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# Home Automation for People Living with ALS



**Jeffery Powers**  
Program Manager  
Team Gleason

**The ALS Learning Series is made possible because of the  
Gilbert & Jacqueline Fern Foundation and our industry partners.**



About Us

# Leader in comprehensive ALS care and research.

*Founded in 1977, the Les Turner ALS Foundation is one of the longest-serving independent ALS groups in the country.*

*We are committed to providing the most comprehensive care and support to people living with ALS and their families in Chicagoland so they can confidently navigate the disease, and advance scientific research for the prevention, treatment and cure of ALS.*

## Support Services for people with ALS, families and caregivers

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*Care visits by ALS support services  
coordinators*

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*Support Group Meetings*

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*Education materials and programs*

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*Access to medical equipment and  
communication devices*

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*Need-based grant programs and  
community resources*

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*In-service education for community  
care*

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## Lois Insolia ALS Clinic

### We Offer

- Access to enrollment in clinical trials and dedicated clinical trial coordinators
- Chicagoland's first and largest multidisciplinary ALS Clinic, with the highest number of neurologists and dedicated pulmonologists
- Multidisciplinary care that brings together an experienced team of neuromuscular specialists in one clinic to provide comprehensive support



# Educational Resources



**ALS & BREATHING**

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**ALS & NUTRITION**

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**ALS & COMMUNICATION**

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**ALS & HOME MODIFICATIONS**


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# MY ALS DECISION TOOL™



**ALS & CAREGIVERS**

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# Home Automation for People Living with ALS



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# Home Automation for People Living with ALS

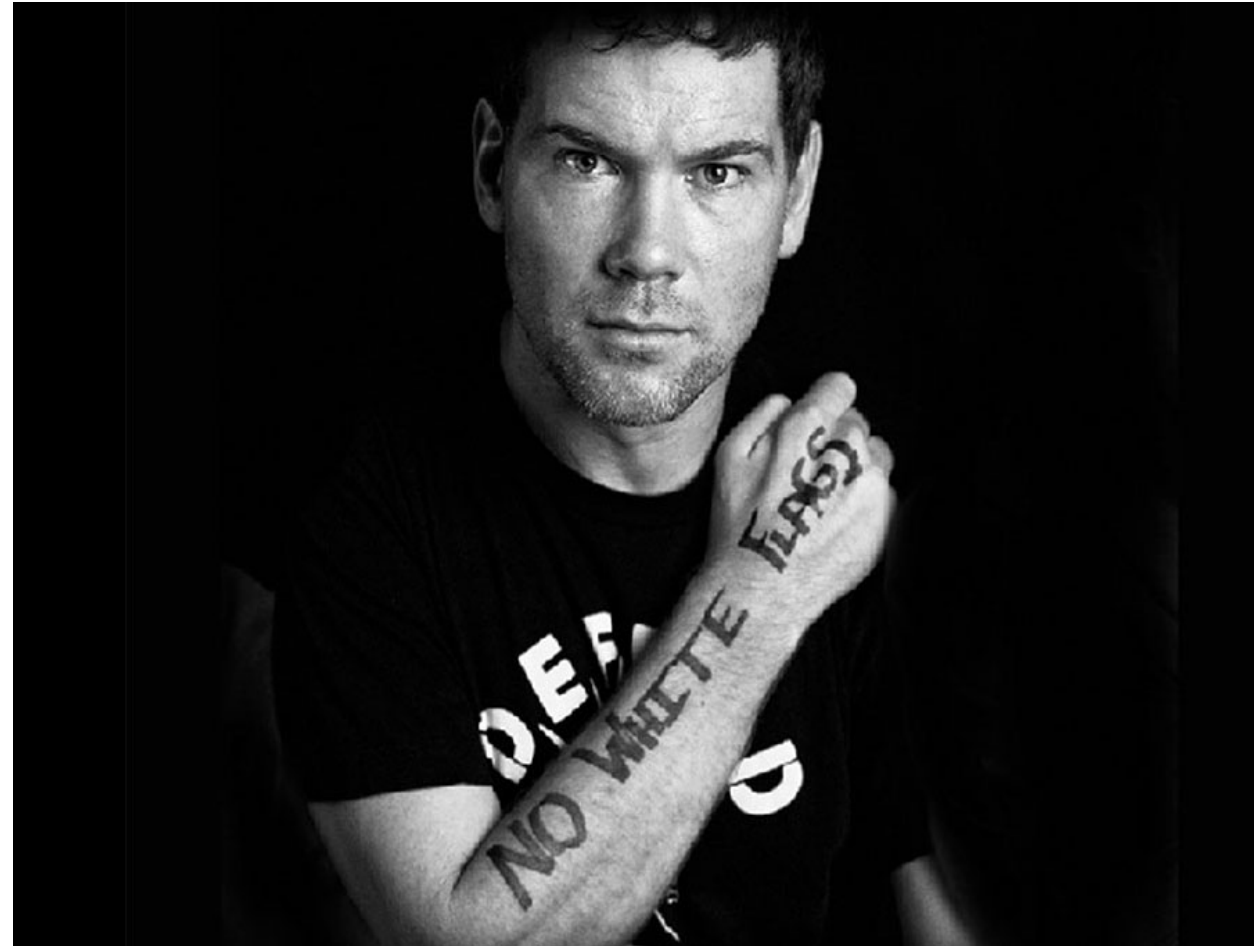
Jeffrey Powers  
Program Manager  
Team Gleason



