

A black and white photograph of the U.S. Capitol dome, showing its intricate architectural details and the American flag flying from a pole in front of it. The image is partially obscured by a large white diagonal shape that serves as a background for the title text.

ACS CAN STATE LEAD AMBASSADOR TOOLKIT





April 2021

Dear State Lead Ambassador:

Greetings, and thank you for all that you have already done and will do in this important leadership position for the American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network (ACS CAN)!

In this toolkit you'll find a variety of tools and resources to enable you to be successful in your efforts to lead a powerful, diverse volunteer team in your state.

Please take some time to review these materials prior to attending our 2021 SLA Summit.

Also, as you know, we do require all our SLAs to be current dues-paying members of ACS CAN. Please check to make sure your annual membership is current and renew if needed at fightcancer.org/join. Please be sure to do so before attending Summit!

And finally, we are always looking for seasoned SLAs who are willing to serve as mentors for new SLAs in other states. Please let your staff partner know if you might be interested in serving in this capacity.

Thanks again. I look forward to seeing you soon!

Sincerely,

Lisa A. Lacasse, MBA
President, ACS CAN

Volunteer Position Description:

State Lead Ambassador (SLA)



TERM:

Two-year commitment required.

POSITION SUMMARY:

In collaboration with ACS CAN grassroots and government relations staff, the SLA is responsible for organizing, maintaining, and mobilizing a statewide ambassador leadership team comprised of all state congressional district team leaders (ACT Leads) to maximize ACS CAN's legislative impact in local, state, and federal campaigns. The SLA assists in recruiting and appointing ACT Leads and helps set goals and expectations for the state ambassador team.

RESPONSIBILITIES:

- Serve as the principal volunteer contact for the ACT Leads. Work with ACS CAN grassroots and government relations staff and ACT Leads to plan and implement appropriate tactics within districts.
- Maintain close communication with ACT Leads through phone, email, and conference calls.
- Monitor district activities and seek additional staff/volunteer assistance when necessary.
- Attend the annual SLA Summit conducted by ACS CAN.
- Serve as the primary volunteer contact for their state's two US senators.
- Participate in regular briefings on local, state, and federal issues. View the ACS CAN website regularly.
- Serve as a volunteer spokesperson for advocacy issues in the state.
- Work with ACT Leads to achieve ACS CAN fundraising and membership goals.
- Assist in planning and implementing statewide advocacy events, including volunteer recognition, ACS CAN fundraisers, etc.
- Mentor Vice SLA to become future SLA.
- Participate on the Regional Leadership Team.

QUALIFICATIONS AND SKILLS:

- Thorough knowledge of the ACS CAN mission, issues, structure, and culture
- Successful experience working collaboratively and communicating well with staff and other volunteers
- Some background in political organizing, electoral campaigns, or lobbying
- A desire to make an impact through advocacy work in the fight against cancer
- The ability to encourage and foster the passion of others in their fight against cancer

SUPPORT PROVIDED:

- Leadership training provided by ACS CAN grassroots and government relations staff
- Monthly national conference calls
- Annual summit

VOLUNTEER AND STAFF PARTNERS:

- State grassroots manager
- State government relations director
- Regional grassroots director
- Vice SLA
- ACT Leads
- Additional staff and volunteer support as needed

