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A letter from our president

Dear Volunteer,

Thank you for committing to the fight against cancer! We are thrilled you have joined us!

The American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network (ACS CAN) empowers advocates to make their voices heard and ask public officials to make cancer a national priority. As the nation's leading cancer advocacy organization, our mission is to reduce death and suffering from cancer by influencing public policy change at every level of government. Every day we see our actions impact cancer policies at the federal, state and local levels, and we look forward to the day when no one has to hear the words, "You have cancer."

As an ACS CAN volunteer, you are an Ambassador of our mission and represent the heart of our organization. You serve a critical role in moving our public policy advocacy forward because you are uniquely able to appeal to your elected officials by sharing your story. Your personal story is a powerful, essential tool you can use to remind your communities of the importance of increasing funding for cancer research, prevention and screening programs and improving quality of life for cancer patients and their loved ones.

As you become familiar with your role, please be sure to talk with your state staff partner and let us know how we might support you as an Ambassador.

Thank you again for all that you do to lead our fight against cancer.

Sincerely,



Lisa A. Lacasse, MBA

President

American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network



What is ACS CAN?

Basics of ACS CAN

The American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network (ACS CAN), the nonprofit, nonpartisan advocacy affiliate of the American Cancer Society (the Society), supports evidence-based policy and legislative solutions designed to eliminate cancer as a major health problem and works to encourage elected officials and candidates to make cancer a top national priority. ACS CAN gives ordinary people extraordinary power to fight cancer with the training and tools they need to make their voices heard. ACS CAN does not endorse candidates and is not a political action committee (PAC).

How is it different from the American Cancer Society?

ACS CAN is a 501(c)(4) organization. This nonprofit designation allows for ACS CAN to use advocacy as its primary effort to eliminate cancer through legislative action. We use your donations to support our citizen-based advocacy and lobbying efforts to end cancer. Because of the American Cancer Society's 501(c)(3) status and IRS guidelines, the Society is unable to take on these efforts to the extent of ACS CAN.

As a 501(c)(4) nonprofit organization, donations made to ACS CAN are not tax deductible.

Any other significant differences between the Society and ACS CAN?

The Society and ACS CAN are independent organizations that share the same goals: to save lives and to diminish suffering from cancer. The Society and ACS CAN take different routes to meet these shared goals.

What ACS CAN does:

- Leads national grassroots movement of cancer survivors and their families to fight cancer through advocacy
- Holds lawmakers accountable for votes on cancer-related issues
- Educates the public, lawmakers, candidates and the media about cancer issues
- Publishes voter guides

What the Society does:

- Funds research
- Provides cancer information to the public
- Educates the public on cancer treatment, prevention and early detection
- Works in local communities to help cancer patients
- Provides funding for advocacy and public policy work

Is ACS CAN political?

Although ACS CAN volunteers often remind their elected officials that “cancer is a political issue,” ACS CAN is a nonpartisan organization.

ACS CAN will not:

- Expressly endorse or advocate defeat of political candidates or political parties.
- Make contributions to or on behalf of political candidates or form Political Action Committees (PACs) to contribute money to political candidates.

How is ACS CAN funded?

ACS CAN receives money from two main sources: donations directly made to ACS CAN from foundations, organizations, corporations and individuals; and funds that are granted to ACS CAN from the Society.

What does ACS CAN do with their funds?

ACS CAN works to ensure decision makers at all levels are doing everything they can to fight cancer.

Membership fees and donations help support ACS CAN’s work. For example, ACS CAN trains and organizes its volunteers so they can effectively take action and communicate with their elected officials and candidates to make the fight against cancer a top priority. ACS CAN engages in legislative advocacy and pays for issue advertisements to increase government funding of cancer research, early detection, prevention and treatment programs. ACS CAN produces voter guides that detail lawmakers’ and candidates’ positions on cancer-related issues. ACS CAN also hosts debates, town forums and other events to discuss candidates’ views on cancer-related issues.

What are the benefits of being an ACS CAN member?

When you join ACS CAN, you join a nationwide grassroots organization dedicated to eliminating cancer. As a member, you will receive regular electronic newsletters to keep you informed and up-to-date on all ACS CAN progress. You may also be invited to attend ACS CAN events or to take action on important legislative issues by writing a letter, sending an e-mail or making a phone call to an elected official. Donations may fund ACS CAN’s legislative advocacy efforts to increase government funding of cancer research, prevention and treatment programs, or any of ACS CAN’s other programs. Donations to ACS CAN are not tax deductible.

