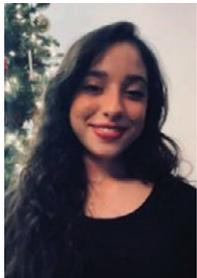


2024 national ambassadors

MDA's ambassadors are pivotal to its mission, empowering people living with neuromuscular disease to live longer, more independent lives. Each year, these ambassadors volunteer to share their experiences and perspectives about living with neuromuscular disease, talking about how MDA has affected their lives and the importance of supporting MDA, and dedicating their time and talents to valuable advocacy efforts and a multitude of events geared to support MDA's mission.

MDA has announced its 2024 national ambassadors: Leah Z and Ira Walker.



Leah Z

Leah shares her experiences being an ambassador and what she is looking forward to in her second year as an ambassador.

How would you describe your first year as a MDA national ambassador? Being national ambassador for the Muscular Dystrophy Association has truly been one of the greatest experiences of my life. I have learned and seen so many amazing things that MDA has done for people living with neuromuscular disease. I am so thankful for the opportunity to be a national ambassador and to be able to share my story on a national level.

What are you looking forward to in your second year as a national ambassador? I hope to bring the neuromuscular disease community even closer and influence others to become ambassadors in order to continue to raise awareness. This is so important to me because hearing others from our community share their stories has personally given me hope and inspiration to continue striving. And I want everyone in the community to know that sharing your story is important and empowering—hearing others' stories has certainly encouraged me!

What is one thing you would like everyone out there to know about MDA that you think may not be widely known? One thing that people might not know about the MDA is that they truly work hard to get the latest and best treatment for their patients. They have truly given the gift of life back to their patients. Everyone who is a part of the MDA family should be proud of the impeccable work they have done and continue to do.

Below, Ira shares his experiences and goals as an ambassador.

What are you most excited about as you become MDA national ambassador? Being a member of the MDA family since my youth, it's a humbling and great

honor to be named the 2024 MDA ambassador. My mission and ambition are to frequently meet with individuals and their families through in-person engagements and virtually to offer encouragement, motivation and hope for a bright tomorrow.

What is your biggest goal as a national ambassador? Having fully obtained independence as an adult with a neuromuscular disease in beautiful south Florida, I'm committed to utilizing this platform as a national ambassador to encourage and inspire others with neuromuscular disease to reach for independence and to be a guide to help many achieve their goals and aspirations on independence. A secondary goal is to be a part of innovative activities and initiatives that extend gratitude and appreciation to all our men and women in uniform and first responders that support us on a daily basis and participate in MDA's mission.

What does MDA advocacy mean to you? By utilizing the journey of my life, the passion and spirit of MDA, and the power of voice, I'm of the belief that my role as an ambassador offers the opportunity to be a part of true change.

Reminders: If you want any of your branch events to be shared on social media, please send them to mda@nalc.org, c davidson@nalc.org or social@nalc.org. Please continue to send copies to NALC Headquarters of all items your branch sends to MDA so that we can give your branch credit for 2024.

Please visit the 2024 NALC/MDA national donor page to see whether your branch has been registered to use for online donations: mda.donordrive.com/event/NALC2024. If your branch has not been registered, please contact Tawny Saunders to assist your branch to register.

Saunders is the new account director for NALC with MDA. She might seem familiar because she worked for MDA from 2016 to 2021 as the executive director for Kansas City, often working with branches in Kansas and Missouri.

If you have any questions, you can contact NALC at 202-662-2489 or mda@nalc.org, or contact Tawny Saunders at 312-392-1100 or nalc@mdausa.org.

—Christina Vela Davidson



Ira Walker