

**A HANDBOOK FOR PROMOTING  
ORGAN & TISSUE DONATION  
DURING NATIONAL DONATE LIFE MONTH**



# April is National Donate Life Month, a time when the nation’s organ and tissue donation and transplant community heightens its promotion of the need for lifesaving donors.



National Donate Life Month was first designated in 2003 with the support of Tommy Thompson, then secretary of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, and each year since, the number of events, activities and campaigns held to promote donation grows.

Many of the campaigns promoted during National Donate Life Month are supported by Donate Life America, a national advocacy group dedicated to increasing the number of lives saved through donation and transplantation.

**LifeQuest Organ Recovery Services**, the organ donor program serving all of northern Florida, works closely with Donate Life America as well as Donate Life Florida, our statewide coalition of donor programs that oversees the management of Florida’s donor registry.

LifeQuest created this handbook specifically to aid our hospital partners, schools, area businesses, civic groups, faith communities and volunteers in developing promotions in support of National Donate Life Month.

Whether you work for a hospital or a tax collector office, are enrolled in high school or college, or lead a civic club or religious organization, this handbook will provide you with a multitude of ideas and resources to make your National Donate Life Month celebration a huge success.

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## **SPECIAL EVENTS & ACTIVITIES**

No matter what type of organization or institution you work for, belong to or attend, there are special events specifically designed to reach you and your contemporaries with the Donate Life message. Here are some examples of events that have worked very well in our service area or other areas of Florida and the country.



# DONOR REGISTRATION STATIONS / VIRTUAL EDUCATION

Setting up a registration station or virtual education event allows you to answer questions from your colleagues or fellow students and provide an immediate opportunity to have them enroll on Florida's donor registry.

For an in-person event, you will need to get approval to set up a table in a high-traffic area of your business or facility. In a hospital, for example, the entrance or exit for the hospital cafeteria has a lot of foot traffic. In a business, it might be in a break room, lunch room or lobby. In a school, it could be the cafeteria or commons.

For virtual or hybrid events such as interactive webinar trainings, you will need to work with one of our public education coordinators.

You will need to have someone well-versed in the facts about organ donation on-site who can answer any questions. That could be someone from LifeQuest, another local donor program or a volunteer ambassador who has been through LifeQuest training. LifeQuest can provide cards or brochures with information about the critical need for organs and tissue and ways to register as a donor in Florida.



SkyWheel hosted a touchless donor registration station at Pier Park in Panama City Beach.



Ambassadors Raenie Johnson and Jan Colvin hosted a registration table at the Alachua County Tax Collector office.



Ambassadors Miriam Altieri and her granddaughter, Tatyana, help register donors at an event.




North Florida Technical College's nursing program participated in an online presentation featuring kidney recipient Demarcus Graham.



LifeQuest ambassadors volunteer at the Kimberly Morales Foundation's Second Annual Snow Party event in Williston.



Cielita Clausell and her son, Jaylen, a heart recipient, shared with the National Hook-Up of Black Women via Zoom.

 **Ambassadors can help register those who are interested in becoming donors by using the [Donate Life Florida scan app](#).**



# FLAGS ACROSS AMERICA

Flags Across America is a nationwide campaign that began in October 2008 with a simple question on a national listserv of people in the donation community: What if every one of our hospitals, transplant centers and organ donor programs flew the Donate Life flag during April? The idea took off, and by the time April rolled around, hundreds of Donate Life flags were flying across the country. Within a few years, that number had risen dramatically.

Flying the Donate Life flag is one of the most popular and dramatic ways to observe National Donate Life Month. If your facility has a flagpole, you are perfectly positioned to participate. There are a number of ways this observance can be made:

- Raise the Donate Life flag alongside the U.S. flag for the entire month of April.
- As part of a flag-raising ceremony, invite a donor family member to speak to staff or students about the lifesaving and life-improving changes their loved one's courage and generosity created for someone in desperate need. LifeQuest may be able to help identify a donor family who is willing to speak during the flag-raising ceremony.
- Work with your organization's leadership and communications/public relations department to ensure that the entire organization knows about the event and understands the importance of the flag-raising.
- Ask your communications/public relations staff to get the word out to local news media. The flag-raising has visual appeal, and local TV news stations and newspapers may be interested in coverage. (\*See the media section for more information on pitching stories.)
- Some hospitals have developed significant and meaningful variations on the Donate Life flag-raising. Some fly the flag year-round in support of organ and tissue donation. Others raise the flag at the time donation authorization has been given, often having a family member involved, and leave the flag up for two days to honor the donor and their family.

## Beyond the hospitals, community and school organizations also flew the Donate Life Flag.



*The Donate Life flag flies outside Tallahassee Memorial Healthcare.*



*A team of chaplains proudly hold the Donate Life Flag.*



*Here the flag symbolizes donor education at Leon County EMS.*



*At Ascension Sacred Heart Hospital a folded flag is placed in the hands of the donor's next-of-kin.*



# NATIONAL DONATE LIFE BLUE & GREEN DAY



Support organ, eye and tissue donation. Show us your **Donate Life** colors!

APRIL 16, 2021

#BlueGreenDay RegisterMe.org

One day each April is set aside as a time when donation supporters are encouraged to wear blue and green, the Donate Life colors. It is a meaningful and fun way to bring attention to the cause of organ and tissue donation, and it can be done anywhere.

