



Greater Illinois
Chapter
Walk 2012



Kari, second from right, with her family.

Dear Friend,

Just like you, I have a personal connection to multiple sclerosis. My name is Kari Johannesen and I will be attending my sixth **Walk MS** event as team captain of "Monster's Walkers" on Sunday, May 6. My symptoms began in early 2007 when a bout of vertigo slowly turned into a full-blown exacerbation where I could not see, walk, talk or even move. After an emergency visit with a neurologist, I was admitted to the hospital and put through a battery of tests including multiple MRI's, spinal taps and blood tests. The results were in ... a diagnosis of multiple sclerosis at the age of 23.

Just two months after I was diagnosed, along with a small group of family and friends, I participated in my first **Walk MS** event. Remembering back, I am happy to say that even though it took me hours to complete, the people closest to me stuck by my side for the entire eight miles and told me I could do it! **Walk MS** isn't just for me, but for everyone who is living with MS, and for those who support people with MS. That is why I continue to walk!

I fundraise for **Walk MS** by sharing my story on different social media sites, talking to neighbors, friends, co-workers and even going to local stores that I frequent. I share my story with the staff there, type up a bio for customers to read, and print out sheets for them to take for their donation. Last year, I personally raised \$3,090 and my small team raised \$4,565. This year, as a team we are aiming to double our efforts and raise \$10,000. April will be our power month!

As you can see, I am on a mission to end MS, and I am asking you to walk beside me and others like us fighting for a cure. By participating in **Walk MS**, your fundraising gives hope to everyone affected by MS—hope that one day we will live in a world free of multiple sclerosis. Join the movement toward a world free of MS and walk with me on **May 6, at one of the 11 Walk MS sites across Illinois.**

Participating in **Walk MS** is one way we can all make a difference. It's our rallying point, a time and place for us to stand together – to help raise critical funds that support cutting edge research, drive change through advocacy, facilitate professional education and provide programs and services to help people with MS move their lives forward.

I'm greatly looking forward to **Walk MS** because when I participate each year I feel the difference I make in the lives of those living with MS and I feel the difference Walk MS makes in me.

Most Sincerely,

Kari Johannesen
Diagnosed in 2007

