



# Life Goes On

Secretary of State Jesse White • Summer 2012  
A newsletter for Secretary of State facility employees and other organ/tissue donation advocates

## Donate Life Month targets community colleges

This year during National Donate Life Month in April we focused on our new community college initiative, reaching out with donor drives and press conferences at colleges throughout the state. Hundreds of students and faculty members volunteered their time to encourage their peers to join the donor registry.

The month kicked off with the unveiling of the new donor commercial featuring our own Vikki Tulcus, who works for the Donor Program in our Chicago office. Vikki suffers from kidney disease and is awaiting a lifesaving transplant. As we traveled the state with our donor message, several people asked to be tested as a potential match for Vikki. Hopefully, a match will soon be found and she can be restored to good health. Vikki is just one of the 5,000 people here in Illinois who wait each day for the call that a match has been found.

This issue features a photo montage of Donate Life Month. Many of those pictured are true heroes, those who have given unselfishly so that others can live. As always, I give much of the credit for our program's success to the frontline staff at our facilities, who ask that all-important question about joining the registry. Without you, the registry would not be where it is today – one of the largest in the nation with more than 5 million people registered.

*Jesse White*

Jesse White  
Secretary of State

During National Donate Life Month in April, organizations worked together to promote organ/tissue donor awareness throughout the state. Television and radio ads aired statewide throughout the month in English and Spanish, and approximately 650 movie screens across the state aired the new donor awareness ad.

This year, a special emphasis was placed on reaching out to people through a new community college campaign coordinated by the Organ/Tissue Donor Program. Community colleges across the state climbed on board, committing to holding donor drives with a goal of registering 100 organ/tissue donors. Many of the colleges met their goals, with many overwhelmingly surpassing the benchmark!

"We are so pleased to be working with community colleges in an effort to enhance and improve the lives of those waiting for a transplant," said Secretary White. "We hope that this joint effort will increase participation in this vital program."

In addition to visiting community colleges throughout the month, Secretary White

### It's easy to join the Organ/Tissue Donor Registry:

- Visit LifeGoesOn.com (it only takes 60 seconds to register online).
- Visit any Driver Services facility and say "yes" to the donor question.
- Call the Organ/Tissue Donor Program hotline at 800-210-2106.
- Complete and mail the registration card on the "Life Goes On" brochure.

participated in other donor awareness events at hospitals and sporting events, including a St. Louis Cardinals vs. Chicago Cubs game where he threw out the first pitch. Libraries also distributed donor materials and hosted registration drives, and a number of donor drives and displays were featured at health fairs, health clubs, schools and hospitals statewide.

This issue of *Life Goes On* illustrates the vast outreach of National Donate Life Month. More photos are available at LifeGoesOn.com.



### Community College Campaign

Secretary White helps Southwestern Illinois College students sign up on the donor registry. The Belleville area college exceeded its goal of registering 100 students and staff by signing up 150 potential donors at their event.

# National Donate Life

## Donate Life America partners with Facebook



facebook

Donate Life America, the national organization dedicated to increasing the number of registered donors, announced a major initiative with Facebook. On May 1, Facebook launched an upgrade to its timeline structure, which asks users to check their donor status and directs them to Donate Life America's National Registration page, where they can designate a donor decision if they have not done so already.

In an exclusive interview with Robin Roberts on "Good Morning America," Facebook founder Mark Zuckerberg announced the new initiative and became one of the first Facebook users to sign up to donate on the social network. Other news media outlets, including ESPN, Yahoo and ABC News Radio, followed with extensive coverage of the groundbreaking initiative.

"We can't thank Facebook enough for the organization's commitment to helping save lives by encouraging Americans to register as organ, eye and tissue donors." said David Fleming, president and CEO of Donate Life America. "We want to encourage every Facebook user to take a moment and update their timeline, register to be a donor, and share their decision with family and friends. It is a simple way to provide hope for those in need."

The partnership signifies a giant step for the donor community, bringing major exposure to the need for more donors and leading the public to officially designate themselves as donors. To sign up as a donor in Illinois, please visit [LifeGoesOn.com](http://LifeGoesOn.com). For more information about the donation process, please visit [DonateLifeIllinois.org](http://DonateLifeIllinois.org).



**#1** — Secretary White stands next to a giant green donor awareness ribbon designed by Memorial Medical Center, part of the Springfield Life Goes On Committee.



**#2** — Charlie Kuhn (left) and Tabitha Seany, nursing students at Lincoln Trail Community College, helped spread the word about donation at a health fair on the campus in Robinson.