The 7 Habits of Highly Effective SLAs	Tips to Achieve the Goal
<p>1. An effective SLA <u>builds relationships with key elected officials</u> and organizes actions to advance our legislative agenda.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Aim to communicate with your local, state and/or federal reps at least once a month ✓ Remember to include high visibility tactics like in-district meetings, rolling drop bys, bird dogging, and LTEs ✓ Make sure you are familiar with our legislative agenda, understand the value of your personal story, and can tie your story to one or more of our campaign issues
<p>2. An effective SLA <u>works with others</u> to set and achieve team goals.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Participate in annual goal setting with the other in-person and online volunteers for your state ✓ Get to know your ACT Leads to understand their skills and interests, and match these with team needs ✓ Hold regular team meetings to plan activities and assess progress towards your team goals
<p>3. An effective SLA recruits <u>ACS CAN members</u> to ensure success with the state's annual ACS CAN membership and fundraising goals.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Develop your fundraising plan together as a team ✓ Ask your staff partner to help you articulate what ACS CAN is and what it means to be a member ✓ Use ACS CAN event guides to review fundraising best practices - this will help make some of our more typical ACS CAN events easier to plan and execute
<p>4. An effective SLA ensures that <u>advocacy is an integral part of ACS events</u> in the state.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Work with your ACT Leads and staff partner to build a list of events in your state, and then begin to create a plan for interacting with those event participants ✓ Visit fightcancer.org/relay and fightcancer.org/makingstrides to familiarize yourself with event advocacy issues and materials ✓ Ready for more responsibility? Consider becoming a Relay or Strides CAN Lead at an event near you!
<p>5. An effective SLA <u>maximizes earned media opportunities</u> to support our legislative agenda.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Use social media to promote ACS CAN legislative agenda and events ✓ Talk to your staff partner if you would like coaching on how to speak about our issues in a media setting
<p>6. An effective SLA <u>recruits and trains new ACT Leads</u> to grow the team and show our power at meetings and other events.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Seek to foster diverse volunteer leadership to decrease death and suffering from cancer in all communities ✓ Engage seasoned ACT Leads to serve as mentors to new/upcoming ACT Leads ✓ Use the ACT Lead Handbook as a training resource
<p>7. An effective SLA <u>maintains strong communication channels</u> with other volunteers and staff.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Create and maintain a list of the ACT Leads in the state and the best ways to reach them ✓ Work with your staff partner to receive talking points, toolkits, and other background materials regularly ✓ Talk to your staff partner about the legislative calendar for your state to better prepare for busy times like the end of session or congressional recesses

DISTRICT ANALYSIS TEMPLATE

Representative Name:
Political party:
Length of time in office:
What issues does the lawmaker care about?
What committees does the lawmaker sit on?
Notes:

Legislative District Office Information
Staff contact name:
Phone number:
Email:
Office addresses:

District Data
Population:
Demographics of District:
Size of District:
Major Cities in District:
Towns in District:

District Ambassador Roster (Current)			
Name	Email Address	Phone Number	Comments: Trained? Active?

District Ambassador Roster (Prospects)

Name	Email Address	Phone Number	Notes

District RFL Event Name

[illegible]

District Health Systems & Cancer Centers

[illegible]

District Businesses

[illegible]

District Civic Organizations

Organization Name	Primary Contact	Phone Number	Comments

"In My District..." & My Next Steps

In my district, people can be found at the following major annual events: (look at community calendars, department of recreation, etc.)

-
-
-

In my district, if I wanted to find local volunteer opportunities, I would look in the following places:

-
-
-

In my district, If I wanted to engage communities that reflect the demographics of the district, I would look in the following places:

-
-
-
-

Now that I have completed this assessment, I believe my next steps should be:

-
-
-

Direct Action Organizing (DAO) Strategy Chart “Cheat Sheet”

Goals	Organizational Considerations	Constituents, Allies and Opponents	Targets	Tactics
<p>1. List the long-term objectives of your campaign. <i>*Consider how your objectives might impact health disparities – both long-term and intermediate.</i></p> <p>2. State the intermediate goals for this issue campaign. What constitutes victory?</p> <p><i>How will the campaign:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Win concrete improvements in people’s lives? (<i>Consider impact on health and health equity.</i>) Give people a sense of their own power? Alter the relations of power? <p>3. What short-term or partial victories can you win as steps toward your long-term goal?</p>	<p>1. List the resources that we bring to the campaign. (Money, # of staff, facilities, reputation, canvass, volunteer stories, etc.) <i>Include resources/policy materials specific to this issue and disparities. Reports, survey results, disparate incidence and mortality rates, etc.</i></p> <p>2. List the specific ways in which you want your organization to be strengthened by this campaign. <i>Is there a way to frame this issue through a health equity lens? Fill in numbers for each bullet below.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Expand leadership group Increase experiences of existing leadership Build membership base Expand into new constituencies (<i>Include currently underrepresented communities.</i>) Raise more money <p>3. List the internal problems that must be considered if the campaign is to succeed.</p>	<p>1. Who cares about this issue enough to join or help the organization?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Whose problem is it? (<i>What specific communities or groups are most impacted by the problem this issue campaign addresses?</i>) Into what groups are they already organized? What do they gain if they win? What risks are they taking? What power do they have over the target? <p>2. Who are your opponents?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> What will your victory cost them? What will they do/spend to oppose you? How strong are they? What power do they have over the target? 	<p>1. Primary Targets</p> <p>A target is always a person. It is never an institution or an elected body. There can be more than one target, but each needs a separate strategy chart as your relationships of power differ with each target.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Who has the power to give you what you want? What power do you have over them? <p>2. Secondary Targets (You don’t always have or need secondary targets)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Who has the power over the people with the power to give you what you want? What power do you have over them (the secondary target)? 	<p>1. For each target list the tactics that each constituent group can best use to put pressure on the target to win your intermediate or short-term goal. (<i>Be sure to consider tactics that will engage your identified allies and constituents and help you achieve your organizational goals.</i>)</p> <p>Tactics must be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> In context Directed as a specific target Backed up by a specific form of power Flexible and creative Make sense to the membership <p>Tactics include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Media events Actions for information and demands Public hearings Voter registration and education Accountability sessions



