

Life Goes On

Secretary of State Jesse White • Winter 2015
A newsletter for Secretary of State facility employees and other organ/tissue donation advocates

A brand new year has begun, and with it comes the opportunity to begin again. That's what transplantation offers — the chance for thousands of people to begin again. We look forward to another banner year with the donor program after a very active 2014, spreading the word about the importance of the life-saving benefits of transplantation. Donor Program staff members were busy coordinating activities for National Donor Sabbath (NDS) weekend throughout the state in November. A press conference held Nov. 14 served as a kick-off event for several donor events at houses of worship in Illinois, many of which I attended.

Our 2015 Be A Hero! campaign is gearing up for spring, with program staff again reaching out to local community colleges encouraging creative donor awareness campaigns designed to increase the donor registry.

As always, thank you for the work you do every day at the 138 driver service facilities across Illinois. Making a difference in another person's life should be our goal for the New Year.

Jesse White
Jesse White
Secretary of State

National Donor Sabbath is time for reflection

National Donor Sabbath (NDS) was held the weekend of Nov. 14-16, 2014 at houses of worship across Illinois and the country to stress the importance of organ and tissue donation and the life-saving reality of transplantation. For many people who have been on waiting lists for months or even years, those gifts of donation mean everything. For those individuals still on a waiting list, NDS provides the opportunity to share their stories with fellow worshipers and encourage donor registry participation.

"National Donor Sabbath is a time when we discuss donation at places of worship and

encourage those directly affected by transplantation to share their stories," said Illinois Secretary of State Jesse White. "The most important step an individual can take to ensure there are enough organs for those in need is to register as a donor," he added.

Secretary White kicked off National Donor Sabbath weekend at a Chicago press conference with The First Ladies Initiative, pastors and donor advocates from area churches to show support for donation.

The 2014 NDS theme, "Let the Music Continue for Others," was a tribute to donors and

(cont. on pg. 2)



TOP LEFT: Secretary of State Jesse White addresses the congregation during National Donor Sabbath at Jordan Temple Baptist Church in Hillside. TOP RIGHT: Pastor Derek Downs and his wife, Rachel, at the donor table at First Baptist Church of Galatia during a National Donor Sabbath event held at the church on Nov. 16. ABOVE: At the National Donor Sabbath press conference on Nov. 14 in Chicago, Secretary of State Jesse White (center) is surrounded by local clergy, pastors' wives ("first ladies") and donor advocates.

Donor Program Assistant Manager Sitha Hun Recognized

Named August 2014
Employee of the Month

Sitha Hun, assistant manager of the Organ/Tissue Donor Program, was named *Employee of the Month* for August 2014 and was honored at a reception held in the atrium of the Illinois State Library in Springfield on Nov. 21. Secretary of State Jesse White presented Sitha with a plaque and a personalized *Blue Book*. "Sitha has stepped up to the challenge of assisting in the management of this life saving program," said Secretary White. "We are lucky to have him on board." Many of Sitha's current and past co-workers as well as his family members attended the ceremony. The library was decorated with the Organ/Tissue Donor Program colors, and a *Life Goes On* cake was served to mark the occasion. Congratulations on a job well done, Sitha.



Donor Program assistant manager Sitha Hun receives recognition as *Employee of the Month* for August 2014 in a ceremony at the Illinois State Library on Nov. 21.



A cake decorated in *Life Goes On* colors honoring Sitha Hun for being chosen *Employee of the Month* for August 2014 was enjoyed by dozens of people attending the ceremony at the Illinois State Library on Nov. 21.

National Donor Sabbath (cont. from pg. 1)

observed at several locations. Secretary White shared the donor message with visits on Nov. 16 to the Faith Community of Saint Sabina with Father Michael L. Pfleger, senior pastor and Thulani Magwaza, pastor; the Apostolic Church of God in Chicago with Dr. Byron T. Brazier; Jordan Temple Baptist Church in Hillside with Pastor Stephen Richardson; and World Deliverance Church in Hillside with Pastor Thomas Clark.

Numerous events were held around the state that weekend at places of worship, including First Baptist Church in Galatia and Mount Nebo Missionary Baptist Church in Madison. A Service of Remembrance ceremony for donor families was held at Springfield's Southwind Park and a special mass was celebrated at St. Mary's Hospital in Decatur for members of the Macon County *Life Goes On* Committee. Fourth Street United Methodist Church in Aurora celebrated National Donor Sabbath the following week with a donor registration drive and presentation.



