

VOLUNTEER NEWSLETTER

Volume 2 Issue 2



In this Issue: Inspiring volunteers making a difference, how to become an Aware in Care Ambassador and easy ways to volunteer at home!

Upcoming Events: [Aware in Care Open House](#) on May 20, [Moving Day USA](#) on May 22, [Summer Volunteer Leadership Call](#) on June 11 and [Parkinson's Revolution](#) on June 12



Happy National Volunteer Week!

On this most wonderful week, we get the opportunity to thank you for your hard work and support of the Parkinson's Foundation. We rely on the energy, skill and passion of people like you to make life better for people with Parkinson's year-round, particularly during Parkinson's Awareness Month and Covid when we can't be together face to face.



As we work toward creating a world without Parkinson's disease, take some time to be proud of what you have accomplished in this past year. We continued moving forward and making better lives, together.

We hope you find some inspiration in this quarter's newsletter on more ways to get involved and make an impact, even if it

is still from home! Stay safe and thank you for your steadfast support in the fight against Parkinson's.

Sincerely,

Volunteer Newsletter Committee

Volunteer Spotlight: Dr. Hao Liu

Hao (Howe) Liu, PT, PhD, is a Professor of Physical Therapy at the University of North Texas Health Science Center. Dr. Liu has been working as a researcher, educator and clinician in physical therapy (PT) for more than 20 years, serving his students and patients living with Parkinson's disease. He also volunteers with the Parkinson's Foundation and encourages his students to volunteer as well. Dr. Liu finds that students who volunteer in their community have a "better sense of understanding their professions, their patients and caregivers... and deepen their medical knowledge."

Dr. Liu attended the Parkinson's Foundation Physical Therapy Faculty Program, an opportunity to practice what he was teaching. He found some of his Chinese patients living in the Dallas-Fort Worth metropolitan area could not understand medical details in English. He recruited five rehabilitation medicine scholars from his PT department who were visiting medical doctors from China. As a team, they partnered with the Parkinson Foundation to create our new [Mandarin Fact Sheets](#).

When asked how to successfully lead and motivate teams of volunteers, he suggested looking for "enthusiasm and passion" in the content produced or the service provided and their response to the feedback from the community they are serving. To that we add *lead by example* as Dr. Liu continues to motivate students by serving others in communities across the world.



About the Author: Dan Novak is living with Parkinson's and Serves on the Greater Texas Chapter Advisory Board



Why I Volunteer: Jessi Keavney

My grandfather was diagnosed with Parkinson's disease (PD) at age 45 and passed away in 1957 at age 50 following experimental brain surgery before carbidopa levodopa treatment was available. Over the last two years, my sister and I were the primary caregivers for my father, who was diagnosed with PD 19 years ago at age 52. My dad eagerly participated in the Parkinson's Foundation PD GENERation: Mapping the Future of Parkinson's Disease study as well as multiple other studies throughout the country. Following a valiant fight, my dad sadly passed away in February 2021. More than ever, I am determined to continue my dad and grandfather's legacy of research involvement.



“With my family as inspiration, I am motivated to help in all ways possible to support Parkinson's research to honor my past and to protect my future.”
- Jessi

It has been about eight years now since I learned I had the LRRK2 G2019S variant that increases my risk for Parkinson's. My passion is in research since my genetic status allows me a very unique opportunity to advance discovery. Since 2013, I have participated in more than twenty biomarker and observational studies, advocated on Capitol Hill for public policies to support PD funding, spoke to support groups about my experiences and served on an organizing committee for a Parkinson's prevention symposium.

My life has changed in a very positive way since I began my volunteer journey and became a trained research advocate for the Parkinson's Foundation. Knowing that my biological data is helpful to others is rewarding. In addition, I am grateful for the chance to learn and interact directly with some of the top neuroscientists in the world. New breakthroughs are made as the result of the bravery and contribution of those before us. I am encouraged by the scientific progress within the last decade throughout the PD research community and I'm proud to have played a small part in it.

With my family as inspiration, I am motivated to help in all ways possible to support Parkinson's research to honor my past and to protect my future and the health of my children's generation. We all deserve a tomorrow without Parkinson's.

About the Author: Jessi Keavney is a Parkinson's Foundation Research Advocate and volunteers in the Georgia Chapter.



