

Bike MS Raises Nearly \$1 Million from Riverbend Ride

by Sydney Sinks, News Reporter
September 18 2023 1:17 PM



ST. LOUIS - The Bike MS: Gateway Getaway 2023 fundraiser and bike ride recently welcomed 1,000 bicyclists to the Riverbend area to raise funds and awareness for multiple sclerosis (MS).

“It was such a great weekend full of hugs, high-fives and mission-inspired moments,” Marisa Hacker, senior manager for Bike MS, said. “Definitely an emotion-filled weekend, with the excitement and the inspiration of the progress that we’ve made so far and then always knowing there’s still work to be done until we find a cure for this thing.”

On Sept. 9 and 10, bicyclists tackled 25-, 50-, 75- or 100-mile routes through local communities with Lewis and Clark Community College (LCCC) in Godfrey as their home base. There are 50 Bike MS events across the U.S., and this ride in the St. Louis region is in the top 15.

The bicycle rides aim to raise a collective \$1.3 million for the [National Multiple Sclerosis Society](#). The Bike MS: Gateway Getaway in the Riverbend area raised over \$941,000 alone. As a whole, the organization has received \$1,072,000 and will continue collecting donations through Bike MS until Nov. 10.

In addition to fundraising, Hacker explained that Bike MS ride is also an opportunity for people to feel supported and connect with each other through their experiences with MS. Attendees who are living with MS crossed the finish line together on Sept. 9 to close out the first day of the bike ride. Hacker said there was “not a dry eye in the house.”

“It definitely feels very overwhelming to see so many different people from different backgrounds coming together with one mission in mind,” she said. “Standing there on the stage at our opening ceremony, looking over the masses, definitely gets me choked up every single year. It just feels very touching to the heart to know all the people, no matter where they come from, all are out there riding for their own personal why.”

She expressed the organization’s gratitude to the 1,000 bicyclists and 500 volunteers who were on campus at LCCC that weekend, as well as the Riverbend communities that cyclists visited on their routes. With so many bicycles on the roads, Hacker thanked motorists for their caution throughout the weekend and voiced her hope that the sight encouraged people to learn more about MS.

“The mission is definitely top of mind,” Hacker added. “There’s all these different reasons that are motivating people to ride, but we all have that one thing in common...Thank you to everyone in the community for being so kind and welcoming to our cyclists and helping us make it a great experience for them so they keep coming back year after year.”

If you want to know more about the Bike MS: Gateway Getaway or donate, you can do so until Nov. 10 at the [official webpage at GatewayBikeMS.org](#). To learn more about MS and ways to help, or to receive support, visit the [National Multiple Sclerosis Society website](#).

