

# Champions Of Courage

## More Than 3,000 Miles Of Inspiration

(NAPSA)—A cyclist and a horseman traveled more than 3,000 miles across the United States to inspire people with disabilities. Delbert Richardson 48, from Wichita, KS, and Michael Muir, 49, from Woodland, CA began separately, but they shared a common goal: to demonstrate that people with multiple sclerosis (MS)—or any disability—can overcome physically and emotionally demanding challenges. They finished their cross-country journeys in Washington, D.C.

Both Richardson, who traveled solo in a recumbent bicycle that resembled a little car, and Muir, who led a horsedrawn carriage from a wheelchair, have MS, a neurological disease that affects more than 350,000 Americans. In addition to combating their illness, each of them also found themselves battling the harshest of conditions: extreme temperatures, ranging from 20 degrees to well over 100 degrees; treacherous mountain roads; more than 50 flat tires and 200 worn horseshoes; getting lost in the desert without water; dangerous snakes; loneliness; losing control of the horses in the middle of a town and countless other trials. It was a journey that few Americans could imagine, yet alone complete.

“We were determined not to let this disease or any other obstacle prevent us from reaching Washington, D.C.,” said Delbert Richardson, who will be a torch bearer in the Winter Olympics. “By finishing what we set out to accomplish and celebrating in our nation’s capital, we hoped to show not only the potential of people with MS, but the potential of all of us in this country—disabled or not. It was really fitting to end our journey in our nation’s capital.”

Richardson, diagnosed with MS in 1997, got the idea for a solo cross-country bike trip in a dream



**MS champions Richardson and Muir complete cross-country journeys to demonstrate that people with disabilities can lead fulfilling lives.**

in which he saw himself pedaling across America.

Muir, a life-long horseman and the great-grandson of Sierra Club founder and naturalist John Muir, has had MS since age 15. Muir has never allowed his symptoms to slow him down. In search of ways to challenge himself, he announced that he would travel the United States in his custom-made carriage, pulled by a team of Stonewall Sporthorses he has bred since the age of 12. The dream became a reality when Muir began his 3,000-mile horse-drawn journey across America on January 30.

Richardson’s and Muir’s missions were funded in part by Betaseron® Champions of Courage, a program that recognizes the accomplishments of people with MS and provides support for their inspirational activities. For more information visit [www.championsofcourage.org](http://www.championsofcourage.org).