

GIFT of LIFE News



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.

OUR 2025 IMPACT: RECORD FOR MOST TRANSPLANTS IN U.S. HISTORY!

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April is National Donate Life Month

TOGETHER, WE DASH TO SAVE LIVES



Celebrate the power of organ and tissue donation with *Gift of Life* at the Donor Dash on **SUNDAY, APRIL 26** — a joyful, high-energy day that brings our mission to life. Together, we'll honor donor heroes, uplift transplant recipients, stand with those still waiting and inspire new supporters to say "yes" to saving lives. Whether you run, walk or cheer, Donor Dash is an inspiring tradition filled with purpose, connection and fun for all ages.

JOIN THE CELEBRATION! SUNDAY, APRIL 26

at the Philadelphia Navy Yard

**10K/5K RUNS, 3K WALK
& much more!**

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A DonateLife Organization



GIFT of LIFE
THE REGION'S ORGAN & TISSUE TRANSPLANT NETWORK
DONOR PROGRAM
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DONOR DASH

WHERE GRATITUDE MEETS HOPE

Join *Gift of Life Donor Program* for an inspiring day filled with gratitude, hope and joy at the 29th Annual Donor Dash on Sunday, April 26. For transplant recipient and advocate Shaahed Hussain, the Dash is a powerful way to honor donor heroes who make a second chance at life possible.

At just eight months old, Shaahed received three liver transplants in one week at Children's Hospital of Philadelphia after suffering liver and kidney failure. "I survived because someone said 'yes' to donation," Shaahed says. "Now, I'm living to pay that gift forward."

Today, Shaahed is a student at the University of Pittsburgh, pursuing his dream of a career in medicine while championing organ donation. Through public speaking and leading a Donor Dash team that has raised more than \$22,000, he inspires others to take action and support those still waiting for a transplant.

Now in its third year at the Philadelphia Navy Yard, Donor Dash will once again bring donor families, transplant recipients, waitlist patients, hospital partners, volunteers and advocates together at the scenic riverfront venue. A virtual Dash option allows supporters everywhere to take part in this meaningful experience.

Since its founding, more than a quarter of a million people have participated in Donor Dash, with virtual participants joining from more than 30 states. Each year, the life-saving message of Dash reaches millions through media and community engagement.



Proceeds from Donor Dash benefit *Gift of Life Donor Program's* Transplant Foundation, supporting programs and services for donor families and transplant recipients — and helping advocates like Shaahed continue paying the gift of life forward.



Fun For All Ages!
SUNDAY, APRIL 26

Philadelphia Navy Yard
Virtual Option Available

- **Live Entertainment**
 - **Community Resources**
 - **Food Trucks**
 - **Free Parking**
- On-site Registration Opens8:00 a.m.
10K/5K Runs9:15/9:30 a.m.
3K Walk.....11:15 a.m.

REGISTER TODAY AT DonorDash.org

To volunteer, contact Colleen Brand at cbrand@donors1.org



Shaahed Hussain

TOGETHER, WE MADE HISTORY: OUR LIFE-SAVING IMPACT IN 2025

Gift of Life's 2025 achievements include record for the **MOST ORGANS TRANSPLANTED IN U.S. HISTORY**

and the **MOST DONOR HEROES IN OUR PROGRAM'S HISTORY**

as we accelerated progress towards our vision to end the waitlist.

Powered by a unique alliance of scientific innovation and human compassion, our dedicated staff and hospital partners embraced ground-breaking technologies that advance the legacies of the donor heroes and families who make it all possible. Together, we helped ensure that more families were able to honor their loved ones through donation and more patients received a second chance at life.

This success reflects *Gift of Life's* leadership in implementing innovative organ recovery and preservation technologies that dramatically expand opportunities for donation and transplantation, rapidly opening doors for more families to save lives.

"Transplants that would not have been possible just a few years ago are now taking place daily thanks to the extraordinary dedication and expertise of our staff and commitment of our hospital partners," said

Richard D. Hasz, Jr., MFS, CPTC, President and CEO of *Gift of Life Donor Program*, *Gift of Life Transplant Foundation* and *Gift of Life Howie's House*.

"As we innovate and lead, we never forget that the true power of donation lies in the humanity of families who choose compassion in their hardest moments. Their courage creates heroes and life-saving legacies, fueling our team's determination to end the transplant waitlist."



