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# msconnection

New York City Chapter

## Do Something about MS NOW Join the Movement at the 2007 MS Walk

**W**hat's it like when thousands of people come together for one cause? At the MS Walk, it's a day of inspiration, excitement and community. That's because when you participate in the MS Walk you are not only making a statement that you want to live in a world free of MS, you are supporting the thousands of New Yorkers and their families and friends who live with the disease. Together, we can change the future and bring an end to MS.

MS stops people from moving. The National MS Society exists to make sure it doesn't. **Join the Movement** today and register for the MS Walk.

**Register today and win a \$50 gift card from Commerce Bank!**

Register for the MS Walk at [www.nycmswalk.org](http://www.nycmswalk.org) and you will be entered into a raffle to win a \$50 Visa card, courtesy of Commerce Bank. To be eligible, enter code: **MSCONNECTION** in the Registration Code field.

### Volunteers can win too!

Join hundreds of dedicated and energetic individuals who help make the MS Walk a success and receive an MS Walk t-shirt. Individuals who sign up to volunteer at <http://msnyc.kintera.org/walkvol> before April 22 will be entered into a raffle to win a \$50 gift card from Commerce Bank.



### Where and When

**MS Walk in Staten Island**  
 Saturday, April 21  
 Historic Richmond Town  
 Check-in: 9:30 a.m.  
 Start time: 10:30 a.m.

**MS Walk in Manhattan**  
 Sunday, April 22  
 South Street Seaport  
 Check-in: 9:30 a.m.  
 Start time: 11:00 a.m.



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212-463-7787

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**We make fundraising easy and fun**

After registering, you'll receive everything you need to collect contributions.

Our online tools make it easy to create personal and team web pages, send e-mails, make donations, check donations and more.

**There is strength in numbers**

Team up with friends, family and co-workers to help fight MS and have a fun day outdoors. You only need 4 people to start a team – all ages welcome!

**Earn cool prizes**

The fundraising minimum is \$50, but raise just \$100 and receive a commemorative t-shirt. Reach higher and earn other fantastic prizes including electronics, MS Walk clothing and more. Check out all the prizes at [www.prizes.msny.org](http://www.prizes.msny.org).

**A GREAT PARTNERSHIP:  
COMMERCE BANK + MS WALK**

Thank you to Commerce Bank for their generous sponsorship of the MS Walk. They hosted our team captain's kick off party, held a Coins for Caring drive during MS Awareness Week, contributed contest prizes, and the Commerce Bank MS Walk team will be out in full force on April 22 in Manhattan.

## This is Why I Walk

By *Emily Munoz*

I was diagnosed with MS after I had my first attack this past December. When I woke up that morning, the left side of my face was numb. I assumed that I ate something the night before that caused an allergic reaction. The next morning I woke up with the same numbness and a headache, all on the left side of my face and head. Now I was worried. I called my mom and all of my close friends. They demanded that I go to the hospital, so I did.

After my MRI, I was told that I probably had multiple sclerosis. I had no idea what exactly that meant because I, like most people, knew nothing about MS. I spent the next five days hospitalized – given steroids to help alleviate the numbness. During my time in the hospital I did a lot of reading about MS. I learned that the numbness probably wasn't my first attack and most likely, will not be my last. I learned that attacks can be as serious as not being able to walk or move, but I also learned that I will be able to live a normal life with the right treatments.



*Emily Munoz (far right) and members of Just E's Support Team.*

After getting over the emotional distress my diagnosis caused, I decided to be strong and help educate others about MS. I started with my inner circle of family and friends. I told them what MS is and what its effects and symptoms are, and what kinds of treatments were available. I loved talking to others who knew about the disease as well, and I

knew that being involved in the fight against MS would help me stay strong and positive.

One of my first MS "projects" was enrolling in the MS Walk. I wanted to walk because MS was now a part of my life and I wanted

to help find a cure, not just for myself but for the thousands of others who live with this disease. I created a team, the Just E's Support Team, and will walk with about 30 of my friends. I will continue to be involved as much as possible because I believe that I can help and I walk because I have faith that someday, I will be cured.

Join Emily at the 2007 MS Walk on April 21 or April 22. Register today at [www.nycmswalk.org](http://www.nycmswalk.org).

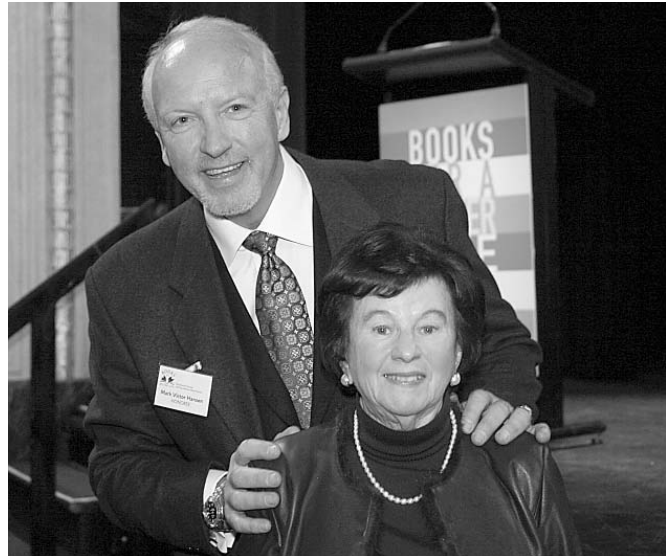
## CHAPTER HIGHLIGHTED 2006 ACCOMPLISHMENTS



*Dr. Bar-Or fielding questions from the audience at the annual meeting.*

Despite the frigid February weather, hundreds of chapter friends attended our Annual Meeting at the New York Marriott Marquis. After learning about our 2006 achievements and meeting our award winners, attendees listened to an informative talk from Dr. Amit Bar-Or, Assistant Professor, Neurology and Neurosurgery, Montreal Neurological Institute, McGill University.

## BOOKS FOR A BETTER LIFE AWARDS



*Mark Victor Hansen, co-creator of "Chicken Soup for the Soul," and a 2006 Ardath Rodale Hall of Fame inductee, with Ardath Rodale at the 2006 Books for a Better Life Awards. Meredith Vieira hosted the awards honoring the best in self-improvement books on February 26. The annual event raised over \$200,000 for the chapter.*

## RUN TO STOP MS! CHICAGO APPLICATIONS NOW BEING ACCEPTED

Join our Marathon Strides Against MS program and receive entry to the 2007 La Salle Bank Chicago Marathon on October 7, 2007; applications are now available. Runners accepted into the program are required to raise a minimum of \$3,000 and receive great



benefits such as:

- Training program and nutrition advice from our team trainer
- Personal fundraising webpage
- Fundraising tips and assistance
- Team apparel
- Incentive awards
- Team social events

For more information visit [www.msny.org](http://www.msny.org), call 212-463-9791 or e-mail [marathons@msny.org](mailto:marathons@msny.org).

**Did you know?** You may qualify for the 2008 Boston Marathon by running in the Chicago Marathon this year.

## Creating a Movement

### Can one person's voice launch a movement?

Laura Wieden, the daughter of Dan Wieden, has been living with MS since she was 24. Dan's award-winning ad agency, Wieden+Kennedy, is world famous for creating brands for organizations like Nike and ESPN, just for starters. So when the Society approached Wieden+Kennedy about working together on a new brand for the organization, Dan Wieden saw it as an opportunity to do something important and long-lasting for his daughter. He asked Buz Sawyer, managing director of the New York Office, if he was willing to work pro bono on the project – he said yes. Sawyer's sister also lives with MS and their mother died from MS complications.

A full team of strategic planners and creative staff was engaged to develop the new brand for the Society, resulting in more than \$1 million worth of time and creative talent for the video, print ads, billboards, and TV spots which debuted in March during MS Awareness Week. The new brand is authentic—every person featured lives with MS.

Thanks to everyone at Wieden+Kennedy, you'll notice a shift in how the Society

looks and talks about itself and the disease. The brand is built around the core concept of movement: **"MS stops people from moving. The National MS Society exists to make sure it doesn't. Join the Movement."** Because moving is so much of who we all are, we believe that everyone will be able to identify with this universal message and call to action.

### A new identity

Our new logo clearly identifies the Society and celebrates movement and personal expression. The color is a warm orange, which creates urgency, and stands out in a world where so many other colors represent so many other things. Through research, we know orange is optimistic, contemporary, and cutting edge. It's

also a color that people with MS find highly readable and can become a symbol for MS around the world.

