



NATIONAL
MULTIPLE SCLEROSIS
SOCIETY

believe

2004 Annual Progress Report



The National Multiple Sclerosis Society

"I believe that with our joint efforts we do improve the quality of life for those living with multiple sclerosis, we can unlock the mysteries about etiology, symptoms, and the course of MS, and we will end the devastating effects of this disease."

—Dr. Nikki Wingerson, programs committee chair of the Ohio Buckeye Chapter Board of Trustees

"Of all of the organizations that I've been involved with, I believe that there has been none with a truer sense of purpose than the National MS Society."

—Sandy Altschul, volunteer at the Michigan Chapter who trains Society staff and volunteers in emergency preparedness

In 1946, a young, determined Sylvia Lawry took a leap of faith. Her brother, Bernard, had been diagnosed with MS and was told by his doctor that there was nothing anyone could do. Sylvia believed otherwise.

She was right. Today, as a direct result of Sylvia's belief, the National MS Society is a 50-state network of 121 local offices serving more than 351,000 people with MS. The National MS Society supports more MS research, offers more information and services to people with MS, provides more professional education programs, and advances more MS advocacy efforts than any other MS organization in the world.



Tom and Tracey Kimball of Littleton, Colorado. Tracey has been living with relapsing-remitting MS since 1995. With some professional assistance, both are enabled to live productive lives and enjoy their time together.

Photo by Mark Kiryluk

Belief Brings Us Together



Sylvia Lawry's belief that the world could and should offer people with MS something more than sympathy continues to provide inspiration for our members. These true believers include MS clinicians and researchers, health-care professionals, people with MS, corporate sponsors, and people of all ages who volunteer for our fund-raising events. They all have one thing in common: Their belief in the MS cause, and their commitment to ending the devastating effects of the disease.

You can see and read about some of the more than 446,300 volunteers who put their beliefs into action to help with the Society's efforts in advocacy, research, clinical education and support, fund raising, and client programs on our Web site: nationalmssociety.org/hof2004_menu.asp.

For a history of multiple sclerosis and the National MS Society, go to nationalmssociety.org/pdf/Brochures/HistoryOfMS.pdf.

Some 30 volunteers were inducted into the Society's 2004 Volunteer Hall of Fame.

Photos by Mark Kiryluk

On the cover:

Belief—in oneself and in the future—is sustained by maintaining the quality of life. Andre Nicholson (climbing) and Ira and Elizabeth Frazier (preparing to climb) enjoy the challenge of the adaptive climbing program at the Southern California Chapter's Family Weekend Retreat. This fully-accessible retreat, located in a tree-shaded valley off the coast of Malibu, is one of many free and nominal-fee programs and services offered by the Society through its 62 chapters nationwide.

Photos courtesy of the Southern California Chapter

Belief in People: The Society's Programs and Services

"I believed I needed to become a peer counselor after my first contact with my chapter. I believe in the human spirit and that by helping each other we will some day overcome this devastating disease."

—Karen Henry,
person with MS
and volunteer at
the Mid Florida
Chapter

"I believe that the National MS Society will always be there for me and anyone else with MS. When I was diagnosed more than 25 years ago, the Society did so much to educate me about every aspect of MS. Today, I am severely disabled and the National MS Society has never stopped caring about and educating me. Over all these years I have tried to give back by volunteering. Today as I struggle to live independently, I know the National MS Society will be there."

—John Grant, volunteer with long-term care programs
at the Mid Jersey Chapter

In 1946, Bernard Lawry could count on his beloved sister and a few other members of his family. Last year, the Society offered free and nominal-fee programs and services through its 62 chapters nationwide. Programs and services included help with medical equipment, information about MS, recreation and family programs, and referral to health-care professionals specializing in MS. Some 75,000 people attended Society education programs and 38,000 participated in self-help groups.



Participants say adapted yoga strengthens mind and body. Nationwide, chapters sponsor classes or help local instructors understand what people with MS may need.

Photo courtesy of the
Southern California Chapter

In the interests of increasing the quality and consistency of programming nationwide, the Society also launched a new “packaged program” concept, beginning with “Take Control: Managing MS Fatigue,” in cooperation with the Oregon Chapter. The six-week workshop included two videos and take-home materials for workshop participants. Chapters used the pre-packaged materials to schedule their own workshops with local facilitators throughout 2004. Two more packaged programs were developed last year, one on employment and MS, entitled “Career Crossroads”, and one for children, called “The Journey Club”. Both will be launched in 2005.

The Journey Club, based on a program developed by the Ohio Valley Chapter, consists of six two-hour sessions, during which time children and parents meet in separate, professionally facilitated groups to discuss issues related to the family’s journey with MS. The program includes a cartoon for children who have a parent

with MS, “Timmy’s Journey to Understanding MS” that was created by the Society’s Allegheny Chapter and the Art Institute of Pittsburgh.

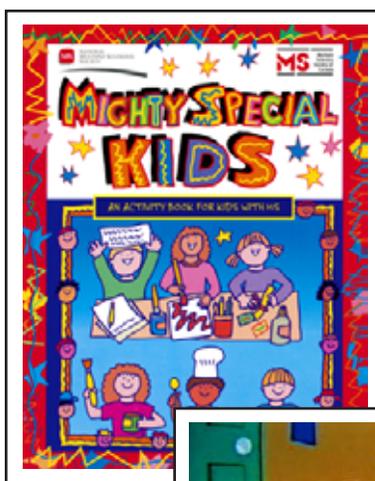


Photo by Chris Vincik

Chris Vincik and her family enjoy the Nebraska Chapter’s annual “Getaway Weekend” in Schramm State Park, Nebraska. The event drew more than 185 people from Nebraska and Southwestern Iowa.

The Society’s scholarship program, which was launched in 2003, more than doubled in 2004. Fifty-two incoming college freshmen who have MS or have a parent with MS received grants of \$1,000-\$3,000 and 34 of last year’s winners received a surprise scholarship of \$500.

It may be rare, but children get MS, too. Recognizing the needs of these young people and their families, the Society offered a parent’s handbook, a telephone support group, an Internet-based listserv, and quarterly educational calls with MS experts. The Society also debuted **Mighty Special Kids**, a 20-page activity book for children 5-12 who have MS.

Belief in Quality Treatment ... for a Better Quality of Life

"I believe that for me and many other people with MS anxiety and fear about the disease is relieved by developing a relationship with an MS nurse who makes sense of what's happening."

—Janet Pearce,
founder of the
Janet Pearce MS
Nurse Training
program, New
York City Chapter

"We have to believe that significant progress has been made in the treatment and care of people with MS during the past ten years, and that still more will occur during the next ten. This belief, combined with the courageous attitude of people who live with very challenging circumstances, makes it all worthwhile."

