

Eric Schwartz Rides in the Tour de Cure

By Michael Filosa



*Eric Schwartz prior to a 50 mile training ride for the Tour de Cure
(Photo by Marietta Schwartz)*

Eric Schwartz is a long-time NESACS member who works at Celgene- Avilomics Research in Bedford, Massachusetts. Eric received his Ph.D. from U. Wisconsin-Madison with Professor Ed Vedejs and was a post-doctoral fellow with Professor Dennis Curran at U. of Pittsburgh. Eric then worked at a variety of local pharmaceutical companies including Eisai, UCB Research, Biogen-IDEC, Resolvix Pharmaceuticals and Avila Therapeutics.

For fitness Eric initially was a regular participant in a spin class. This class subsequently catalyzed his participation in outdoor cycling. Through this spin/cycling group Eric became friends with a diabetic training for the Tour de Cure. The Tour de Cure is a series of 80 cycling fundraisers held in 44 states involving 55,000 participants, sponsored by the American Diabetes Association. In 2011 these Tour de Cure events raised \$18 million. In 2010 the ADA funded \$34 million in research at 125 different institutions.

Eric helped his friend train in 2011, but had a conflict preventing his own participation. This year Eric is riding the Tour de Cure New England Classic 150, which starts from Woburn, Massachusetts on July 14 and will finish on July 15 in Biddeford, Maine after 150 miles of cycling. It will be held concurrently with the New England Classic 500, which will follow the same course to Biddeford but swing over across New Hampshire into Vermont before returning to the start in Woburn on July 20th.

Since these types of events are difficult to stage, each rider must commit to a substantial fundraising minimum in order to participate. Eric must raise a minimum of \$800 to ride in the 150-mile event. The 500-mile event has a minimum of \$2500. Eric mentioned that his

fundraising is going well and he hopes to raise \$1500. You can help Eric meet and exceed his goal while also helping those suffering from diabetes by going to the following link: http://main.diabetes.org/site/TR/TourdeCure/A1ENE-NewEnglandArea?px=7310431&pg=personal&fr_id=8027, clicking on the “Support a Rider” button, entering “C. Schwartz” and making a contribution.

While Eric is doing the Tour de Cure this year, he has thoughts of riding in the Pan Mass Challenge (PMC) next year. *The Nucleus* has published stories in the past about Pan Mass Challenge participation by NESACS members and their families. For articles on participation by NESACS members and their families in the PMC see the September 2007 and September 2008 issues of *the Nucleus*.



Nucleus editor Michael Filosa (far right) with friends at the Webster, MA water stop during the 2010 Tri-State Trek first day ride from Newton, MA to Storrs, CT

Other than the PMC and Tour de Cure, there are many other rides and causes which have attracted the participation of NESACS members:

- The Tri-State Trek <http://tst.als.net/> supports Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis (ALS) research. This ride is very demanding and runs from Newton, MA, across Connecticut to New York and finishes in Greenwich, CT after three days and 270 miles.
- The American Cancer Society has started a cycling fundraiser called Bicycles Battling Cancer http://community.acsevents.org/site/TR?fr_id=41596&pg=entry. Teams from Astra-Zeneca and Genzyme are leading fundraisers in this one-day ride which starts and finishes in Lancaster, MA.
- The Best Buddies Challenge <http://www.bestbuddieschallenge.org/> is another prominent ride featuring the New England Patriots’ Tom Brady as a celebrity host/participant. This ride is held the first Saturday in June and runs 100 miles from the Kennedy Library in Dorchester to the Eunice Kennedy Shriver Center at Craigville Beach.
- The MS Society also sponsors a number of walks and rides. NESACS member Xavier Herauld
- and his team, the X-Men, have participated in the Concord MS Walk for several years.

There are many rides and many great causes. If you can’t participate yourself, please support your NESACS colleagues and your friends and neighbors in their efforts to financially support and publicize these important causes while at the same time improving and enjoying their own health and fitness.