The transformation is part of a long-term process. For a while you'll be seeing both of our looks—old and new—together. But the movement has started.

We are asking everyone to **Join the Movement**. To learn how, visit **JointheMovement.org** or call **212-463-7787**.



## MOVING FORWARD ON NERVE REPAIR

By Dr. Peter Calabresi,  
Johns Hopkins  
University School of  
Medicine



Dr. Calabresi heads a multidisciplinary team focused on the repair of nerves damaged by MS. The goal is to restore function – to return abilities that MS has stolen from legs and arms and hands. Dr. Calabresi's nerve repair research is funded by the Society's Promise: 2010 program. The following is from an interview conducted with Dr. Calabresi late last year.

### Old drugs, new purposes

The concept of nerve loss is not a new one to neurologists. We also know from lab studies that nerve loss is reversible. In fact, there are repair or protective medications out there that were tested for Parkinson's, Lou Gehrig's (ALS), and others. They had limited success, but those diseases are diagnosed in older people who have significant damage. We diagnose MS much earlier, when people are younger and healthier. These drugs may work better for them. There are other drugs approved for other conditions that also merit testing in MS.

If your target drug is already approved for something else, you can go directly to what's called a Phase II-B clinical trial. That saves years and years of safety testing.

### Which old drug?

At Johns Hopkins we have a library of some 10,000 drugs and a three-part system for looking at them. First we identify those with the most promising properties. Then we ask about safety

and which ones can be given as pills. Parallel with that we have to figure out how we're going to know if a drug really makes someone better. It would be great if we could just give something and people would get up and dance again. But nerves aren't like that. They take quite a while to grow out and do their thing. At the very least it would take 6–12 months for nerves to start functioning better or become more normal.

We need to know what's happening sooner. If a drug doesn't work, we want to try another on our top 10 list. We're going to test some of these drugs in people in the next five years. We may even do it in three.

## INTERNATIONAL GROUP FINDS EXTENSIVE MYELIN REPAIR EVEN IN ELDERLY

When myelin—the fatty coating that insulates and protects nerve fibers—is damaged by MS, messages from the brain can misfire or be lost. This, in turn, can affect anything from vision to physical movement.

Scientists believe that myelin repair (called "remyelination") may restore function in damaged myelin and that it also protects the nerve fibers themselves from further damage. A recent study by an international team suggests that a substantial amount of natural remyelination can occur in most types and stages of MS. It is not confined to younger, healthier people, or to people who do not have progressive disease.

### About the study

The researchers examined autopsied brain tissue from 51 people who had lived with MS, including people with

relapsing-remitting, secondary-progressive, and primary-progressive disease as well as some whose MS type was unknown. The tissue samples were analyzed for signs of myelin damage and repair using a variety of high-tech microscopic, staining and labeling techniques.

### New Myelin in Progressive MS

The researchers were surprised to note that in about 20% of the samples studied, remyelination was extensive, including in those with progressive forms of MS. The amount of remyelination ranged from sparse to nearly complete repair—and, in another surprise, they found more extensive remyelination in people who had died later in life and/or in those who had MS for the longest period of time. No link was found between the extent of repair and the age at onset, gender, or type of MS.

John Richert, MD, executive vice president of Research and Clinical Programs for the Society, told **MSConnection** that more research is needed to find out why some people experienced highly efficient myelin repair while others did not. “The findings of variable rates of remyelination will be taken into consideration as we design future clinical trials of ways to stimulate myelin repair,” Dr. Richert said.

The study, published in the December 2006 issue of **Brain**, was conducted by Drs. Peter Patrikios, Hans Lassmann, and others of the Medical University of Vienna and financed by the National Institutes of Health and the European Union, with additional support from the National MS Society’s MS Lesion Project (led by Dr. Claudia Lucchinetti of the Mayo Clinic).

### STUDY REFUTES MS BLOOD TEST PREDICTION



Scientists worldwide have been searching for ways to predict if a person will get MS. In 2003, Austrian researchers at the University of Innsbruck thought they had found a way.

