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In Review: Academic Debates

On Thursday, March 2nd, a record breaking 250+ healthcare professionals came together for the 14th annual Academic Debates in downtown Chicago. The evening began with an hour of networking with colleagues and visiting exhibit booths. The program opened with a welcome from ALF Great Lakes Division Medical Advisory Committee Co-Chairs, Dr. Nancy Reau and Dr. Lisa VanWagner, followed by an explanation of the format of the program and rules for the competition. The first debate was on the topic of hepatitis C and the question at hand was “Is there are a subgroup of patients with advanced fibrosis who no longer need to be monitored after Hep C eradication”. Northshore argued a pro-stance while University of Illinois argued a con-stance and after each team had an opportunity for rebuttal, Northshore was announced the victors. The second debate focused on transplantation, specifically if “survival rates of 1 and 3 years are the best outcome measures for success”. University of Chicago argued a pro-stance while Loyola University argued a con-stance and after thought-provoking arguments and rebuttal, Loyola was voted victorious by the panel of judges. The final debate topic of whether moderate alcohol use is beneficial in NASH was between Rush University and Washington University in St. Louis, the travelling team of the night. In the end, the judges felt Rush scored higher and won the round. In addition to the opportunity of winning the debate, each university had the opportunity to win the coveted Liver Trophy. This Trophy was awarded to Rush, the team who raised the most money for the American Liver Foundation throughout the night. It was agreed that we achieved our goal which is to promote thought-provoking conversation between the various health systems and inspire new research and discoveries in the liver world.

Secure Your Place in the Bank of America Chicago Marathon!

The ALF Great Lakes Division is proud to be selected once again as a charity partner in the Bank of America Chicago Marathon for 2017. This year is the 40th anniversary of the race and a limited number of spots will be available. While the early registration period has already closed, the ALF Great Lakes Division is offering guaranteed entries to the race with a fundraising minimum of only $1,500. All Team ALF runners will have access to incredible benefits and fundraising rewards.

Register [here](#) or email [Tatiana](#) with any questions!
Get Fit Launches New Tier System

This month Get Fit introduced a new tier system of their workplace wellness programming to businesses and individuals. Get Fit, a revolutionary workplace wellness program being piloted by the ALF Great Lakes Division, is currently serving over 2,500 people and over 500 businesses. The program is designed to be a wellness solution for workplaces of all sizes featuring customized, on-demand live education, high-quality, evidence-based materials, monthly programming opportunities, employee discounts and more. The newly released no-cost level offers the same high-quality educational and empowerment materials as the other levels, minus the hands on component. To start receiving your complimentary Get Fit Wellness Materials as an individual or employee, click here. To register your business for any of the Get Fit campaign tiers or inquire about sponsorship opportunities, email Brandon.

New Fundraising Incentives Offered at Liver Life Walks

The ALF Great Lakes Division is proud to bring six Liver Life Walks to the states of Illinois and Michigan. The flagship Liver Life Walk of the Great Lakes Division will take place in Chicago on June 10th at Diversey Harbor. The remainder of Community Liver Life Walks will take also take place on June 10th in Northbrook, Wheaton, Oak Lawn, and Detroit with an additional walk in Holland, Michigan on September 23rd. Registration has already begun for all of the walks and participants are encouraged to create or join a team. New this year, individuals who create a team before April 15th will receive an ALF-branded Team Captain baseball cap to proudly wear on the day of the Walk.

The Great Lakes Division is also excited to share a brand new fundraising incentive for ALL participants! Each registered walker has the opportunity to earn $500 a week through their fundraising efforts until May 15th. How it works: starting April 1st thru the 30th, for each donor who donates at least $25 to your personal fundraising page, you will receive one $1 scratch-off lotto ticket ($500 a Week for Life, based on availability in IL or MI). All of the proceeds of your fundraising will go to the American Liver Foundation and if you do happen to receive a winning ticket, it is yours to keep or donate back to ALF. The promotion will be extended from May 1st to the 15th, but you will only receive a lotto ticket for donors who donate a minimum of $50 to your fundraising page. These incentives will be distributed at the Liver Life Walk and you must attend the walk to receive them. Register and start your fundraising today to help us raise the critical funding we need to fulfill our mission and possibly earn your chance at winning $500 a Week for Life! Please read all the rules of the contest here.
On March 14th ALF staff, board members, and members of the National Patient Advisory Committee marched through snowy conditions to Capitol Hill to advocate for patients with liver disease. ALF Great Lakes Division Community Outreach and Education Manager, Sarah Koltun, was joined by ALF GLD Board President Dr. Donald Jensen, and ALF GLD Board Member Toni Feldstein. The group spent the day in meetings with their Senators’ and Representatives’ offices advocating for patient protections in the healthcare system. Tom Nealon, ALF National Board Chair and CEO, went into detail about the meetings, “we advocated for a strong federal investment in liver disease research at the National Institutes of Health, particularly the National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases-Liver Diseases Branch, public health awareness at the Center for Disease Control and Prevention’s Division of Viral Hepatitis, and increased patient access to care and quality treatments”. On the final day at Capitol Hill, several ALF Community Outreach and Education Managers, including Sarah from the Great Lakes Division, led a training for members of the National Patient Advisory Committee. The American Liver Foundation is committed to being a trusted voice for individuals living with liver disease and will continue advocacy efforts on a local and national level.

Volunteer Spotlight: Heidi Haglund

This month we are highlighting Michigan-based volunteer, Heidi Haglund. Heidi has volunteered her time and leadership to the ALF mission for several years. Heidi is extremely involved in our Liver Life Walk program and is always stepping up whenever asked. This year, we are excited to have Heidi as the Volunteer Walk Coordinator for the Holland Liver Life Walk in September. In addition to coordinating the walk, Heidi captains her team, Hoot & Haggi, to raise awareness for liver disease. Please visit Heidi’s Liver Life Walk team page and make a donation today to thank her for all of her support to the ALF over the years!
Kick-off Digestive Disease Week with ALF!

Calling all medical professionals!

Join the ALF Great Lakes Division Medical Advisory Committee kick-off Digestive Disease Week with a debate and panel discussion about DAA in the treatment of HCV patients with advanced liver disease. This event will include access to the Get Fit cocktail reception, dinner, and discussion. Email Sarah to register for the event or with any questions! Registration coming soon!

In Review: Michigan Liver Symposium

The ALF Great Lakes Division has relaunched educational programs in Michigan by partnering with the University of Michigan Health Systems Transplant Center to present a CME accredited program for medical professionals from the Ann Arbor area. Dr. Grace Su began the evening with her presentation on viral hepatitis followed by Dr. Pratima Sharma who discussed portal hypertensions management, with a final presentation on the topic of liver cancer by Dr. Neehar Parikh. All of the presenters provided very informative detail on their topics and answered questions from the audience of about 45 medical professionals. The ALF Great Lakes Division and the University of Michigan Liver Program look forward to expanding our partnership and intend to provide additional medical education and patient education programs in the future. (Right: Dr. Grace Su presenting on viral hepatitis)

Upcoming Events

- **Monthly Webinar Series**— 1st of every month—April: Financial Literacy
- Pre-DDW Kick-off— May 5th
- **Liver Life Walk**— Saturday, June 10 in Chicago, Northbrook, Wheaton, Oak Lawn & Detroit
- **Journeys**— September 8
- Holland Liver Life Walk— September 23
- **Chicago Marathon**— October 8
- Town Hall Meeting— October tbd
Your donation helps us fight liver disease and promote liver health. We appreciate your generous support.

To make a donation, click here.