



**National
Multiple Sclerosis
Society
Ohio Buckeye
Chapter**

Ohio Buckeye Chapter
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VOLUNTEERS

NATIONAL RECOGNITION FOR ADVOCACY EFFORTS

Samantha Villella received the first District Activist Leader of the Year Award at the National MS Society's 25th Annual Public Policy Conference on March 14, 2016. She has fostered key relationships with her senators and representatives, cultivated friendships with key staff members, aided efforts to better understand constituent relations and made those around her aware of opportunities to advocate for change. Most recently, she worked with U.S. Representative Tim Ryan's office to get a proclamation declaring March as MS Awareness Month.

The Villella family has been affected not once,



**NMSS VICE PRESIDENT
OF LOCAL AND
STATE GOVERNMENT
RELATIONS, KAREN
MARINER, PRESENTED
SAMANTHA VILLELLA
WITH HER AWARD.**

but twice, by an MS diagnosis. Her mom, Kathy, was diagnosed with the disease in 2008 and her sister, Nikki, was diagnosed with MS in 2014.

“My commitment to my mom, my sister, and all of those who have MS is that I will be their voice,” Samantha said. “I will be an MS activist. I plan to continue advocating and working with elected officials so that one day MS will be a thing of the past.” ■