Donate Life America also runs a national contest for the best Blue & Green Day photos in a variety of categories. For a flyer with the photo categories and contest rules, go to [DonateLife.net/blue-green-day/](https://www.donatelife.net/blue-green-day/), then download the file named Flyer with Photo Contest Information. Here are some suggestions on how your organization can participate:

- Encourage employees to show their colors. Wear blue and green clothing, ties, shoes, scarves, jewelry and sunglasses.
- Decorate your desk, office, nursing station, breakroom, lunchroom or classroom with blue and green balloons and streamers.
- Share blue and green cupcakes or cookies with your coworkers.
- Have friendly competitions between offices, nursing units, classes, grades or teams. Invite a transplant recipient or donor family member to judge which are most creative.
- Take photos and share them on your Facebook, Instagram and Twitter accounts. Share them on the LifeQuest, Donate Life Florida and Donate Life America Facebook pages. Talk to your public relations and communications department about posting them on your organization's social media pages.



Guests were treated to a spectacular blue and green light show by SkyWheel at Pier Park in Panama City Beach.



Donate Life supporters participated in National Dress Up Your Pet Day.



Health care workers show their Donate Life spirit.



Ambassador Naishanda Larramore posted this picture of her wearing blue and green on social media.



# TESTIMONIAL SPEAKER EVENTS

Inviting speakers to share their experiences with organ and tissue donation and transplantation is a great way to inspire others to embrace donation, as they are hearing stories from individuals who have genuinely been touched by donation.

LifeQuest can connect you with trained speakers who have either had a transplant, have a family member who became a donor, or are a living donor or caregiver. Their stories are moving and often motivate others to register as organ donors. Transplant or organ recovery staff may also be available for speaking engagements.

If you cannot identify or arrange for someone to come into your organization, there are many wonderful stories of donation and transplantation already written that can be shared during National Donate Life Month.

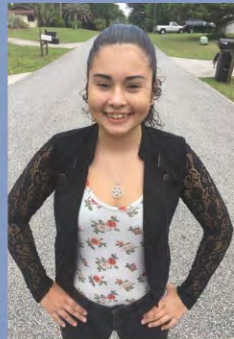
Additionally, you may have individuals within your organization who have been touched personally by donation but never were asked to share their story. You can work with your communications/public relations department and administration for the most appropriate and sensitive ways of reaching out to your employees or members to gauge interest and obtain the necessary consent.

## 2020 AMBASSADORS OF THE MONTH

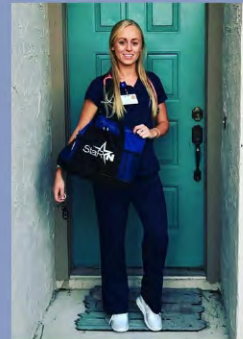
Thank you for your year-round commitment.



Liz Kasey  
April



Shiara Veltman  
May



Allie Biess  
June

LifeQuest  
Organ Recovery Services

Ambassadors are routinely recognized for volunteering and speaking in their communities.



Ambassador Rosetta Hylton Anderson speaking at St. Eugene Catholic Mission and Student Center at Florida A&M University.

7 ET FACEBOOK LIVE FEB. 10

Cielita Clausell & son Jaylen



Ever wonder what it's like to live with someone else's heart in your chest? Join us to learn more about Jaylen's Gift of Life.

Ambassadors found creative ways to share their stories online during the pandemic.



Ambassador Katie Walton spoke at the St. Mary Council of Catholic Women in Fort Walton Beach.



# HONOR WALKS

Honor Walks are a great way for our hospital partners and their staff to show respect to those who are making their final journey toward giving the Gift of Life. Although not restricted to just April for National Donate Life Month, hospitals that have not yet implemented them may wish to begin in April.

Honor Walks invite all staff throughout the hospital to line the corridors along the route from the ICU to the operating room as a donor is being transported for the recovery. Family and friends are also included, and often the hospitals will capture the tribute on video.

**This video from a donor's Honor Walk at UF Health Jacksonville has garnered more than 2.8 million views and 23,000 likes on our YouTube channel.**

**Click the image below to view the video on our YouTube channel.**



*LifeQuest executive director Danielle Balbis recognizes UF Army ROTC staff and cadets for their participation in honor walks of veterans and active duty personnel.*



# LUNCH & LEARN EVENTS

If your organization has a lunch and learn program, talk to the organizer about devoting one or more April events to the importance of organ and tissue donation and transplantation.

This is another forum for having employees in your organization who have experience in donation and transplantation to share their stories. If there is not anyone from inside your organization who can speak, LifeQuest has trained ambassadors, including transplant recipients and many donor family members, who are pleased to tell their stories.



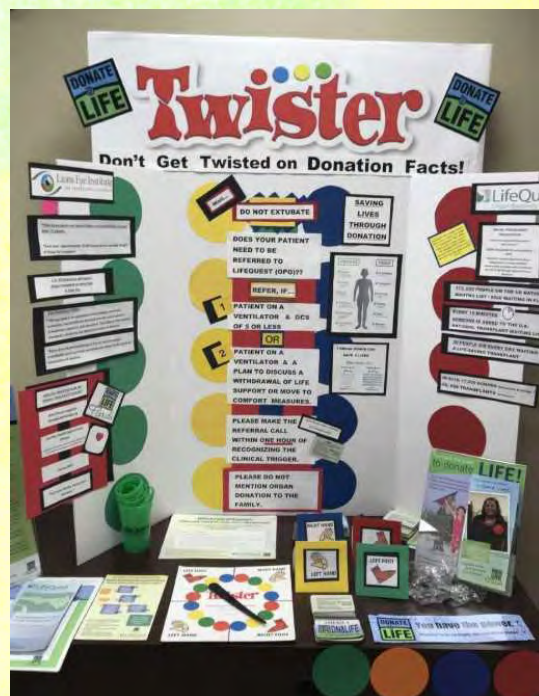
LifeQuest staff delivers a lunch & learn presentation to a packed house at Tallahassee Memorial Hospital.



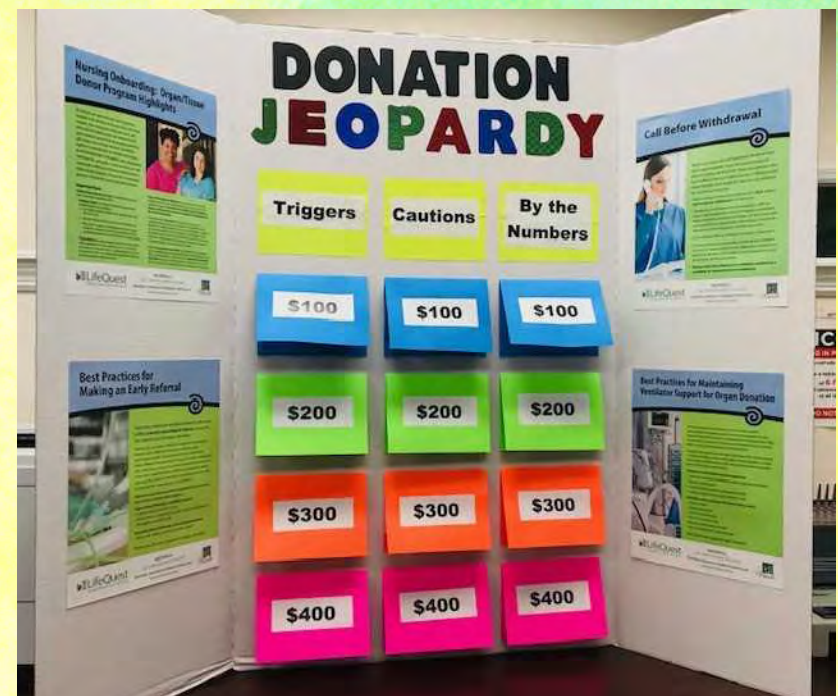
**Lunch-and-learn events provide a relaxed and sociable environment in which information on donation and transplantation can be presented to your staff.**

# POSTER BOARD GAMES AND CONTESTS

A creative way of engaging different hospital departments, classes or entire grades is to host a friendly poster board game or contest. Encourage each unit to create a board that showcases how lives can be saved and enhanced through organ, tissue and eye donation. In Jacksonville, Baptist Medical Center began an annual poster contest that has had as many as 14 units participate. The posters are displayed in a high-traffic area and voted upon by the staff and visitors. The top three winning units are recognized with pizza parties and ice cream socials. Poster boards can also be used to play fun interactive games that teach the importance of organ donation.



Participants played Twister to learn more about donation facts.



This Jeopardy poster board was used to train health care workers on proper procedures.



# FAITH COMMUNITY EVENTS

Most churches, temples and other houses of worship are supportive of organ and tissue donation, and they often will participate in activities which promote donation.

Approach your own clergy members or other faith communities about having a donor registration drive, an information table or guest speaker on donation and transplantation.

There also are many resources and references available for inclusion in bulletins, such as inserts, suggested scripture, psalms and songs. **Please see the appendix for examples.**

**Nearly every faith sees organ and tissue donation as an act of love and charity or as a decision to be dictated by conscience and left to the individual.**



Houses of worship can hold candle-lighting ceremonies in honor of donors from their congregations.



Ambassadors promoted donation at St. Eugene Catholic Mission and Student Center at Florida A&M University.

## National Donor Sabbath



"Being an organ donor is so important to me because it saves lives.

The reason why I know this is because it saved my daughter's life.

She was able to receive a kidney recently, and I am a registered donor, too. I have had it on my license for years, not knowing that my daughter would one day need someone to help her.

I encourage you to become a donor and save a life."

**BEVERLY CRAWFORD**  
*Nationally-renowned gospel singer*

Nationally-renowned Gospel Singer Beverly Crawford promotes organ donation because it saved her daughter's life.



# LIVING GREEN RIBBON EVENTS

For many years, the green ribbon was the symbol for organ donation. Although the donation and transplant community widely uses the Donate Life logo and call-to-action, the green ribbon still serves as a reminder to many people to think about organ donation and join the registry.

The idea of the “living” green ribbon was started by Donate Life Florida’s student volunteers involved in their college “Get Carded” chapters. Over the years, Florida college students have made more than a dozen Living Green Ribbons in celebration of National Donate Life Month.

To create a successful living green ribbon event, you will need a large outdoor, grassy area; a crowd of 150 or more; a custom green T-shirt for each participant or requirement that everyone wear a similar shade of green clothing and a photographer who is not afraid of heights!

LifeQuest can help you with the finer points of organization, logistics and choreography.

APRIL IS  
National Donate Life Month



Register to be an organ and tissue donor at  
[www.DonateLifeFlorida.org](http://www.DonateLifeFlorida.org)



(Top to bottom) Students at Florida State University, University of South Florida, and University of Central Florida organized to host successful Living Green Ribbon events.





## **PUBLICITY & MEDIA**

National Donate Life Month provides a rich opportunity to engage media of all kinds to deliver the message about the lifesaving and life-improving possibilities of organ, tissue and eye donation to your hospital, organization, school and community using traditional news media, as well as social media platforms.



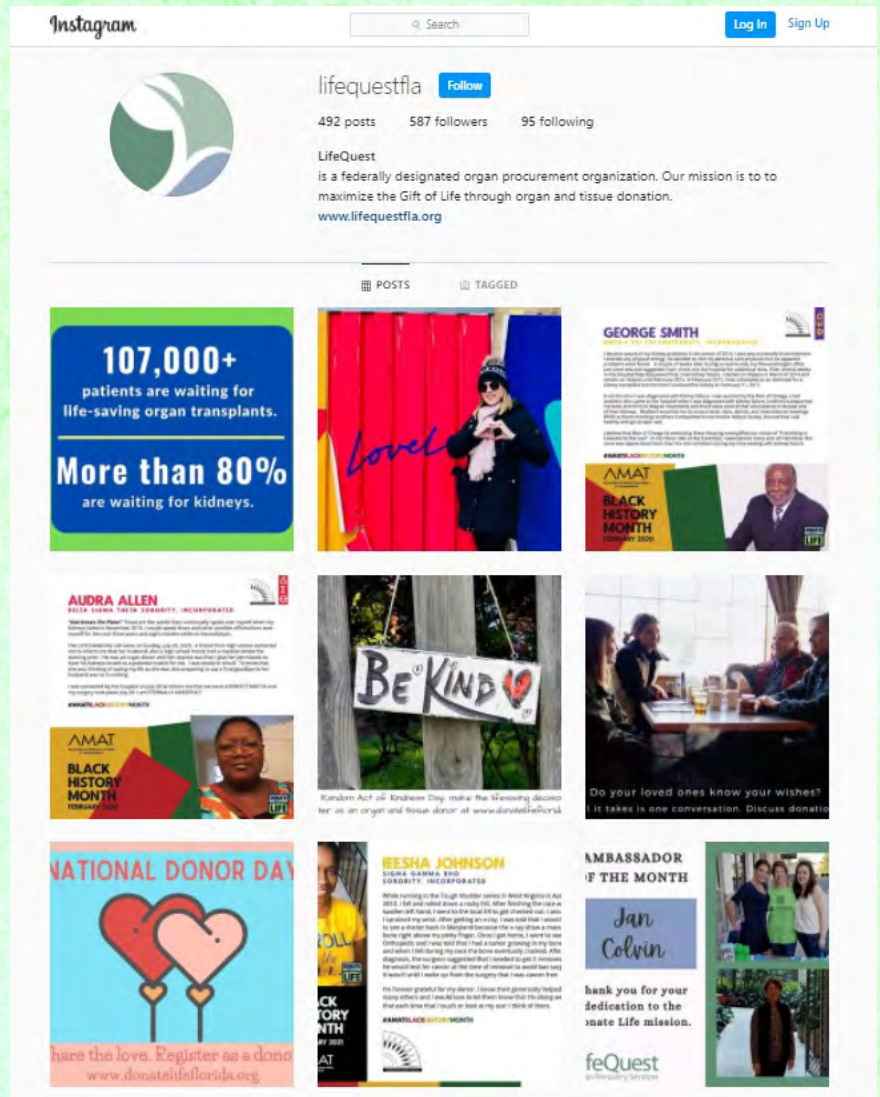
# SOCIAL MEDIA

Using your social media platforms is an easy and effective way to reach a large number of employees, students or members. In addition to posting photos and stories from within your organization and liking and sharing stories from other local, state and national pages, there are a number of graphic images that you can share.

You can add the Donate Life or Donate Life Florida logo or the custom artwork for National Donate Life Month to your Facebook page, Twitter profile or Instagram account. LifeQuest also can provide you with specially-designed Facebook banners and cover images.

Ask your organization's communications/public relations department about reserving a spot on the screen saver schedule, and LifeQuest can provide artwork for that as well.

Tweet a National Donate Life Message to your followers with a different message every day throughout the month. **Sample tweets can be found in the appendix.**



 Like us on Facebook: [facebook.com/LifeQuestFla](https://facebook.com/LifeQuestFla)

 Subscribe to LifeQuest's channel: [youtube.com/LifeQuest](https://youtube.com/LifeQuest)

 Follow us on Instagram: [@LifeQuestFla](https://instagram.com/LifeQuestFla)



# VIDEO STORYTELLING

Video storytelling is one of the most powerful ways to share the impact of The Gift of Life. Consider sharing videos on your social media sites, including Facebook and YouTube, as well as on your personal and organization websites. Posting photos with links to the videos on Instagram sites is another great way to draw attention for the videos and the messages they carry. Many hospitals, schools and businesses have closed-circuit television and may be willing to add National Donate Life Month messaging and videos to their CCTV lineup.

Sample 30- and 60-second scripts are in the [Appendix](#). Videos can be downloaded from the Donate Life America website at [DonateLife.net/videos](https://www.donatelife.net/videos). LifeQuest's YouTube channel has multiple videos with connections to organ and tissue donation. Subscribe to our channel at [YouTube.com/LifeQuest](https://www.youtube.com/LifeQuest).



*Liz Kasey was young, in kidney failure, and has a blood type that is hard to match. She got a donation through the paired kidney exchange that saved her life and the lives of three more people.*



*LifeQuest's Faces of Life video is a moving tribute to those who gave the Gift of Life to others. It is shared during our annual Tribute to Life program.*

**You Tube** Subscribe to LifeQuest's channel:  
[youtube.com/LifeQuest](https://www.youtube.com/LifeQuest)



## The Gift of Life: Zander's Story

*Zander Laurin, 16, was less than 100 feet from being done with his run when he was struck by a pickup. He donated a kidney and saved the life of his mother's best friend.*



*Jaylen Clausell was a star athlete at Pine Forest High School in Pensacola, Fla., then his heart stopped. In an instant, his focus changed from college scholarships to waiting for the Gift of Life.*



# NEWS RELEASES

If you are planning an event or activity, consider inviting the local media to cover the event. This will give your organization outstanding exposure as an organization dedicated to helping others and saving lives.

The appendix of this handbook includes a [sample news release](#), [newsletter article](#) and [letter to the editor](#) that you can customize for your organization's events and promotions. We have also included [frequently asked questions about organ and tissue donation](#), [current facts and statistics about organ donation](#) as well as [background information on National Donate Life Month](#) that will be helpful when you pitch your event to the media. These documents can be provided separately in PDF or Word versions upon request.

