



Bike MS: Gateway Getaway Fundraiser Will Ride the Riverbend in September

by Sydney Sinks, News Reporter
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GODFREY - On Sept. 9 and 10, the Riverbend region will welcome 1,000 bicyclists for Bike MS: Gateway Getaway 2023.

This event is based out of St. Louis and will take bicyclists on 25-, 50-, 75- or 100-mile routes through local communities, starting at Lewis and Clark Community College in Godfrey. The event aims to raise \$1.3 million for the National Multiple Sclerosis Society.

“It’s hard not to pay attention when you’ve got that many people out there to raise not only funds but awareness for multiple sclerosis,” Marisa Hacker, the senior manager for Bike MS, said.

Hacker explained that there are 50 Bike MS events across the U.S., and the St. Louis region ride is in the top 15. Cyclists will spend two days riding up the Great River Road and through towns from Godfrey to Jerseyville, Bunker Hill, Bethalto and others. The Lewis and Clark Community College (LCCC) campus will serve as the home base, and cyclists will have access to bike mechanics, support vehicles, rest stops and additional help.

There are currently almost 900 people signed up to participate in Godfrey that weekend. Hacker anticipates another hundred or so will sign up in the next three weeks. Cyclists must be 12 years old or older and raise at least \$300 to participate.

“We are really grateful for being welcomed into the communities, and anyone that lives in those communities and is looking for a chance to make a difference for those living with multiple sclerosis, they are more than welcome,” Hacker added. “We’re happy to find them a place in our community. Whether it’s volunteering, sponsoring, riding themselves, we have so many different ways that folks can get involved and become part of the group that helps peddle us towards a future without MS.”

Multiple sclerosis, or MS, is a central nervous system disease that can cause fatigue, vision problems, muscle spasms and mobility issues. There is currently no cure for MS, which is often disabling and affects one million people in the U.S.

This event raises money for the [National Multiple Sclerosis Society](#), the leading organization for MS research. Bike MS started in 1980 in Minnesota, and all chapters of the National MS Society now host their own rides, making it the largest fundraising cycling series in the world. Collectively, the Bike MS series has raised \$1.4 billion.

St. Louis’s National MS Society chapter serves approximately 9,000 people with MS in the region. They have sponsored a Bike MS ride for 39 years. LCCC has hosted the ride for the past nine years.

“Lewis and Clark is such a great host. They treat us very well,” Hacker said. “And we love the community and love getting out of the hustle and bustle of St. Louis City and heading out across the river to enjoy all the beautiful scenery and little communities that welcome us.”

Hacker asks drivers to be cautious on Sept. 9–10, as cyclists will be using the roadways. If you want to get involved as a volunteer or rider, visit the [Bike MS website](#) or the [event page for the St. Louis Bike MS ride](#). To learn more about MS and how you can help, check out the National MS Society’s [official website](#).