TOP LEFT: Sisters of Pastor Thomas Clark of World Deliverance Church in Hillside sign up as donors at a donor registration table at the church on Nov. 16. TOP RIGHT: Secretary of State Jesse White greets several children during National Donor Sabbath events on Nov. 16. ABOVE: Members of Macon County *Life Goes On* Committee were special guests at a mass celebrated at St. Mary's Hospital in Decatur in recognition of National Donor Sabbath. Father Nick Husain emphasized the church's support of donation as a gift of love and compassion for others.



ABOVE LEFT: Secretary of State Jesse White presents an Illinois license plate to several pastors' wives ("first ladies") during the press conference kicking off National Donor Sabbath, Nov. 14 in Chicago. ABOVE RIGHT: Secretary of State Jesse White meets with Pastor Thomas Clark and his wife, Felicia, on National Donor Sabbath Sunday, Nov. 16 at World Deliverance Church in Hillside.

Customer Service Week awards

Many facilities and other secretary of state departments throughout Illinois celebrated Customer Service Week held October 6-10, 2014. Staff had fun decorating their workplaces, offering refreshments, setting up informational tables and giving treats to customers. This is a week for employees to thank the thousands of Illinois residents who pass through one of the state's 138 driver services facilities and Secretary of State offices annually. Many facility staff dressed up in costumes or wore Donate Life shirts, showing solidarity for donation at the counters.

Winners of Customer Service Week awards are:

First Place for larger departments (13+ employees): Schaumburg Driver Services facility

First Place for smaller departments (1-12 employees): Plano Driver Services facility

Second Place for larger departments: Secretary of State Police

Second Place for smaller departments: Benton Driver Services facility

Third Place for larger departments: Securities Department Chicago employees

Third Place for small departments: DeKalb Driver Services facility

In addition, 28 other departments received Certificates of Excellence for Customer Service recognition. Congratulations to all who participated. We hope you enjoy the photos below.



ABOVE LEFT: Secretary of State Jesse White presents a poster to the Plano Driver Services facility staff in October for their 3rd Place award from Customer Service Week in 2013. Facility manager Sue Keenan stands to the Secretary's left.

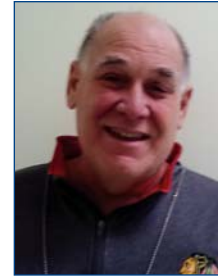


ABOVE LEFT: The Lombard Driver Services facility staff promotes Customer Service Week with a donor table and balloons. ABOVE RIGHT: The Benton Driver Services facility staff "clown around" during Customer Service Week in October.



ABOVE LEFT: The DeKalb Driver Services facility welcomed heart-recipient Donna Stout to share her donor story during Customer Service Week. ABOVE RIGHT: Customer Service Week in October was celebrated by the Schaumburg Driver Services staff with balloons, informational tables including organ/tissue donor and games for customers.

Employee Connection



Paul Ponzio

For Paul Ponzio of the Lombard facility, the best day in his life came 21 years ago when his sister became a living kidney donor to him. Paul was diagnosed with end-stage renal failure when he was

only 38 years old. Up until that time he had been a healthy and active individual, owning his own business, participating in sports and enjoying life with his family. When doctors told him that the best course of action was a kidney transplant, Paul was placed on the national waiting list. As the weeks went by and Paul did not receive a kidney, his family began looking into the possibility of living donation. Two of his sisters began the testing process to see if either matched Paul. His sister, Teddy, was found to be a perfect match. In fact, Paul's doctors told his family that only an identical twin would have been a better match for him. After Paul's surgery in September 1993 at Loyola Medical Center in Maywood, Illinois, Paul woke up with a perfectly functioning kidney and 21 years later is still doing well.

"Since my surgery there is not a day that goes by that I am not grateful for this second chance," Paul said. "I celebrated my 35th wedding anniversary this year and enjoy a wonderful life with family and friends." He is forever grateful for his sister's gift that allows him to continue to go boating, travel, play golf and be active.

Organ/Tissue Donor Program Staff:

To contact a Donor Program staff member in your area, please call the Springfield toll-free phone number at 800-210-2106 or email lgo@ilsos.net.

PROGRAM MANAGER

Connie Boatman – Chicago

ASSISTANT PROGRAM MANAGER

Sitha Hun – Springfield

LIFE GOES ON.

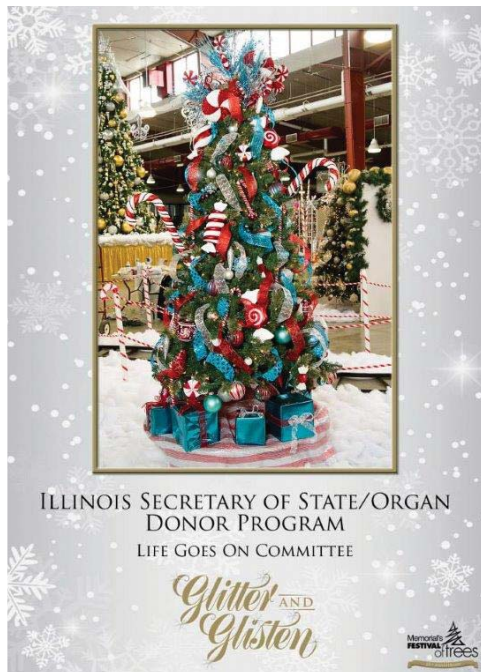
BE AN ORGAN/TISSUE DONOR.