Ambassador Action Center

The Ambassador Action Center (AAC) is the tool the American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network (ACS CAN) uses to capture the activity of its grassroots leadership volunteers – State Lead Ambassadors, ACT Lead Ambassadors, and ACT Team Members/Ambassadors. It allows us to quantify the IMPACT volunteers that are having as they work to affect public policy change at the local, state, and national levels.

The AAC measures this collective impact of ACS CAN volunteers in five key areas:

1. Impact Your Lawmakers: Interactions with legislators at every level of government.
2. Build Your Team: Growth of ACS CAN's grassroots movement.
3. Get Media Coverage: Amplifying ACS CAN's public voice.
4. Connect with Partners: Outreach to organizations and groups who share the ACS CAN mission.
5. Money Raised for ACS CAN: An essential for running winning campaigns and building the organization!

There are multiple tactics volunteers can undertake to help advance ACS CAN's work in each of these areas, and they have varying point values in the AAC. For example, one would earn more points for a meeting with a lawmaker than sending an email. As a result, our hope is that we can easily answer questions like how many meetings are we having a year? How many new volunteers are we recruiting? How many letters to the editor are we submitting?

It's important to note that while competition is healthy (and fun!), the goal of the AAC isn't simply to "win" by getting the most points, but rather to make sure we are engaging lawmakers and our communities in a variety of ways in order to maximize ACS CAN's impact as an organization.

For the first four categories listed above, ACS CAN relies on volunteers to self-report their actions by signing up and regularly visiting the mobile-optimized site at acscan.org/ambassador-action-center. For the fundraising category, all money raised through CANRaiser feeds directly into the AAC on a monthly basis. This includes offline fundraising that has been manually entered into that system. As with everything we do at ACS CAN, we strive for continuous improvement, and the AAC is no exception, so from time to time there will be tweaks in the information that we collect or in the points assigned to an activity.

The only way a tool like the Ambassador Action Center can truly be effective is if it's valuable to ACS CAN volunteers who use it. If you have questions about the system, feedback you'd like to give, or if you aren't signed up yet and want to know how, please consult with your ACS CAN staff partners for more information!



Ambassador Action Center: Points by Activity

ACTIVITY	POINTS
Category #1: Impact Your Lawmaker (Goal: 250 points)	
Personal office meeting with a lawmaker (or lawmaker's staff) or Cancer Votes target candidate	50
Office drop-by	30
Personal letter	15
Seasonal card	10
Personal phone call	20
Personal email (not an action alert)	10
Attend town hall or other meeting where lawmaker or Cancer Votes target candidate is present	30
Collect 50 petitions in a current campaign	15
Participate in canvassing, phone banking, or collecting signatures for a state campaign	50
Testifying at city council, state house, or federal hearing	50
Host a lawmaker at an ACS / ACS CAN event	40
Category #2: Build Your Team (Goal: 140 points)	
Recruit a new Team Ambassador with a signed partnership agreement	30
Recruit 1 ACS CAN member	10
Recruit 10 people to attend a state lobby day, ACS CAN rally, or represent ACS CAN at Relay or Strides	10



Ambassador Action Center: Points by Activity

Category #3: Get Media (Goal: 50 points)	
Send a letter-to-the-editor to support an ACS CAN campaign or event	20
Join ACS CAN's social media channels (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram)	1
Share ACS CAN content (repost/retweet) on your personal social media account	1
Lawmaker or Cancer Votes target candidate reposts/retweets your message or replies to message publicly	5
Get interviewed by media about an ACS CAN issue	30
Contact media to promote an ACS CAN event or fundraiser	10
Category #4: Connect with Partners (Goal: 60 points)	
Attend Relay For Life meetings such as team captain, kick-off event, etc. to promote ACS CAN membership recruitment or implement our ACS CAN campaign at a Relay event	20
Attend a Making Strides Against Breast Cancer kick-off to promote ACS CAN membership recruitment or attend the event to help implement ACS CAN's Power of the Purse campaign effort	20
Represent ACS CAN at cancer-related or community events to promote ACS CAN membership or current legislative campaigns	20
Category #5: CAN Raising (Goal: 250 points)	
Each \$50 Milestone in CANRaiser	50

ACS CAN Volunteer Structure and Succession Planning for SLAs

Objective: Build on existing model and develop future volunteer structure to maximize effectiveness at the local, state, and federal levels in support of grassroots policy campaigns and to achieve optimum advocacy integration in ACS program activities.