—Dr. Ugo Goetzl, chair of the clinical advisory committee, Eastern North Carolina Chapter

The medical community was unable to offer anything to Sylvia Lawry's brother Bernard beyond a diagnosis of MS. No treatments existed at that time; nor could anyone offer any advice.

The opportunities and support for people with MS have greatly improved in the nearly 60 years that have passed—thanks in great part to Sylvia's belief that no one should be denied something so basic as a satisfying quality of life. The Society has been a leader in providing education to people living with MS and a partner with the medical and scientific communities.



Physical medicine & rehabilitation physician Eddy Chan works with Eileen Helfand of the Northern California Chapter (left and p. 7, right). Kandy Stoddard works with occupational therapist Jenny Sweeney on molding a new hand cast for better support (p. 7, left).

Photos by Ed Kashi

In 2004 the Society provided a total of 427 professional education programs to 14,400 health-care professionals. The Society launched two new clinical fellowship programs: the Serono Pfizer Physician Fellowship and the John Dystel Nursing Fellowship. One neurologist and two nurses completed advanced courses of MS specialty training and three new fellowships were awarded. You can read more about these important fellowships at nationalmssociety.org/IMSOct04-FellowshipProg.asp.

In 2004, eight MS nursing articles were made available through our up-to-date in-depth professional Web site, nationalmssociety.org/prc.asp. An article by Society staff on long-term care for people with MS was published in professional journals with combined circulations of over 600,000. Several books for people with MS were also published by clinical staff.

The Society also published **Assisted Living for Individuals with Multiple Sclerosis**. This book addresses the unique

set of clinical conditions of people with severe MS. It provides recommendations for administrators and staff of assisted living facilities. In addition to the book, an electronic version was launched on our Web site at nationalmssociety.org/pdf/forpros/assisted_living.pdf.

The Society strengthened affiliations with 150 clinical facilities; targeted mailings on MS and the Society to primary-care physicians in Hispanic communities; and piloted a program to develop relationships with Hispanic community organizations to promote MS specialty care.

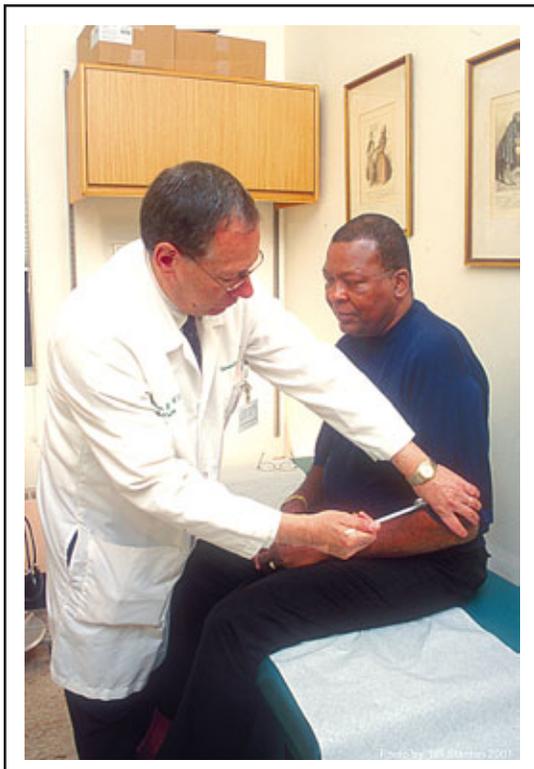
The Society's influence was felt around the globe in 2004. The Society sponsored an international pediatric workgroup and played a key role in developing and distributing a consensus statement on rehabilitation and MS. Society staff and volunteers were actively involved with an initiative with the Multiple Sclerosis International Foundation to create a set of principles to promote quality of life for people with MS worldwide. The results



were launched in April of 2005 and introduced by world-famous author J.K. Rowling, whose mother had multiple sclerosis.

The Society has been actively engaged, individually and with coalitions, in shaping the design and implementation of the new Medicare Prescription Drug Improvement and Modernization Act passed by Congress in 2003.

In July 2004, when the Medicare Prescription Drug, Improvement and Modernization Act was implemented, the Society conducted a broad awareness campaign. To date, the Act is covering the injected MS therapy for about 4,200 MS patients. They represented 27% of the total number of people taking advantage of the Act, even though MS is a considerably less common disease than many of the others covered.



John Jones of New York receives care from Dr. Aaron Miller, the Society's Chief Medical Officer.

Photo by Bill Stanton

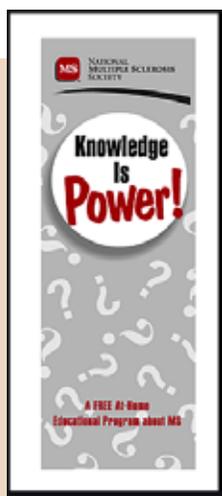
The National Multiple Sclerosis Society exists to end the devastating effects of multiple sclerosis.

MS is multiple sclerosis, a chronic often disabling disorder of the central nervous system (the brain and spinal cord). It can cause relatively mild symptoms, such as numbness in the arms or legs, or more severe symptoms, including paralysis or loss of vision. Complications of severe MS can result in death. The progression, severity, and specific effects of MS in any one person cannot be predicted, but recent advances in treatment and research give hope to many.

MS strikes almost twice as many women as men. It is most often diagnosed in people between the ages of 20 and 50, although rarely, individuals as young as 2 and as old as 75 have developed it. MS is not generally considered a fatal disease as the vast majority of people who have it live a normal lifespan.

There is a wealth of information on current treatments for MS at: nationalmssociety.org/treatments.asp.

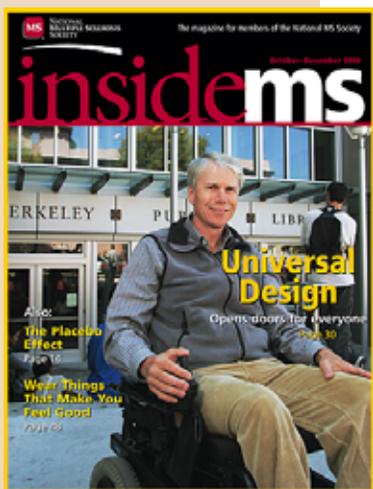
Belief Is Sustained by Knowledge



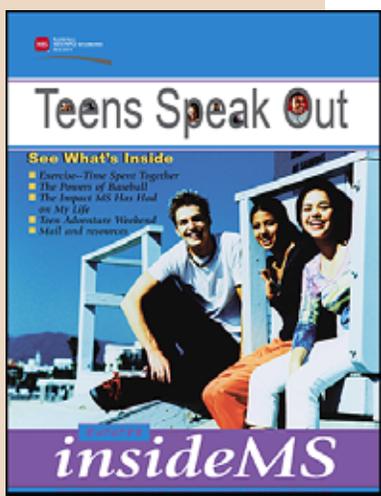
“I believe that the most important thing I can do is to educate people about MS and how to best live with their illness. I strongly believe that education is the tool to enable people with MS to be their own best advocates.”