Be A Hero! gearing up for repeat success in 2015

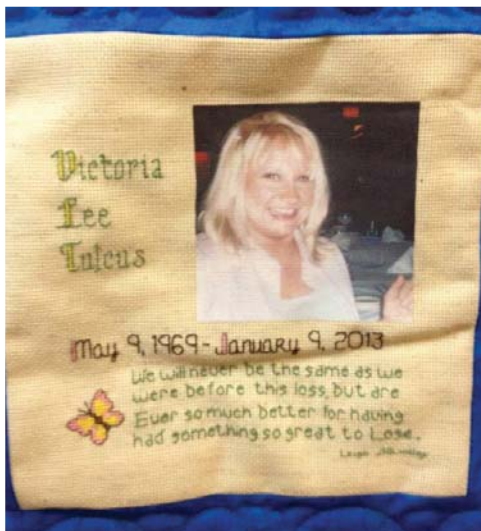
Donor Program staff is gearing up for the second annual Be A Hero! campaign in 2015! The success of last year's program was encouraging with three Illinois community colleges being awarded prizes for their creative and innovative donor campus awareness campaigns. Elgin Community College in Elgin (northern IL), Lincoln Land Community College in Springfield (central IL) and Olney Community College in Olney (southern IL) were each awarded a summer internship for one winning student.

New this year, one winning school from

each of the three geographic areas will be awarded a monetary scholarship for the student who has gone above and beyond in their college's campaign. Be A Hero! materials are available on the *Life Goes On* website, which explains the campaign rules and regulations in detail. The goal of the challenge is to engage students on their campuses and communities bringing awareness to their fellow students, faculty and staff about the importance of donation. Students are encouraged to "think outside the box" and to create and implement activities that bring awareness to their communities.



Springfield's Life Goes On Committee decorated a holiday tree in honor of donation. The tree, purchased by Henson Robinson Co. this year, was auctioned off to benefit health related projects and programs at Memorial Health System and in the Springfield community.



A quilt square remembering Vikki Tulcus, a coordinator with the Illinois Secretary of State Organ/Tissue Donor Program, is on display on one of the Illinois donor family remembrance quilts. The square, designed and created by her family, is one of many squares honoring donors for their gifts of life. Last month marks the second anniversary of Vikki's passing due to kidney failure and the lack of a suitable donor kidney.

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 a donor brochure.

DONOR FACTS — Test your donation I.Q.

QUESTION: I'm too old to be a donor. Who would want my organs and tissue?

FACT: You are NEVER too old to be a donor! Many older Americans donate their corneas or numerous tissue if they are unable to be an organ donor. Register to be a donor and let the doctors at the time of death make the decision.

QUESTION: I'm certain my religion wouldn't allow me to be a donor.

FACT: All major eastern and western religions allow donation if that is the individual's wish. Religious leaders, while leaving the decision up to the individual, agree that donation is the most generous act one can bestow.

QUESTION: I want an open casket at my funeral. I'm sure I can't be a donor if I want to be viewed.

FACT: There are no visible signs of donation so individuals wanting an open casket at their funerals can have one. The donation process is a respectful surgical procedure. Nothing that would be viewed (face, hands, neck) is touched. Your clothing covers your surgical incisions.

QUESTION: I'm sure my family cannot

afford for me to become a donor. I don't want to burden them more.

FACT: There is absolutely no cost to your family if you are a donor. Organ and tissue transplants are gifts and they are freely given to those who are in critical need.

QUESTION: I'm pretty sure I heard that doctors will not try to save you if they know you are a donor.

FACT: That is completely false. This is the number one myth circulating about donation. Don't buy into the myths. Emergency and trauma doctors try to save lives—that's what they do. Only after everything has been done to save a person is the family approached about donation. Life-saving doctors and transplantation doctors are completely separate types of physicians. A trauma physician has nothing to do with transplantation, and a transplant doctor has nothing to do with emergency care.

QUESTION: How many people have signed up to be donors in Illinois?

FACT: Illinois has more than 5.7 million potential donors on the donor registry. However, each year 300 people in Illinois die waiting for a transplant. Sign up to be a donor today.