Year 1 Goals:

- SLA is fully trained on the responsibilities of their role as the volunteer leader in their state, actively leading the statewide volunteer team, and adopting a forward-thinking approach to building volunteer capacity.
- SLA owns volunteer calls and electronic communication with the Ambassador Constituent Team.
- SLA is responsible for coordinating all legislative ambassador activities statewide, holds regular check-ins with ACT Leads and staff partner.
- SLA supports staff partner to ensure appropriate ACT Leads are in place, and properly trained, in all congressional districts.
- SLA and staff partner start identifying future leaders and internal candidates for leadership positions:
 - Conduct strengths assessment of existing leadership volunteers (Vice SLA and ACT Leads);
 - Create an inventory of needed skill sets and representation of statewide demographics;
 - Evaluate each person's future potential and how committed they have been to their current role.

Year 2 Goals, January-June:

- SLA continues to lead volunteer program and has begun to identify a clear succession plan, in coordination with staff partner, provides candidate development through training and performance.
- Each congressional district team maintains current ACT Lead or transitions to clearly identified successor.
- Application and interview process occur for open leadership positions.

Year 2 Goals, July-December:

- SLA and Vice SLA continue to lead and serve as resources within the volunteer program.
- SLA and Vice SLA have a clear succession plan in place and have begun to transition roles and/or train successors:
 - Vice SLA or designated ACT Lead assumes SLA role if appropriate.
 - New Vice SLA is selected.
- SLA is engaging seasoned ACT Leads to serve as mentors to new/upcoming ACT Leads.
- SLA supports ACT Leads in building out robust Ambassador teams in CD's and key legislative districts.
- Vice SLA continues to support SLA and serve as main volunteer point of contact for state campaigns.
- Outgoing ACT Leads and SLA assume elevated state focus Lead roles where appropriate:
 - Elevated roles are based on skills and experience; these leads serve as experts in a given focus area and serve as resources to the current SLA, ACT Leads and ambassadors.
 - Possible focus areas include:
 - Fundraising
 - Volunteer recruitment
 - Youth/young professional engagement
 - Diversity outreach and engagement



Fundraising Tip Sheet

1. GET INSPIRED

Review some of the sample communication and example fundraiser ideas in the [Fundraising Toolkit](#) to get ideas for activities that make sense in your context.

2. BE A LEADER

Nobody likes to be first. That's why it's always a good idea to get your fundraising off to a good start by making the first contribution. This will make others more likely to get involved.

3. ADD YOUR *WHY* TO THE EMAIL

We've put together an email template you can use right from your fundraising page. The most important thing you can add to this message is **why you are fundraising**. Let your family and friends know why this issue matters to you, that's what they care about most!

4. START WITH YOUR CLOSE CONTACTS

It's always best to start by emailing your close contacts because they are the most likely to donate. Try sending some quick personal messages to your inner circle to build up some momentum. Then use the email template you customized to reach all your other contacts.



5. NOW MOVE TO SOCIAL MEDIA

Once you've sent your first batch of emails out, it's time to turn to social media. One of the best strategies to use on both Facebook and Twitter is tagging and thanking people who have already contributed while you are asking for new donations. This spreads your message further and lets the people you are asking, know that people are already getting behind you.

6. REENGAGE WITH EMAIL

Don't hesitate to send a few follow up emails. Emails are easy to overlook, and people often open them up quickly and then forget to go back to them. Use email to keep people up to date with your progress as you hit different milestones (50% raised, 75% raised, etc.) and ask supporters to help you hit the next milestone.

7. CONTINUE THANKING AND UPDATING YOUR SOCIAL MEDIA.

As more of your network gets behind you, keep thanking them on social media and make sure you continue to share your progress towards your goal.





