

Let's Go!

**ACTIVE
AGAINST
ALS**



ANN ARBOR NEWSLETTER
FALL 2017



Meet SAB member Brian Callaghan

For U-M neuromuscular physician/researcher Brian Callaghan, who is also a big basketball fan, the decision to serve as an SAB board member was a slam dunk.



“
To see the projects that are able to occur because of the money raised by Active Against ALS is amazing.”

Our Scientific Advisory Board (SAB) provides us with valuable insight and council on the most promising ALS research. We are thrilled to shine the spotlight on SAB member Dr. Brian Callaghan, whose involvement we greatly appreciate.

Brian grew up in Royal Oak, Mich. He earned his undergraduate degree from the U-M with a major in biology. He subsequently attended the University of Pennsylvania for medical school and a residency in neurology. Life came full circle when he returned to Ann Arbor and U-M for a neuromuscular fellowship in 2008. Brian is currently a neuromuscular physician and researcher, and has been on the faculty at U-M for the past eight years. “Neurology is a great fit for me,” he said, “It requires solving diagnostic puzzles based on knowing neuroanatomy.” He was in charge of the U-M ALS Clinic, and now runs the Ann Arbor VA ALS Clinic. “ALS is a rewarding field because you get to help patients with a very difficult disease,” he explained.

Brian lives with his wife, Sara, whom he met when they were undergrads at U-M. They have two daughters, Anna (7) and Emma (4). When not working or spending time with his family, Brian loves playing and watching basketball. He has played weekly with the same group of guys for the past eight years, and regularly attends U-M games. Brian’s involvement with Active Against ALS began during an ALS research project about environmental exposures when he met and was assisted by Bob Schoeni who was the inspiration for forming our organization. The ongoing research project has resulted in at least two publications with more expected.

Brian enjoys serving on the SAB. “It’s very rewarding because we all have the same goal of finding better treatments for ALS. To see the projects that are able to occur because of the money raised by Active Against ALS is amazing.” While it’s challenging to choose which research projects and investigators to fund due to the fact that there are so many promising projects and dedicated people working to find a cure for ALS, Brian says he is excited about the direction of research for this same reason: There are so many people working together to find new treatments—and ultimately a cure.

HONORING OUR 10-YEAR ANNIVERSARY

Our compassionate community of Ann Arbor Active Against ALS marks its 10-year anniversary in 2018. For nearly a decade, YOU have been determined, persistent and ACTIVE in helping us achieve our mission to increase awareness about



ALS while raising funds for critically needed research! Our anniversary year kicks off October 20, 2017 with our Barn Party for ALS and culminates on Nov. 10, 2018 with a gala event at Travis Pointe Country Club. Honor our memories and milestones! Display our 10-year logo (window decals available at the Barn Party) with unwavering pride as we move forward TOGETHER with renewed resolve.



Summer reflections from Bob

In late August Gretchen headed to the airport, taking Maddie back to college in Maine. A year from now Sophie will be headed off to college too. Wow. How did that happen? It seems like just yesterday we were celebrating their single-digit birthdays with piñatas in the front yard, homemade cake, and neighborhood friends.

Summer is a popular time for reading good books. While I didn't read as many as I had hoped these past few months, there was one I found myself reading over and over: *The Book of Joy*, which is based on a weeklong dialogue between Desmond Tutu and the Dalai Lama. I met with friends John and Lynn throughout the summer to discuss the book and share experiences. The book identifies eight pillars of joy, four of the mind -- perspective, humility, humor, and acceptance -- and four of the heart -- forgiveness, gratitude, generosity, and, the most important, compassion. I couldn't agree more, especially in today's toxic political environment. Active Against ALS was created to support research that leads to a medical cure for ALS, but compassion, which is also a prescription for healing, has been a pillar for the organization since it was created nearly 10 years ago.

Thank you for supporting Active Against ALS, and I look forward to seeing you at the upcoming events. Stay active!



Gretchen and Bob lunch in Naples, Fla. while attending a field hockey tournament with daughter Sophie in early January.

Students apply theory to practice

In April, several board members and volunteers accepted an invitation to attend final-project presentations by students in the U-M Ford School of Public Policy. The graduate level course, Public Management: Fundraising for Non-profit Organizations, was taught by our board member Kat Walsh. Working in small teams, students were assigned to develop a ready-to-execute FY18 annual fund strategy for Ann Arbor Active Against ALS (using a \$1,000 budget). Required elements included: Making a case for support; providing strategies for donor acquisition and retention; designing solicitation appeal strategies and materials, and proposing ideas for stewardship. Throughout the semester, students immersed themselves in learning about all aspects of our organization. They also had an opportunity to participate in our events, meet with Bob and hear from board members. All of us who attended were impressed with the variety, creativity and applicability of the eight presentations. Huge thanks to the students and to Kat for facilitating this incredible educational project.