*Terri Herrington made national news when she and her late husband, Bryan, donated kidneys to the same man 16 years apart.*



# MESSAGE FROM THE CEO

A positive message about organ and tissue donation from the chief executive officer, administrator, principal or superintendent of an organization can have a real impact on employees.

Approach your CEO or administrator about sending an email to all employees or members about the altruistic decision to become a donor.

A [sample message from the CEO](#) that you can customize can be found in the appendix.



*Memorial Hospital's Brad Talbert, FACHE, speaking at a flag-raising ceremony.*



# BLOGS

Another great way to promote your organization's support of organ donation and National Donate Life Month is to share a story through a blog post on your website or intranet.

Tell the story of an employee, volunteer, customer or affiliate who has a personal connection to donation or transplantation.

Let your stakeholders or constituents know that donation is personal to your organization and that you are committed to saving and enhancing lives through donation.

**LifeQuest** Organ Recovery Services ABOUT SERVICES TESTIMONIALS FAQs BECOME A DONOR GET INVOLVED LIVING DONATION BLOG CONTACT



### A Gift's Long-Lasting Ripple Effect

February 9, 2021:

Nancy and Kelly Burke both grew up in Tallahassee. They graduated from Florida State University, got married, found jobs, bought a house, and then became pregnant. Nancy had always hoped for four kids – two boys and two girls.


Once pregnant, Nancy developed a terrible cough. She visited a pulmonologist in October 1988, and he alarmingly told Nancy that her heart was very enlarged. This came as a shock. Nancy had no prior health issues and lived an active lifestyle. She started medications in hopes that her enlarged heart was



**RECENT ARTICLES**

- Madison's Room
- Back In The Game
- A Gift's Long-Lasting Ripple Effect
- Two Transplants Strong
- Fourth Quarter: LifeQuest Ambassadors of the Month
- Silent Celebration
- A Long-Lasting Bond
- Get Your Donate Life Florida License Plate
- Third Quarter Feature: LifeQuest Ambassadors of the Month
- Walk of Love

**LifeQuest** Organ Recovery Services ABOUT SERVICES TESTIMONIALS FAQs BECOME A DONOR GET INVOLVED LIVING DONATION BLOG CONTACT




### Silent Celebration

December 18, 2020:

They say a picture is worth a thousand words. The same can be said of a Donate Life flag waving in the wind. This silent visual illustrates a bold yet heartfelt statement about the legacy of an organ donor and the significance of sharing the *Gift of Life*.


Raising the Donate Life flag is just one way LifeQuest recognizes our donor families for their generosity and sacrifice. The flag is prominent at private memorials, Honor Walks and public celebrations, too. It represents our continuing effort to raise awareness about organ, eye and tissue donation.



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### Walk of Love

September 11, 2020:

As a woman of faith, Cristy Sutton had come to appreciate the life-saving miracle of organ transplantation. Four years ago, lying flat on her back in a hospital bed, she came face-to-face with the emotional uncertainty that she may need a liver resection to survive.

The pause brought about by Sutton's stay in an Atlanta transplant center gave her time to reflect. On each side of her were patients waiting to receive organ transplants.


"I couldn't help but think about the fact that these people were likely going home with their families," said Sutton, a



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### Madison's Room

February 24, 2021:

A daddy's girl through and through, Madison Hair loved hanging out with her family. She also cherished the time she spent at home in her bedroom. Like many young people, it was the one place she could call her own; her sanctuary.

For seven years, Madison's bedroom on Mary Louise Drive provided a safe place to express herself and be alone with her thoughts. The former high school cheerleader listened to music and played with her pet hamsters and Siamese cat, Sushi. She studied, sketched and penned letters to family and friends in the stillness of her room.

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# CREATING A CULTURE OF DONATION

Creating a culture of donation involves more than just a one-time event or announcement. It includes embracing organ and tissue donation as an opportunity available to each and every member of your organization. It involves sharing the facts about donation, providing outlets for your employees, students or members to enroll on the registry and sharing the heart-warming stories of individuals whose lives have been saved or enhanced through the gifts of organ, eye and tissue donation.

Just as some organizations adopt specific charities, fundraising campaigns and public service initiatives throughout the year, your organization can incorporate the donation message into your corporate, civic or academic structure. Consider dedicating a page on your website or intranet for donation-related stories, statistics and activities. You could set an annual goal for the number of individuals who enroll on Florida's donor registry and establish friendly challenges between departments. You could add a hyperlink behind the Donate Life Florida logo on your homepage that takes a viewer directly to the registry to enroll. Sharing the stories of your employees who have been touched by donation or transplantation is another way to inspire others to register as organ and tissue donors and is an easy and all-welcoming way of showing compassion and kindness for those in need.



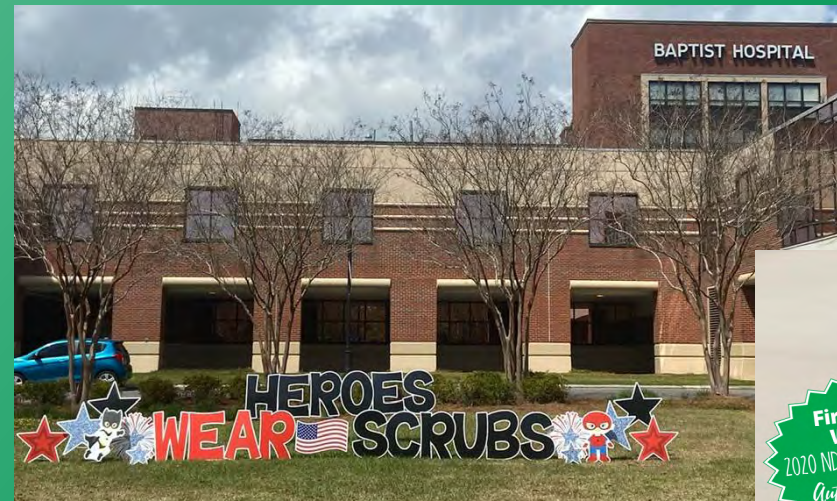
The wedding of LifeQuest ambassadors Kevin and Amanda Jacques, of Tallahassee. Kevin is a liver transplant recipient.