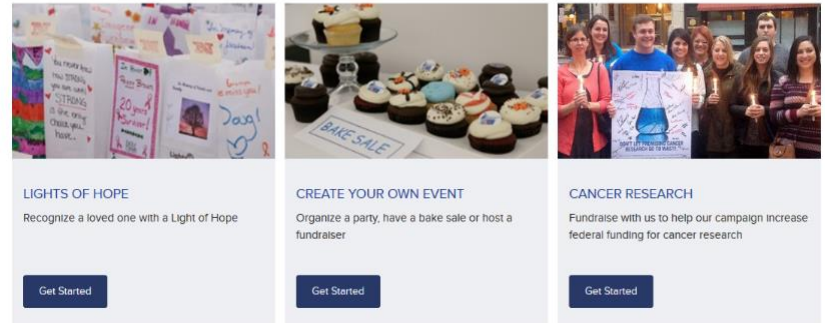
Fundraise for ACS CAN through CANRaiser with these 4 easy steps

1. Set up your personal CANRaiser page.

- Visit fightcancer.org/canraiser and create your page.
- Customize the text of your page by sharing your story and information about your fundraiser.
- Upload your own photos or videos. (be sure not to use photos that you do not own)
- Create a personal URL website link to direct people to your fundraising page.

Ready to get involved!

Choose from the options below to start fundraising. Inside you will find fundraising ideas and the tools you need to set up a personal page, email your friends and share your story on social media.



2. Let your friends know.

- Send emails through CANRaiser with the templates provided. It's always best to start with your closest family and friends.
- Post your personal URL on social media. Start by tagging and thanking someone who already has donated while asking for new donations. To tag someone simply type the @ symbol and start typing the donors name. This will tag them in the post.

3. Keep track of your donations and RSVPs for events.

- Log in to your fundraising center and track your progress. From here you will be able to see all online donations and enter offline donations.
- You will be notified by email anytime someone donates online to your page.

4. Celebrate, send thank-you emails and process donations.

- Send a thank you email to anyone who donated to ACS CAN on your page.
- For donations that are not made online ie. cash or check, please work with your ACS CAN staff partner for processing.
- For donations made outside of your CANRaiser page (offline), make sure to complete an ACS CAN membership form for those who want to be members of ACS CAN. (anyone who donates through your CANRaiser page automatically becomes an ACS CAN member). You can download an ACS CAN membership form right from the fundraising center on CANRaiser.
- No matter what you choose to do as a volunteer, the American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network is here to help and support you. Don't be afraid to reach out to your ACS CAN staff partner or email acscanraiser@cancer.org with any questions or for more information.

ACS CAN Volunteer Recruitment Resources

ACS CAN is the American Cancer Society's non-partisan advocacy network. ACS CAN relies on the work of volunteers in their communities and nationally to advocate for legislation that will improve the lives of cancer patients, survivors, and caregivers and make prevention and detection measures a constant standard. Here are some resources that can be used to recruit ACS CAN volunteers in the community.

Online Recruitment Resources:

- [The Vanessa Video](#) – This video shares the story of cancer survivor, Vanessa, and her experience with ACS CAN. This is a great recruitment tool to be shared online via social media or to be shared at events where you have an opportunity to talk about ACS CAN and make the volunteer ask.
- [Link to volunteer with us](#) – Share this link on social media in conjunction with the video to give potential volunteers a quick and easy way to learn more about ACS CAN volunteer opportunities in their community.
- [Link to become a member](#) – This is another great link to share on social media or via email to encourage individuals to sign up to become an ACS CAN member.
- [Link to take action](#) – This link provides a list of easy micro volunteer opportunities/actions that individuals can take to make an impact on cancer legislation. Micro volunteerism consists of quick and easy actions that can be done within minutes from your device.

Volunteer Recruitment Resources (available via ACS Brand Toolkit – you will need to create a user account to access):

- [Membership Brochure](#) – Use this brochure to promote ACS CAN membership in your community.
- [Membership Form](#) – Use this form to collect the necessary information and required donation for new ACS CAN members. If using this form, be sure you have the information needed to collect and deposit money.
- [Member Benefits](#) – This flyer outlines the benefits of becoming an ACS CAN member at a variety of levels. It is a great resource to share with volunteers who may be interested in making a larger donation to ACS CAN.
- [What is ACS CAN](#) – This one-page document presents an overview of what ACS CAN is and how it works with ACS to achieve our shared mission. One of the best resources available for individuals who are interested in advocacy and how they can contribute to our mission.
- [Where does the money go](#) and [Advocacy Accomplishments](#) – These documents help to illustrate the accomplishments of ACS CAN and can be great tools to engage volunteers.

