



FIGHTING CANCER EVERY MILE

WWW.TEXAS4000.ORG



TEXAS 4000 MISSION

Our mission is to cultivate student leaders and engage communities in the fight against cancer. Students from The University of Texas are competitively selected to participate in an 18-month leadership development and training program prior to departing for a more than 4,000-mile bicycle ride from Austin, Texas, to Anchorage, Alaska. Putting on the longest annual charity bike ride in the world, Texas 4000 has raised more than \$5.5 million in the fight against cancer since our inception in 2003. Texas 4000 is dedicated to fighting cancer by sharing hope, knowledge, and charity.

HOPE

We share hope by letting those touched by cancer know that we are riding for them and fighting for a world without cancer.

KNOWLEDGE

We share knowledge by bringing life-saving information about cancer prevention to communities and providing leadership development training to tomorrow's leaders.

CHARITY

We share charity by contributing to cancer research and cancer support services while developing the next generation of volunteers and philanthropists.

TEXAS 4000 OVERVIEW

Texas 4000 is a unique organization that combines leadership development, physical training, cancer awareness outreach, volunteer opportunities, and philanthropic commitment. Each year, approximately 90 students are competitively selected for participation based on the following:

- Passion to fight cancer – including previous involvement & future goals
- Leadership & communication skills
- Demonstrated ability to be a team player

The Texas 4000 executes the longest annual charity bike ride in the world extending from Austin, Texas to Anchorage, Alaska. The ride takes the students 70 days, averaging 70+ cycling miles per day. The team splits into three groups of 24–30 riders to travel separate routes until they meet again for the last 10 days to ride together into Anchorage. The routes are called Sierra, Rockies, and Ozarks.

Note: Cycling experience is not a requirement. Some participants have never been on a bike before!

Wherever they are along the journey, the riders begin their day by gathering in a circle to reflect on their mission to fight cancer. Often joined by their hosts, everyone shares ride dedications for the day – usually made in honor or in memory of someone they know or have met along the way who is fighting cancer.



I wish everyone reading this could be part of one of our ride dedication circles. I've been honored to participate in several and I cherish the opportunity to share with the team about my loved ones impacted by cancer. Emotions tend to run high as we go around the circle sharing our reasons for riding, hearing stories about people the riders met along the way who provided additional inspiration, and listening to the many ways riders have grown and changed as a result of their Texas 4000 experience."

— Jen Garza
Executive Director, Texas 4000

TEXAS 4000 OVERVIEW

Each team member participates in our 18-month program that includes the following commitments:

- Raise \$4,500
- Ride 1,500 training miles with his/her team
- Volunteer more than 50 hours in the community

While the signature event of Texas 4000 is the Summer Ride from Austin to Anchorage, the Texas 4000 program encompasses so much more from a leadership development standpoint. The Texas 4000 program empowers riders to plan all logistical aspects of the ride. This includes securing lodging, obtaining food donations, providing riding support, and identifying speaking engagements to promote cancer awareness along the routes.

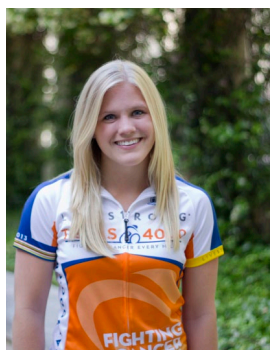
The Texas 4000 program includes a comprehensive training curriculum on grassroots fundraising, volunteerism, media training, and the basic operations of a nonprofit. Riders receive physical training through group workouts and boot camps, skills and mechanical clinics, and organized training camps. In the spring semester before the ride, the team receives intensive safety and crisis management training, wilderness safety, first aid training, and resiliency training. For those selected as leaders, training and experience in areas such as project management, conflict resolution, and team building are available through weekly meetings and progress updates with Texas 4000 staff.

The skills that the riders develop prepare them not only for the Summer Ride but also to be leaders and contributors in their communities long after their participation in Texas 4000.



“The Texas 4000 riders have given our community so much more than we have provided to them. Through hosting Texas 4000, neighbors and casual acquaintances have developed into friendships as together we’ve shared the hosting experience and personal stories of how deeply cancer has impacted each of our lives. There is never a shortage of fun, laughter and intelligent conversations as hosting this highly accomplished group of riders is nothing short of AMAZING and we highly recommend it to others.”