1,955 MOST Organs Transplanted in U.S. History

984 MOST Kidneys Transplanted in U.S. (10th Year in a Row)

508 MOST Livers Transplanted in U.S. History

180 MOST Hearts Transplanted in U.S.

725 MOST Donor Heroes in Program History

43,108 MOST Organs Transplanted Since Start of National Donation System

Gift of Life works with 123 acute care hospitals and 12 transplant centers in our region, as well as hundreds of transplant centers throughout the country, to provide the most comprehensive array of services available in the U.S. to the donation and transplantation community. *Gift of Life* consistently ranks in the highest-performing tier of the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) for key donation and transplantation metrics.

See our complete 2025 results: donors1.org/2025release

Gift of Life Award

**Jefferson Torresdale Hospital Honored
Creating Legacies That Save Lives**

Gift of Life Donor Program and the Hospital and Healthsystem Association of Pennsylvania (HAP) Southeast Connect honored Jefferson Torresdale Hospital with the 2025 Gift of Life Award in recognition of its outstanding commitment to organ donation.

“This is the fourth time Jefferson Torresdale Hospital has earned the Gift of Life Award — a testament to their strong culture of donation and commitment to saving lives,” said Richard D. Hasz, Jr.,



Front row, from left: Zachary Weisner, DO, Resident, Jefferson Torresdale Hospital (JTH); Nicole Graf, OR Manager, JTH; Michelle Conley, Chief Nursing Officer, Jefferson Health North Region (JHNR); Richard Galup, COO, JHNR; Bridget Ostaszewski, ED Nurse Manager, JTH.

Second row, from right: Donna Titus, Trauma Program Director, JTH; Ed Turzanski, VP Government & Veterans Affairs-Government Relations, Jefferson Health; Randy Present, VP Public Affairs & Family Services, Gift of Life Donor Program (GLDP); Jim Glessner, AVP Operations, JTH; Maritza Sanchez, Executive Clinical Director Perioperative Services, JTH; Brian Sweeney, President, JHNR; Chris Costello, RN Intensive Care Unit, JTH; Richard D. Hasz, Jr., President and CEO, Denise Cirio, Hospital Services Coordinator, and Kristen Stachowicz, VP Hospital Services, all of GLDP; Benjamin Hagendorf, MD, Trauma Surgeon, JTH; Christine Radolovic, Chief Clinical Officer, GLDP.



Collaborating to Increase Donation and Transplants

Gift of Life Institute is now the home of the National Community Partnership for Donation and Transplant Growth, assuming stewardship of a national grassroots movement focused on strengthening collaboration to increase donation and transplantation nationwide.

As host organization, the Institute brings the structure, coordination and educational expertise needed to sustain and expand this important work. Building on more than 20 years of experience, the Institute’s strong track record and reputation for excellence uniquely position it to grow the Partnership’s impact.

An affiliate of Gift of Life Donor Program, Gift of Life Institute has served as an international training center for organ and tissue donation professionals since 2004.

MFS, CPTC, President and CEO of *Gift of Life Donor Program*. “Their team embraces the mission of organ donation with passion and purpose. At every level, Jefferson Torresdale demonstrates the power of leadership and clinical expertise in supporting organ donation as part of compassionate end-of-life care. We are proud to celebrate Jefferson Torresdale’s work to help create a heroic legacy for donors and a future of hope for those waiting.”

“This award recognizes the excellence, dedication and compassion of our entire team at Jefferson Torresdale,” said Brian Sweeney, RN, MAB, FACHE, President, North Region – Jefferson Health. “Organ donation is among the most profound gifts we can facilitate in healthcare — creating life out of loss through the generosity of donor heroes and their families. Through our strong partnership with *Gift of Life Donor Program*, we are proud to support families in their most difficult moments and provide a second chance at life for those on the transplant waitlist.”