*Many of these materials are available in Spanish, so please check with your ACS CAN staff partner.

ACS CAN Volunteer Recruitment Tips

Listen to the potential volunteer – When you're talking to a potential volunteer, be sure that you are asking them questions and listening closely to their responses. Active listening can help you best determine where they fit and what they're looking for in a volunteer opportunity. Keep in mind that with ACS CAN there are a few different ways to engage with varying time commitments, allowing us to match most prospective volunteers with an opportunity that meets their needs and interests.

Share a story – It can be more powerful to make it personal when you make a volunteer ask. Share a story about why you're passionate about fighting cancer or why you got involved with ACS CAN. Potential volunteers also love to hear stories of success. Share some experiences that you've had with advocacy or any amazing accomplishments that ACS CAN has achieved, both locally and nationally.

Encourage other volunteers to participate in volunteer recruitment – Volunteer stories are very powerful in volunteer recruitment. Who better to share the many rewards of volunteering with ACS CAN than a current volunteer? Consider inviting more volunteers so you can share a variety of experiences in several different areas.

Encourage folks to look us up online – A potential volunteer can get a good snapshot of who we are and what we do by following their state and national ACS CAN social media accounts and/or by visiting www.fightcancer.org.



Getting More Mileage from Your Letter to the Editor

Letters to the Editor (LTEs) are an easy way to get your message out to lawmakers – and with a few simple steps, we can make sure every LTE has an even broader impact than it otherwise would.

STEP ONE: Increase the likelihood your letter gets published with a simple phone call.

HOW? 1-2 days after you have submitted your letter, call the paper where it was submitted and confirm that it has been received, ask if they have any questions, or if there are any edits you could make that would increase the chance of it being published.

STEP TWO: Share your letter once it has been published. Getting a letter published gets our issues on the reader's radar – but to be most effective, we need to get that issue on the *lawmaker's* radar.

HOW? Facebook, Twitter & even snail mail! Once your letter has been published, let your staff partner know. Then, post a link on your Facebook page and/or Tweet it. Make sure to tag your lawmaker/target in your post and, if possible, tag the paper where it was published. Some examples:

My letter asking @lawmaker to support [issue/campaign] was published in today's @newspaper – read it here: www.website.org

So glad @newspaper published my letter calling on @lawmaker to support [issue/campaign]. Check it out here: www.website.org

I hope @lawmaker reads my letter in @newspaper thanking him/her for voting in support of [issue/bill] last week. Check it out here: www.website.org

Don't have social media? That's fine, too – snail mail works just as well! Print a copy of your letter and mail it to your lawmaker's district office with a quick note. Example:

"Dear Senator Jones,

I wanted to make sure you saw my recent letter in the [newspaper name], enclosed here. As a constituent and cancer advocate, I hope you'll support this bill.

Sincerely,

[Name]

Volunteer, American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network (ACS CAN)"

STEP THREE: You're done, and you're on your way to making sure your letter has a widespread impact!

HOW? Remember your ACS CAN staff partner is there to help. Let them know if you need assistance with contact info for your local paper, locating a mailing address for your lawmaker or identifying the lawmaker or newspaper's social media tags.

Social Media Tips

Look at these tips and examples from your fellow volunteers of using social media for advocacy and start using them in your work as an ACS CAN State Lead Ambassador!

Lobbying a lawmaker

Use your Twitter account to tag your lawmaker and ask them to co-sponsor/vote on legislation. Jeff used an @ACSCAN tweet to thank Senators who voted for cancer research funding and asked House members to do the same.



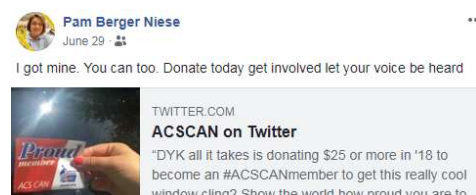
Thanking a lawmaker

A thank you goes a long way in relationship building, and a tweet like Kathi's makes sure your lawmaker knows we're thankful when they support cancer patients and survivors and our issues.



Recruiting new members

Add social media to your work recruiting new ACS CAN members. You can repurpose ACS CAN tweets and posts and add your recruitment message like Pam did.



Engaging your friends on our campaigns

Get your friends involved in our cancer advocacy work, and then let them know when something good happens on a campaign where they took action! Tanya got her friends involved, and then shared with them when that legislation was moving (and went the extra distance by individually answering them back when they commented!)