—Susan Kushner, physical therapist and volunteer at the Allegheny District Chapter and for the national publications program

Had Bernard Lawry been diagnosed with MS today, he could have signed up for Knowledge is Power (KIP), [nationalmssociety.org/Knowledge is Power.asp](http://nationalmssociety.org/Knowledge%20is%20Power.asp), the Society’s study-at-home series for people newly diagnosed. KIP served more than 8,000 people in 2004, in both English and in Spanish. KIP was also adopted this year by the MS Society of Australia.



The National MS Society is a leader in providing people with MS the information they need to live successfully with MS. In 2004, the Society distributed more than 633,000 copies of 67 brochures, booklets, and fact sheets covering topics including employment, wellness, managing symptoms, and general MS information.



The Society sent copies of **InsideMS**—a lifestyle magazine providing information on living with MS, research updates, Society news, book reviews, and peer support—to every person with MS known to the Society. More than 2.5 million copies of the magazine were distributed in 2004, reaching members, donors, and health-care professionals. The magazine can be read online at nationalmssociety.org/InsideMS.asp.

The National MS Society has a growing Web presence. Last year the Society’s national Web site hosted 7.9 million visitors. Society chapters maintain their own Web sites, which

include information about local special events, programs, and services.

Our popular MS Learn Online series provided interviews in short video segments on 19 vital topics. To explore our archived online programs, go to [nationalmssociety.org/MS Learn online.asp](http://nationalmssociety.org/MS_Learn_online.asp).

Society collaboration with MSWorld provided Internet chat and bulletin board opportunities for people with MS at nationalmssociety.org/chat.asp.

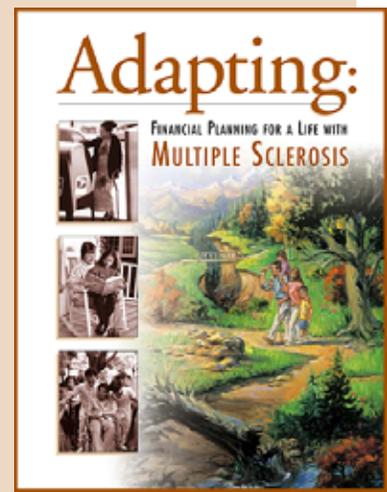
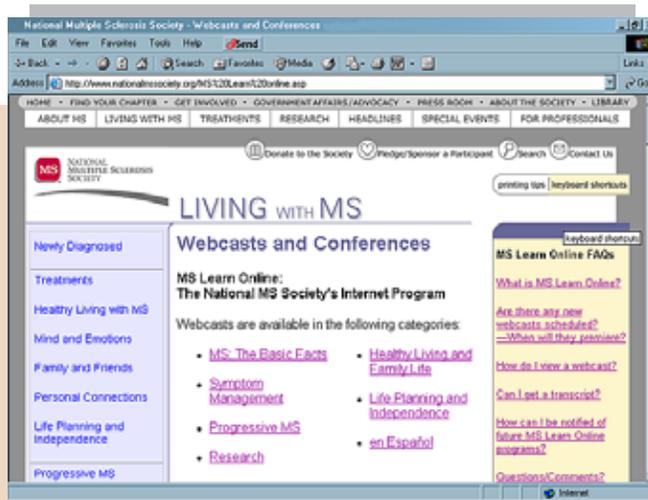
Teen InsideMS, a quarterly online magazine written by teens for other teens, was published on the Web at [nationalmssociety.org/Teen InsideMS.asp](http://nationalmssociety.org/Teen_InsideMS.asp), to provide education and networking for teens who have MS or someone with MS in their lives.

Parents looked to the award-winning quarterly newsletter and the interactive Web site, Keep S'myelin, [nationalmssociety.org/Keep S'myelin.asp](http://nationalmssociety.org/Keep_S'myelin.asp), to help

talk about this difficult disease with their younger children.

The Society also published **Adapting: Financial Planning for a Life with Multiple Sclerosis** in book form and on the Web, nationalmssociety.org/FinancialPlanning.asp. This financial planning guide outlines practical strategies to help families plan wisely to live well with MS.

The Information Resource Center (IRC) completed a second year by serving more than 45,000 callers. Society chapters contract with the IRC to handle a majority of their information and referral calls. In 2004, eight chapters were using the services of the IRC. More chapters are scheduled to begin using the IRC's services in 2005. The IRC added a trilingual specialist and a new 150-language interpretation service for all chapters. Society chapters and IRC together handled some 300,000 MS information and resource inquiries.



Belief in a Better Future: Research Horizons

"I believe that evidence based medicine and translational research is providing us with all of the tools to conquer MS within the next decade."

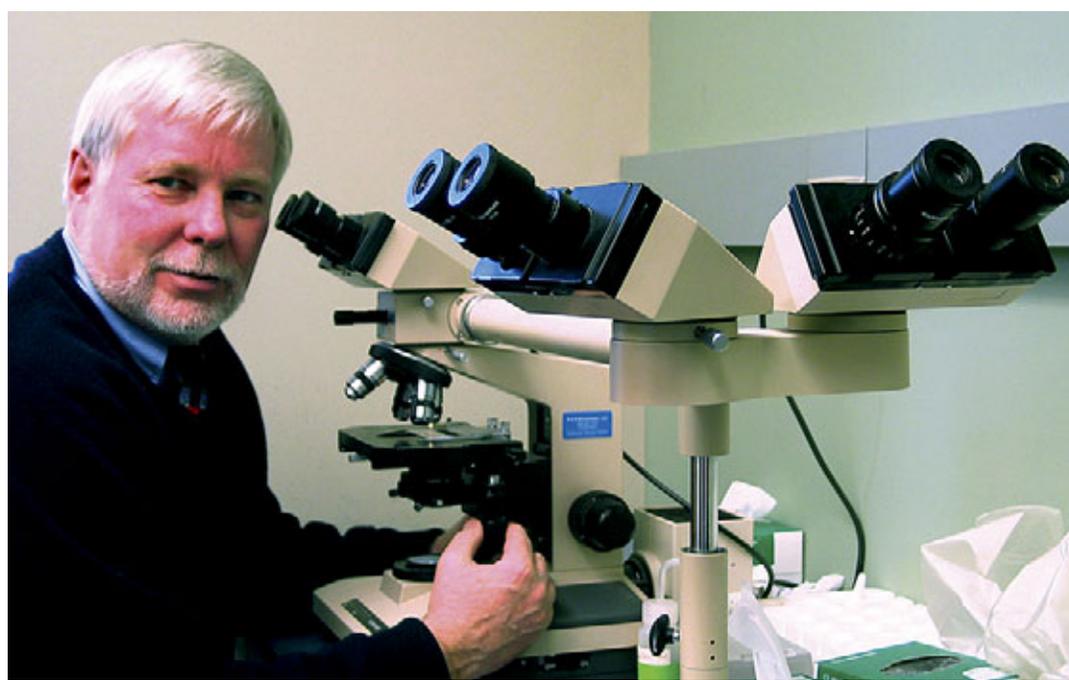
—Dr. Jerry Wolinsky, neurologist, Lone Star Chapter board member, and member of the national Medical Advisory Board

