



Fall News & Events

In the last quarter, grassroots event organizers and project leaders worked hard to raise autoimmune awareness on behalf of AARDA and those we serve. If, in reading about them below, you are inspired to create an event or project in your community, please give us a call at (855) 239-2557 or email aarda@aarda.org.

Marathoner on a mission

Joe Geoghegan considers himself a lucky guy although he has multiple autoimmune diseases. Here's why:

"In less than two months, I will have the privilege of lining up alongside 50,000 runners to take on the challenge of the New York City Marathon. It will be my third marathon. The second was harder than the first, and this one will no doubt be harder than the second. In fact, after my second one, I swore to myself that I would never run another marathon again.

But then I thought back to my first marathon and I tried to remember what inspired me to run it in the first place. Yes, it was an opportunity to check a line item off my bucket list, but there was more to it. That marathon came right after I was diagnosed with an autoimmune disease. My disease is not life-threatening but it's serious enough that it gave me a real scare. When I first started noticing a problem, I visited many doctors and I was frustrated because none of them could pinpoint a root cause of my discomfort - maybe it was Lyme disease, maybe it was a nagging basketball injury - no one really knew.

Finally, after what seemed like 100 tests, my condition was diagnosed, but even still, my doctors could offer me very little in the way of definitive direction or treatments. Science, it seemed, was just beginning to understand autoimmune diseases and how to treat and cure them. That lack of clarity and understanding angered me, and it does still.

But like I said, I'm lucky. Autoimmune diseases come in many shapes and sizes, and there are quite a few out there that are much more devastating than mine...I see the terrible effects of Lupus as a close friend deals with it now. In fact, when I really think about it, autoimmune diseases have touched the lives of lots of people I know.

So when I was diagnosed, a few years ago, I ran the marathon because the uncertainty of my diagnosis scared me, and I didn't know when I would get another chance to run a marathon. So this marathon, I am running for a different reason. This time around, I'm running the marathon to raise money for the American Autoimmune Related Diseases Association (AARDA). AARDA's mission is the eradication of autoimmune diseases and the alleviation of suffering and the socioeconomic impact of autoimmunity through



Joe Geoghegan

fostering and facilitating collaboration in the areas of education, public awareness, research, and patient services.

I'm asking [everyone I know] to support this great organization and help stop autoimmune diseases with a small donation...Hopefully, I'll finish all 26.2 miles of the marathon, so a donation of \$1 per mile would equate to a total donation of \$26.20."

Joe has a goal of \$5000. You can help him reach his goal at:
<https://secure.acceptiva.com/?cst=ca3260>

We are grateful to...

...**Dominica Pavlik**, whose 9th annual fundraiser in memory of her cousin Cara Lian Lebedda who had ITP/TTP, raised \$3000 for the AARDA mission.

...**Jimmie Parten**, who raised \$4,276.27 through her second annual 5 for the 5K event in Saint Augustine, FL

...**Rozlynn Fanchier, Aubri Neagle, Jennifer Halen, and Katy Castaneda**, LuLaRoe retailers who raised \$51 plus a matching gift from LuLaRoe through an online fundraiser.

...**Chloe Denley and Meredith Weiss** of Holy Innocents Episcopal School in Atlanta, who raised \$343 for AARDA through a bake sale.

...the **students and families** who donated \$214 to AARDA through a Kids Cause Day event.

...**Facebook Fundraisers** who collectively raised nearly \$15,000 in the last quarter! Our thanks to all!



5 for the 5K

Other ways you can help

- **Volunteer!** If there is an AARDA Walk in your area, contact us; we could use your help on a Walk Planning Committee or on the day of the event.
- **Host an Awareness Event or Fundraiser** at your school, place of work, community center, place of worship -- just about anywhere will do! AARDA will send you brochures, flyers and newsletters, and may provide additional help, depending on the size and scope of your event.
- **Share your autoimmune story.** As part of our advocacy efforts and our ongoing campaign to raise awareness, AARDA presents autoimmune patient stories that illustrate the challenges and needs of the autoimmune community. Whether it's in printed materials, testimony before Congress, or PSAs and YouTube videos, these stories serve to educate and inspire.



Walk Registration Volunteers

Email aarda@aarda.org to share your autoimmune story, if you'd like to help with advocacy, or if you are interested in doing an awareness event or fundraiser.

Email walk@aarda.org to volunteer for a Walk in your area.

**** Upcoming Events ****

Public Forum

"What Every American Needs to Know About Autoimmune Disease"
Saturday, November 3, 2018
Rush University, Chicago

Los Angeles Autoimmune Walk

Saturday, November 17, 2018
Culver City Park, Culver City, CA
11 a.m. to 2:30 p.m.
Walk Ambassador: Kellie Martin
Featuring: Vocalist Lori Jenaire
To register or donate: Los Angeles Walk

Giving Tuesday

November 27, 2018
AARDA events and projects to be announced



Lori Jenaire

QUOTE OF THE QUARTER:

**"I didn't come this far
only to come this far."**

-- Anonymous

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STAY CONNECTED:

