



Life Goes On

Secretary of State Jesse White • Spring 2018

A newsletter for Secretary of State facility employees and other organ/tissue donation advocates

It has been a busy and successful spring for the Organ/Tissue Donor Program. The second annual Chicago Organ Summit was held in March with donor advocates and the medical transplant community celebrating the lifesaving success of transplantation in the Chicago area. Speakers and panel discussions were centered on increasing the number of transplants for this year and beyond.

Registration numbers have increased since the beginning of the year because 16- and 17-year-olds are now eligible to become part of the registry. This new law will greatly increase the number of individuals registered in Illinois. Donor staff continues to educate 16- and 17-year-olds in high school classroom presentations throughout the year.

National Donate Life Month is celebrated each April and the Organ/Tissue Donor Program staffers have more opportunities to promote donation throughout their communities and to increase education and awareness of organ/tissue donation to hundreds across the state. The summer edition of *Life Goes On* will cover the events of this important month.

We appreciate all you do at the facility level to promote donor awareness. It is an important message that you promote each day. Each time you ask the donor question, you might be changing someone's life. Thank you.

Jesse White

Jesse White
Secretary of State

Chicago Organ Summit celebrates accomplishments, sets goals

Spotlight on annual goals

The Gift of Hope Organ & Tissue Donor Network held its second annual Chicago Organ Summit on March 8, at the JW Marriott Hotel in Chicago. Transplant surgeons, donor advocates, recipients, members of donor families and dozens more attended the event that showcased transplantation in Chicago. Chicago broadcaster Bill Kurtis emceed the event and hosted two panel discussions with transplant surgeons, physicians, coordinators and educators.

Secretary of State Jesse White was a special guest speaker at the summit. Secretary White noted that while Illinois has 6.3 million people registered as donors, there are still 4,700 on the statewide waiting list. On a successful note, he announced that more than 6,500

16- and 17-year-olds have joined the registry since Jan. 1.

"We want to thank and applaud these young people for stepping up to the plate," Secretary White said. "Illinois will lead the initiative of organ/tissue donation. Please spread the word to your neighbors and friends to become part of this lifesaving program," he added.

Kidney recipients, Chicago Superintendent of Police Eddie Johnson and Chief of Police Mark Saunders of Toronto, Canada, shared their stories of receiving lifesaving gifts from living donors. Chicago Mayor Rahm Emanuel supported the summit through a video message for attendees. Gift of Hope Organ & Tissue

(cont. on pg. 2)



Illinois Secretary of State Jesse White speaks at the second annual Chicago Organ Summit at the JW Marriott March 8 in Chicago.

Chicago Organ Summit celebrates accomplishments, sets goals (cont. from pg. 1)

Donor Network CEO Kevin Cmunt gave an overview of donation in Chicago. He emphasized his vision of ensuring Chicago would act as a transplantation hub with successful stories of organ/tissue donation.

"Donation is not just about the numbers, it's about people," Cmunt explained. He added that he would like to see a goal of 2,000 transplants performed each year by 2020. His message also included the need to assist living donors so they do not have the additional burdens of financial hardship or taking time off work if they choose to donate.

Donor family member Tarcia Patton shared the story of tragically losing her son, Jermaine, a basketball player, who saved three lives through organ donation. She celebrates her son's gifts by hosting a basketball game each year in his honor.



A panel of eight transplant doctors, emceed by broadcaster Bill Kurtis, far left, discuss organ transplantation at the second annual Chicago Organ Summit at the JW Marriot on March 8 in Chicago.

African-American Heritage Month observed

Chicago Police Superintendent Eddie Johnson honored

African-American Heritage Month was celebrated Feb. 22 in Chicago in an event hosted by Secretary of State Jesse White. Chicago Superintendent of Police Eddie Johnson, a recent kidney recipient, was the guest of honor and the recipient of the Distinguished Leadership Award. He received a lifesaving kidney transplant from his son, Daniel, in August 2017. Johnson promotes donor awareness with the Secretary of State's office. He emphasizes the need for more individuals to register as donors in Illinois.



LEFT: Secretary of State Jesse White celebrated African-American Heritage Month Feb. 22 in Chicago. Pictured from left: Chicago Superintendent of Police Eddie Johnson, kidney recipient; Alderman Walter Burnett (27th Ward); Andrew Holmes; Joyce Tucker; Joseph Ainongya, Jr.; Theaster Gates; Caleb Green; Secretary of State Jesse White; Karen Jordan; and Christian Farr.



RIGHT: Secretary of State Jesse White presents Chicago Superintendent of Police Eddie Johnson, a recent kidney recipient, with the Distinguished Leadership Award Feb. 22 during African-American Heritage Month in Chicago.

Secretary White accepts Lifetime Achievement Award from Joliet group

Senior Services of Will County honors Secretary White for his accomplishments

Secretary of State Jesse White accepted Senior Services of Will County's Lifetime Achievement Award at the group's 2018 Annual Senior Celebration on March 5 at Presence St. Joseph Medical Center in Joliet. More than 100 individuals gathered to honor and celebrate Secretary White at the event. Guests included local dignitaries, legislators and members of Senior Services of Will County.

