

Life Goes On

Secretary of State Jesse White • Fall 2021
A newsletter for Secretary of State facility employees and other organ/tissue donation advocates

National Minority Donor Awareness Month Virtual Campaign

The Illinois Organ/Tissue Donor Registry reached two milestones this summer. The donor registry now stands at 7.2 million registrants – the result of in-person, online and mail-in registrations – 200,000 of which are 16- and 17-year-olds who have registered since 2018. Driver Services facilities continue to register thousands of donors across the state each month, and a mailing to 16- and 17-year-olds yielded thousands more.

In August, we celebrated National Minority Donor Awareness Month with a virtual campaign on the Life Goes On website. The need for multicultural communities to become a part of the donor registry is important. A diverse donor pool is essential to successful matches for those on the organ transplant waiting list.

This fall, we continue both our virtual and in-person outreach to educate individuals about organ and tissue donation. Health fairs, high school driver's education classrooms and community events continue to be venues for successfully educating people of all ages about the lifesaving and life-enhancing benefits of organ and tissue transplants.

Thank you for continuing to spread the message of the importance of the registry.

Jesse White

Jesse White
Secretary of State



In August, we celebrated National Minority Donor Awareness Month with an informational virtual campaign aimed at educating people in minority communities about the need to register as donors. The multifaceted campaign included a video message and letter from Illinois Secretary of State Jesse White, a short PowerPoint presentation with facts about the need for minorities to register as donors, and a flowchart and step-by-step guide to the donation process. The information emphasized the importance of those in minority communities to consider joining the Illinois Donor Registry. The campaign also included a press release and facts about donation.

For many in minority communities, health conditions that are prevalent – such as high blood pressure, diabetes and chronic liver disease – can lead to the need for kidney, pancreas, heart and liver transplants if left untreated. A kidney transplant, the most common transplant, is often necessary because of undiagnosed high blood pressure and diabetes. Many minorities also suffer from higher rates of chronic liver disease, which can lead to the need for a liver transplant.

Often times, individuals believe the many misconceptions associated with being a donor or receiving an organ transplant. Myths which are not true include that rich and

(cont. on pg. 2)

A VIRTUAL PUBLIC AWARENESS CAMPAIGN

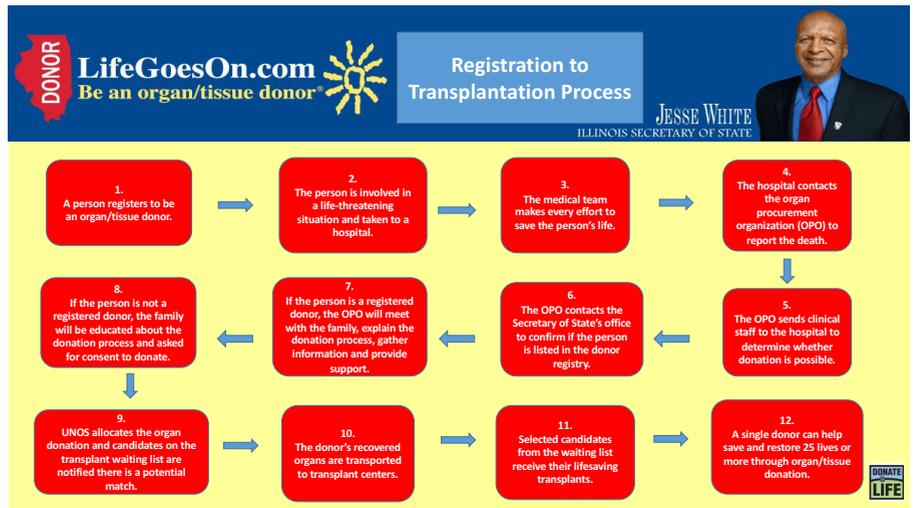
Wave Away The Waiting..

NATIONAL MINORITY DONOR AWARENESS MONTH
2021

National Minority Donor Awareness Month Virtual Campaign (cont. from pg. 1)

famous people receive organs before others, major religions do not support donation, medical attention could be compromised if they are a donor or they are too old to be a donor. Organs are distributed in a fair and equitable manner to those waiting. Rich and famous people do not receive organs before others, most major world religions do support donation, medical need is never compromised if someone is a registered donor and many older individuals can be very successful tissue donors if they cannot donate organs.

A single donor can improve the lives of up to 25 people with the donation of a heart, kidneys, liver, lungs, pancreas and the small intestine and tissue transplants such as veins, corneas, skin, bones, heart valves and soft tissue.



Employee Connection



Jared and Hailey Astor of Dyer, Ind., wear their matching donation t-shirts after Hailey donated a kidney to her husband, Jared, in 2020. Hailey is the niece of Effingham Driver Services facility manager Carol Zumbahlen.