The Austrian team claimed to have found levels of two antibodies—anti-MOG and anti-MBP—in blood samples taken from people with CIS that predicted who would later be diagnosed with MS. CIS stands for “clinically isolated syndrome,” meaning a single neurological attack. Not everyone who has such an attack goes on to develop MS.

But a new, much larger study by Swiss and German researchers, using methods similar to the earlier study, found no correlation between anti-MOG and anti-MBP levels in blood samples and a later diagnosis of MS.

The new study was published in the January 25, 2007, **New England Journal of Medicine**.

“While the news this time is not what we wanted to hear,” said Dr. John Richert, executive vice president for the Society’s Research and Clinical Programs, “we’re still hoping to find ‘biomarkers’ that one day will accurately predict the onset or future course of MS.”

## The Disability in Accessibility

By Rosemary Chowallur



*The participants at Grand Central Terminal.*

**T**hose who live in New York City swear by the public transportation system. But does the public subway system effectively serve commuters with disabilities? A recent outing coordinated by PJ Weiner, the chapter's manager of advocacy programs, suggests otherwise.

On March 6<sup>th</sup>, five volunteers with disabilities – Anne Davis, Marc Fenton, John Sheehan, Nelson Stern and Anne Straub – along with John Liu, New York City Councilman and Chair of the Transportation Committee, members of the media, and chapter staff traveled the New York City subway system to demonstrate its inaccessibility to people with disabilities. The experience was, as John Liu put it, “eye opening.”

As the participants discovered, the elevators available in 56 of the 468 stations in New York City do not necessarily indicate accessibility. Broken elevators, poorly lit elevator entrances, lengthy

waits and inconveniently located elevators, each contributed to the commuters' barrier to transportation. Even the MTA hotline (800-734-6772) which is supposed to provide riders with the locations of broken elevators wasn't current, as the group learned at the inoperable West 14<sup>th</sup> Street Station elevator.

The office of the Manhattan borough president reports that 78% of subway elevators did not receive each of their annual inspections from 2002-2005. Under a federal mandate, Manhattan plans to increase subway accessibility in at least 100 stations by 2020, but improved accessibility will be theoretical in concept rather than in reality if the City does not maintain its subway elevators.

Accessibility issues extend beyond inefficient elevators, as the experience of the group reveals. An MTA transit worker rushed Anne Davis to get on the train but still closed the doors too soon, leaving her on the platform. Another rider, Anne Straub, required assistance from police officers to exit a train that was too high for her wheelchair to safely travel onto the platform, which was much lower than the subway train. Only several trains later was the group able to re-board a train, at the same station, that was more level with the platform.

Commuters with disabilities frequently use city buses, which are now fully

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### *The Disability in Accessibility...continued from page 8*

accessible, to avoid the barriers in subway systems. Unfortunately, buses often take much longer and trips may require multiple transfers.

Marc Fenton generally avoids subways because of experiences such as what he faced at the conclusion of the project. After saying goodbye to the rest of the group at West 4<sup>th</sup> Street, he rode up and down the platform on his scooter for several minutes searching for an accessible exit. Unable to locate one, he boarded the

train to 34<sup>th</sup> St and then was forced to travel the mile and a half to his apartment.

The challenges that the group reported are only a few of the daily difficulties disabled commuters endure. Robin Einbinder, the chapter's vice president of programs, said: "We plan to take what we learned and continue to advocate on behalf of people with MS who want to use the same form of transportation that most New Yorkers have come to rely on."

### **MAIMONIDES MS CARE CENTER WINS 2007 MS ADVOCACY AWARD**

The Society held a petition drive from November 2006 to January 2007 to collect as many signatures as possible in support of a push to increase NIH funding for MS research. The chapter gathered over 3,058 signatures (10<sup>th</sup> highest in the country!), thanks in large part to the nine MS Comprehensive Care Centers in the five boroughs. The Maimonides Medical Center MS Comprehensive Care Center gathered the most signatures with a total of 236, and was awarded the chapter's 2007 MS Advocacy Award for its efforts. Crucial to the petition drive was chapter member Evelyn Velazquez, who individually collected 225 petition signatures. Learn more about ways to support federal funding for MS research; visit [www.nationalmssociety.org/advocacy](http://www.nationalmssociety.org/advocacy).