"I believe that we are on the threshold of even greater scientific achievements in understanding the many faces of MS, from genomic research to identifying patients who will respond to specific drug therapies, to research that leads to earlier identification of those with the disease. We must believe in the future and believe in a cure."

—Dr. Anthony Turel, neurologist and volunteer for the Central Pennsylvania Chapter

When Sylvia founded the Society in the 1940s, she did so with the belief that her efforts would result in a cure. It has been harder than anyone imagined. But today, thanks in part to the millions of dollars the Society has spent on research over the decades, there are now treatment options, and more being developed.

The Society continues to be a leader in support of MS-related research. In 2004 the Society made commitments to support 115 new research projects, postdoctoral fellowships, and pilot projects. Total research funding for the year was nearly \$35



Bruce D. Trapp, PhD, professor and chair of the Department of Neurosciences in the Lerner Research Institute at the Cleveland Clinic Foundation pursues myelin repair strategies. A Harry Weaver Neuroscience Scholarship from the Society in 1985 focused him on MS research.

“When I was diagnosed with MS in 1967, there were few effective therapies available or even accurate tools to make diagnoses possible. Thanks to the National MS Society and the many experts and researchers working diligently to combat this mysterious ailment, I now believe that the final answers will be found in the near future.”

—*Sylvia Lange, founder and guiding force behind the Greater Delaware Chapter's lending library*

million. The Society streamlined the grant-application process last year by making grant applications fully electronic.

The Society's world-renowned research screening process has been successfully funding high potential research projects since 1946. The process invites investigators from around the world to identify viable ideas, create grant proposals, and submit their proposals to the Society for consideration. Projects are scrutinized by panels of peer reviewers composed of MS research specialists who carefully evaluate each submission and recommend proposals for funding by the National MS Society.

In 1998 the Society's National Board of Directors established an additional strategy for research funding: targeted research projects.

In targeted research, the Society and noted MS specialists identify highly promising and potentially productive areas in MS research, programs, and program design that could dramatically impact future disease

management and lead us to a cure.

In 2004, the Society continued its investment in two targeted projects:

the MS Lesion Project (see nationalmssociety.org/Research-TargetedLesion.asp) and the Sonya Slifka Longitudinal MS Study (see nationalmssociety.org/Research-TargetedSlifka.asp). In addition, the Society identified two crucial new areas: nervous system repair and protection, and pediatric MS care and treatment.

Taken together, the four targeted efforts formed the basis for the Society's newest fund-raising campaign: **Promise: 2010**. In 2004, more than 40 chapters committed to raise an additional \$32.2 million by the year 2010 to pay for these important projects. For more information see nationalmssociety.org/Research-Targeted.asp.

In 2004 the Society initiated an important collaborative effort with the American Academy of



"I believe that if we continue on track in the next decade as we have in the last, we will be well on our way to a cure."

—Dr. Linda Buchwald, neurologist, member of the Central New England Chapter's clinical advisory committee and the national Medical Advisory Board

Neurology (AAN): the National MS Society/American Academy of Neurology clinical research training fellowship. This fellowship marked the first-ever collaboration between the Society and the AAN.

The National MS Society-convened International Panel on Diagnosis of MS was reestablished with

new members and a meeting has been set to review the 2000 "McDonald Criteria" for MS diagnosis. The McDonald Criteria was named for the distinguished neurologist W. Ian McDonald, who sparked a Society-supported effort to make the diagnostic process for MS faster and more precise based on new data. See nationalmsociety.org/Research-2005Feb1.asp.

All told, the Society supported 10 additional scientific meetings relating to neuroimmunology, imaging, neurochemistry, and MS biomarkers. For a complete, updated list of current research, go to nationalmssociety.org/research.asp.

National Multiple Sclerosis Society CORE VALUES

Commitment—We are passionate in our commitment to people affected by MS. We strive to improve quality of life while searching for the cure.

Leadership—We are leaders in the fight against MS. Through creativity and hard work, we accelerate the pace of scientific discovery, promote quality health care, stimulate community resources and services, advocate for favorable government policies and are the world's best source of information about multiple sclerosis.

Integrity—We are honest and straightforward in all that we do. We treat everyone with dignity and respect. We act responsibly with resources entrusted to us. We are accountable and act in accordance with these values.

Excellence—We set high standards of performance and service delivery and work towards excellence in our mission to end the devastating effects of multiple sclerosis.

Teamwork—We advance the interests of people affected by multiple sclerosis through individual and team achievements. We recognize our volunteers and staff as our most valued resources. We encourage collaboration across organizational boundaries.

These values guide our work as volunteers and staff of the National MS Society as we move toward our ultimate goal of a world without multiple sclerosis.

Unanimously approved by the National Board of Directors, February, 2004

Belief that We Can ... Change Public Policy

"I believe that when good people come together to advocate on the issues that bind us, good things happen, not only for people with MS—but for everyone."

—Yolanda Treiguts, person with MS and Greater Illinois Chapter board member

"People with disabilities have been called the 'sleeping giants' of American politics. I believe that if we vote in large numbers, our legislators will do what we need to make possible quality health care, jobs, education, transportation, and accessible housing."

—Jessie Jane Lewis, person with MS and volunteer at the Greater Delaware Valley Chapter

Our laws help to define and determine who we are and what kind of society we live in. The National MS Society has long been aware of the impact that our collective voices can have on the decisions made by policy makers, and therefore on the lives of people with MS.

National MS Society chapters contacted more than 1,000 state policy makers in 2004. Chapters in 23 states participated in state advocacy forums. Eight chapters in six states secured legislative resolutions declaring an MS awareness day or month.



Representatives from the National MS Society (left and on p. 15) meet and discuss their concerns with legislators during the 2004 Public Policy Conference. More than 200 participants made more than 300 Congressional visits during the conference.