Using an ACS CAN report to lobby a lawmaker

ACS CAN reports are a great tool for lobbying your lawmaker on our issues! Julie did a great job here of tagging her lawmaker and using the report to lobby her on Ohio's tobacco campaign.



Julie Turner
@Julieaturner

Follow

I don't like how Ohio measures up @peggylehner. We need to put more funding in tobacco cessation programs and raise the cost of tobacco. #HDMU @ACSCAN_OH

Using your story

Your story is powerful. We use stories in meetings with lawmakers, with reporters, and at Relay and Strides events. So, it makes sense that you should be using stories on social media when you lobby lawmakers or ask people to become ACS CAN members like Dana did.



Dana Bernson
@dbernson

Follow

I'm an #ACSCANmember because cancer left me a widow at age 29 and I want to use my voice to make sure that we enact smart policies and fund the groundbreaking research to ensure that cancer isn't the reason more young people join the #widowclub @ACSCAN @ACSCANMA

Sharing LTEs you have published

Make sure people see those Letters to the Editor! And, when you share them on social media, you can use that opportunity to tag your lawmaker or thank the newspaper like Brittney did.



brittneymemphis
@brittneymemphis

Follow

Thanks @memphisnews for publishing my letter to the editor in today's paper.

#keepuscovered
commercialappeal.com/story/opinion/ ...



Becky Mack

January 19, 2017 · Palmona Park, FL ·

My Letter to the Editor regarding the Affordable Care Act is in the Naples Daily News this morning. It's under "Don't Repeal without Replacing."

Thank you to the American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network for your guidance and all the work that you do! #keepuscovered



NAPLESNEWS.COM

Letters to the editor: Thursday, Jan. 19, 2017



ACS CAN Connection

Closed Group · 12 Members



Remember to Join "ACS CAN Connection" Volunteer Facebook Group

We created ACS CAN Connection to have a place where our volunteer community can come together and discuss legislative issues, share volunteer activities, and post photos and other ACS CAN-related content. And, it will be driven by volunteer posts – meaning content that is posted by you, our volunteers.

Join at www.facebook.com/groups/ACSCANConnection and invite your volunteer teams!



Valuing Everyone: Creating Diverse and Inclusive Volunteer Networks

Some Strengths of a Diverse Group:

- Improves group effectiveness and decision making by incorporating diverse perspectives.
- Enhances the creativity and problem-solving abilities of the group.
- Offers learning opportunities for personal growth.
- Results in better service to a changing “customer” population.
- Strengthens the organization by appealing to a larger audience.

Guiding Principles for Being Inclusive:

- Practice the “Platinum Rule.” It states that we should do unto others as they would do unto themselves (Treat others the way they want to be treated).
- It’s important to be aware of not just our differences, but also our similarities.
 - Regardless of our personal context, we come together through ACS CAN because of a shared interest in preventing cancer and reducing the toll it takes on individuals, families and communities.
- Show respect to everyone:
 - Learn how to pronounce and spell names correctly—don’t be afraid to ask.
 - Take time to listen and understand.
 - Allow for silent time or other ways to make space for quieter people to contribute.
 - Reach out to the “outsider.” Anyone who is new, sitting alone, or not part of an “insider” joke or story may feel excluded. The feeling may be intensified if they are (for example) the only young person, or elder, or person of color in the room.
 - Pay attention to the physical environment and how it might create barriers to access, hearing, etc. Make changes to eliminate those barriers.
 - Ask permission before asking someone to share their cancer story or other personal information. It’s important to take time to develop relationships of trust with each other.

Additional General Tips for Being Inclusive:

- Host meetings in locations that are familiar or comfortable to different members of the group or to the population you are trying to include.
- Host meetings at times that accommodate varied schedules of volunteers.
- Engage in self-reflection. Everyone has biases and prejudices. Take stock of yours and consider their impact on your interactions and decisions. Also, consider the concept of “privilege” — how you may have benefited from your class, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation or education.
- Tailor rewards and recognition to treat people how they want to be treated. All volunteers, regardless of age, gender, physical ability, etc., respond positively to being rewarded for their work. For some volunteers, the best reward is public recognition; for others, it is more responsibility or the opportunity for training; and for others, the satisfaction of seeing their work pay off in their community. Identify what is a reward to them, and then make sure they get it.
- Develop an awareness of cultural values of people who are different from you. You may share these values or not. These may include:
 - respect for elders, peers, or those in positions of authority
 - reliance on family support systems
 - emphasis on the extended family or the nuclear family
 - collective decision making or individual decision making
 - spirituality
- Learn beyond general groupings such as “Asian” or “Hispanic” commonalities to discover the uniqueness of each community within the broader group label.

