

GIFT OF LIFE News



GIFT of LIFE
DONOR PROGRAM
A Legacy of **HEROES**. A Future of **HOPE**.

A publication of **Gift of Life Donor Program**, the region's organ and tissue transplant network, serving the eastern half of Pennsylvania, southern New Jersey and Delaware.

TOGETHER

We Shine the Light of Hope



We celebrate the light
you bring to our community
through your generosity, advocacy and support.

Best wishes for a holiday season
FILLED WITH WARMTH
and a New Year
ILLUMINATED BY KINDNESS.

YOUR FRIENDS AT  **GIFT OF LIFE**

Pictured are donor families and transplant recipients who represent our proud past and inspiring future. Learn more about them at donors1.org/holiday.



A Donate Life Organization

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DONOR PROGRAM
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28TH ANNUAL DONOR DASH

Nearly 16,000 supporters gathered at the Philadelphia Navy Yard on April 27 for the 28th Annual Gift of Life Donor Dash. We honored donor heroes, celebrated transplant recipients, showed support for those waiting, while highlighting the incredible strength and generosity of our community.

This year's Dash was especially meaningful as it marked the finale of our 50th anniversary commemoration. Thanks to your support, we added 50,215 people to the donor registry! Together, we are building a future of hope for those waiting urgently for a transplant. What a powerful way to mark 50 years of saving lives!

The event included 5K and 10K runs, 3K walk, Kids Fun Run, lawn games, food trucks, and entertainment by the PME Drumline, DJ Doc B and the Philadelphia School of Rock.

The Donor Dash honors the legacy of Claire Braverman, who founded the event in 1996 after losing her husband, Mickey, who died while waiting for a liver transplant.



A Celebration to Remember!

DONOR DASH HIGHLIGHTS:

- Nearly **200 transplant recipients** ran or walked in tribute to donor heroes
- **\$720,000+** raised to support donor families, recipients and community education
- **355+ teams** and **250+ volunteers** came together to make the day a success
- **Virtual Dashers** joined from 28 states, Washington, D.C., and even Ireland
- **Hip-hop artist Philadelphia Freeway**, a kidney recipient and father of donor hero Jihad, performed live with kidney waitlist patient Phillip Davis, sharing their song, "Gift of Life"
- A vibrant **Community Village** featured more than 20 local organizations including Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc., Office of City Council President Kenyatta Johnson, Pa. House of Representatives, Pennie, Philadelphia Water Department, Teaching to Change Lives Inc. – Women of Wellness (W.O.W.), Indego and Skillz Group Inc.

"Thank you to all our sponsors, participants, volunteers and community partners for making our 28th Donor Dash a tremendous success. Everyone can help us build on this momentum by signing up as a donor, so that one day no one will die waiting for a transplant."

—Rick Hasz, Jr., President and CEO, Gift of Life Donor Program, pictured above between Philadelphia Freeway (left) and kidney waitlist patient Phillip Davis (right).

THANK YOU to our Donor Dash sponsors:

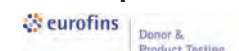
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DON'T MISS THE 29TH ANNUAL DONOR DASH

Gift of Life's biggest celebration of organ and tissue donation in **APRIL 2026** – the highlight of **National Donate Life Month!**

Follow Gift of Life (@donors1) on social media and sign up for our colorful monthly eNews at donors1.org/eNews for more information!



Join

TEAM PHILADELPHIA

at the
**2026 TRANSPLANT GAMES
OF AMERICA**

JUNE 18-23, 2026 | Denver, CO

- Honor the heroic legacy of donors, celebrate the success of transplantation and inspire more people to register as a donor.
- Organ, tissue and bone marrow recipients, living donors, donor families and supporters are all invited.

Visit **TeamPhilly.org**



Clinical

Celebrating Our Hospital Partners

THANK YOU, HOSPITAL PARTNERS for sharing the power of organ and tissue donation and inspiring more people to sign up to become a donor!

2025 DONATE LIFE PENNSYLVANIA Hospital Challenge

- 121 hospitals statewide / 67 in Gift of Life's region:**
- Hosted educational programs to improve the clinical process for donation.
 - Held special events to register new donors.
 - Earned recognition for their efforts.

- Sponsored by:**
- Hospital and Healthsystem Association of PA (HAP)
 - PA Department of Health
 - Gift of Life Donor Program
 - Center for Organ Recovery & Education



Staff at the Hospital of the University of Pennsylvania honored organ and tissue donor heroes at a special ceremony in May.

