



Accelerated Cure Project for Multiple Sclerosis Volunteer Track Program June, 2008

Accelerated Cure Project for Multiple Sclerosis is a national nonprofit organization dedicated to curing MS by determining its causes.

If you think this is a great mission, we'd love to work with you.

Accelerated Cure Project has only eight full time staff members. Our volunteers make a tremendous impact on our organization's progress. Raising money to pay for our scientific work is most helpful to our mission to cure Multiple Sclerosis, but doing non-fundraising volunteering will support our efforts, too.

The more independent a volunteer is, the more time it saves our small staff. We want to give volunteers every tool and advantage possible to be successful contributors to our mission. In order to do this, we've created our "**Volunteer Track,**" a program for cultivating independent volunteers so that our staff can stay focused on efforts to determine the causes of MS. The **Volunteer Track** consists of two paths, one for supporters that are interested in raising funds for our mission and one for those who wish to support our efforts doing non-fundraising activities. Completing each tier of either the **Fundraising Track** or the **Staff Support Track** will cultivate volunteers into high impact contributors to our organization's mission.

Unless you have been successful at fundraising in the past or have a highly specialized skill to offer, we ask that **Fundraising Track** and **Staff Support Track** volunteers begin at Tier 1. Each track starts with signing up on our mailing list. This tells us that you are interested in our work and want to stay informed about our progress. The next tier involves completing a simple volunteer task that is easy to do, doesn't take a lot of time, and doesn't require a large commitment on your part. This way you can get to know what's it like to work with our staff and see how volunteering for Accelerated Cure Project fits into your schedule. Levels of responsibility, resources and support from staff, and formal acknowledgements increase as a volunteer passes through each tier on the track. We want you to get to know us as we are getting to know you before we embark on a major project together.

Review the **Fundraising Track** or the **Staff Support Track** and let us know how you'd like to contribute to our mission.

Regardless of which track you choose (or if you contribute to both!) and how far through the track you wish to go, you are supporting Accelerated Cure Project's efforts to determine the causes of Multiple Sclerosis. For more information about our work and why it is necessary, look here: <http://www.acceleratedcure.org/offerings/>

We look forward to working with you!

Fundraising Track

Under some circumstances we can allow a volunteer to begin further along in our Fundraising Track but this requires approval from our President.

Accelerated Cure Project volunteers have raised hundreds of thousands of dollars for our efforts by writing letters, hosting parties, soliciting for auction items, and organizing major fundraising events. The funds and awareness volunteers raise through efforts like these have a huge impact on our organization.

If you've never organized a fundraising event before, you might be surprised how much time and energy it takes. We've done a lot of them, and know that you have to start small and grow into a major event like our Scavenger Hunt. As you go along, you learn what works, what doesn't work, and how to raise the most funds possible while still having a great time (because events are a lot of fun!).

This Track will take you through the fundraising process, starting off with small, executable tasks and building skills until you are well equipped to plan your own successful fundraiser.

Tier 1: Indicate your interest.

Show us that you're interested in the work we are doing to determine the causes of MS.

Sign up for our mailing list and indicate in the comments that you'd like to volunteer. We'll follow up with you right away. <http://www.acceleratedcure.org/about/joinemail.php>

By doing this, we'll keep you in the loop as to our progress, upcoming events you may wish to get involved in, and other MS-related news.

Tier 2: Lend a hand for a one-time project

This is the "getting to know you" stage. Tier 2 tasks are quick and easy tasks that allow for an uncomplicated introduction to working with Accelerated Cure Project. After you sign up on our mailing list, we'll have a conversation with you about kinds of things you are interested in doing!

For example:

- Complete a letter writing campaign to at least fifteen people asking them for support of our mission. We'll provide a template, work with you on customizing your letter, and even mail the letter out for you if you want!
- Work with us to connect Accelerated Cure Project to at least two people who could make a generous gift (\$1K or greater). We can help identify these people and will guide you through the introduction process.
- Raise funds through a sponsored effort like our Sense of Purpose program. Similar to a letter writing campaign, we'll provide a template letter and assist you in mailing it out to your contacts.
- Make an introduction to a potential significant donor (\$10K or greater). We'll do the asking and guide you on introduction technique.