What to know about the fight against cancer

Some Basic Talking Points About Cancer

We know:

- Nearly half of all cancer deaths are preventable.
- Tobacco use accounts for nearly twenty percent of all cancer deaths.
- Twenty percent of cancer deaths are attributable to overweight/obesity, inactivity and/or poor nutrition.
- Research is leading to scientific breakthroughs resulting in better screening tests, treatments and cancer-preventing vaccines.
- Breast, cervical and colon cancer screenings save lives by detecting cancer early, when it is easier and less expensive to treat.
- Inadequate access to timely, quality health care is one of the greatest barriers to winning the war on cancer. Our ability to continue to make progress against cancer relies heavily on eliminating the inequities that exist in the prevention and early detection of cancer.

Some Specific Talking Points About ACS CAN

- ACS CAN is the nation's leading cancer advocacy organization.
- ACS CAN works every day to increase government funding for cancer research and programs.
- ACS CAN is committed to working community by community and state by state until all restaurants, bars and workplaces are smoke-free.
- ACS CAN serves as the voice of cancer patients and survivors at the federal level and in every state legislature in the country.
- ACS CAN empowers volunteers by providing the training and tools to help them make cancer a national priority.
- ACS CAN educates the public, lawmakers, candidates and the media about the importance of the government's role in defeating cancer.
- ACS CAN works to get candidates for public office "on the record" about their positions on key cancer issues.
- ACS CAN supports evidence-based policy and legislative solutions designed to eliminate cancer as a major health problem.

ACS CAN Sets its Policy Priorities & Actions to Address the Following:

Access to Health Care:

Every American deserves access to quality, affordable health care. From cancer screenings like mammograms and colonoscopies, to the latest breakthroughs in treatment, everyone should have access to the care that could prevent cancer and save their life. In addition, ensuring that low-income working families have access to affordable health insurance is proven to reduce overall health care costs.

For more information, see [Access to Health Care](#) and explore other topics below:

- Access to Health Insurance
- Access to Affordable Cancer Drugs
- Increased Access to Medicaid
- Oral Chemotherapy

Cancer Prevention:

More than half of all cancer deaths can be prevented by fully leveraging the knowledge, tools and medical breakthroughs we have today.

Providing everyone with the opportunity to have a healthy lifestyle and true access to cancer screenings – like mammograms and colonoscopies – could save thousands of lives every year.

For more information, see [Cancer Prevention](#) and explore other topics below:

- Breast & Cervical Cancer
- Colorectal Cancer
- Global Cervical Cancer
- Healthy Eating & Active Living
- Skin Cancer & Indoor Tanning

Cancer Research Funding:

Cancer research saves lives. Every new breakthrough in freeing the world from the pain and suffering of cancer, from new cures to innovative ways to prevent and treat the disease, have one thing in common: the research was in some way funded by the federal government's National Institutes of Health (NIH) and the National Cancer Institute (NCI).

Yet, when adjusting for inflation, federal funding for cancer research has seen huge cuts over the last decade. Increasing funding for cancer research must be a top budget priority for Congress.

For more information, see [Cancer Research Funding](#) and explore other topics below:

- Childhood Cancer Research
- One Degree Campaign

Quality of Life:

Less pain. Emotional stability. Caregiver support. Nutritional guidance.

These are what cancer patients and survivors need when coping with the side effects of cancer treatment. We can reduce health care spending and save more lives by looking beyond treating the cancer and focusing on treating the patient as well.

By supporting the courage, passion and determination of cancer patients and cancer survivors, we will help them defeat cancer and thrive once again.

For more information, see [Patient Quality of Life](#) and explore other topics below:

- Pain Relief
- Palliative Care

Tobacco Control:

Tobacco products are projected to kill one billion people worldwide this century. And the industry is showing no signs of slowing down, spending more than \$9 billion on marketing each year.

Despite the industry's deceptive and deadly practices, ACS CAN continues to have enormous success passing local, state and federal laws that prevent children from smoking, help adults quit and ensure the government uses its authority to regulate tobacco industry practices.

While our work has had an enormous impact on youth cigarette use, now at historic lows, the use of e-cigarettes among kids is skyrocketing. This further reinforces the importance of continuing this lifesaving work.