Effingham Driver Services facility manager Carol Zumbahlen never thought that organ donation would affect her family. As a facility manager, she and her staff ask the donor question numerous times each day. Donation became reality when her niece, Hailey Astor of Dyer, Indiana, donated a kidney to her husband, Jared, in December 2020 at UI Health in Chicago. Hailey works as an x-ray technician at Midwest Orthopaedics at Rush and her husband served as a Calumet City police officer.

Jared received his first kidney transplant at the age of 25 from his mother after experiencing kidney failure from chemotherapy he received as a child. He was doing well until January 2020 when his donated kidney failed, placing him on kidney dialysis three times a week while working full time. As his kidney failure progressed, he made the decision to resign from the police department to focus on his health. He was told he would need a second kidney transplant. Several family members, friends, co-workers and his wife were tested to see if they were a match for Jared. It turned out that Hailey was the best match.

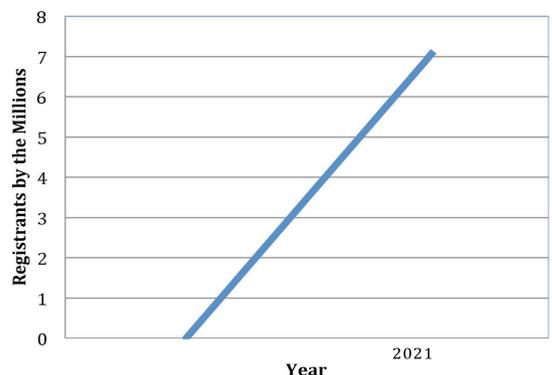
Since the transplant, Hailey and Jared have been active advocates for organ and tissue donation. They have participated in several National Kidney Foundation walks together. Hailey has represented Team Indiana virtually in the Transplant Games in track and field and swimming events. Jared is back to work, now as a dispatch supervisor for Calumet City and a part-time police officer in Burnham. Together, they are focused on his health. "You never know who your best match can be," Hailey said.

Donor Registry reaches 7.2 million, 200,000 16- and-17-year-olds

The Illinois Donor Registry reached a milestone this summer as it climbed to 7.2 million registrants. Despite challenges due to the pandemic, the registry continued to climb to an all-time high. Individuals continued to say 'yes' to donation at Driver Services facilities throughout the state, as well as registering at health fairs and community events.

Thousands of 16- and 17-year-olds registered their donor decisions after receiving an informative letter about donation this summer. In 2018, 16- and 17-year-olds were given the opportunity to join the registry due to new legislation. Since then, the total number of registered teens has reached 200,000. In addition to a positive response from the mailing, many teens in driver's education classes participate in a presentation on donation, which further encourages registration when they receive their driver's licenses or state IDs.

Illinois Organ/Tissue Donor Registry



Mother McAuley High School Golf Outing honors student recipient

Chicago's Mother McAuley Liberal Arts High School held its Fore the Macs: Playing It Forward annual golf outing on Aug. 26 at Ridge Country Club in Chicago. The annual event helps fund scholarships for Mother McAuley students. Several awards are presented at the event each year including The Caring Heart Award that honors a former student golfer, Caroline Griffin, who graduated from the school in 2012. Caroline, who received a heart transplant as a baby, died of heart complications in 2015. "Caroline received her heart in January 1994 at 3 months old and had it for 21 years," said Georgina Griffin, Caroline's mother and a Mother McAuley graduate. "While we miss her dearly, we cherish those 21 years we had her in our lives. She had some setbacks, but always remained positive and made the most of everything she was involved in. She lived life to the fullest with her family and friends and had such a sense of humor," Georgina added.

The Caring Heart Award pays tribute to Caroline, a member of the McAuley golf team, who went on to attend St. Ambrose University in Davenport, Iowa. Dozens of golfers competed in this year's outing to support the school. Donor program staff had a donor registration table at the event.



Dozens of golfers participated in the Fore The Macs: Playing It Forward golf outing on Aug. 26 at Ridge Country Club in Chicago.



Peggy Rourke, vice president for institutional advancement at Mother McAuley Liberal Arts High School (left) and Mary Acker Klingenberg, president of Mother McAuley, visit the donor display table at the Fore The Macs: Playing It Forward golf outing at Ridge Country Club on Aug. 26 in Chicago. The event provides scholarships for students and honors a former student golfer, Caroline Griffin, who was a heart recipient.



Georgina Griffin, whose daughter Caroline Griffin received a heart transplant as a baby, visited the donor table at the Fore The Macs: Playing It Forward golf outing for Mother McAuley Liberal Arts High School on Aug. 26 in Chicago.