### **NEW YORK STATE PUBLIC POLICY CONFERENCE**

On February 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup>, the NYC chapter joined three other New York chapters to attend the New York MS Coalition

Action Network's (NY MS CAN) 7<sup>th</sup> annual Public Policy Conference in Albany, New York. Our delegation met with key legislators to discuss the NY MS CAN's 2007 Legislative Agenda. This year's agenda covers issues relating to accessing affordable prescription medications and quality health care, development and preservation of affordable, accessible housing, and access to community based long term care options.

In the short time since the Conference, NY MS CAN has already achieved a legislative success. In an effort to decrease Medicaid spending, Governor Spitzer proposed cuts in housekeeping and other personal care services for certain people who receive Medicaid benefits. The NY MS CAN spoke out strongly against these cuts during the Public Policy Conference and we are pleased to announce that the Governor has since amended his budget and removed the proposed cuts to the Medicaid program.

To find out more about the chapter's advocacy activities, contact Robin Einbinder at 212-453-3212.

## Ask the Expert

*With Jennifer M. Smrtka, Faculty Nurse Practitioner at Columbia University Multiple Sclerosis Clinical Care Center*

### **W**hat is a nurse practitioner and why do I see one at my MS center?

A nurse practitioner (NP) is an advanced practiced nurse who, according to the American Academy of Nurse Practitioners, “provides high quality health care services”<sup>1</sup> to patients and their families. NPs can diagnose and treat a variety of health issues, including acute and chronic conditions. The focus of an NP practice is a combination of the “caring” of nursing and “curing” of medicine. More specifically, NPs focus on health promotion, disease prevention, health education, and counseling. NPs can diagnose and treat medical diseases; prescribe medication; and order, perform, and interpret diagnostic tests independent of a medical doctor. An NP is an autonomous clinician who may or may not work with a physician to provide comprehensive care to patients in an outpatient or inpatient setting.

NPs have advanced education and training beyond the registered nurse (RN) level, such as a Master’s of Science in Nursing (MSN) or Doctorate in Nursing (clinical degrees such as DrNP or DNP or research degrees as in DNSc or DNS). NPs are licensed under the rules and regulations of the state in which they practice, and are board certified

nationally in their area of specialty. NP specializations include:

- Family Nurse Practitioner (FNP)
- Geriatric Nurse Practitioner (GNP)
- Adult Nurse Practitioner (ANP)
- Pediatric Nurse Practitioner (PNP)
- Acute Care Nurse Practitioner (ACNP)
- Psychiatric/Mental Health Nurse Practitioner (PNP)
- Women’s Health Nurse Practitioner (WHNP)

Furthermore, with additional training in a given specialty, NPs can acquire other certifications as an expert in a subspecialty. For example, in multiple sclerosis, the International Organization of Multiple Sclerosis Nurses (IOMSN) has a board certification for RNs and NPs, designated as Multiple Sclerosis Certified Nurse (MSCN). Fellowship programs through organizations like the IOMSN<sup>2</sup> and the National Multiple Sclerosis Society are also available for continued training.

### **What can the nurse practitioner do at my MS center?**

In the specialty of MS, comprehensive care centers are becoming more common. In New York City, for example, there are nine MS specialty care centers affiliated with the NYC chapter. In several of these centers, NPs collaborate with

neurologists and often a team of other clinicians, including medical fellows and residents, social workers, registered nurses, clinical trial coordinators, and rehabilitation specialists to ensure comprehensive management of the disease. In your MS center, the NP may work directly with the neurologist to obtain your medical history and to perform physical and neurological examinations. In addition, the NPs can:

- Perform independent follow-up visits with patients (so you may not see the neurologist every time)
- Order diagnostic testing (MRIs, X-rays, CAT scans, blood work, and lumbar punctures) and review the results
- Prescribe medication and training for individuals using the injectable disease-modifying agents

MS nurse practitioners partner with individuals and families living with the disease to focus on the whole person, taking into account the current neurological symptoms you may be experiencing as well as the impact of those symptoms on your day-to-day activities. Your NP may work with you and your neurologist to provide an optimal symptom management regimen to improve your quality of life. NPs educate patients and their families about treatment options, long-term management strategies, and work with the MS team to provide comprehensive care.

I hope I have offered you a better understanding of the role of a NP.