Ambassador and organ recipient Danny Martin volunteers year-round to help save lives.



A hand-stitched mask in support of organ donation.



LifeQuest honors its hospital partners and healthcare workers who provide services where they are most needed.



First Place Winner 2020 NDLM ART CONTEST Autumn Miller

Autumn Miller won first place in the 2020 National Donate Life Month Art Contest.



ICU nurses at West Florida Hospital in Pensacola support Donate Life.



LifeQuest staff shared their furry friends online for National Pet Day. Having a pet is a great emotional boost.



Ambassador Rosetta Hylton Anderson gears up for National Minority Donor Awareness Month.





## APPENDIX

The tools found in this appendix are intended make your activities during National Donate Life Month more effective. Feel free to customize them for use in your special events and publicity.



## Suggested Scriptures and Hymns

### Scriptures

The following scriptures are recommended for National Donate Life Month activities in churches, because of their messages of giving, healing and understanding of the relationships between human beings. They can be used as calls to worship, responsive readings and affirmations of faith. This list is not exhaustive, but merely a starting point for worship and possible sermon ideas.

Psalms 8	Matthew 25: 31-46	Romans 8: 28-39
Psalms 23	Luke 6: 31-38	Psalms 145
Psalms 41	John 3: 16-17	Psalms 34
Psalms 100	John 15: 1-17	Luke 10: 27-37
Psalms 107	John 14: 12	Psalms 82
Psalms 111	I John 4: 7-12	

### Hymns

The following hymns can provide a start to your promotion of National Donate Life Month. These selections bring a message of hope that can translate to the Gift of Life that organ and tissue donation can provide.

- Amazing Grace
- Blest Be the Tie That Binds
- Come Sinners, To the Gospel Feast
- Have Thine Own Way, Lord
- Heavenly Father, Bless Me Now
- Hope of the World
- Immortal Love, Forever Full
- Jesus, Lord, We Look To Thee
- Jesus, Lover of My Soul
- Jesus, United By Thy Grace



# Sample News Release

For Immediate Release

Contact: [Contact Name]

## April is National Donate Life Month

[Your City, State] (April 1, 2021) – National Donate Life Month was declared by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services and instituted by Donate Life America in 2003 as a time for the nation’s organ and tissue donation and transplantation community to focus its attention on the critical need for lifesaving donors. National Donate Life Month is celebrated throughout the month of April.

LifeQuest Organ Recovery Services, the federally-designated organ donor program serving a 36-county region of northern Florida, and [your organization name] are encouraging Floridians to learn the facts about organ and tissue donation and to join Florida’s donor registry at [DonateLifeFlorida.org](https://www.donatelife.org).

“There are approximately 5,000 patients on the waiting list at transplant centers in Florida,” said Danielle Balbis, executive director of LifeQuest, “and each one is waiting for the Gift of Life. By documenting our decisions to become donors on Florida’s registry, we are making a commitment to help save lives.”

In 2020, more than 39,000 patients nationally received lifesaving organ transplants, nearly 2,800 of whom were transplanted at Florida centers. There are more than 107,000 patients on the national organ transplant waiting list, and it is estimated that every 10 minutes, another person is added to this list.

“The most important thing we can do to increase donation is to document our decisions by joining the donor registry,” [name and title of representative from your organization]. “In less than one minute, you can make a decision that could save someone’s life.”

For more information about organ and tissue donation or to register your wishes to become a lifesaving donor, visit [DonateLifeFlorida.org](https://www.donatelife.org).



## Sample Newsletter Article

(word count 274)

### 2021 National Donate Life Month

April is National Donate Life Month, a time when the donation and transplantation community concentrates its yearlong efforts to educate Americans about the critical shortage of donated organs and tissue and remind them of the importance of documenting one's own donation decision.

According to the United Network for Organ Sharing (UNOS), the non-profit organization that maintains the nation's organ transplant database, more than 107,000 people currently are waiting for lifesaving organ transplants. Approximately 5,000 of them are listed at transplant centers in Florida. This year, thousands of patients also will need life-enhancing tissue transplants, such as skin grafts and heart valves.

[Insert a personal testimonial from someone within your organization who has been touched by organ and tissue donation or transplantation.]

The limited supply of donated organs is not meeting the enormous demand—roughly 20 people die each day while waiting—but there is something we all can do about it. *We can donate life!* One organ donor can save the lives of up to eight people, and one tissue donor can help more than 75. One donor can keep a family together. One donor can give a child his first real, play-filled summer or make it possible for a man to take his grandchildren fishing.

Documenting your decision to Donate Life has never been easier. Visit Florida's donor registry at [DonateLifeFlorida.org](https://www.donatelife.org) to learn the facts and join the registry.



## Sample Letter to the Editor

April is National Donate Life Month, an annual campaign by the organ donation and transplantation community that encourages Americans to learn the facts about donation and to document their own donation decisions by joining their state's donor registry.

I encourage you to learn the facts about donation and make the decision that may one day save the lives of others in need. It won't take but a moment of your time.

