



Craig Szczuka
2013 Jingle Bell Run/Walk
Chairperson/Honoree
St. Louis, MO

Craig Szczuka remembers when he was in high school, and his mother was diagnosed with rheumatoid arthritis (RA). Craig said, "It killed me to see her have flare ups and not be able to get out of bed." He felt as though there was nothing he could do to make her pain go away. Craig shared, "The only thing I felt like I could do was help raise money to educate people about the prevention and control of arthritis and to maybe one day find a cure."

This desire compelled Craig to start volunteering for the St. Louis area Jingle Bell Run/Walk. He did it to let his mom know that he was aware of what she was going through. Craig became committed to helping his mom fight arthritis, and he was determined that they would fight it together.

In 2011, when Craig was 29 years old, he started showing signs of arthritis. He went to his primary doctor who knew right away by the redness of his hands that there was something wrong. Craig was given a blood test and the results showed his rheumatoid factor was through the roof. Craig's doctor sent him to a specialist, and on February 22, 2012 Craig was diagnosed with rheumatoid arthritis. "Although my arthritis is under control, it is not gone and I still have days when I can't move my arm, foot or hand. Keeping it under control means I have to give myself a shot (50mg Enbrel) once a week."

Craig's message to the Greater St. Louis area is, "Please help us to find a cure for arthritis by signing up for the Jingle Bell 5K Run/Walk or donating at www.jinglebellrunstl.org.

We are grateful for Craig sharing not only his story, but his mom's story as well. It is with great pride that we recognize Craig Szczuka as the 2013 Jingle Bell Run/Walk Chairperson and Honoree. His commitment to finding a cure for arthritis is exemplary, and the love he has for his mom is nothing short of inspirational.

About the Arthritis Foundation

The Arthritis Foundation (www.arthritis.org) is committed to raising awareness and reducing the unacceptable impact of arthritis, which strikes one in every five adults and 300,000 children, and is the nation's leading cause of disability. To conquer this painful, debilitating disease, we support education, research, advocacy and other vital programs and services.