If you have the opportunity to see one of us, you know you're getting excellent care from a highly qualified clinician who has the authority and expertise to manage many of the medical and non-medical issues you face in living with MS.

*For more information about the Columbia University MS Clinical Care Center visit <http://cumc.columbia.edu/dept/neurology/>.*

### References

1. American Academy of Nurse Practitioners. Frequently Asked Questions. Why Choose a Nurse Practitioner as your Healthcare Provider? 2007. Available at <http://www.aanp.org>. Accessed February 2007.
2. International Organization of Multiple Sclerosis Nurses. IOMSN Nursing Fellowship. 2003. Available at <http://www.iomsn.org/Fellowship.htm>. Accessed February 2007.

## Get Moving! Recreation and Fitness Programs Score High with Participants

By Gina Davis and Benaie Varkey, SUNY Downstate Medical Center, Occupational Therapy Program

**E**veryone knows exercise makes you feel better, but exercising with a group can be even more beneficial. That's the consensus of those who enjoy the NYC Chapter's Recreation and Fitness program. A survey conducted last June with all of the program's 2006 participants provided positive results:

- 94% of responders who attended fitness classes reported improvement in their fitness levels
- 89% reported improvement in their mood and self-esteem
- 85% reported improvement with fatigue, spasticity, mobility and energy levels
- 93% of participants in the Adult Day Recreation Program (ADP) indicated that the program contributed to changes in their interpersonal relationships outside of the program
- 80% reported a sense of belonging to their groups
- Group leaders were found to be very knowledgeable and well-informed about MS, and very effective in modifying exercises for people in different stages of MS

In addition to the survey, three focus groups were held with participants from the ADP and fitness groups. Describing their experiences in different classes, people said: "I feel better afterwards, I walk better, I talk better afterward. I do everything better after the class." "There's a sense of euphoria." "You feel more energetic." Many spoke about the

social support benefits of being part of a group. "There's a social aspect to all of this that encourages people to do better." "It's a great experience of being in the group, it's good to interact with a variety of people in different stages of MS." "We don't have a support group in my area; for me the exercise classes are how I connect with other people; you see people at their best."

As treatment options for MS have increased in the last 15 years, the attitude toward exercise



has radically changed. Doctors once recommended that people with MS restrict their physical and social activities to preserve their energy. Now research shows that exercise can improve quality of life. Social support is another important factor in helping people with MS cope with their diagnosis and symptoms. A study published in Health and Social Work in March 2005 found that people with MS who feel that they have more social support reported a higher level of mental health.

### Facts about the Recreation and Fitness Program

- Classes include: Chair and Mat Yoga, Sit & Fit, Total Fitness, Aquatics, Pilates and the Adult Day Recreation Program (ADP)
- The ADP is a weekly program that

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*The Society does not endorse products, services or manufacturers. Such names appear here solely because they are considered valuable information. The Society assumes no liability for the use or contents of any product or service mentioned.*

### **FREE FINANCIAL PLANNING RESOURCES**

One part of navigating MS is managing your money and planning wisely for the future. Just as your MS symptoms are not exactly like someone else's symptoms, your financial situation also is unique. Now more than ever, you will need to take a clear look at your income, assets, debts, benefits, and other resources. A financial planner can assess your individual situation and make recommendations to help you plan your finances and protect you or your family from having to divest assets in order to receive long-term care services at some point in the future.

The National MS Society and the Society of Financial Service Professionals have joined forces in a partnership called the Financial Education Partners to help people with MS and their families address financial planning and insurance issues. Call 1-800-FIGHT-MS (1-800-344-4867), option 1, to learn more about this free program.

### **GROCERY RELIEF**

Faith Exchange, on behalf of Angel Food Ministries, provides a food program in which groceries are sold in a quantity that can fit into a medium-sized box at \$25 per unit. There is a different menu each month and consists of both fresh and frozen items with an average retail value of approximately \$50. Generally, one unit of food assists in feeding a

family of four for about one week or a single senior citizen for almost a month. Angel Food Ministries also participates in the U.S. Food Stamp program, using the Off-Line Food Stamp Voucher system. For more information call Faith Exchange at 212-226-3333.