For more information, see [Tobacco Control](#) and explore other topics below:

- Regulation & Products
- Smoke-Free
- Prevention & Cessation
- Tobacco Taxes
- International Tobacco Prevention

Biomarker Testing:

Biomarker testing detects the presence of specific genetic alterations or molecular signatures within cancerous cells. The results of these tests can help health care providers match targeted therapies to a specific patient's needs. "Precision medicine" or "the right treatment, to the right patient, at the right time" has already improved cancer outcomes. Unfortunately, patient access to biomarker testing has not kept pace with the rate of innovation.

ACS CAN is committed to enhancing patient access to biomarker testing by advancing the following policy principles:

- Increase awareness and education of comprehensive biomarker testing and precision medicine among patients, health care providers and policymakers
- Improve access to comprehensive biomarker testing to reduce health disparities
- Ensure coverage across all insurers of appropriate comprehensive biomarker testing and precision medicines to improve health outcomes
- Support access to innovations in comprehensive biomarker testing and precision medicines by ensuring patients have access to clinical trials

EXERCISE 1-1: SO, LET'S PRACTICE "PITCHING" ACS CAN

Find someone with whom you can practice your ACS CAN talking points.

Incorporate the answers to the following questions in your pitch:

1. What is ACS CAN?
2. What has ACS CAN accomplished?

Understanding your role as an ACS CAN Volunteer

Description of the Advocacy Volunteer Structure

ACS CAN's continued success depends on the strength of its volunteers. The advocacy volunteer structure is led at the state level by a State Lead Ambassador (SLA) and within each congressional district by an Ambassador Constituent Team (ACT!) Lead. These teams handle the critical volunteer activities that support ACS CAN's local, state and federal advocacy campaigns.

There are 51 active SLAs representing each state including the District of Columbia. SLAs serve as the main contact for their U.S. senators and oversee their state's ACT! Leads in their respective congressional districts. ACT! Leads work with the SLA and ACS CAN staff to recruit volunteers and work to:

- Integrate advocacy into ACS programs like Relay For Life or Making Strides Against Breast Cancer (MSABC)
- Raise funds for ACS CAN
- Engage with media
- Mobilize other volunteers in their community

Teamwork – Turning Leadership into ACTION!

As an ACS CAN volunteer, you play a key role in the fight against cancer in your community, in your state and across our nation. By working closely together with your staff partners and other volunteers, you are building a grassroots army that decision makers at every level of government must acknowledge. And, just like building an army, we need strong leadership, capable recruits, and basic training to be effective in our fight. We also need to be able to put real power behind our actions to show that we mean business.

As individuals, we don't have much power, but collectively, we do. As you may know from Relay For Life, working as local teams across the nation can be extremely successful.

Likewise, each Leadership Ambassador needs to build and work with a team to move our shared mission forward. Each Leadership Ambassador must take initial and ongoing actions to organize the team and expand its capability. Here are specific suggestions on how to accomplish this.

If You Are a State Lead Ambassador (SLA):

A large part of your role as a State Lead Ambassador (SLA) is to head a team of Ambassador Constituent Team Leads (ACT! Leads) from each congressional district in your state. Working with your state staff partner, you will help recruit, train and mobilize ACT! Leads and coordinate activities with other key volunteer leaders such as those from Relay, Making Strides and SLAs from other states.

- 1. Recruit effective ACT! Leads** – A committed ACT! Lead in each congressional district in your state ensures that every member of Congress has contact with a skilled ACS CAN constituent leader. The ACT! Lead is the point person in each district and is tasked with building a local team of additional cancer advocates needed to exert the power to win on our issues at the local, state, and national levels. Check with your staff partner for recruiting best practices and to generate leads.
- 2. Communicate regularly with your ACT! Leads** – This can be done in person, by phone or electronically with email, Facebook, Twitter, etc. Share issue information, alerts and upcoming meetings or other activities with these key members of your state team. Help them plan specific strategies and tactics to employ during each campaign. Inform them about online or other trainings that may enhance their advocacy skills. Inquire about what else they may need to perform their important role in building and mobilizing their local teams.
- 3. Facilitate in building the ACT!** – Monitor how each ACT! Lead is working to build an effective Ambassador Constituent Team in his or her district. Suggest best practices you have learned from trainings and your own experience. Recognize volunteers who may be ready to become Leadership Ambassadors in his or her district. Report back to your staff partner on each team’s progress.
- 4. Have fun!** – Help your ACT! Leads plan a potluck. Give team members leadership or speaking roles in state lobby days and at group meetings. Give special recognition to those who go “above and beyond.” Celebrate victories together!