**#3** — Secretary White visited Olive-Harvey College in Chicago on World Kidney Day in March. The school partnered with the National Kidney Foundation of Illinois to provide free kidney disease screenings and doctor referrals.



**#4** — Administrators, staff and students from Frontier Community College and Olney Central College accompanied Secretary White at a press conference announcing the community college campaign.



**#5** — Students and staff, including (left to right) Emily Ramage, Jean Anne Grunloh, Kiersten Kasey and Jennifer Ferguson, met with Secretary White at Lake Land Community College in Mattoon.

**#6** — Springfield's Memorial Medical Center hosted a question/answer session led by NewsChannel 20 anchor Natalie Sparacio (far right). Medical professionals on the panel included (left to right) Memorial's administrative manager Deb Werner; surgical director Marc Garfinkel, M.D.; transplant surgeon David Rea, M.D.; and medical director Brad West, M.D.

**#7** — Student Nathan Kurz joins the donor registry at John Wood Community College in Quincy.

**#8** — Secretary White spoke to the staff, students and administration at Quincy's John Wood Community College along with President Dr. John Letts (seated).



# Month and other events across Illinois



**#9** — Secretary White was a featured speaker at St. John's Hospital in Springfield and was joined by (left to right) Donor Program staff member Vikki Tulcus, who is awaiting a kidney transplant, donor father Kay Rogers and kidney recipient Frank Buraski.



**#10** — Volunteers helped Rockford residents join the bone marrow registry during the Red Shoe Run for Donor Awareness at Northern Illinois University. More than 1,200 people attended the annual event.



**#11** — Six-year-old kidney recipient Gillian Irons is pictured with Candi Sims of the Decatur Derby Dames. The roller derby team donated proceeds from its bout on April 7 to the Macon County Life Goes On Committee.



**#12** — Members of the Southwestern Illinois College Campus Activities Board, pictured with Secretary White, spearheaded a donor drive at the Belleville area college.



**#13** — Joining Secretary White at a press conference at Parkland College in Champaign was (left to right) kidney/pancreas recipient Robin Morrow, donor family member Ellen Saveley and kidney recipient Gill Garman.



**#14** — The new donor commercial aired on the jumbotron during a donor awareness event at the St. Louis Cardinals' Busch Stadium.



**#15** — Secretary White threw the first pitch at a Chicago Cubs game as part of a donor awareness event at Wrigley Field.



**#16** — Secretary White spoke at an on-field presentation before a Chicago Slaughter football game. Pictured with him are (left to right) kidney recipient Ron Dickover, liver recipient Lori McInerney Weklinsk and kidney recipient JP Mangano.



**#17** — Secretary White looks on as a Chicago Slaughter football fan joins the donor registry.



## NATIONAL DONATE LIFE MONTH (continued from page 3)



**#18** — A Tree of Life memorial was unveiled at a kick-off press conference at University of Illinois Hospital in Chicago. Joining Secretary White are (left to right) Connie Payton, donor parents Jill and Matt Zuleg, and Vikki Tulcus of the Donor Program.



**#19** — Students at Southeastern Illinois College in Harrisburg registered fellow students as part of the community college campaign.



**#20** — Students at Kaskaskia College in Centralia registered more than 100 students on the donor registry during their weeklong community college donor drive.



**#21** — Secretary White and Naperville Mayor George Pradel helped plant a tree at Organ Transplant Support's annual donor family tribute in Naperville.



Jimmy Zerante

## EMPLOYEE CONNECTION

Chicago Heights Driver Services facility employee Jimmy Zerante knows what it's like to be on the national transplant waiting list — not just once, but twice. In 1993, when he was just 31, Jimmy received a dual kidney/pancreas transplant at the University of Wisconsin at Madison. Elated at being done with dialysis, Jimmy resumed his regular

activities, but the pancreas soon failed and was removed, placing him back on insulin. The kidney lasted five years, and in 1998 he received a second kidney/pancreas transplant at the University of Chicago.

"I waited nine weeks on the list for my first transplant and nine months for my second," said Jimmy. He was in the hospital for four months in Madison before his first transplant in 1993.

Jimmy celebrated his 50th birthday this spring. He is enjoying life with his wife, Susan, and daughter, Gena, now 11, whom he and Susan adopted from Bulgaria in 2002. "She's the best thing that ever happened to us," Jimmy said. "She looks just like me."



Secretary White, along with state Senator John Sullivan (D-Quincy), presented Laia Monells Costan, a foreign exchange student at Quincy Senior High School, with an award for her grand-prize winning entry in the Secretary of State's Organ/Tissue Donor Poster Contest. Her poster is on display at Driver Services facilities, hospitals and libraries statewide.