Thank You



SWIMATHONS

Over two weeks in mid-July, three incredible youth swimathons took place at local swim clubs. Thank you to the swimmers, divers, coaches, volunteers, and donors from [Buhr Park Sharks](#), [Huron Valley Swim Club](#), and [Racquet Club of Ann Arbor](#)! We had over 200 participants swim over 250 miles, and raised more than \$25,000 for ALS research!!! Hooray to such amazing, inspiring and ACTIVE young people!



MICHIGAN STUDENTS AGAINST ALS (MSA3)

MSA3 had a busy spring! In April, they hosted a Dodgeball Tournament that was a "ton of fun!". Thanks to the sponsors [Washtenaw Dairy](#), [The MDen](#) and [Espresso Royale](#). MSA3 also had a fundraiser at Salads UP, a local restaurant. Way to be active against ALS, MSA3!



2017 TWINKIE RUN

Approximately 680 participants, including teams [ISR Runs for Bob](#) and [U-M Relay For Life](#) – College of Pharmacy, ran this unique race at Gallup Park. Thank you to our generous Silver sponsors, [Bank of Ann Arbor](#) and [Blue Care Network of Michigan](#). Special thanks also to [The Local Bike Shop A2](#) and [Tortoise and Hare](#). We could not do it without your support as well as the support of our volunteers! Thanks to [Black Diesel Coffee](#) for donating the yummy coffee that got us going on race morning – and to [Meijer](#) for helping out with the Twinkies that stuffed so many faces! Check out photos from this year's run: [Album #1](#), [Album #2](#).

TO EVERYONE WHO HAS DONATED, VOLUNTEERED, OR SPONSORED AN EVENT OR PLANNED AN EVENT OF YOUR OWN. WE HAVE NOW DONATED MORE THAN **\$455,000** FOR ALS RESEARCH!



2017 BOX CAR DERBY

A gorgeous day welcomed 55 racers and 35 teams, with over 200 people attending. There were 61 waves of the checkered flag, 145 boxcar runs (and stops), 8.2 miles traveled downhill (and 8.2 miles back up), and 239,880 total wheel revolutions! We had a new overall champion, Kate, of "Team Kate Kate," and raised over \$21,000! Huge thanks to our partners [Phi Delta Theta](#) and to our Gold Sponsors for their continued support: [Suburban Chrysler Jeep Dodge Ram of Ann Arbor](#), [Hotels Unlimited](#), and [Foley & Lardner LLP](#); to our Bronze Sponsor, [Amherst Fund LLC](#), and our In Kind Donors, [Biggby Coffee](#) and [Learning Express](#). Click to watch us featured in a [local TV show](#) and see great [photos](#).

2017 WATER TABLE AT DX-A2 RUN

It was a great morning to run and volunteer! Thank you to our Active Against ALS supporters for cheering and hydrating the runners!



2017 ELECTRIC BOLT

Over 400 people ran along the river for the 6th Annual Electric Bolt raising over \$10,000! Deep thanks to our primary sponsors, the [Electrical Training Alliance](#) and their NTI partners: [American Technical Publishers](#), [IBEW Local 639 San Luis Obispo](#), and [National Electrical Contractors Association Monterey Bay](#) who make this beautiful race possible. Thank you to the individual fundraising teams: Team Jerri & NTI, Team Weldman for Darrel Uptegraft, Team Bauer, Team Appleby, and Team Schoeni. Thanks also to: [Ann Arbor Track Club](#); [Black Diesel Coffee](#); [3M](#); and [Zinger-man's](#). Many thanks to [Ann Arbor Running Company](#) for hosting packet pick-up and helping promote the race, and to [Human Performance Collective](#) for the post-race massages! Check out photos from the run [here](#) and the Argo Dam and Finish Line [here](#). For race results, click [here](#).

Events at a Glance

6TH ANNUAL RIVALRY RIDE

Saturday, October 7

BARN PARTY FOR ALS

Friday, October 20

Save the Date!

10-YEAR ANNIVERSARY GALA EVENT

Saturday, Nov. 10, 2018

Ann Arbor ACTIVE AGAINST ALS

RAISING FUNDS. RAISING HOPE.

2020 Shadford Road 734.623.9877
Ann Arbor, MI 48104 info@a2a3.org

WWW.ACTIVEAGAINSTALS.ORG

Rivalry Ride

Saturday, October 7

Join our 6th Annual Rivalry Ride for ALS on U-M vs. MSU game day! This year's ride starts in East Lansing and finishes in Ann Arbor, and will include lunch!

[Register here.](#)

Barn Party for ALS

Friday, October 20

Join us for a fun night at the Washtenaw Farm Council Grounds to kick-off our 10-year anniversary: Square dancing, kids' raffle, silent auction, Mexican food from Chela's...and more! [Register here.](#)

Shop to Fight ALS

Show your support for Active Against ALS!! Visit our [online store](#) through Red Bubble to purchase a variety of items such as hoodies, tees, mugs, bags and more! All proceeds fund ALS research.

Save a Tree!

Opt out of receiving the paper version of our semi-annual newsletter. Email elizabeth@a2a3.org to be taken off our hard copy list and you'll be automatically added to our email list for the electronic version.

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2020 Shadford Road
Ann Arbor, MI 48104