"We applaud the innovation and dedication of HAP and our hospital partners through the HAP Donate Life Pennsylvania Hospital Challenge. We are deeply grateful for the vital role hospitals play in championing organ and tissue donation and inspiring countless individuals to say 'yes' to saving lives."

—Rick Hasz, Jr., President and CEO, Gift of Life Donor Program

2025 Winners in Gift of Life's Region:

TOP HEALTH SYSTEMS:			
First Place	Second Place	Third Place	
Main Line Health System	Temple University Health	Tower Health	
TOP HOSPITALS:			
First Place	Second Place	Third Place	
Hospital of the University of Pennsylvania	Bryn Mawr Hospital	UPMC Williamsport	
Titanium Level			
Geisinger Wyoming Valley Medical Center	St. Luke's University Hospital – Bethlehem Campus		
Paoli Hospital	St. Luke's Hospital – Monroe Campus		
Phoenixville Hospital	Temple University Hospital		
Pottstown Hospital	Temple University Hospital – Jeanes Campus		
St. Christopher's Hospital for Children			
Platinum Level	Gold Level	Silver Level	Bronze Level
41 hospitals	9 hospitals	2 hospitals	3 hospitals



HONORING 30 YEARS OF IMPACT: Michael's Legacy Lives On

Donation after circulatory death (DCD) is a vital pathway for organ donation, thanks to the legacy of 14-year-old Michael McVey. After a tragic fall in 1995, Michael became *Gift of Life Donor Program's* first DCD donor at a time when most transplants occurred only after brain death. His gift saved three lives and transformed the future of organ donation.

His mother, Susan McVey-Dillon, became a passionate advocate who worked alongside *Gift of Life* to establish DCD as a national standard. "I understood how severe Michael's trauma was. He was not going to get up and get out of that bed and come home with us. We decided to remove him from life support, then asked about organ donation," said Susan. "We had made the toughest decision any family would ever have to make. Knowing that there was no hope of a miracle for Michael, we thought that maybe we could provide a miracle for someone else. As a donor mother, I wanted

every family possible to have the opportunity for the healing legacy of donation that we had."

It is after ICU teams share with families that continued support would be ineffective and there is no hope for recovery, and together they make the difficult decision to withdraw life-sustaining treatment, that the DCD donation option is offered to families.

In Gift of Life's region, nearly 3,000 families have chosen this special legacy, leading to almost 5,300 transplants. *Gift of Life* has become a national leader in DCD, partnering with hospitals whose protocols and training serve as a model for compassionate care and life-saving donation. *Gift of Life* and every hospital in our region has specific standards on DCD and all components of organ donation to ensure an optimal process for patients and their families.

DCD is a powerful testament to the courage and compassion of one young hero and his family. Thirty years later, Michael is still saving lives.

SUPPORTING FAMILIES, HONORING HEROES

Announcing New LEGACIES OF LOVE Online Tribute

At *Gift of Life*, we are honored to walk beside families through their grief journey, offering comfort and support during the donation process and through ongoing aftercare provided by our team of Family Support counselors. Now, we're excited to share a new way to honor and remember donor heroes, our new **LEGACIES OF LOVE Memorial Website.**

- Families can:**
- Create a personalized tribute page for their loved one
 - Share up to four photos
 - Add stories and cherished memories
 - Contribute to a gallery of heroes that celebrates the power of donation
- We look forward to seeing this special collection of tributes grow as we honor each donor's legacy of life and love.**

Visit legaciesoflove.org or scan the code »

STUDENTS SAVE LIVES! College Challenge Sets New Record for Donor Registrations

Fourteen colleges in our region participated in the challenge, registering 704 people as organ and tissue donors – making College Challenge history in a landmark year of advocacy. Those individuals have the potential to save more than 5,000 lives (*one organ donor can save eight lives*)!



Each organization shared the importance of donation with students, faculty and staff through donor registration drives, special events, social media, and other activities.

- Thank you to all participants and congratulations to the winners:
- FIRST PRIZE |** Susquehanna University (*pictured*) Paul Dannelly Chapter of Public Relations Society of America (PRSSA) *A week of events reached hundreds in person and more than 10,000 on social media.*
 - SECOND PRIZE |** Pennsylvania College of Technology Wellness Committee *Also recognized for registering the most donors – 265 – in the 2025 Challenge.*
 - THIRD PRIZE |** University of Scranton Communications and Ethics Course



2026 Gift of Life College Challenge – Registration opens in Fall 2025 for student organizations and clubs. Visit donors1.org/college or contact Dwendy Johnson at djohnson@donors1.org. 2026 College Challenge will run from February 14 (National Donor Day) through the end of April.