According to the United Network for Organ Sharing (UNOS), the non-profit organization that maintains the nation's organ transplant database, more than 107,000 people currently are awaiting lifesaving organ transplants. Each one is waiting for a chance to live.

Until the day when there are enough donor organs, thousands of patients awaiting transplants and their families, their friends and colleagues will continue, every day, to hear the words, "not yet." Their need is our challenge, and we can meet this challenge by saying yes to donation and helping to eliminate the wait. Consider for a moment what that means.

We've all waited in line to see a movie. We've waited for our number to be called at the deli. We've drummed our fingers on the wheel during rush hour, waiting to inch our way toward the traffic light. We lose patience when it takes more than a few seconds for an app to load. Waiting is time spent in-between other things. It is the limbo of "not yet."

Each patient waiting for an organ transplant faces a day-by-day struggle for survival, a week-to-week effort to maintain some semblance of what the rest of us take for granted. Waiting to them might mean six hours of being attached to a dialysis machine, three times each week. Or it may mean being out of breath - always.

The limited supply of donated organs is not meeting the enormous demand—roughly 20 people dying each day while waiting—but there is something we all can do about it. We can *donate life*! On average, one organ and tissue donor can help more than 75 people. One donor can keep a family together. One donor can give a child his first real, play-filled summer. One donor can make it possible for a man to take his grandchildren fishing.

Documenting your decision to Donate Life has never been easier. Visit Florida's donor registry at [DonateLifeFlorida.org](https://www.donatelife.org) to learn the facts and join the registry. Taking a couple of minutes out of your morning may someday save another person's life. What greater legacy can we leave behind than to have given the *Gift of Life*?

[Name]

[Title]

[Organization]



## Frequently Asked Questions About Organ & Tissue Donation

### **Q: Is brain death like being in a coma?**

No. Brain death is death. There is no recovery from death. The definition of brain death is the complete and irreversible cessation of all brain activity. Even though a patient is still connected to a ventilator (a machine which artificially maintains bodily functions such as respiration and circulation), when a person is declared brain dead, he or she no longer is alive.

### **Q: Is there an age limit on being a donor or recipient?**

There is no specific age range for donation. A person can be in his or her 70s or even 80s and still donate. The coordinators who evaluate potential donors perform a variety of clinical tests to determine which organs can be recovered.

### **Q: How do I know they will try to save my life if I get in an accident if they see “donor” on my license?**

Every EMT and every ER or ICU nurse or doctor has one goal: to save patients' lives. Each of them does his or her best to stabilize the patient and get them to the next stage (from the ambulance to the ER, from the ER to the OR, from the OR to the ICU, from the ICU to home). When all lifesaving efforts have been exhausted, and the patient has died, or it is evident that death is imminent, the hospital will refer that patient to the OPO.

### **Q: Can anyone become a donor?**

Most people can become organ or tissue donors. There are certain medical conditions that would rule out a potential donor, but we encourage people to let the OPO make that clinical determination and not rule themselves out of a decision based on the assumption that they cannot donate. We encourage everyone to make an informed decision about donation based on the facts.

### **Q: Who pays for the donation?**

Ultimately the insurance provider of the person who gets an organ transplant will pay for the costs associated with organ recovery. The donor's family never pays for the costs associated with organ donation.



## FAQs About Organ & Tissue Donation (continued)

### **Q: Can donors or their families get paid?**

No. It is illegal and against the 1984 National Organ Transplant Act to pay someone for an organ or tissue. All organ donation in the United States is done altruistically.

### **Q: What if I don't join the registry?**

We encourage people not only to make an informed decision about donation, but also to take action. Join Florida's donor registry at [DonateLifeFlorida.org](https://www.donatelife.org). If you don't live in Florida, go to [RegisterMe.org](https://www.registerme.org) to join the national registry. If you have not joined a registry, it will be your next-of-kin who makes the decision for you.

### **Q: Is my religion against donation?**

All major eastern and western religions either fully endorse donation (as the ultimate act of kindness toward humanity) or they leave the decision up to the individual.

### **Q: I heard that rich people and celebrities don't have to wait as long to get transplanted.**

Not true. The transplant waiting list is blind to one's celebrity or financial status. The only information that appears next to one's name on the list is their height and weight, blood type, age, severity of illness and length of time on the list. People are transplanted when they reach the top of the list and are matched with the next available organ.

### **Q: What tissue can be donated and how many lives can be changed?**

Among the tissue that can be donated are skin, bone, corneas, heart valves, tendons, veins and ligaments. The solid organs are heart, liver, kidney, lung, pancreas and small intestine. Up to 75 people can be helped by one tissue donor.

### **Q: What do I need to tell my family?**

That you learned about organ donation. That you have made a decision to save lives by becoming an organ and tissue donor and that you want them to make a positive decision to save lives through organ donation as well.



## 2021 Facts and Statistics About Organ Donation

- LifeQuest is one of only 57 organ procurement organizations in the country.
- One organ donor can save up to eight lives through the donation of the lungs, kidneys, heart, liver, pancreas and small intestine.
- On average, 20 people die each day while awaiting organ transplants.
- One tissue donor can enhance the lives of more than 75 people.
- Nationally, more than 107,000 people are awaiting lifesaving organ transplants.
- More than 95 percent of Americans support organ donation, but the national registration rate is 58 percent.
- It has never been easier to register as an organ and tissue donor. Simply register online at [DonateLifeFlorida.org](https://www.donatelife.org).
- Organ and tissue donation does not hinder funeral arrangements, and a donor can have an open casket funeral.
- More than 84 percent of those listed on the national transplant waiting list are awaiting kidney transplants.
- About 90 percent of donor registrations in Florida occur in driver license offices.
- The oldest organ donor was nine days shy of turning 93 and became a liver donor.
- More than 800,000 organ transplants have occurred in the U.S. since 1988.
- More than 40,000 corneal transplants occur in the U.S. annually.
- Last year there were more than 5,700 living donations in the U.S.
- More than 1 million tissue transplants are performed each year, and the surgical need for tissue has been rising steadily.