- Recognize patterns for communicating. Does the person prefer “speak your mind” or “read between the lines” when communicating? Do they focus on relationships in customer service or value efficiency and speed? Pay attention to both verbal and nonverbal communication. By mirroring someone’s communication style you are affirming their values in that area.
- Promote a sense of ownership in the organization by facilitating meaningful participation opportunities at all levels.
- Establish and model group processes and norms that foster trust and respect.
- Speak up and take action when someone is excluded, or issues of disrespect happen. Remember, no matter how wrong you feel the person was and no matter how angry or upset you may feel, approach the issue with respect.
- Remember that ACS CAN is a nonpartisan grassroots organization that strives to frame our issues through a cancer lens.

Diversity and Health Equity:

One important aspect of building diverse and inclusive volunteer teams is making clear how our work advances health equity and reduces health disparities. Information about how we’re collectively addressing health disparities can be found here: <https://www.fightcancer.org/healthdisparities>.

Some Aspects of Diversity:

- Age and generational influences
- Developmental and acquired disabilities
- Religion and spiritual orientation
- Ethnicity and “Race”
- Education, income and occupation (“Socio-economic status” including financial/ economic situation, educational status, literacy status)
- Sexual orientation
- Gender and gender identity
- Indigenous heritage
- National origin
- Marital or parenting status
- Political affiliation

How Diverse is Your Volunteer Team?

Strengths

In what ways does your volunteer team currently represent the diverse profile of the communities they represent? How has that diversity strengthened the team?

What relationships already exist?

Weaknesses

What gaps exist that keep your volunteer team from representing the full diversity of your state?

Is there flexibility in the structure to accommodate diverse needs?

Opportunities

What can we do now to address the gaps and remove barriers?

Are there potential non-traditional allies for our policy campaigns that can help us win?

Threats (Obstacles and Risks)

What stands in our way?

What do we need to help us succeed?

What do we risk if we don't act?

Volunteer teams that reflect the diversity of the communities they represent will be more successful in achieving our legislative goals, as we are able to show elected officials that our organization can involve and mobilize all constituents in a given legislative district.

This SWOT chart is a terrific tool to use with ACT Leads to help them assess the strengths and weaknesses of the diversity within their teams, and to brainstorm opportunities and threats around diversity in their congressional districts.

A starting point for your ACT Leads is to use the district analysis tool, if they haven't already, to create a snapshot of the congressional district they live in. They can use the most recent US Census data to get demographic information, including race/ethnicity, religion, age, economic and education status, etc.



Sample Communications Plan

As a State Lead Ambassador, communicating well and regularly with your ACT Leads, legislative ambassadors, and state staff partner will be critical to your success as a leader and will ensure that all team members have the information and guidance they need to thrive in their roles. Create a communications plan that works for you and your unique circumstances. Below is a sample of what that might look like.

Phone Calls

- Conduct monthly check-in call with ACT Leads.
- Host monthly statewide volunteer call.
- Schedule weekly or bi-weekly check-in calls or in-person meetings with your staff partner.
- Participate in monthly national SLA call and encourage ACT leads to participate in quarterly national All Leads call.

Emails

- Send bi-weekly emails to ACT Leads to update on progress between check-in calls.
- Pull monthly reports for your state in the Ambassador Action Center and update your ACT Leads on their progress to reaching each of the 5 goals.
- Send additional email notifications as needed.

Social Media

- Use Facebook to highlight the contributions of the legislative ambassadors on your team.
- Post regular legislative and appropriate team planning updates to your state's Ambassador-only closed Facebook group, if applicable.
- Join the ACS CAN Connection Facebook group and take part in the conversation to share tactics and connect with other ACS CAN volunteers.

Meetings

- Host annual volunteer training/summit.
- Host and work with state staff partner to develop agenda for monthly Ambassador team calls, which may include an in-person or zoom option.

Training

- Ensure that your new ACT Leads have a full understanding of their role.
- Resources to help your communication include the ACT Lead handbook. Reach out to your staff partner for a copy if you don't have one.

Other

- Send annual birthday cards to ACT Leads, and thank you cards as appropriate.