A Tier 2 volunteer Kelly Corrigan joined our Sense of Purpose program and asked her friends and family to sponsor her in a marathon: <http://expansion.acceleratedcure.org/bcpanemone/templates/familypage.asp?fundid=128>

Volunteers who complete this Tier will receive an Accelerated Cure Project t-shirt.

Tier 3: Give Us Some Time

Once we've worked together on a Tier 2 task, we're ready to embark on a larger, more involved project. A Tier 3 volunteer owns a piece of a project or task where other people are depending on them.

For example:

- Secure a free venue for a fundraising event.
- Get auction or raffle items donated for an event.
- Recruit event attendees by spreading the word online, researching and contacting specific groups that might be interested in the event, making phone calls to contacts in the Accelerated Cure Project database.
- Raise money for a repository collection site by rallying friends, family, and the local MS community to get involved.

A great example of a Tier 3 volunteer is Jeff Shapiro. Jeff solicits auction items for Accelerated Cure Project's Annual Event. Accelerated Cure Project works with Jeff to identify potential donors, craft a request letter, and once he is successful, gathers all the information we need from the donor to properly present their auction item at the event. http://www.acceleratedcure.org/events/eventpages/20071117_acp_party.php

Accelerated Cure Project will provide complete instructions and advice on how to complete the task, and include any documents that may be helpful. Volunteers who complete this Tier will be acknowledged in monthly status emails and Accelerated Cure Project's printed newsletter.

Tier 4: Be a Leader

You can jump to Tier 4 if you have previously run a fundraising event, have a mailing list of ready attendees and can duplicate the success of past events.

Tier 4 volunteers have worked with Accelerated Cure Project staff to organize successful fundraisers at bars, sit down dinners, and fundraising walks. They have contributed their time and talent to several other fundraising efforts and are enthusiastic about executing their own fundraising event from start to finish.

For example, a volunteer organized a fundraiser at a local restaurant. Accelerated Cure Project worked with the volunteer by providing advice on how to approach companies for sponsorships, reviewed corporate sponsorship letters, and helped with tracking goods and services donated to the event. The volunteer secured a band, free food, and several auction items for her event. http://www.acceleratedcure.org/events/eventpages/20070725_orleans.php

Tier 4 volunteers will have their event posted on the Accelerated Cure Project website and will be acknowledged in monthly status emails and in Accelerated Cure Project's printed newsletter.

Tier 5: Create A Legacy

Tier 5 volunteers execute a successful fundraising effort annually for two or more years. They work independently, may manage a committee of volunteers and have an annual fundraising plan in place. They have been regular contributors to Accelerated Cure Project over several years and are essentially volunteer staff members.

An example of a Tier 5 volunteer is The Greater Cincinnati Cure Project (GCCP). GCCP is an Expansion Team <http://expansion.acceleratedcure.org> that organizes several volunteer-run events each year. Led by a core group of volunteers, GCCP commits to planning a Canine Happy Hour, recruiting new volunteers to do letter writing campaigns and smaller fundraising events, and introduces Accelerated Cure Project to major donors in the Greater Cincinnati area. Accelerated Cure Project includes GCCP's fundraising plan in its annual development budget.

Another example of a Tier 5 volunteer is the Sing to Cure MS concert expansion team <http://expansion.acceleratedcure.org/bcpanemone/templates/familypage.asp?featureid=&fundid=146>, led by Marion Leeds Carroll. Marion has planned and executed the Sing to Cure MS concert annually since 2003. Marion has created a seamless, successful event with volunteers, performers, corporate sponsors, and attendees.

For Tier 5 volunteers, Accelerated Cure Project will create and maintain an Expansion Team website (i.e. <http://expansion.acceleratedcure.org/gccp>), may provide business cards and acceleratedcure.org email addresses, and may create a named fund for the volunteers to raise funds under. Lead volunteers may also be listed as a Volunteer Staff Member on the Accelerated Cure Project web site <http://www.acceleratedcure.org/about/people.php?section=3>

Staff Support Track

Unless a volunteer has a highly specialized expertise to contribute to our efforts, we ask that volunteers begin at Tier 1.