If You Are an Ambassador Constituent Team Lead (ACT!) Lead

- 1. Build your local district team** – No ACT! Lead can do this job alone. Work with your SLA and staff partner to identify and recruit other Ambassadors and volunteers (advocates) to form a local team of committed cancer-fighters in your district. Working together in large numbers makes us a more powerful force. We highly recommend each team recruit enough advocates to focus on critical volunteer activities: engaging media, mobilizing advocates into action, raising funds for ACS CAN and integrating advocacy into local Strides and Relay For Life events. This is your team and you should work with them and your staff partner to set goals and expectations.
- 2. Keep your team informed and active** – It is critical that you set up a regular communication process with your team so that you can update and mobilize your team members throughout your district. You should set up regular meetings (or conference calls) with your team as needed to discuss action plans and update issues. In most situations, information must be communicated quickly and accurately to have an effect on your local

decision maker. When we act together locally in large numbers, we can have a much bigger impact!

- 3. Have fun!** – As with any team, build in activities where you can get to know one another. Hold a team meeting at the new restaurant in town. Celebrate a victory with your staff partner when he or she is in the area. Recognize the hard work of your team and report best practices back to your SLA and staff partner. Remember – teamwork is contagious!

Working Within Your Volunteer Teams:

Media – Teams should build a list of local media contacts, in print, radio and television. They should monitor the media in their area to find out who is usually reporting on cancer-related issues, or public policy issues in general. Keep track of major media outlets, community papers, local TV and radio stations, as well as online publications. When appropriate, use these contacts to send out approved press releases, letters to the editor, event information or other material to build that relationship.

Mobilizing Advocates – Teams should build a contact list of all the members of the ACT! This list should include all active advocates as well as other critical relationships in the district. Working with a staff partner, teams should devise a process for easy communication with all or some of the team for meetings, events, or widespread mobilization, including advocates who have opted to stay in touch with team activities.

This may involve creating and maintaining phone trees, listservs or other communication channels. The ACT! Lead may need to designate a team member to take the lead in logistical support for tactics the team may undertake (e.g. finding appropriate venues for a press conference, setting up a meeting with a district office and calling to remind everyone to show up at the appointed time).

CAN Fundraising – Teams should seek out local fundraising opportunities, such as house parties or fundraising around a celebration. Everyone should set up personal CANRaiser pages, as well as inform the staff partner of large donor possibilities that could be pursued by ACS CAN staff. Team members should be familiar with ACS CAN's purpose and legal parameters of the organization (for example, our 501(c)(4) designation). Reviewing the ACS CAN [Frequently Asked Questions](#) material is a good start. More details on page 19.

Integrating Advocacy into Relay and Strides events – Teams can and should stay involved in their local Relay and Strides events! ACS CAN works closely with both events to introduce advocacy and team members at local Society events to inform and motivate Relay and Strides participants about opportunities to defeat cancer through legislative action. By letting these event participants know about advocacy and why joining ACS CAN is so important, they become part of the nationwide grassroots movement that is helping to place cancer at the top of the nation's agenda.

Volunteer Recruitment Tips: Know What You Need

- **Know what volunteers you need**
When someone wants to volunteer, recommend a specific way to use them.
- **Be prepared!**
Know the ACS CAN mission and why you are part of it.
- **Ask!**
Many people just need to be asked to become involved. We recommend you ask one-on-one since general invitations (“If anyone is interested ...”) rarely get you the volunteers you need. Be able to articulate what kind of time commitment you think the role will entail.
- **Pursue diversity**
Diversity (i.e., race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, religion, experience, socioeconomic, age) is important in any volunteer structure. Volunteer teams should reflect the communities in which they work and expanding the diversity of our volunteer corps is a major priority of the American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network. Your grassroots manager can assist you in developing strategies for outreach to diverse communities.
- **Reach outside your comfort zone**
Go to other organizations and those outside your social circle for volunteers.
- **Follow through, follow through, follow through!**

Volunteer Recruitment Tips: Understand What They Need

Be creative in attracting volunteers by offering a variety of positions to groups of individuals who may have been overlooked in the past. A few ideas:

- **Short-term volunteers**
These individuals are interested in activities that are short in duration, with a definite start and end date, including annual or periodic events.
- **Family volunteering**
Many individuals view volunteering as a great chance to do something as a family. This is an important resource to tap, because having an entire family talk of a struggle with cancer can provide a powerful message. Families might also be ideal as volunteers at community events because of their relationships with people from other groups like churches and schools.
- **College volunteers**
College towns provide a deep well of volunteers. Contact organizations within the institution, both social and academic, to present the ACS CAN message and cultivate an opportunity for increased involvement.

