

Operation Creating Hope

The American Childhood Cancer Organization is partnering with Kids v Cancer (<http://www.kidsvcancer.org/>) to identify approximately 5 to 10 articulate and dedicated Advocacy Leaders who are ACCO members and who would like to engage and provide leadership at the local level on childhood cancer advocacy initiatives. We are seeking individuals whose children have been diagnosed with cancer and available to serve in capacity as regional/state Advocacy Leader over a period of several years.

Called **Operation Creating Hope**, these individuals will advocate for the **Creating Hope Act** and other pediatric cancer initiatives including the addition of pediatric cancer language to the state cancer plans if applicable. The partnership will be organized around monthly calls and/or videoconferencing with the Advocacy Leaders who would be briefed on what is happening with the Creating Hope Act, as well as what is happening generally in DC pertaining to pediatric cancer policy.

The Advocacy Leaders would be trained via videoconferencing and conference calls on how to effectively advocate for the Creating Hope Act from their own home. The Advocacy Leaders would be responsible for organizing their local childhood cancer community to send letters to the staff of their Members of Congress. The goal would be a steady stream of letters, whether it's 10 per month or 50 per month, over many years. The Advocacy Leaders would also form their own regional and state based community of people to send emails to the staff and, on occasion, visit them in their local offices. The purpose of the regular communication via letters, emails and local visits would be to form personal relationships with the Representative's staff. Letters and emails should include not only requests to support the Creating Hope Act and pediatric cancer initiatives, but also a personal account of what it's like to have a child with cancer—what treatments are like, whether there were any drugs shortages, when a child finishes treatment, graduates from elementary school, gets a job, experiences a late-effect, develops a secondary cancer etc.. These relationships are intended to seed awareness and new energy in Congress to address our community's needs.

The monthly calls would create a form of community for the Advocacy Leaders which would also build on the existing constituency attending Washington D.C. based Pediatric Cancer Lobby Day. We are looking for a handful of well-placed Advocacy Leaders who are willing to take time to make a significant difference in the relationship that families have in each state with their Representatives and Senators. We are initially interested in individuals interested in becoming Advocacy Leaders in Iowa, Wyoming, Pennsylvania, Massachusetts, Texas, Maryland and North Carolina.

If you feel that you would be interested in serving as one of ACCO's Advocacy Leaders for Operation Creating Hope, please contact ACCO's Executive Director Ruth Hoffman at: rhoffman@acco.org