



The Tough Mudder



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I can't say this enough: Thank you! Thank you, brothers and sisters, for all your hard work! 2021 is over and 2022 is here. Happy New Year!

On Oct. 17, 2021, Team NALC ran/walked the DC Tough Mudder 5K in Mechanicsville, MD. Team NALC raised \$19,261 this year and \$3,982 in 2020 before the event was canceled, raising a total of \$23,243 for the Muscular Dystrophy Association.

The Tough Mudder competition is a place for you to push your physical and mental limits without the pressure of actual competition. A community built on teamwork and overcoming obstacles, where stepping outside your comfort zone is the reward.

Tough Mudder races are just that—challenging and muddy, but fun. While the obstacle course requires endurance and muscle strength, our team proved that you can raise money, work as a team, have fun and get muddy. Oh yeah, we also are challenging ourselves. During the Tough Mudder, competitors of all shapes and sizes took to the motocross hills to participate in the DC Metro Area Tough Mudder. Many people participated this year who were not able to do so last year due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

During the Tough Mudder 5K, the team of 13 helped each other complete an obstacle course race that covers 5 kilometers. This course allowed us to challenge ourselves without the pressure of timings and competition. Thirteen teamwork-focused obstacles stood between us and the finish line.

We began the Mudder running up and down several steep mounds, running and sliding down muddy hills butt-first, and getting extra dirty but staying together as a team. The first obstacle was the Kiss of Mud, which required Army-crawling through the mud under a net of barbed wire. Then as the day went on, we slogged through a series of flooded trenches where we had to work together as a team to get each other across. Assistant to the President for Administrative Affairs Chris Henwood stated, "I had a blast running the Tough Mudder and working as a team to get through the course and to help raise funds for MDA."

Climbing walls, hay bales were only a few of the things we had to do. One of the walls we climbed was called the Mudderhorn. This was the tallest obstacle on the course. The Mudderhorn stood almost three stories high; if you have a fear of heights, get over it. Not really—if you feel like you can't do it, you can walk around, and the team is here to support you. All we had to do was stay calm and climb up and down like we were on a giant ladder.

One of the other signature obstacles is Everest. The only way to get up and over the top is to run up the wall, grab the hand of another Mudder and have them pull you up and over

the summit. Hats off to MBA Supervisor Giana Sauter. She is the only one who conquered Everest.

Many of the teammates stated that they did not think they would ever have participated in a Tough Mudder, but they were excited about their accomplishments after completing the course. J. Anthony Mitchell of Kansas City, MO Branch 30, stated, "Starting from the first hill, I knew I would be pushing myself. With our team, we were able to push each other and help each other conquer the obstacles throughout the course. Like belonging to a union, everyone on the Tough Mudder team helped and encouraged each other throughout the day. Without the team, I don't know if I would have finished, but I did."

The ending was electrifying—or terrifying to some. As we approached the end of the Mudder, we came to a field of wires dangling from a rectangular frame, clicking as 10,000 volts crackled through them, just waiting for you to run right into it. It's called Electroshock Therapy, and we race arm-in-arm through 10,000 volts of electricity. A zap here and a zap there—some of us went down to our knees, but we didn't quit. We got back up and ran to the finish line.

After the race, we stuck around the Tough Mudder village and enjoyed the beer, the food, and the atmosphere. Mitchell stated, "I had a great time and will do it again. If you ever get to participate in a Tough Mudder, take advantage of it. If I can do it, you can too."

Thanks to all who donated and participated. The 2022 DC Tough Mudder is scheduled for Oct. 8; you can find the registration form, donation form and sponsor form on the website. The new link will be provided on the website and social media at the beginning of this year.

Again, we have been successful in raising money for MDA in past years because of branch leadership and coordinators. I can tell you that MDA sings your praises at every opportunity. They are grateful for you, my sisters and brothers. Again, I want to thank all those who have worked so hard to raise money for MDA. Let me end with this: Remember, you never know when it might be you or someone you love who may need help. So, give to those in need, even if it's just a little bit.



Left: The NALC DC Tough Mudder team crosses a muddy obstacle. Right: The team goes over the Everest obstacle. Top: The team celebrates post-Mudder.