For more information on working with college volunteers, please visit the Colleges Against Cancer page at www.fightcancer.org/campus-advocacy.

- **Virtual volunteering**
Create web pages, email alerts, and other sources of Web-related involvement, allowing individuals to volunteer from the comfort of a home or work computer.
- **Volunteers with Disabilities**
Individuals with disabilities are a vast, but underused, source of volunteer talent who may be interested in a way to participate in meaningful work.
- **Social Media**
Don't forget to post about ACS CAN on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram. You can talk about your specific work, post pictures of your ACS CAN volunteer activities or even just link back to the ACS CAN pages to highlight updates on our activities, accomplishments and action opportunities.

Make sure to follow us:

Facebook: www.fightcancer.org/facebook

Twitter: www.twitter.com/acscan

Instagram: www.instagram.com/acscan

Volunteer Involvement Tips

- **Share goals**
Make sure everyone is on the same page in terms of goals.
- **Have an action plan**
This is the best way to know how to use your volunteers effectively.
- **Activate newly recruited volunteers**
Use volunteers soon after you first learn of their interest.
- **Empower them to do their job!**
Train volunteers. Give them the tools/materials they need and be a resource for them.
- **Let them do their jobs!**
The job/task may not be done exactly the way you would have done it, but that's OK. It might even turn out better.
- **Don't try to fit them into your box**
Again, a diverse group comes up with diverse ideas and solutions. Encourage that creativity.
- **Titles often scare people**
Give them the job first. Once they see they are able to do a job well, they can more easily accept the title.

- **Remember that people sometimes like to volunteer for jobs that are different from what they do every day**
Give them that opportunity to express their interests.
- **Don't carry dead weight**
Give volunteers a graceful way out if they are not able to do the job, or talk to them about a smaller task, perhaps in a different area.
- **Learn to delegate!**

Volunteer Retention *and* Recognition

- **Recruit the right person**
Time crunches often happen where you need to recruit a volunteer quickly. Unfortunately, if you recruit the wrong person or don't take time to train/equip him or her properly, you end up with the job being done incorrectly and/or the job being done by you.
- **Identify the reason**
Understand why each person volunteers and then nurture that reason.
- **Be supportive**
Try to be available, accessible and visible to your volunteers so they know you're a resource.
- **Let them know you need them**
Remind your volunteers that you need them in order for the program/project/event to be successful.
- **Clearly communicate their role and responsibilities during recruitment**
Volunteers who know up front what is expected will be more likely to a) get the job done and b) stay around for a while. Partnership agreements and job descriptions are the best tools for this.
- **Build RELATIONSHIPS! Relationships build trust. Trust builds honesty**
Calling volunteers once a month does not make a relationship. Relationship-building must be done in person – it cannot be done solely via email or voicemail.
- **Say thank you!**
You may know donors should be thanked seven (7!) times before you ask them again. Do the same thing for our most valuable asset – our VOLUNTEERS!
- **Keep in touch**
Write a note to say they're doing a great job! Don't communicate with them only when you need something. Send them a holiday card. Give them a quick call.

- **Nominate outstanding volunteers for awards**

There are many opportunities to recognize our volunteers but a few of the most obvious include the National Advocacy Awards presented each Leadership Summit & Lobby Day. Contact your staff partner for more information.

- **Affirm their satisfaction about the work they are performing**

- **Say “Thank you!” (again, and again and again...)**

EXERCISE 2-1: THE ADVOCACY VOLUNTEER STRUCTURE

Fill in the blanks with the correct volunteer(s):

1. Initiates and maintains contact with U.S. senators:

2. Develops and implements fundraising ideas for his or her district:

3. Serves as the key volunteer contact with U.S. representatives:

4. Builds relationships with local media:

5. Provides resources and information on training at Relay For Life events:

6. Helps mobilize ACTs! and carries out campaign activities:

Lobbying Basics

Lobbying legislators is about persuading them to do what you want. There are five main categories of legislators to think about:

1. Champions

All issues need a group of legislators dedicated to being tireless, committed advocates for your cause. What they can do for you is make the case to their colleagues; help develop a strong “inside” strategy; and be visible, public spokespeople. They need good information and visible support outside the Capitol.