Photos by Leigh Mosley

Overall, Society chapter advocates represented the interests of people with MS on 247 state and local issues in 2004, achieving an impressive 101 successes in the areas of health insurance, quality health care, long-term care, and disability rights. See the Society's Advocacy page, at nationalmssociety.org/advocacy.asp.

At the Society's 2004 Public Policy Conference in Washington, DC, 200 participants made more than 300 Congressional visits to present the Society's positions on NIH funding, respite care, and the Medicare Prescription Drug, Improvement and Modernization Act. The Society's National Board of Directors held its own "Day on the Hill" in 2004, further emphasizing the Society's policy positions and establishing important contacts with members of Congress and their staff.

2004 was an important election year. Recognizing that 38% of all people with disabilities are not registered to vote, 16 chapters worked on get-out-the-vote efforts, ranging from newsletter articles to registering voters at Society events.

In addition, the Society co-sponsored a Town Hall Meeting on Family Caregiving



with the National Family Caregivers Association and other organizations. The event had bi-partisan support and highlighted the Society's support for the Lifespan Respite Care Act, which unanimously passed in the U.S. Senate but did not pass the House. The Society is hopeful that this legislation will pass both the Senate and the House this year. For more information on the Lifespan Respite Care Act and the Society's advocacy efforts on other federal legislation, see nationalmssociety.org/FederalFocus.asp.

"I became involved in advocacy for the Minnesota Chapter because I believed I could make a difference. I saw legislation without compassion, empathy, or integrity for people with disabilities. I believed there needed to be common sense infused into the thinking of our lawmakers. I just wanted to help in some small way to improve the lives of other people. I learned that it is not hard to get involved and make a positive impact on our legislators."

Paul Kremer, person with MS and member of the Minnesota Chapter's Government Relations Committee

Belief that We Can ... Change Public Attitudes

"I believe that the National MS Society has been, and will continue to be, the key institution in the effort to defeat multiple sclerosis."

—Richard Slifka,
member and former chair of the National Board of Directors and the Central New England Chapter board

"I believe that the thoughtful and committed people at the National MS Society have indeed changed our world. Our lives have been blessed by this magnificent organization."

—Janine Vanier, person with MS and volunteer at the Northern California Chapter

In 1946, few who were not either medical professionals or directly affected by MS had ever heard the words "multiple sclerosis". The Society intends to bring awareness of the disease to the general public.

In 2004 public service announcements about MS and the National MS Society appeared on TV, radio, and in print an estimated 6,000 times. Three hundred TV and 600 radio stations broadcast Society messages and provided the Society with more than \$3 million worth of free advertising.

Celebrities such as David Baldacci, Teri Garr, David Lander, Liane Mark, Bill Pullman, Clay Walker, Richard Cohen, Meredith Vieira, and Tyler Hamilton appeared at our events or in our public service announcements. Their presences helped change public attitudes about MS and disability.



Photos by Mark Kiryluk



"I believe in the hope and goodwill that the National MS Society provides for the entire MS community."

—Patricia Blake, health professional and volunteer at the Ohio Buckeye Chapter

**Celebrities at the Society's 2004 National Conference in Denver, Colorado.
From left to right: Tyler Hamilton, Teri Garr, Richard Cohen, David Landers.**

Belief Sustained by Financial Support



Photo by David Hulnick

"I believe that I have MS because I was meant to make a difference by raising money to find a cure, spreading awareness of the disease and setting an example of what someone with a disability can accomplish."

—*Elissa Levy, person with MS and volunteer at the New York City Chapter*

The Society depends on support from members, friends, corporate partners, and the public at large. The Society's total revenue in 2004 was \$184 million. This includes all individual gifts, membership dues and contributions, legacies and bequests, special events, corporate contributions, and investments. About 1% comes from federal grants.

The Society spent \$28 million (16%) to raise these funds (less than 16 cents for each dollar brought in) and devoted \$11 million (6%) to the management of the organization so that the Society can provide uniform services in all 50 states and \$4 million was invested to protect future Society growth. The success of the Society's events depends on grassroots efforts—every volunteer makes a difference.



Well worth the effort—walkers complete the last mile of the Greater Delaware Valley Chapter's 2004 MS Challenge walk (above); on the road with bikers in the 2004 BP MS 150 Bike Tour (left), a two-day ride from Houston to Austin, Texas.

Photo (left) by Bill Rosen

A Report from Ed Kangas

Chairman, National Board of Directors



We live in an exciting time. A time of change and a time of great discovery. It is vitally important to our mission that we “seize the day” and strengthen our partnerships with everyone working to end the devastating effects of MS.

We have a lot to be proud of. The Society offers funding, direction, coordination, and education to the scientific community working to solve the basic mystery. Our advocacy efforts on local, state, and federal levels encourage public policies supportive of the needs of people with MS. And we offer empowering programs for the many people who have been touched by this disease.

But as we begin another fiscal year, we are notching up our efforts to reach out to the 400,000 people in this county who live with this disease, and to their families, their friends, and their caregivers. In 2005 we are strengthening our partnerships with other MS organizations, with researchers exploring new therapies, with everyone who is working to ultimately lick MS.

The Society is growing by leaps and bounds. An important and inevitable part of this growth process is change. After completing twelve successful years as President and CEO of the Society, General Mike Dugan decided to retire last year. During his tenure Mike both unified and strengthened the organization, and under his leadership the

Society raised more than half of the income of its entire 58-year history.

To build on Mike’s achievements, the National Board of the Society selected Joyce Nelson as our new President and Chief Executive Officer. Joyce is committed—as I believe we all are—to the worldwide effort to erase the words “multiple sclerosis” from our vocabulary and to provide hope and support for everyone who is fighting MS.

Fiscal Year 2004 was a great year for the Society—we raised \$184 million for the cause. We expect greater things to come in 2005 and beyond. We can’t do it without you. You are all part of the solution—and, indeed, you are why we are here.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ed Kangas". The signature is stylized and written in a cursive-like font.

A Report from Joyce Nelson

President and CEO, 2005



More than 50 years ago, Sylvia Lawry took on a cause. A young, single, and seemingly ordinary woman from a hard-working family, she was galvanized by the plight of her brother Bernard. He had been diagnosed with MS and told his situation was hopeless. Throughout her long life, Sylvia Lawry refused to accept hopelessness. Instead, she was often heard to say: “The National MS Society offers the best hope for people with MS. If you don’t help us, who will?”

Sylvia was absolutely focused on our mission to stop this disease and the terrible things it does to people. As soon as she learned of someone who had been touched by MS, she was on the doorstep asking for support.

I feel greatly indebted to her for her visionary example. As we move forward, I believe the Society must become a true partner with all people who want to see an end to MS. In Sylvia Lawry’s spirit, I hope to expand our relationship with every group and individual who can help us.