# NDLM Background Information

## *National Donate Life Month*

### **History**

- National Donate Life Month (NDLM) was instituted by Donate Life America and its members in 2003. It grew out of the federally proclaimed National Organ and Tissue Donation Awareness Week and is celebrated throughout the month of April.
- National Donate Life Month is a time when the donation and transplantation community concentrates its yearlong efforts to educate Americans about the critical shortage of donated organs and tissue and other lifesaving gifts and remind them of the importance of documenting one's own donation decision.

### **Need**

- More than 107,000 patients are on the national waiting list for organ transplants.
- Of them, approximately 5,000 are listed at transplant centers in Florida. According to the United Network for Organ Sharing, as of March 2021, 618 of them are listed at UF Health Shands Transplant Center in Gainesville, 990 are listed at the Mayo Clinic in Jacksonville and 192 are listed at Ascension Sacred Heart Hospital Pensacola.
- In 2020, more than 39,000 patients received lifesaving organ transplants in the United States. Of them, nearly 2,800 were transplanted in Florida.
- Approximately 20 people die each day while awaiting lifesaving organ transplants.
- One organ donor can save the lives of up to eight people.
- One tissue donor can enhance the lives of up to 75 people through skin, bone and cornea donation.

### **Action**

- Designate your wishes to be an organ, tissue and eye donor.
- Join the registry at [DonateLifeFlorida.org](https://www.donatelife.org).
- Support Florida's campaign to save lives and enroll on the donor registry today.



# Suggested Tweets

## *In 140 characters or fewer...*

### History

- *Donate Life Month* was instituted by Donate Life America in 2003 and is promoted throughout April.
- Each April the donation and transplant community educates Americans about the critical shortage of organs and encourages individuals to join the donor registry.

### Need

- As of January 2021, there were more than 107,000 patients on the national waiting list for organ transplants.
- Approximately 5,000 patients are waiting for organs at transplant centers in Florida.
- In 2020, more than 39,000 patients received lifesaving organ transplants in America.
- In 2020, nearly 2,800 patients received organs at Florida transplants centers.
- Approximately 20 people die each day while awaiting lifesaving organ transplants.
- One organ donor can save the lives of up to eight people.
- One tissue donor can enhance the lives of more than 75 people through skin, bone and cornea donation.

### Action

- Designate your wishes to be an organ, tissue and eye donor. Join the registry at [DonateLifeFlorida.org](https://DonateLifeFlorida.org).
- Join Florida's organ donor registry at [DonateLifeFlorida.org](https://DonateLifeFlorida.org).
- Support Florida's campaign to save lives and enroll on the donor registry today. Register at [DonateLifeFlorida.org](https://DonateLifeFlorida.org).
- Visit [DonateLifeFlorida.org](https://DonateLifeFlorida.org) to enroll or to learn more about donation. Your decision today could save the lives of many people down the road.



## Sample Message from the CEO

[Company Name] employees:

It is my privilege to serve as the chief executive of an organization that has real heart. That's why I'm sending this message to you all. [Organization Name] has always been an organization that cares, and I know that you will care about this. April is National Donate Life Month. It is a time to consider the lifesaving possibilities of organ, eye and tissue donation.

There are now more than 107,000 Americans waiting for an organ transplant to save their lives. Of those, approximately 5,000 waiting are listed at transplant centers in Florida. A transplant can save their lives. We can honor them by registering as an organ and tissue donors.

If you haven't yet registered on your driver license or state ID card, go to [DonateLifeFlorida.org](https://www.donatelife.org). Registration just takes a few minutes, and it can really save lives. I have committed to helping by registering. Won't you join me?

[Name]

[Title]

[Organization]



## Public Service Announcements (PSAs)

**:30**

More than 107,000 Americans are awaiting lifesaving organ transplants, and approximately 5,000 of those are listed at transplant centers in Florida.

April is National Donate Life Month, a time in which the need for organ, tissue and eye donation is emphasized across the country.

A single organ donor can save eight lives, and tissue donation can improve the lives of 75 or more.

Save lives! Become an organ, tissue and eye donor. Register at [DonateLifeFlorida.org](https://www.donatelife.org).

**:60**

More than 107,000 Americans are currently awaiting lifesaving organ transplants, and of those, approximately 5,000 waiting are listed at transplant centers in Florida.


April is National Donate Life Month, a time in which the need for organ, tissue and eye donation is emphasized across the country.

Although more than 190 million Americans are registered donors, an average of 20 people die every day waiting for an organ transplant, and each day nearly 150 names are added to the waiting list – an average of one name every 10 minutes.

A single organ donor can save eight lives, and tissue donation can improve the lives of 75 or more. Donated corneas restore sight to tens of thousands every year. More than 1 million tissue transplants are performed in the United States every year.

You have the power to donate life! Register to be an organ, tissue and eye donor at [DonateLifeFlorida.org](https://www.donatelife.org).





**With more than 107,000 Americans currently waiting for transplants, the need for organ and tissue donors is more critical than ever. Of those, approximately 5,000 waiting are listed at transplant centers in Florida, all of whom are awaiting that second chance at life.**

**National Donate Life Month is a unique opportunity each year to inform and educate your staff in addition to the community about the critical role we all play in saving the lives of those who wait on the list.**

**LifeQuest Organ Recovery Services appreciates the vital support you provide in saving the lives of so many who otherwise would have no opportunity for survival.**