2. Allies

This group of legislators will be on your side but can be pushed to do more – to speak up in party caucuses or on the floor.

3. Fence-sitters

Some legislators will be uncommitted on the issues, potentially able to vote either way. These are your key targets. Your lobbying strategy is to put together the right mix of “inside” persuasion and “outside” pressure to sway them your way.

4. Mellow Opponents

Another group of legislators will be clear votes against you, but they are not inclined to be active on the issue. With this group, it’s important to keep them from becoming more active by lobbying them enough to give them pause but not enough to make them angry.

5. Hard-core Opponents

Finally, there are legislators who are leading your opposition. It is important to isolate them, to highlight the extremes of their positions, rhetoric, and alliances and to give other lawmakers pause about joining them.

(Source: The Democracy Center)

Tips for Effective Lobbying

- Research your legislators’ backgrounds, committee assignments and voting records on health and cancer issues.
- In coordination with your staff partner, develop relationships with your legislators by routinely visiting, writing and calling them. Let them know you’re a constituent.
- Don’t overdo your lobbying. Only write, call or visit when you have something to say.
- Invite your legislators to visit your local cancer center to demonstrate the importance of cancer research funding.
- Put a human face to the issue. Lobby with your personal stories and real-life experiences.

- Ally yourself with other like-minded groups to demonstrate broad support; collaborate with others.
- Don't forget the media. Get your message out through letters to the editor, op-ed pieces, etc., to influence your legislators and public opinion.
- Always be positive and courteous.
- Remember to thank each of your legislators for a job well done.

How a Bill Becomes a Law: To Be Effective, Know the Process

Take the time to refresh your memory on the basics of the legislative process. Being familiar with it is critical to effectively communicating to your legislator the importance of an issue.

1. A bill is introduced in at least one chamber of the legislature.
2. It is then assigned to the committee or committees that oversee the issue the bill addresses.
3. Often, the bill is referred to subcommittee for further consideration.
4. The committee decides to approve, amend, defeat or table the bill.
5. If the bill goes forward, either amended or in its original form, the full chamber considers the bill.
6. If both chambers, the House and the Senate, approve the bill, it goes to a conference committee to work out any differences or discrepancies.
7. If both chambers approve the final bill, it continues on to the Governor or President, who can either veto or sign the bill.
8. If vetoed, the House and the Senate have the opportunity to override the veto by a vote.

(Source: Center for Lobbying in the Public Interest)

EXERCISE 3-1: REMEMBER WHY YOU GOT INVOLVED

Take a few moments to remember why you are involved with ACS CAN by thinking about these questions:

- Are you a cancer survivor, or a friend or family member of a cancer patient or survivor? If so, how did your experience influence your work with ACS CAN?
- Did someone recruit you to become involved? If so, what did that person do or say to convince you how much your work was needed?
- Are there individuals you can think of at this moment who could become passionate ACS CAN volunteers, but haven't been asked properly or by the right person?
- What events or activities offer great opportunities for people to get involved?

As much as a personal story can be effective in motivating people on Capitol Hill, it can be just as effective in recruiting volunteers. Discuss your answers with others to practice talking about *your* passion in the fight against cancer.

How we do what we CAN

Hook, Line and Sinker

Hook, Line and Sinker is a simple strategy to help you make a legislative ask. Using this approach will help ensure that you cover the key points to make your ask strong and effective.

This approach can be used in different situations, including:

- visiting your elected officials
- making a request by phone, email or letter
- speaking to the media
- testifying in a committee hearing
- recruiting volunteers & members!

Hook: Introductions

Everyone should briefly introduce themselves at the start of the meeting. Consider sharing a few unique details to underscore the fact that your group represents a broad cross section of constituents in your congressional districts.

Line: Stories and Statistics

Provide the decision-maker with local stories and/or basic statistics about your chosen issue. This could include sharing personal stories and experiences. Decision-makers especially appreciate real-life examples that put a human face on an issue.

Sinker: The Request

Stay on message! Make a clear request of the decision-maker. Ask for a commitment and then listen carefully to the response. Decision-makers often need some time to consider supporting or opposing a proposed change, but they often share important insights into their thought process. Please remember to thank them before you leave!