### **NEW ACCESS-A-RIDE APPLICATION PROCEDURE AND FACT SHEET**

*Information provided by Access-A-Ride*

The MTA Board of Directors recently approved a new Access-A-Ride (AAR) application process that includes a visit to an assessment center located in the borough where the applicant resides. The new application procedure puts Access-A-Ride (AAR) in step with the rest of the country's paratransit services.

AAR provides transportation for people with disabilities who are unable to use public bus or subway service for some or all of their trips. Assessment reports provide information that is often left off the application or missing from a doctor's note. A clearer picture of an applicant's travel ability is gained when an applicant has a face-to-face interview with a medical professional and undergoes functional testing, where appropriate. Having a clearer picture enables our certifiers to assign applicants an appropriate eligibility status: (1) full, (2) conditional, (3) continuing eligibility, (4) full temporary, (5) conditional temporary, or (6) ineligible. This should reduce time-consuming appeals by customers who disagree with their eligibility status.

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*Get Moving!...continued from page 12*

offers social, educational and recreational activities

- There are two levels of fitness classes, based on ability
- Classes are held on a weekly basis in each of the five boroughs during the day and evenings
- Transportation is available on a limited basis

- If you require personal care, please bring your own personal care assistant or someone to help you during the class

*Before beginning any fitness program, please discuss it with your physician. See the calendar listing on page 15 for schedule and registration information.*

*Community Resources...continued from page 12***Here's how the new procedure works:**

**Beginning March 5, 2007** new applicants and those being recertified will need to go to an assessment center as part of the eligibility determination process.

Applicants must call 877-337-2017, press #1 for English and #1 to speak with customer information staff. Customers being recertified will receive a notice in the mail of the new procedure. Applicants and those being recertified who agree to visit an assessment center will be told that in about five days, they will receive an application and a letter providing the date, time and location of their appointment and instructions on how to schedule a round-trip to the assessment center. The cost for transportation is \$2 each way.

**On April 2, 2007** a form letter will be mailed to AAR customers who must recertify by May 31, 2007 informing them of the new application process.

**After April 2, 2007** all applications received into our office will be returned to the sender with instructions describing the new procedure for applying.

**DO YOU IM?**

Thanks to a new Society relationship with Microsoft, every single time you have an IM conversation using Windows Live™ Messenger, Microsoft will donate a portion of the program's advertising revenue to the National Multiple Sclerosis Society. There is no fee for using Messenger, and it only takes a minute to download. When you join, select the Society as your organization.

Visit [im.live.com](http://im.live.com) for more details and to sign up.

**ONGOING****Spring/Summer Support Groups**

Starting the week of April 16  
for 12 weeks

The NYC Chapter offers support groups for individuals with MS as well as their families and caregivers. Over 50 in-person and conference call groups are organized on a wide variety of topics related to MS concerns, experiences and resources.

- For locations, times, topics and to register, please visit [www.msny.org](http://www.msny.org).

**Recreation and Fitness Programs**

The NYC Chapter offers free recreation and fitness programs to promote health and wellness for people living with MS. Programs started in October but it's not too late to join. Programs include: Adult Day Recreation Program, Aquatics, Sit & Fit, Total Body Fitness, Pilates, and Yoga.

- To view the complete list of programs and to register visit [www.msny.org](http://www.msny.org).
- For a registration form call 212-463-7787, option 1. No telephone registrations accepted.

**Online Creative Writing Workshop**

Tuesdays at 7:00 p.m., April 17, 24,  
May 1, 8, 15, 22, 29

Wednesdays at 11:00 a.m., March 29,  
April 4, 18, 25, May 2, 9, 16, 23

Whether you're a novice writer or have been writing most of your life, these online workshops are structured to make the process easy and available to everyone. Under the direction of published writer Rochelle Ratner, your works will be shared in a supportive and constructive atmosphere. Selected works may be published in Society publications.

Registrations will only be accepted online at [www.msny.org](http://www.msny.org) and you may only sign up for one group of sessions.

**Ask the Chapter:****A Lunchtime Drop-In Series**

Wednesday, April 4

Wednesday, May 2

Wednesday, June 13

12:00 p.m. – 2:00 p.m.

Join us for informal monthly lunchtime chats about MS and meet chapter staff and other members. A light lunch will be provided, or feel free to bring your own brown-bag lunch.