— Jim & “B” Gorman,
Team Hosts, South Lake Tahoe, CA



“Texas 4000 is a journey of personal growth. I’ve overcome challenges and pushed myself to levels I never thought I could reach. My teammates and the many people who shared their stories with me along the way were my inspiration. This organization is so much bigger than me.”
— Elaine Posluszny, 2014 Sierra



“I’m really excited that Texas 4000 has given me purpose. It doesn’t end today and it doesn’t end after I drive the vans back. It doesn’t end. We’ve known what it means to do something every day for other people and that sense of purpose doesn’t end.”
— Barron Peper, 2013 Ozarks



“My Texas 4000 experience taught me to never lose faith in humanity. I interacted with the most uplifting and positive people. I will never view a challenge the same way. I learned that my abilities extend further than I ever thought they could. Texas 4000 changed the goals I have for my life.”
— Ethan Perez, 2014 Sierra

HOSTING OVERVIEW



Every host is different, just as every community is different. Over the course of the ride we stay in school gyms, churches, community centers, individual host homes, and campsites. No matter the accommodations, we are always grateful to have a roof over our head and kind people to share our mission with.

If you are hosting in a city in which the team has a rest day, it can be a good idea to brainstorm a short list of suggested activities or to think of things about your city you would like to share with the riders. Because rest days are few and far between, it is also a good idea to be open to riders who may need the time to recuperate.

Additionally, rest day hosts may want to consider keeping a short-hand list of doctors or clinics in the area that can see someone on short notice. Riders often are only able to take care of minor medical issues on days off, and it can be helpful to know where to turn. It is also a good idea to let a local bike shop know in advance that there may be some rush repairs on the rest day when you are hosting - there always seem to be a few mechanical problems to be taken care of on every rest day.



Lastly, if you ever have questions, touch base with your travel contact person for each year. They are happy to answer any questions you may have. The more communication, the better!



CONSIDER HOSTING



Over the course of the summer ride, we depend on the generosity and kindness of our hosts in communities across North America to support, feed, and lodge the Texas 4000 riders.

We are grateful for any support you are able to provide. Most hosts commit to house the riders for one or more nights and provide them with dinner and breakfast. In exchange, the riders hope to share their stories and experiences with cancer with their host families. The relationship between rider and host is a unique one, and many riders remain in touch with hosts across the continent years later.

If you are hosting Texas 4000, some things to consider include:

- Would you like to provide dinner, breakfast, or both for the team, or would you rather refer them to places they can pursue for donations?
- Are you able to provide showers for the team either in your home, church, or local recreation center, or, alternatively, can you refer the team somewhere they may be able to find showers?
- Are you able to offer laundry facilities or can you refer the team to a nearby Laundromat?
- Is there an opportunity for the riders to present their cancer awareness program in your community or social group?
- Is there a safe, secure place the team can store their bicycles overnight?
- Is there a place to easily park the team's two vans and support trailer (this is especially a concern in large cities)?
- Do you have WiFi available?

HOSTING FAQ

1. How many riders are there?

The exact number each year varies, but there are approximately 25 riders on each route. If you are hosting before Day 60 of the ride, you are only accommodating one route (25 riders). If you are hosting after Day 60, you will be accommodating all three routes (75 riders).

2. What time will the riders arrive?

One of the most important things we try to communicate with hosts is arrival time, which can be delayed by weather conditions and injuries, as well as unexpected terrain. We will always try to keep in close touch with the host about our arrival time on the day we are traveling to their community, but it is not unheard of to arrive 30 minutes to an hour early or late. For this reason, we try to give time ranges.

3. What do riders like to eat for dinner? For breakfast? What about riders with special diets?

Generally, riders will eat almost anything. That being said, when we are on the road without hosts, we eat a lot of peanut butter and a lot of spaghetti with plain sauce, and it is always nice to have something different. Every rider craves different things, but a list of favorites includes: for dinner - turkey, chicken, hamburgers, potatoes, casseroles, salad, fresh fruit & vegetables, and rolls; for breakfast - yogurt, milk, orange juice, granola, egg casseroles, bacon, sausage, and fruit. We all also have a sweet tooth and desserts tend to be popular! We sometimes do have riders who are vegetarian or observe other special diets, and we always try to communicate their needs to hosts. If you are able to provide a dish that meets their needs, that's wonderful, but if not, we carry food they can easily prepare if needed.

4. Would the riders be interested in talking to the local paper/radio/TV station?

In short, yes! We are always interested in spreading our mission and would appreciate any connection you would be able to make on our behalf.

5. If we have multiple host homes, should I assign riders to homes myself?

You are welcome to do so, however, if you like, you can send the travel contact a list of homes and any requirements (gender preferences, number of riders, other concerns) and we will assign riders to each home based on the best match. It is also helpful to know if homes have any pets, in case we have riders with severe allergies.