The first thing I did as I took on my new responsibility as the Society President and CEO was to ask for your input. I have invited people with MS, their families and friends, health-care professionals, our partners in research, government officials, the media—our supporters and our detractors—to share their thoughts and ideas with me. I have welcomed your input and now look forward to building a Society that better serves as both advocate and resource for people with MS.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Joyce". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

A Report from Mike Dugan

General, USAF, Ret., President and CEO, 1992-2004



I came to the National MS Society over 12 years ago. During my time with the National MS Society, I've seen that progress in biomedical understanding is almost always incremental, but each increment opens up new concepts and new pathways for further discovery. Over time, small increments grow into major breakthroughs, as we have seen with MS in recent years.

We are making progress, but not fast enough for anyone's liking. Still, I am not discouraged. A few years ago people with MS and their families wanted faster, more reliable diagnosis; this has been accomplished. They wanted to destroy the myth that MS is an untreatable disease; this has been accomplished.

We now face the challenge of making moderately helpful medications more effective and of finally stopping MS progression. We are now now heading toward the next generation of therapeutic interventions, and even more dramatic outcomes. We are beginning work on preventing and repairing the damage MS does. Promising studies are underway in these areas; accomplishment is in the wind.

Across the country the very professional staff of the Society is doing everything in its power to complete our mission. I have complete confidence in their abilities and I take great pride in having served among them. Society volunteers continue the best traditions of this nation by giving their time, their wisdom, and their resources to solve the MS problem. We would not be where we are without them. I take particular pride in the fact that I am turning my position over to a very able successor—Joyce Nelson, who has been part of the Society since 1983. She will need your continued support and she will give back her very best efforts to advance our mission.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Mike Dugan". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

A Report from Richard J. Mengel

Treasurer, National Board of Directors



I am gratified to report that the Society's financial position continues its upward course. The most obvious outcome is our continuing ability to fund 100 percent of all the research projects judged meritorious by our distinguished peer reviewers. These volunteers, all internationally respected MS research specialists, measure every application against rigorous standards, weighing what their outcomes might contribute to our ultimate goal: ending MS and its devastating effects.

Chapters are in the front lines, critically aware of the need to keep research fueled. They are also aware of the need to empower individuals and families to solve MS problems in daily life. Creative supportive programs for those who live with MS, reliable information about symptoms and treatments, public policies and resources, and careful analysis of recent research findings are all vital to helping people cope with this horrible disease.

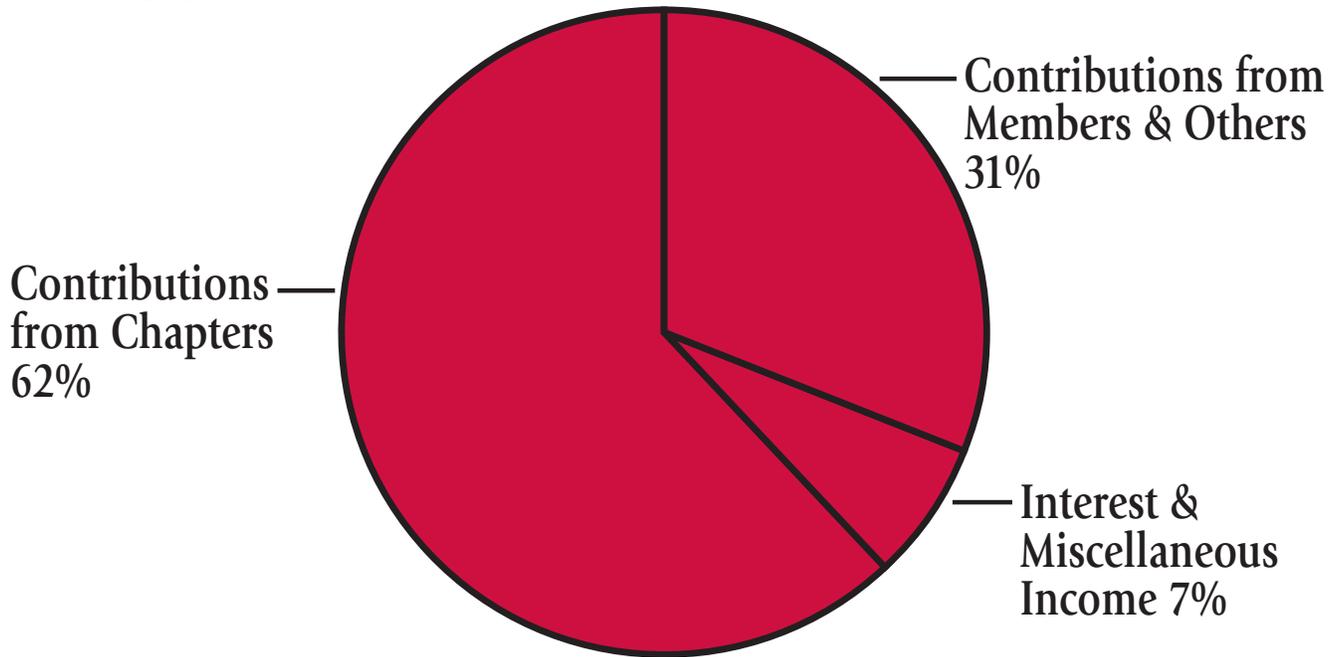
National leadership is profoundly aware that we have a responsibility to be wise stewards of our financial resources. Much of it is raised by grassroots efforts, involving the trust of hundreds of thousands of individuals. We are mindful of the pressing need to provide researchers with the resources they need to move forward. We are mindful too that we must offer services and supports for individuals and families who struggle every day with the effects of MS. And we must maintain the Society's fiscal integrity to ensure continued stability so we can all to continue our effort until our work is finally done.

I invite each of you to contact the chapter nearest you for an opportunity to learn more about the activities, programs, and research your contributions support.

