management & General: \$9,797,598
-  Fundraising: \$7,304,843



[VIEW COMPLETE FINANCIALS](#)

## 2015 HOME OFFICE & LOCAL OFFICES' INCOME COMBINED



**Total Income: \$214,387,285**

- **Received Directly:**  
\$214,095,556
- **Received Indirectly:**  
\$818,730
- **Other:**  
\$633,476



**VIEW COMPLETE FINANCIALS**

## 2015 HOME OFFICE & LOCAL OFFICES' EXPENSES COMBINED



**Total Expenses: \$226,986,493**

- **Research:**  
\$56,081,336
- **Public & Professional Education:**  
\$35,333,687
- **Services to Chapters:**  
\$25,678,490
- **Client & Community Services:**  
\$53,505,903
- **Management & General:**  
\$19,001,342
- **Fundraising:**  
\$37,385,735

# 2015 NATIONAL BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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Tykeson Associates/Enterprises  
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Dillon, CO

**Joyce Nelson**  
Evergreen, CO

# HOME OFFICE LOCATIONS

## NEW YORK

733 Third Avenue, Third Floor  
New York, NY 10017  
Tel 212-986-3240

## DENVER

900 S. Broadway, Second Floor  
Denver, CO 80209  
Tel 303-698-6100

## WASHINGTON D.C.

1100 New York Avenue NW, Suite 440 East  
Washington, DC 20005  
Tel 202-408-1500

## INDIVIDUAL GIVING

Tel 1-800-923-7727  
[nationalMSSociety.org](http://nationalMSSociety.org)  
[info@nationalMSSociety.org](mailto:info@nationalMSSociety.org)



# LOCAL OFFICES

## **Alabama**

Alabama-Mississippi

## **Alaska**

Greater Northwest

## **Arizona**

Arizona

## **Arkansas**

Mid South  
South Central

## **California**

Northern California  
Pacific South Coast  
Southern California & Nevada

## **Colorado**

Colorado-Wyoming

## **Connecticut**

Connecticut

## **Delaware**

Greater Delaware Valley

## **District of Columbia**

Greater D.C.-Maryland

## **Florida**

Mid Florida  
North Florida  
South Florida

## **Georgia**

Georgia  
Mid South

## **Hawaii**

Pacific South Coast

## **Idaho**

Greater Northwest  
Utah-Southern Idaho

## **Illinois**

Gateway Area  
Greater Illinois

## **Indiana**

Indiana State  
Kentucky-Southeast Indiana

## **Iowa**

Upper Midwest

## **Kansas**

Mid America

## **Kentucky**

Indiana State  
Kentucky-Southeast Indiana  
Ohio Valley

## **Louisiana**

South Central

## **Maine**

Greater New England

## **Maryland**

Greater D.C.-Maryland

## **Massachusetts**

Greater New England

## **Michigan**

Michigan

## **Minnesota**

Upper Midwest

**Mississippi**

Alabama-Mississippi  
Mid South

**Missouri**

Gateway Area  
Mid America

**Montana**

Greater Northwest

**Nebraska**

Mid America

**Nevada**

Southern California & Nevada

**New Hampshire**

Greater New England

**New Jersey**

Greater Delaware Valley  
New Jersey Metro

**New Mexico**

South Central

**New York**

Long Island  
New York City-Southern New York  
Upstate New York

**North Carolina**

Greater Carolinas

**North Dakota**

Upper Midwest

**Ohio**

Ohio Buckeye  
Ohio Valley

**Oklahoma**

South Central

**Oregon**

Oregon

**Pennsylvania**

Greater Delaware Valley  
Pennsylvania Keystone

**Rhode Island**

Greater New England

**South Carolina**

Greater Carolinas

**South Dakota**

Upper Midwest

**Tennessee**

Mid South

**Texas**

South Central

**Utah**

Utah-Southern Idaho

**Vermont**

Greater New England

**Virginia**

Greater D.C.-Maryland  
Virginia-West Virginia

**Washington**

Greater Northwest

**West Virginia**

Virginia-West Virginia

**Wisconsin**

Wisconsin  
Upper Midwest

**Wyoming**

Colorado-Wyoming



# together we are **STRONGER**



**JOE (CENTER)**  
DIAGNOSED IN 2010



**KAREN (LEFT)**  
DIAGNOSED IN 2007



**JOSEPH (LEFT)**  
DIAGNOSED IN 2008

- Receive support to navigate the challenges of MS by calling **1-800-344-4867**
- Learn more about MS and the many ways we address it with regular visits to **[nationalMSSociety.org](http://nationalMSSociety.org)**
- Become a research champion at **[nationalMSSociety.org/research](http://nationalMSSociety.org/research)**
- Make a donation of any size — in cash, by check or online at **[nationalMSSociety.org/donate](http://nationalMSSociety.org/donate)**
- Defy MS by connecting with people around the world striving to live their best lives on **[MSconnection.org](http://MSconnection.org)**
- Get the Society's email newsletter to keep up with breaking news, research developments, and available resources and services at **[nationalMSSociety.org/signup](http://nationalMSSociety.org/signup)**
- Meet others in the movement on Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn or Instagram
- Participate in a Walk MS<sup>®</sup>, Bike MS<sup>®</sup>, Challenge Walk MS<sup>®</sup>, MuckFest MS<sup>®</sup>, or Do It Yourself Fundraising MS event, and ask everyone you know for donations
- Be part of the MS Activist Network to start receive updates and Action Alerts at **[nationalMSSociety.org/MSactivist](http://nationalMSSociety.org/MSactivist)**
- Remember the Society in your will or estate plan; call Individual Giving at **1-800-923-7727** to learn how
- Correspond with President and CEO Cyndi Zagieboylo at **[cyndi@nms.org](mailto:cyndi@nms.org)**



**National  
Multiple Sclerosis  
Society**

1-800-344-4867

[nationalMSsociety.org](http://nationalMSsociety.org)