6. If I am acting as a mail drop for riders, what should I do with mail that comes after they have already left?

If this happens and you are able, please return to sender. If this is not an option (i.e. internationally), unfortunately you have no choice but to throw the packages away. We try to make it clear to family and friends that packages must be shipped by a certain date otherwise they may not reach the riders.

GET MORE INVOLVED

HOST AN EVENT



Our host families are an integral part of the summer ride as well as our overall mission. They are our gateway to connecting to the communities along our ride to Alaska in hopes of sharing hope in the fight against cancer. Many of our hosts help us with this important piece of our mission by hosting an outreach event or get together in which we can interact with the community and share our message of hope, knowledge, and charity.

These events can look very different and can be large or small depending on the interests and needs of the host and their community. A few examples of events that hosts done in the past include a community potluck, social hour at a local bar, or even a community concert.

We see all of these events as successful as they allow our riders a way to connect with the communities along their route to Alaska that they have worked so hard to get to. If you're interested in hosting an event when the riders come through your town, please let your travel contact know and they can help support you in the planning process!



JOIN SUPPORT TEAM

The summer ride would not be possible without the generosity of our hosts, and we are so appreciative of the work it takes to host and feed our riders. Over the years, many of our hosts have asked how they can do even more to support the organization which is extremely exciting!

One way in which our hosts can take on a larger role our fight against cancer is by joining the Texas 4000 Support Team and choosing a goal to work towards. These goals can be whatever you wish and we encourage you to choose fitness or fundraising goals that are challenging for you to reach!

If you're interested in finding out more or have any questions, contact our Special Events & Alumni Relations Coordinator, Courtney Becker, at courtney@texas4000.org.



SUPPORT TEAM MEMBER SPOTLIGHT



MEGAN SMITH - CLOVIS, NM

Texas 4000 has been a part of my life since 2011 and the familial effects of cancer are some of my earliest memories (sneaking into the hospital as a toddler to visit my grandma after her breast cancer surgery). Cancer has continued to affect my life as my dad passed away from melanoma in 2003 and my cousin and best friend have also battled skin cancer. My first interaction with Texas 4000 was when my family got the opportunity to host two riders as they passed through our town of Clovis, NM.

In 2013, I got the opportunity to expand my involvement in Texas 4000 from just donating food/drinks for the riders and serving as a host home to fulfilling a position as a host coordinator with two friends and military spouses, Sarah Cross and Amy Ward. This year was especially meaningful to me as I signed my aunt's name on the banner the riders carry with them to Alaska and asked them to ride for her as she battled brain cancer. Sadly, she passed away before the riders finished their journey that year but the riders never gave up and neither did she. Each year I was devoting a little more time to Texas 4000, but as I was getting back from the riders was immeasurable. In preparation for the 2014 riders, I recall coming across some information on joining the support team and fundraising. Since learning about Texas 4000 just a few years ago, I have stood by while several friends, family members, and relatives of friends fought cancer. I was to the point where I was feeling helpless and wanted to do something, anything, and knew that raising money in support of Texas 4000 was another way to join the fight against cancer.

As part of joining the support team, I generated my fundraising website online and shared it through social media and e-mail, setting a personal goal that would enable me to earn that coveted jersey. I also designed tribute cards to sell that could be personalized in honor of or in memory of a loved one. These tribute cards were displayed at the welcome dinner and send-off breakfast we hosted for the riders. Another fundraising event I coordinated was through a local pizza restaurant. I created some informational flyers to pass out and, on prearranged days, anyone who turned in the flyer to the cashier had a percentage of their order total donated directly to Texas 4000 and could also give directly to a donation jar. This was also a great community outreach as I stood outside the restaurant and was able to share the message of hope, knowledge, and charity. Between the monetary donations from family and friends, the funds raised selling tribute cards, the percentage raised in our pizza fundraiser, and the generous donations from local businesses, I was able to exceed my fundraising goal and now can proudly wear a Texas 4000 jersey and promote this amazing organization. Cancer affects us all-old/young, rich/poor, military/civilian, and having Texas 4000 travel through Clovis has allowed all those groups to come together to support an event and a cause that we can all care deeply about.



OUR THANKS

Through the generous support of sponsors, volunteers, riders and community leaders, Texas 4000 has impacted thousands of individuals by sharing our message of hope, knowledge and charity over the past decade. We are proud to have raised more than \$5.5 million in the fight against cancer, but we know there is so much more work left for us to do in order to overcome cancer. We are energized about Texas 4000's future growth and impact and thankful you are considering hosting our team!

It doesn't take just one / It takes all of us / Let's fight cancer together



For more information on hosting the team, please contact:

Texas 4000

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info@texas4000.org, 512-329-1979

For a list of current organization needs, please visit
www.texas4000.org/get-involved/donate

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