National Donor Sabbath to be celebrated Nov. 12-14

National Donor Sabbath, a weekend in November for clergy and worship leaders to speak to their congregations about the benefits of organ and tissue donation, will be held Nov. 12-14, 2021. During this weekend, clergy are encouraged to speak to their parishioners about the positive benefits of organ and tissue donation. They are also encouraged to have individuals speak at religious gatherings about their experiences with donation. The donor program will create a virtual campaign on the Life Goes On website that will help individuals in understanding religious views on donation; suggest sermon ideas; and refute many of the myths that prevent people from registering as donors, such as "my religion probably prevents donation." Nearly all major world religions embrace donation as an act of human kindness from one individual to another and encourage the saving of lives.



Joliet man receives five transplants simultaneously

A Joliet man has received five transplants all at the same time – called a multivisceral transplant – this spring at IU Health University Hospital in Indianapolis. Phillip Hanks, 50, a Joliet father of five, received a new liver, pancreas, kidney, stomach and small intestine in late April. Hanks had received a liver transplant previously. Only about 50 multivisceral transplants are performed each year in the U.S., according to a Chicago Tribune report. Hanks received his new stomach, liver, pancreas and small intestine in one day. The following day he received his new kidney. Hanks is currently helping others navigate the transplant process.

Where Are They Now?



DeKalb police officer Jonathan Bell

For Jonathan Bell, his seventh-grade year was one he navigated as an adult. A healthy child with athletic ability, Jonathan was surprised when he became seriously ill. Flu-like symptoms turned into a more dire situation when his mother, a nurse, took him to the doctor for a diagnosis. He was told he had dilated cardiomyopathy, an enlargement of his heart that made it two times its normal size. His family was informed that Jonathan needed a heart transplant at age 13. He had always been healthy and athletic, so this diagnosis was a shock to his family.

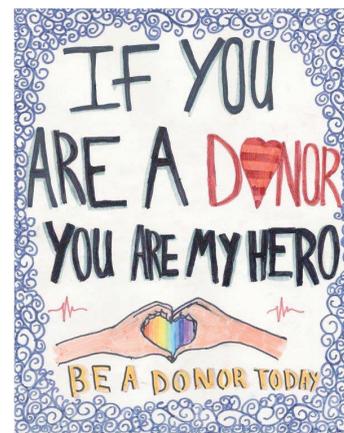
Jonathan recalls that scary winter before his March 23, 2008, heart transplant. He became very ill and was hospitalized. He waited six weeks for his transplant at the Ann & Robert H. Lurie Children's Hospital in Chicago. He returned home in late spring of 2008 with a new heart and a new lease on life as a teenager. After his transplant, Jonathan returned to sports in eighth grade – football and track and field – much to his mother's dismay. He told his mother he did not want to be treated any differently than anyone else after his transplant. He wanted to be a normal kid. He continued to compete in sports throughout high school, graduating from DeKalb High School in 2014.

Now age 26 and a patrol officer for the DeKalb Police Department, Jonathan appeared in the Illinois Organ/Tissue Donor Program's April 2009 National Donate Life Month commercial that featured other children who had also received transplants. With donor program staff, Jonathan has shared his transplant story with driver's education students at DeKalb High School.

Jonathan said he did not consider donation before his transplant, but now he thinks about it often and how a perfect stranger saved his life. "Do as much good as you can while you're on earth," Jonathan said. "I feel it's a very important decision that everyone should make. Essentially, you're helping someone live on."

2022 Secretary of State Poster Contest

More than 6,600 public and private schools in Illinois have received details for the Secretary of State's 2022 Poster Contest to raise awareness about organ/tissue donation. All schools have received a packet with a letter from Illinois Secretary of State Jesse White and a poster contest entry form. Kindergarten through 12th grade students are eligible to participate, while school administrators are encouraged to share the packet with teachers who might have students interested in the contest. Students are to submit original artwork that depicts what organ and tissue donation means to them by Jan. 31, 2022. The four entry categories are: K-2nd grades, 3rd-5th grades, 6th-8th grades and 9th-12th grades. Winners will be notified in the spring. More poster contest details can be found at LifeGoesOn.com.



Maddog Strong Foundation, 10K run helps teens learn about donation



Miles For Maddog enthusiasts hold up messages that they participated in the 10K run, 5K walk on June 26 in Frankfort for organ/tissue donor awareness.

The Maddog Strong Foundation was founded two years ago to honor Maddie "Maddog" Grobmeier, a gymnast who had attended Lincoln Way East High School in Frankfort and passed away suddenly in 2019 from an asthma attack the day after she turned 18. Her parents, Frank and Cyndi Grobmeier, followed her wishes and donated her organs and tissues. A 10K run, 5K walk and virtual race called Miles for Maddog: Celebrating the Hearts and Soles of Organ and Tissue Donation were held in

Frankfort on June 26, 2021, in her honor. One of the foundation's missions is to help educate teens about organ and tissue donation. The foundation encourages conversations about how being an organ and tissue donor can save lives. Donor program staff participated in the walk and handed out donor information.

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