Ever since the ALS Ice Bucket Challenge went viral during late June, Truman State students have been cooling off from the summer heat by pouring a large bucket full of iced water over their heads to raise awareness for ALS, or amyotrophic lateral sclerosis.

The challenge consists of videotaping one’s self pouring a bucket of iced water over one’s head within 24 hours of being nominated by someone and subsequently donating a small sum of money toward ALS research. In turn, those who accept the challenge nominate one or more people as well. If the nominee does not complete the challenge, they are asked to donate $100 toward ALS research. ALS is a neurodegenerative disease that progressively weakens and destroys neurons throughout the body, according to the ALS Association. As many as 30,000 Americans currently are affected by the disease, including notable sufferers such as the late baseball legend Lou Gehrig, according to the ALS Association. The ALS Association stated on their website they raised more than $88.5 million from the challenge as of Aug. 26.

Sophomore Cheryl Petzoldt said students should make an effort to research diseases such as ALS so they can identify symptoms early on. The same doctors originally diagnosed her aunt with arthritis in her lower back, but the diagnosis was later changed to ALS. There currently is no known cure for the disease.

Once Petzoldt heard her aunt had the disease, she said she learned of other people close to her that were affected. She said taking part in the challenge is important because it supports her aunt as well as everyone else affected. She said it put her in her aunt’s shoes because the cold water is supposed to simulate what it feels like for one’s body to lock up as nerves begin to fail throughout time. She said students should take the challenge because the disease is not just genetic but could happen to anyone the same way anyone can be nominated.

“I felt good doing the challenge because I am supporting so many people,” Petzoldt said. “Most importantly, it is about raising awareness and showing people that we care.”

Sophomore Christy Crouse said a close friend nominated her on Facebook to take the challenge. She said she didn’t initially see what the impact was until she researched ALS and saw how much support the challenge was gathering.

“I didn’t know much about the disease at first but once I started researching it, it really opened my eyes,” Crouse said. “I learned about others’ stories and of a friend I had who died from the disease.”

When watching her own video, Crouse said she could see a look of anticipation on her face because the water was colder than expected. She said it was a lot of fun and she was glad she could show support to the friend who nominated her.

Crouse said she thinks if Truman State students are passionate about a cause, they should pursue it in a creative way. She said the challenge showed that something as simple as “dumping and donating” can rally support, and that students should “keep the ball rolling.” She said the most important thing is to reach out to people who battle illness and treat them as friends.

“This is a reminder to show support to our friends and family,” Crouse said. “It is surprising to figure out what some people may be going through.”

Viral video challenge puts ALS on ice

Truman State students discuss their connections to the ALS Ice Bucket Challenge and how “dumping and donating” has made an impact throughout their lives

By Clayton Berry
Staff Reporter

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Sophomore Christy Crouse

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sunday garden outside Magruder Hall in full bloom

Flowers and shrubs bask in the afternoon heat in the garden located on the south side of Magruder hall. The garden features a series of concrete pathways laid out in a sundial pattern with a metal obelisk acting as the shadow-casting dial.