(Source: Soapbox Consulting)

EXERCISE 3-2: PRACTICE HOOK, LINE AND SINKER

At your next meeting:

Split up into small groups of 3 to 5 people. This way, members of your group can alternate playing the role of the volunteer spokesperson and the decision maker.

Only one person needs to deliver the Sinker. However, every person should deliver his or her own Hook and Line.

One round of Hook, Line and Sinker should be done in 8 to 10 minutes, but it also depends on how many people are in the group.

Practice! Practice! Practice!

Volunteer fundraising for ACS CAN

Fundraising is critical to our work. The easiest way to get others involved is to encourage them to become members of ACS CAN. Here are some simple tools to help you feel more comfortable raising money for ACS CAN.

Worried about what to say? Consider these ideas when approaching potential members.

- **Impact** – Tell them what ACS CAN is doing in the fight against cancer.
- **Inspiration** – Tell them your story. Why are you involved in ACS CAN?
- **Information** – Tell them what ACS CAN is working on now.
- **Inclusion** – Tell them how the voices and dollars from thousands of ACS CAN members will be heard and make a difference.
- **Interaction** – Show them www.fightcancer.org, www.fightcancer.org/canraiser, www.twitter.com/acscan and www.fightcancer.org/facebook where they can stay up to date with the latest information.

CAN Fundraising – Everyone should be prepared to work with their staff partner to help raise money to support ACS CAN’s mission. ACS CAN offers an easy-to-use online tool called CANRaiser, which allows volunteers to raise money for ACS CAN by hosting an event; celebrating a birthday; collecting donations through Lights of Hope; or even supporting our campaigns like our work to increase cancer research funding. Volunteers help engage new ACS CAN members in our work by becoming an active part of the local team.

DIY Fundraising with CANRaiser

Use your talents and interests to raise awareness and funds for ACS CAN! There are endless ways to get involved and with our online website, www.fightcancer.org/canraiser; it’s easy to set up your personal fundraising page!

Honor or Memorial – Recognize someone special or honor a loved one’s memory

Create Your Own Event – Organize a party, have a bake sale, host a fundraiser or fundraise for your birthday, anniversary, wedding or special occasion

Lights of Hope – Recognize someone with a Light of Hope bag in Washington, D.C.

Cancer Research– Help our campaign increase federal funding for cancer research

No matter what you choose to do, ACS CAN is here to help and support you. Don’t be afraid to reach out to your staff partner with any questions.

Follow these steps to help get you started!

1) Set-up your personal CANRaiser page

- Visit www.fightcancer.org/canraiser and set up your fundraising page
- Enter in your fundraising goal
- Personalize your fundraising page
 - Add a photo or video
 - Share your story and explain what your fundraiser is
- Create a custom URL so that people can easily find your page.

2) Let your friends know about your fundraiser

- Send emails inviting your friends and family to your page and/or event
 - Sample email templates can be found inside your fundraising center
- Post your event URL on social media

3) Keep track of your donations and RSVP's and send thank you notes

- Log into your fundraising center and track your progress
- Send thank you emails, reminder notes and milestone congratulations
- Track your event RSVPs

4) Post Event

- If a business is hosting the event, collect one check made out to ACS CAN
- Complete an ACS CAN membership form for those donating at your event so they become a member
- Donations made through your CANRaiser page automatically make the donor a member of ACS CAN
- Turn in the money you raised offline (cash or check) to your staff partner

CANRaiser event ideas – Ask yourself...

- What are your hobbies and interests? What do you spend your free time doing? Where do you eat? What businesses do you frequent?
- What is going on in your state that fits into your CANRaiser page?
- Consider activities you all like to do and see if you can make it into a fundraiser. If you like it and your friends like it, there must be other people that like it, too!
- Ask a restaurant or business you frequent to host a fundraiser with a portion of their sales going to ACS CAN.
- Find a list of event ideas and the volunteer fundraising toolkit when you sign up for CANRaiser!

If you have questions or need help getting started, reach out to Molly Waite at molly.waite@cancer.org

Other opportunities for ACS CAN advocates

Introduction to Direct Action Organizing (DAO)

Cancer *is* a political issue. Every day, our elected and appointed officials make critical decisions about a variety of cancer issues, including funding for research, ensuring coverage for effective cancer screenings, mandating smoke-free workplaces, improving access to cancer care and many others.