"Seniors of today are not the seniors of yesterday," said the organization's executive director Barry Kolanowski. "Seniors in Will County are embracing life with the help of this organization," Kolanowski added. With nearly 500 members, it is one of the largest senior organizations in the area. Kolanowski explained it was a natural decision to recognize Secretary White as one of Illinois' most active seniors. His service to the state, as well as his lifetime achievements, is worthy of applause. The Secretary's mission to promote organ/tissue donation is also important to the organization. The Secretary's career of service began decades ago as a teacher. He began his political career of service more than 40 years ago as a legislator and was elected as the Illinois Secretary of State when he was nearly 65 — this age is when many individuals choose to begin retirement.

Secretary White served as the keynote speaker for the group's annual meeting after accepting the Lifetime Achievement Award. The group also recognized corporations and community organizations that support the senior services group. These organizations included the Illinois Department on Aging; Northeastern Illinois Area Agency on Aging; Joliet Township; the United Way of Will County; local hospitals; and several area businesses. Individual members of the organization were also recognized for longtime membership.

Senior Services of Will County received the Social Service Agency of the Year award in January from the Joliet Area Chamber of Commerce. The chamber honored the agency for its strength and commitment to area seniors.



ABOVE: Secretary White addresses the audience at the 2018 Annual Senior Celebration.

LEFT: Secretary of State Jesse White receives the Lifetime Achievement Award from Barry Kolanowski, executive director of Senior Services of Will County, at the group's 2018 Annual Senior Celebration and awards ceremony March 5 at Presence St. Joseph Medical Center in Joliet.

Crestwood resident celebrates 31 years with liver transplant

Longest-surviving recipient from Rush University Medical Center in Chicago



Nellie "Lee" Tarulis and her husband, Bernie.

Nellie "Lee" Tarulis, a resident of Crestwood, received a lifesaving liver transplant at Rush University Medical Center on Jan. 28, 1987. She was the fifth recipient at Rush to receive this operation and currently serves as the longest survivor of an organ transplant from the hospital. Originally her goal was to live at least four months following her transplant so she could see her son, Rick, graduate from law school. Today, her son is a senior partner at Brooks, Tarulis and Tibble Law firm in Naperville.

Nellie's donor was a 16-year-old boy named Joey who died in a motorcycle accident. She felt it was important to let Joey's family know that his donation had given her a second chance at life. She sent a letter to Joey's mother, but years passed and she never received a response. Nearly 10 years after her transplant, Nellie received a letter from Joey's mother, who wrote: *He was tall, had a head full of dark curly hair, beautiful dancing eyes, and a smile that could melt your heart. Sometimes it is so hard to understand and live with the loss of Joey. I can feel him close to me often. To know you and the others are able to reach out and hug your sons makes it a little easier for me to go on.*

Employee Connection

Hillsboro Driver Services facility manager's mother a donor



Peggy Durbin

Peggy Durbin, manager of the Hillsboro Driver Services facility, has always been a strong advocate of the Organ/Tissue Donor Program. She gives her mother, Joyce, part of the credit. "Mom always thought that donation was a wonderful thing," said Peggy. "She made me promise that when she died, we would be sure that she would donate anything that could be used." When Peggy's mom passed away in February, Peggy was asked about donation and told the procurement agency that her mom was in the donor registry. Joyce, at 85 years old, was able to donate skin. Peggy was told that her mother was possibly the oldest tissue donor they ever had. "I know my mom would be happy to know that she helped someone else. Maybe a child burn victim or someone who really needed a skin graft," Peggy added.

As a Driver Services facility manager, Peggy has heard many reasons individuals give for choosing to not be part of the registry, including that a person can be too old to donate anything. "Now I can personally say that you are never too old. I can point to my mother and proudly say that she was a tissue donor at 85," Peggy explained.

16- and 17-year olds join the registry in 2018

Teens making the donor decision

As of Jan. 1, 16- and 17-year olds are being educated and encouraged to register as potential donors with the implementation of a new law that allows them to join the donor registry. Program coordinators are stepping up their classroom presence to include more high school presentations this year. Donor education presentations in driver's education classes are even more important because of the new law. Driver's education students will be asked the donor question in the near future as they are issued driver's licenses.

"We are so pleased to be able to offer the opportunity for donor registration to 16- and 17-year-olds. Driver's education classes are the perfect place to offer an educational program about donation," said Illinois Secretary of State Jesse White. "The new law has the potential to add more than 300,000 names to the Illinois donor registry annually."

When talking to students about donation, many presenters note that students express an interest in donation and want to discuss the topic with family members. Many admit they did not know much about organ and tissue donation prior to the presentation, but the information they learned was something they wanted to share with their families.



Morrisonville High School driver's education students learned about organ and tissue donation from donor program coordinator Liz Hager, fourth from left. Many said they were open to signing up as donors under the new law.

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