Ask A Volunteer

“How can I become an Aware in Care Ambassador?” The Aware in Care Ambassador team is a passionate group that advocates for the Aware in Care program. Ambassadors work with the Parkinson’s Foundation to help distribute hospitalization kits while educating people with Parkinson’s, partners and healthcare providers on the resources and support available to them through the Foundation.

Ambassadors make a key difference in the lives of people with Parkinson’s and their loved ones by delivering on three primary goals: to educate the community, educate clinicians who treat Parkinson’s disease and educate hospital staff.

I have been an Aware in Care Ambassador since the program began in 2019. To quote Anne Wallis, Associate Director of Education and fierce advocate for the Aware in Care program, “The Aware in Care program is, in my opinion, the most important thing that we do at the Parkinson’s Foundation because hospitalization can be life or death for a person with Parkinson’s. The Parkinson’s community deserves better – they deserve to receive the care that they need and we are working tirelessly to ensure that this is achieved in as many



hospitals as possible as quickly as possible in the United States.”

Online applications to become an Aware in Care Ambassador will be open June 1-30, and we need volunteers who care about the Parkinson’s community. After online applications are submitted, selections will be announced on July 30. New ambassadors will then be asked to attend the Volunteer Orientation in August and a special Aware in Care Online training in September before they can start their three-year term.

To learn more about becoming an Aware in Care Ambassador, register for the **Aware in Care Ambassador Volunteer Open House on May 20, 2021 at noon ET** and keep an eye on [Parkinson.org/Volunteer](https://www.parkinson.org/Volunteer) for the application link once it goes live this summer.

About the Author: Tiffany Birge volunteers with the Parkinson’s Foundation Rocky Mountain Chapter in Salt Lake City, UT.

New Ways to Volunteer

Did you know you can safely volunteer from home? Try one of our Do-It-Yourself volunteer projects listed on [Parkinson.org/Volunteer](https://www.parkinson.org/Volunteer) to volunteer virtually.

You can send a gift or well-wish to healthcare workers who make life better for people with Parkinson’s and ensure that the Parkinson’s community receives the best care possible during the COVID-19 pandemic. You can also **download** our stationary to thank a healthcare worker in your life!





Hitting the Trail

Looking for a unique way to fundraise for the Parkinson's Foundation? Take some tips from Dan Schoenthal who turned his dream of hiking the Appalachian Trail into a reality. Dan was diagnosed with Parkinson's disease in August 2015, and five years later started "hiking for a cause" to benefit the Parkinson's Foundation Moving Day Buffalo.

In August 2020, Dan started his journey of the 2,190-mile trail at Springer Mountain in Georgia. He worked his way up north this fall, while raising funds along the way. After a short break for the winter, Dan returned to his hike in the first few days of April. His plan is to pick up where he left off and try to get at least as far as Harper's Ferry, WV this year (about 750 miles). If he feels



good, he will keep navigating through the wilds of the east toward the northern terminus at Mount Katahdin in Maine.

Dan raised a total of \$4,604 during his first hike, receiving donations from all over the country. His progress was documented through Facebook and lots of updates to friends, family and donors. Of his choice to hike Dan said, "I am hoping that my hike with the trail will inspire somebody that's a little nervous to get some exercise and get a better quality of life."

We thank Dan for showing us anything is possible! If you'd like to donate to Dan's new fundraiser as he heads back out on the trail, click [here!](#)

Interested in getting involved with the Parkinson's Foundation? We have many different options for all abilities and athletes! You can participate in Moving Day or think of a creative idea like Dan to help make life better for people with Parkinson's. Reach out to us at volunteer@parkinsons.org to get involved.

About the Author: Sarah Freyman volunteers in honor of her dad who has Parkinson's disease in Kansas City, MO.

Volunteer Tip

There are more than 100 Parkinson's Foundation Aware in Care Ambassadors trained to educate the public, clinicians and hospital staff to make sure we are all Aware in Care. These volunteers include people with Parkinson's disease, care partners and healthcare professionals. Located around the country, they are ready and willing to help educate you and your community!

Do you run a support group or know a clinician who would benefit from learning more about Aware in Care hospitalization kits? The Aware in Care Ambassadors are ready and can present virtually (and hopefully in person again soon). If you are connected to a clinician or hospital and can help your local Aware in Care Ambassador get in the door to share these lifesaving kits and information, you just became your local Aware in Care Ambassador's best friend!

To connect with the Aware in Care Ambassador closest to you, email volunteer@parkinson.org. For more information or to order your own hospitalization kit visit Parkinson.org/AwareinCare.