Gift of Life also recognized the following 16 Pennsylvania hospitals that achieved a 100 percent patient referral rate:

- | | |
|--|--|
| Bryn Mawr Hospital | Lankenau Medical Center |
| Chester County Hospital | Mercy Fitzgerald Hospital |
| Children’s Hospital of Philadelphia | Nazareth Hospital |
| Doylestown Hospital | Paoli Hospital |
| Grand View Hospital | Pennsylvania Hospital |
| Jefferson Abington Hospital | Penn Presbyterian Medical Center |
| Jefferson Hospital for Neuroscience | Riddle Hospital |
| Jefferson Torresdale Hospital | St. Christopher’s Hospital for Children |

Innovative Tool for Donation Professionals

Gift of Life Institute has launched DonorPedia™, a new mobile app that gives donation professionals quick, practical guidance in real time. The app brings together expert information and best practices in one easy-to-use place, helping teams support donor families with care and ensure life-saving gifts reach patients in need.

Through tools like DonorPedia, *Gift of Life* remains committed to advancing innovative solutions that strengthen practice, collaboration and outcomes across the donation and transplantation system.



**MORE THAN 22,000
KIDNEY TRANSPLANTS
FOR PATIENTS IN NEED**

For the 10th consecutive year, *Gift of Life* led the nation in kidney donation – the most needed organ for transplant – in 2025, **coordinating 984 kidney transplants**. This brings our program’s cumulative total to 22,756, the highest number of kidney transplants facilitated by any organ procurement organization in U.S. history.

Gift of Life’s leadership reflects an unwavering commitment to addressing one of the most urgent needs in health care:

- **More than half a million people in the U.S. are living with End-Stage Renal Disease.**
- **More than 90,000 patients are currently waiting for a kidney transplant.**
- **The need is especially acute in communities of color, where chronic conditions like high blood pressure and diabetes place individuals at greater risk for kidney failure.**

Guided by a culture of innovation and collaboration, *Gift of Life* is committed to achieving a future in which every patient in need has access to a second chance at life.



**Jessica’s Story:
I HAVE HOPE**

“I was bedridden a lot of the time. I was very sick. There are so many things I missed out on that I get to enjoy now. I have so much to look forward to. I have freedom. I have hope.”

—*Jessica Gonzales, kidney and liver recipient*

Jessica Gonzales was just 27 when she was diagnosed with lupus, an autoimmune disease that is more prevalent among both African Americans and Latinos and can lead to organ failure. Jessica, a mother of two, was unable to continue working as a teacher’s aide and missed special family occasions as the disease damaged her kidneys and later led to liver cancer.

In 2024, Jessica received the life-saving gift of a kidney and liver transplant at the Hospital of the University of Pennsylvania, made possible through the generosity of an organ donor and their family and the work of *Gift of Life*.

Today, Jessica is healthier than ever, working alongside her sister and joyfully sharing life with her daughters, now 24 and 27. Grateful beyond words, she says not a day passes without thinking of her donor’s family and the extraordinary gift that gave her a second chance at life.

YOUR KIDNEYS: Small but Mighty

Did you know...

- **Your kidneys are remarkable organs.** Each one is about the size of a fist, yet together they filter nearly 50 gallons of blood every single day.
- **Your kidneys work nonstop 24/7** to keep your body in balance.
- **Inside each kidney** are about one million tiny filters called nephrons, which help regulate blood pressure, remove waste and support the production of red blood cells.

Are You at Risk for Kidney Disease?

Kidney disease often has no early warning signs but it affects up to one in three adults in the U.S. Many people don’t learn they have kidney disease until it is advanced, sometimes requiring dialysis or a life-saving transplant, according to the National Kidney Foundation.

Take a one-minute quiz at [MinuteForYourKidneys.org](https://www.MinuteForYourKidneys.org)

Learn more: [kidney.org](https://www.kidney.org)



**Join
TEAM PHILADELPHIA
for an Unforgettable Experience**

JUNE 18-23, 2026 | Denver, CO

This summer’s Transplant Games of America will shine a powerful spotlight on the extraordinary lives made possible by donor heroes and their generous families. It’s a one-of-a-kind opportunity to honor the legacy of donation, celebrate the life-saving success of transplantation and inspire more people to register as donors — as part of *Gift of Life’s* Team Philadelphia.

- **Open to organ, tissue and bone marrow recipients, living donors, donor families and supporters.**
- **Features athletic competitions, an Olympic-style opening ceremony, donor tributes and more.**
- **Connect with transplant recipients and donor families from across the country.**
- **Enjoy a festival-style atmosphere filled with camaraderie, inspiration and celebration.**



Visit [TeamPhilly.org](https://www.TeamPhilly.org)