Whether you're interested in marketing, IT, research, or project management, your skills sets can have a huge impact on our infrastructure, making us more efficient, and even help us launch initiatives that we might not otherwise be able to do on our own.

This Track will introduce you to our staff and our internal processes, and we will work with you to explore options for you to contribute your skill sets to our work. Like the Fundraising Track, it starts off with small, executable tasks and moves on to greater commitments of time and responsibility on both our parts.

Tier 1: Indicate your interest.

Show us that you're interested in the work we are doing to determine the causes of MS.

Sign up for our mailing list and indicate in the comments that you'd like to volunteer. We'll follow up with you right away. <http://www.acceleratedcure.org/about/joinemail.php>

By doing this, we'll keep you in the loop as to our progress, upcoming events, and other MS related news.

Tier 2: Lend a hand for a one-time project

This is the "getting to know you" stage. Tier 2 tasks are quick and easy tasks that allow for an uncomplicated introduction to working with Accelerated Cure Project.

For example:

- Participate in Accelerated Cure Project's Repository as a subject.
- Introduce Accelerated Cure Project to individuals that can donate goods or services to our efforts.
- Come to our office and assist in a mass mailing or other administrative task.
- Make thank you phone calls to supporters from your home.
- Host an information table at a trade show or patient marketing seminar with Accelerated Cure Project staff.
- Host an MS Social, a free networking event at a bar or restaurant for people with a connection to MS.

Tier 2 volunteers have made introductions for Accelerated Cure Project staff members at companies interested in donating advertising, IT and printing services.

Volunteers who complete this Tier will receive an Accelerated Cure Project t-shirt.

Tier 3: Give Us Some Time

Once we've worked together on a Tier 2 task, we're ready to embark on a larger, more involved project.

Tier 3 volunteers contribute to a project or task on an ongoing basis. For example, some have come into the office regularly to assist with contribution processing, quarterly mailings and administrative work.

Accelerated Cure Project will provide any necessary support, training, and resources to Tier 3 volunteers to help them successfully complete their project.

Volunteers who complete this Tier will be acknowledged in monthly status emails and in Accelerated Cure Project's printed newsletter.

Tier 4: Be A Leader

Tier 4 volunteers lead a project from inception to execution, possibly managing a team of volunteers. Tier 4 volunteers have written educational documents for Accelerated Cure Project, led advocacy programs, and created scientific documents for release to the MS community. They have contributed their time and talent to several previous efforts and are enthusiastic about leading a new project from start to finish.

An example of a Tier 4 volunteer is Sue Ropiak. Sue has extensive project management experience and took a lead role on determining how to incorporate digital MRI data into Accelerated Cure Project's MS Repository.

Volunteers who complete Tier 4 will be treated to an appreciation lunch with Accelerated Cure Project staff. If this is not possible, we'll send you a small token of our appreciation for your work.

Tier 5: Volunteer Staff Member

A Tier 5 volunteer has major responsibility, works independently toward the success of the organization, and may manage a committee of volunteers.

Tier 5 volunteers have created internal infrastructure and technical support and have developed educational programs for national distribution. They have been regular contributors to Accelerated Cure Project over several years and are essentially volunteer staff members.

A great example of a Tier 5 volunteer is Dave Kaffine. Dave has built a customized contact and donor database for Accelerated Cure Project and makes regular updates to it. This database is used on a daily basis by all staff members and is a vital part of our internal infrastructure.

Tier 5 volunteers will be provided with Accelerated Cure Project business cards and email addresses, and are listed as a Volunteer Staff Member on the Accelerated Cure Project web site:

<http://www.acceleratedcure.org/about/people.php?section=3>

Ready to get started?

Sign up on our mailing list (click the "Sign up" button at the top of the page) and indicate that you'd like to volunteer for our mission in the comments section. We'll contact you right away.

If you have questions or if you are already on our mailing list, please call our volunteer coordinator: Jane Follansbee at 781-487-0010 or email jane-volunteer@acceleratedcure.com