# Team Gleason

## Our Mission:

To improve life for people living with ALS by delivering innovative technology and equipment, as well as providing and empowering an improved life experience.



# What is Home Automation?

- ❑ Home automation is the automatic and electronic control of devices in your home
  - ❑ Devices include:
    - ❑ TV
    - ❑ Lights
    - ❑ Thermostat
    - ❑ Doors
      - ❑ Garage Door opener
    - ❑ Phones
    - ❑ Appliances
    - ❑ Others

# Why use Home Automation?

- ❑ Team Gleason wants people living with ALS to remain as independent as possible no matter where they are in their progression.
- ❑ Home automation can increase independence for people living with ALS, while reducing caregiver burden.
  - ❑ Home automation gives back the ability to do things that were previously mindless activities such as turning on the lights, adjusting the thermostat or unlocking the front door for a guest.



Shirley Eave

Georgetown, TX

Team Gleason,

I can't thank you enough for being such inspiration in my life. I was feeling lost and hopeless until I came in contact with you all. My home automation has been a game changer for me. My smart lock and ring camera has given me a sense of security, and makes me feel safe now that I can know who is at the door and control who comes in and out of the door simply by speaking to Alexa. I have fallen in love with my Fire TV Cube. I can control my TV such as turning it off and on, changing channels, and don't have to bother anyone to find a movie or go without watching TV when my ability to use a remote has been compromised due to ALS. The use of smart switches to control the light, or having the ability to control the thermostat gives me a sense of power again. It's the small things that matter to someone who has a disability. I have been given the most incredible shower chair, which makes bathing time much easier when getting me in and out of the tub. I thank God for Team Gleason... NO WHITE FLAGS!

#ALSWARRIOR #SHIRLEYSTRONG

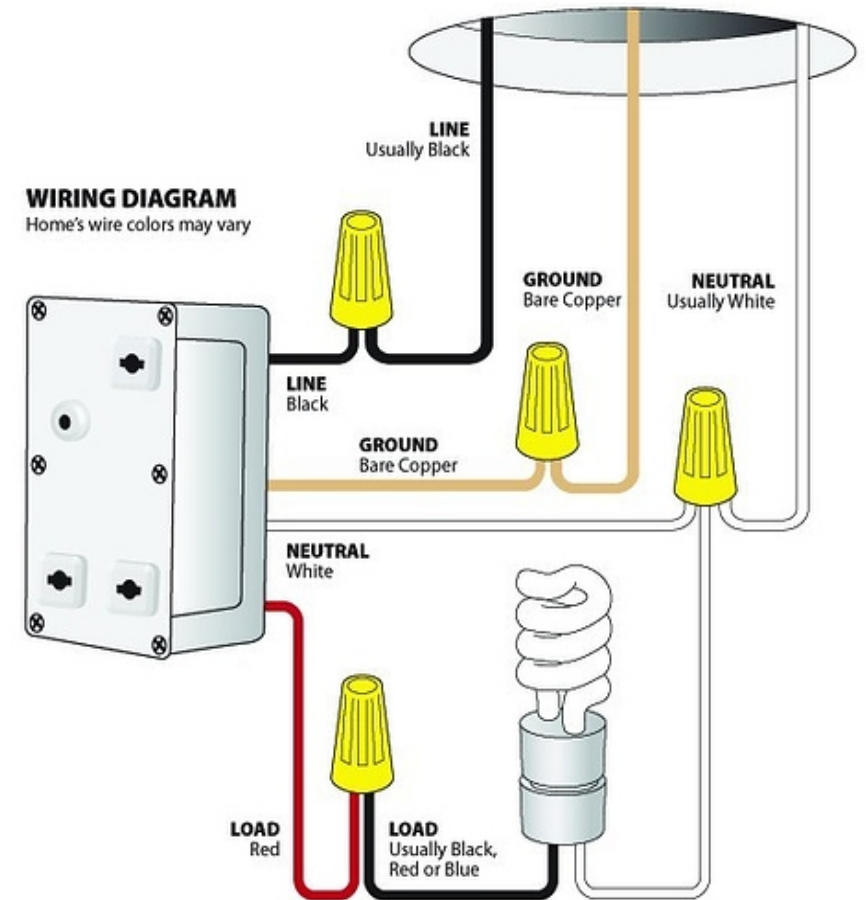
# Getting Started with Home Automation

A couple of things to know...