- Location: National MS Society, 733 Third Ave. (between 45<sup>th</sup> and 46<sup>th</sup> Streets), 3<sup>rd</sup> Fl, Manhattan.
- No pre-registration is necessary. Just drop in and bring your questions.

**APRIL****I Want to Work: A Guide for Returning to Work**

Thursday, April 26

1:00 p.m. - 5:00 p.m.

Have you been out of work for a while but would like to return? Are you unsure of how to start or what to do? This four hour workshop will address these questions and provide guidance on the necessary steps to get you on the road to work.

- Location: National MS Society, 733 Third Ave. (between 45<sup>th</sup> and 46<sup>th</sup> Streets), 3<sup>rd</sup> Fl, Manhattan.
- Register online at [www.msny.org](http://www.msny.org).

**For more information on any of the chapter's programs and services, please call 212-463-7787**

**¿Qué es la Esclerosis Múltiple?  
Conferencia Telefónica Informativa en  
Español (What is MS? Informative  
Telephone Conference in Spanish)**

**jueves, abril 19**

**7:00 p.m. - 8:30 p.m.**

Aprenda sobre la EM por teléfono desde la comodidad de su casa u oficina. La llamada será gratis. Nuestro presentador será el Doctor Diego Cadavid. El discutirá: ¿Qué es la EM?, ¿Cómo se diagnostica?, Síntomas comunes de la EM, y Opciones de tratamiento. El Dr. Diego Cadavid actualmente ejerce en los Centros de EM de los hospitales UMDNJ y Holy Name. Además pertenece a la facultad del Departamento de Neurología y Neurociencia en UMDNJ – New Jersey Medical School.

- Para inscribirse llámé al 212-453-3299.

**MAY**

**Moving Forward:  
An Educational Program for  
People Newly Diagnosed with MS**

**Sunday, May 6**

**9:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.**

Panel of experts include: Dr. Mark Tullman; Jennifer Smrtka, RN; Tova Epstein, LMSW; and Rick Sommers, chapter member with MS. Lunch will be provided, followed by four breakout sessions featuring topics of interest to the newly diagnosed.

- Location: DoubleTree Hotel, 1568 Broadway, Manhattan.
- Register online or call 212-463-7787, option 1.

**Home-Based Employment: Exploring  
Options and Pros and Cons**

**Wednesday, May 23**

**5:30 p.m. - 7:30 p.m.**

Rosalind Resnick, Founder and CEO of Axxess Business Centers, a consulting firm that specializes in helping startups

and small businesses, will discuss various home-based employment options including telecommuting, as well as the pros and cons of working from home.

- Location: National MS Society, 733 Third Ave. (between 45<sup>th</sup> and 46<sup>th</sup> Streets), 3<sup>rd</sup> Fl, Manhattan.
- Register online at [www.msny.org](http://www.msny.org) or call 212-463-7787, option 1 for either in-person or call-in option (limited number of spaces available).

**JUNE**

**Research Symposium**

**Sunday, June 3**

**11:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.**

The program includes a keynote presentation on immune-modulating treatments and research by Dr. Aaron Miller, breakout sessions covering MS and the immune system led by MS clinical professionals, and a video featuring a virtual tour of a lab doing MS immunology research.

- Location: Lighthouse, 111 E 59<sup>th</sup> St., Manhattan.
- Please check [www.msny.org](http://www.msny.org) and your mailboxes for registration information in the coming weeks.

**LAB TOUR FILM TO DEBUT AT  
RESEARCH SYMPOSIUM**

This year's Research Symposium on June 3<sup>rd</sup> will feature a chapter produced film, "Behind the Scenes of MS Research: A Virtual Tour of an MS Research Laboratory." The short film will highlight ongoing research in immunology and give the audience direct access to the behind the scenes world of a working lab. The goal of the project is to help MS patients understand the connection between what happens in the lab and what happens in their doctor's office.



Relying on the support of the caring individuals, businesses, and foundations listed below, the New York City Chapter strives to improve the lives of all who are affected by this life-long disease. Your commitment and personal dedication help thousands of people living with multiple sclerosis and give us the tools we need to combat this disease through progressive research and advocacy. We wish there was space to thank all our generous donors. Regardless of your gift's size, every commitment is invaluable and tremendously appreciated. For more information, please contact Sandra Owen at 212-453-3211.

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