It is increasingly important to have well-trained advocacy volunteers and staff who can effectively organize and win these important political battles in our ongoing campaign against cancer.

One proven organizing model we use at ACS CAN is called Direct Action Organizing (DAO). DAO provides a strategic framework by which we can organize the many people affected by cancer and motivate them to take action to win on our issues and build an even stronger advocacy organization.

Throughout the year, we provide nationwide DAO training opportunities. The goal of the training is to have you – our key volunteers – begin to “think like organizers.” As such, you can help empower our growing number of grassroots advocates to effectively interact with their elected officials and continue to win on the issues that improve the lives of cancer patients, their families and caregivers. Please contact your staff partner if you are interested in learning more or attending a DAO training.

(Source: Midwest Academy)

Taking Action

Taking part in ACS CAN’s legislative campaigns on the national, state and local level is fun and easy to do. There are activities and campaigns that we focus on year-round, and you can help to lead our campaigns to victory.

Here are some activities you can do each month to keep you and your fellow advocates engaged in our campaigns. For help or more information on any of these activities, contact your local advocacy staff partner.

January: Once Congress returns in the new year, they will begin to outline priorities for the second half of the legislative session. They begin work on the federal budget priorities for the next year as well. Late in the month, ACS CAN volunteers will hear from their staff partners about action to be taken.

February: Congress typically celebrates President’s Day with a congressional recess. During recess, members of Congress will return home to listen to constituents and hear their concerns. Working with your staff partner, you can schedule a time to talk with your member of Congress and ACS CAN will provide suggested talking points for these meetings ahead of time.

- March:** Colorectal Cancer Awareness Month is celebrated in March, and this is a perfect time to let elected officials know that they have a role in fighting colon cancer. Visit www.fightcancer.org to learn more about our campaign to fight colon cancer and what you can do to take action.
- April:** Participate in a congressional spring recess event. Contact your local advocacy staff partner for the most up-to date legislative messaging.
- May:** Send a special Mother's Day message to those special ladies in your life, encouraging them to join ACS CAN in the fight against breast cancer. ACS CAN is fighting breast cancer by working to ensure that uninsured and underinsured women have access to mammograms.
- June:** Help us celebrate the more than 14 million cancer survivors in this country. Honor all survivors by calling your members of Congress and urging them to support more funding for cancer research including the National Institutes for Health (NIH) and National Cancer Institute (NCI).
- July:** Congress recesses for Fourth of July, but we know that you won't stop fighting cancer. Send a letter to the editor of your local newspaper, urging lawmakers to do their part in supporting ACS CAN's legislative agenda. You can ask your staff partner for a sample letter to the editor.
- August:** Members of Congress return to their districts in August to work directly with their constituents. Check out <http://www.fightcancer.org> to review our current legislative priorities and then stop by the office of your member of Congress with a personal note about how these matter to you. It's also a great time to remind them you'll be stopping by their office in Washington, D.C., during our annual Leadership Summit and Lobby Day in September.
- September:** If you cannot join ACS CAN at its annual Lobby Day on Capitol Hill this month in Washington, D.C., host a house party to let your friends and family know what ACS CAN is doing to fight cancer and what things advocates will be doing in D.C. to advance our legislative agenda.
- October:** Take part in Breast Cancer Awareness Month by sending a letter or making a phone call to your elected leaders. Urge them to fully fund the National Breast and Cervical Cancer Early Detection Program.
- November:** Fight tobacco during the American Cancer Society's Great American Smokeout®. Call or email your members of Congress and urge them to support our tobacco legislation this legislative session.
- December:** With the end of the year, it's time to celebrate our victories and prepare for the next year of success. Visit your local elected officials' offices, and give or send them holiday cards, thanking them for their support, as well as providing a "wish list" of cancer priorities that you want them to accomplish in the new year.

Online Resources

ACS CAN and the American Cancer Society are committed to providing you with the tools and training you need to flourish in your role.

For more information and resources, please visit the following web sites:

- www.fightcancer.org
This is the official site of ACS CAN and the primary source of tools, resources, and information on ACS CAN campaigns, state pages, and action opportunities.
- www.fightcancer.org/volunteerhome
This volunteer web page serves as a virtual hub in which you can find information and training resources as well as tools and materials for making an impact.
- www.facebook.com/groups/ACSCANConnection/
This Facebook group offers a way to connect with fellow ACS CAN volunteers. Joining the private group requires answering a few simple questions from the group administrators.