1. While Team Gleason can assist with purchasing the home automation devices, it is the responsibility of the family to have them all wired and installed.
  - a. Once the devices are installed, our partners at Axial Control will help with getting them all connected and working properly.
2. In order to install smart switches (lights, dimmers, fan controllers, etc.), your home will need to have neutral wiring.
3. There are different ways to access and control the home automation devices.
4. You must have a windows-based computer to plug the z-stick into in order to act as the hub, which will keep all of the home automation devices connected.

# What is Neutral Wiring?

- ❑ Neutral wire carries the circuit back to the original power source. More specifically, neutral wire brings the circuit to a ground or busbar usually connected at the electrical panel. This gives currents circulation through your electrical system, which allows electricity to be fully utilized. Additionally, this prevents faulty or excess currents from residing in your outlet.
- ❑ This is separate and different from the grounded wire though the two are often confused.
- ❑ Ground wire acts as defense against unstable electrical currents. Under normal circuit conditions, ground wire isn't carrying any current. But when an electrical accident such as a short circuit occurs, the ground wire takes the unstable current away from your electrical system and sends it toward the ground.



# How do I tell if I have Neutral Wiring?

- ❑ The easiest way to determine whether you have neutral wires in your switches is to know when your house was built, or the last time it underwent a major renovation. If that happened after 1990, it's most likely you have neutral wires running throughout your home. If that happened before 1980, it's most likely that you **don't** have the neutral wiring necessary for smart switches.
- ❑ Consult an electrician or handy-person.
- ❑ DIY





# What is Axial Control?

- ❑ Axial Server is smart home software used to automate and control your smart home devices. Axial integrates with many popular brands, including z-wave, Nest, Clipsal, Philips Hue, Wemo and many more.
- ❑ Team Gleason partnered with Axial Control due to its ability to integrate with many different brands and because of its compatibility with windows-based computers.
  - ❑ The majority of eyegaze speech-generating devices are windows based and it is vital for people living with ALS to be able to control their environment using their communication device.
- ❑ The other benefit is that if your internet goes out, you can still use the Axial system with the z-wave components.

# Z-wave compatible devices

## Amazon Products



# Z-wave compatible devices

Axial Control Products:



# Selection Methods

Selection methods include:

- ❑ Touch Screen
- ❑ Single, Dual Switch, Head Array
- ❑ Voice Activation (note an individual can create stored phrases on an AAC device to speak the commands)
- ❑ Eye Gaze
- ❑ Mouse (standard, head mouse, wearable mouse such as Quha Zono)
- ❑ Wheelchair Joystick

# Axial Hub

A hub is a system that connects all of your smart devices together. There are many different types. It is important to consider the following:

- Transmission type
  - Zigbee, Zwave, Bluetooth, etc...
- For the Axial system you must have a windows-based computer to plug the z-stick into in order to act as the hub, which will keep all of the home automation devices connected



# Now What?

- ❑ From here, one of our Tech & Equipment Associates will work with you determine what home automation devices are best for you.
  - ❑ Keep in mind that we cannot automate an entire home so we just focus on one or two rooms where you spend the majority of your time and automate those environments to the best of our ability
    - ❑ If you did want to add your own compatible devices to the system, you could always do that
- ❑ The Tech Associate will work to get a wishlist of items from you and then we will determine what we will be able to provide.
- ❑ The order will then be placed through Axial Control and/or Amazon, depending on what you need.

# Questions

Please email me at [jeff@teamgleason.org](mailto:jeff@teamgleason.org) with any questions

You can also fill out our online application for assistance with home automation at [teamgleason.org/need-assistance/](https://teamgleason.org/need-assistance/)



**Daniel Vance, LOTR  
Lead Technology &  
Equipment Specialist**



**Emily Kornman, SLP  
Speech Language  
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**Richard Bourgeois  
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**Mary Schmidt  
Technology and  
Equipment**



**Liz Chapoton  
Support Services**



**Kelly Viator  
Support Services**



**Emily Cornett  
Adventures**



# Q&A

Please type your questions  
in the Q&A box

[www.lesturnerals.org](http://www.lesturnerals.org)





## Upcoming Webinar:

# Navigating the Challenges of Caregiving with a New and Enlightened Perspective

**October 6<sup>th</sup>, 2022, 12:00 CT**

[alslearningseries.org](https://alslearningseries.org)



**Anne Lidsky, Ph.D.**

# 12th Annual Les Turner Symposium on ALS

• Monday, November 7

KEYNOTE SPEAKER  
Nicholas Maragakis, MD



Learn more and register:  
[lesturnerals.org/symposium](https://lesturnerals.org/symposium)



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