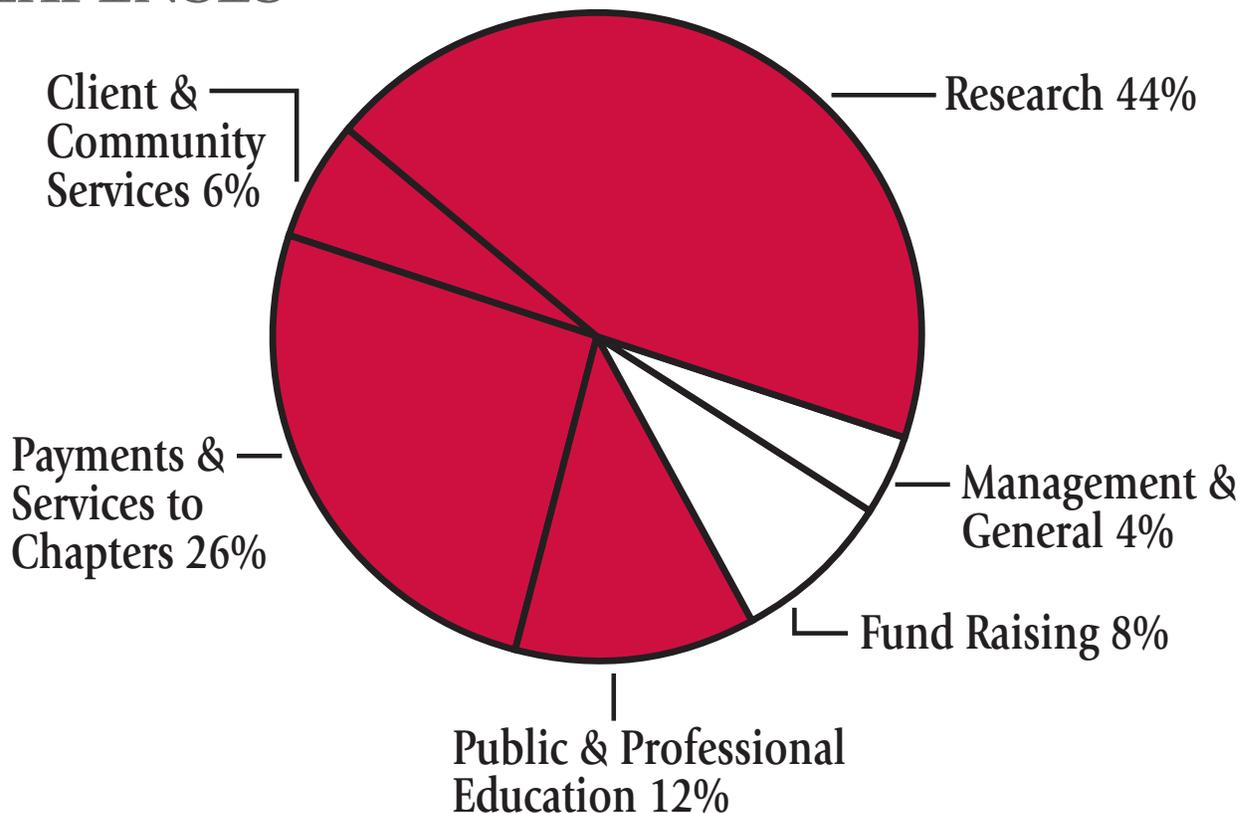
Richard J. Mengel

Home Office

INCOME

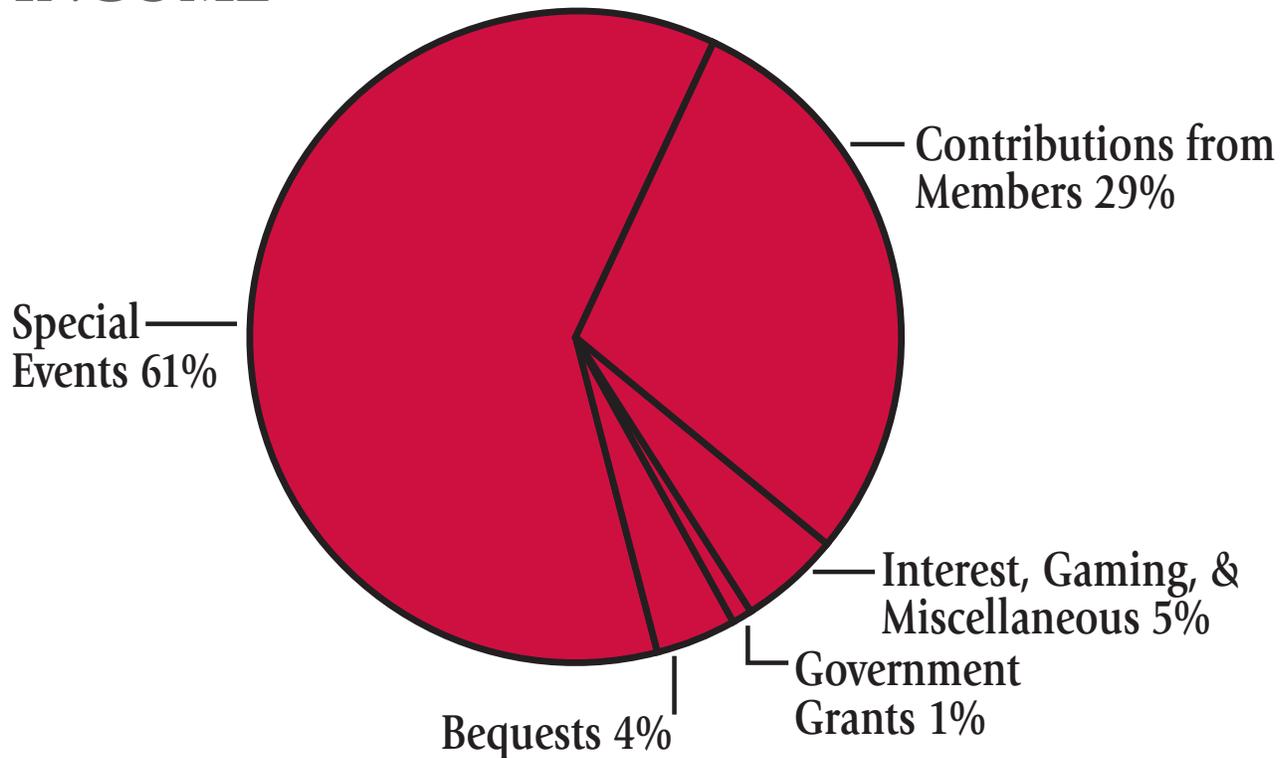


EXPENSES

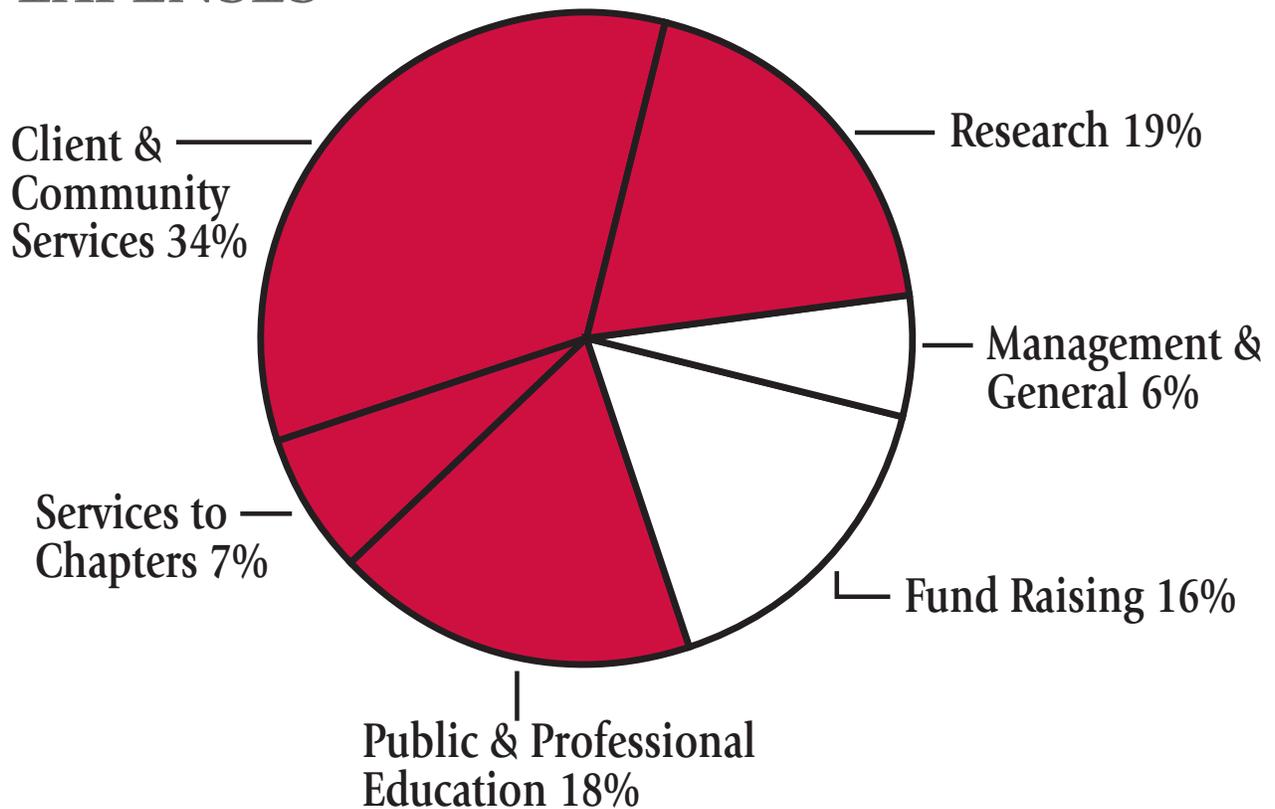


Home Office & Chapters

INCOME



EXPENSES



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In Memoriam

John F. Milliken, 1920-2004

Edith L. Russell, 1912-2004

The number of voting members of the Society as of September 30, 2004 (National Board members and chapter chairs) was 99.

The number of general members and people with MS known to the Society was 599,194.

Chapters

■ Chapter serves more than one state

Alabama

- Alabama Chapter

Alaska

- All America Chapter
—Alaska Division

Arizona

- Arizona Chapter

Arkansas

- All America Chapter
—Arkansas Division
- Mid South Chapter

California

- Channel Islands Chapter
- Northern California Chapter
- Orange County Chapter
- San Diego Area Chapter
- Silicon Valley Chapter
- Southern California Chapter
- Great Basin Sierra Chapter

Colorado

- Colorado Chapter

Connecticut

- Greater Connecticut Chapter
- Western Connecticut Chapter

Delaware

- Delaware Chapter

District of Columbia

- National Capital Chapter

Florida

- Mid Florida Chapter
- North Florida Chapter
- South Florida Chapter

Georgia

- Georgia Chapter
- Mid South Chapter

Hawaii

- All America Chapter
—Hawaii Division

Idaho

- All America Chapter
—Idaho Division
- Inland Northwest Chapter

Illinois

- Greater Illinois Chapter
- Gateway Area Chapter

Indiana

- Indiana State Chapter
- Kentucky/Southeast Indiana Chapter

Iowa

- Iowa Chapter
- Nebraska Chapter

Kansas

- Mid America Chapter
- All America Chapter
—S. Central/W. Kansas Division

Kentucky

- Kentucky/Southeast Indiana Chapter
- Ohio Valley Chapter
- Indiana State Chapter
- All America Chapter
—West Virginia Division

Louisiana

- Louisiana Chapter

Maine

- Maine Chapter

Maryland

- Maryland Chapter
- National Capital Chapter

Massachusetts

- Central New England Chapter

Michigan

- Michigan Chapter

Minnesota

- Minnesota Chapter
- Dakota Chapter

Mississippi

- All America Chapter
—Mississippi Division
- Mid South Chapter

Missouri

- Gateway Area Chapter
- Mid America Chapter

Montana

- All America Chapter
—Montana Division

Nebraska

- Nebraska Chapter
- Iowa Chapter

Chapters (continued)

■ Chapter serves more than one state

Nevada

- Great Basin Sierra Chapter
- All America Chapter
- Nevada Division

New Hampshire

- Central New England Chapter

New Jersey

- Greater North Jersey Chapter
- Mid Jersey Chapter
- Greater Delaware Valley Chapter

New Mexico

- All America Chapter
- Rio Grande Division
- Panhandle Division

New York

- Long Island Chapter
- New York City Chapter
- Southern New York Chapter
- Upstate New York Chapter
- W. New York/N.W. PA Chapter

North Carolina

- Central North Carolina Chapter
- Eastern North Carolina Chapter
- Mid Atlantic Chapter
- Hampton Roads Chapter

North Dakota

- Dakota Chapter

Ohio

- Ohio Buckeye Chapter
- Northwestern Ohio Chapter
- Ohio Valley Chapter
- All America Chapter
- West Virginia Division

Oklahoma

- Oklahoma Chapter
- All America Chapter
- Panhandle Division

Oregon

- Oregon Chapter

Pennsylvania

- Allegheny District Chapter
- Central Pennsylvania Chapter
- Greater Delaware Valley Chapter
- W. New York/N.W. PA Chapter

Rhode Island

- Rhode Island Chapter

South Carolina

- Mid Atlantic Chapter

South Dakota

- Dakota Chapter

Tennessee

- Mid South Chapter

Texas

- Lone Star Chapter
- North Central Texas Chapter
- All America Chapter
- Panhandle Division
- West Texas Division
- Rio Grande Division

Utah

- Utah State Chapter

Vermont

- All America Chapter
- Vermont Division

Virginia

- Blue Ridge Chapter
- Central Virginia Chapter
- Hampton Roads Chapter
- National Capital Chapter

Washington

- Greater Washington Chapter
- Inland Northwest Chapter
- Oregon Chapter

West Virginia

- All America Chapter
- West Virginia Division

Wisconsin

- Wisconsin Chapter
- Minnesota Chapter

Wyoming

- All America Chapter
- Wyoming Division



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