The new donor registry has surpassed 2.5 million people! Because of the hard work of employees, volunteers and transplant community members, more people than ever have experienced the miracle of organ donation.

Facilities see record increase in donors

Two-and-a-half million people are a lot of people no matter how you look at it. The fact that we have spread the new donor message to that many people in Illinois in just a little more than 18 months is truly an accomplishment.

Driver Services facilities are experiencing record numbers of visitors who are saying “yes” to donation, according to a facility statistics report released recently (see back page). The report covers an 18-month period from Jan. 1, 2006, through July 31, 2007. The percentage of visitors joining the new registry is much higher than the percentage the office realized on the old registry.

"We are very pleased to see such an increase in the percent of people joining the new donor registry," said Secretary of State Jesse White. "The average percentage of people joining the old registry before Jan. 1, 2006, was about 50 percent. Now we are seeing facilities with 70, 80, even 90 percent of their visitors joining the new registry!"

In the meantime, donor staff is everywhere, fanned out across Illinois, talking to people at health fairs, hospital health awareness events, in high schools and colleges, and at businesses large and small spreading the word about joining the new registry. Staff members distribute brochures, Life Goes On wristbands and pens, and register people everywhere they go. Many keep supplies on hand in their vehicles and tote bags, ready to reach in and grab a handful of wristbands to hand out at an event they may happen upon.

Facility staff is encouraged to review the statistics on the back of this newsletter and compare theirs with other facility percentages. The facility statistics will be a regular feature in the newsletter as a way for facilities to track their efforts and set new goals for donor participation.

It’s easy to join the new registry:

• Visit www.LifeGoesOn.com (it only takes 60 seconds to register online).
• Visit any Driver Services facility and say “yes” to the donor question.
• Call the Secretary of State’s Organ/Tissue Donor Program hotline at 800-210-2106.
• Complete and mail the registration card on the YOU DECIDE brochure.

The transition from our “intent” registry to our new “consent” registry is a work in progress. There are still people who do not understand that if they registered prior to Jan. 1, 2006, they must re-register. It is our job to inform everyone who visits our facilities, and you have done quite well as evident in new facility donor statistics.

I always remind those in other states who are planning donor programs that their most important asset is facility staff. You are the people on the front lines of donation — the ones who make the program a success. I commend you for your commitment. Those waiting for a lifesaving transplant and those who have received transplants thank you.

Secretary of State

Jesse White

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• A person can receive a kidney from a living donor with a different blood type if they undergo a process both before and after the transplant, which removes harmful antibodies from the blood as well as removal of the spleen.

New Organ/Tissue Donor Program staff

Sitha Hun — A member of the staff for several years, Sitha (pronounced Seeta) is the new community outreach coordinator for Springfield and the surrounding area. He is also continuing his regular staff duties.

Kenesha Greer — A student at Southern Illinois University in Edwardsville, Kenesha has joined the staff as a regional coordinator. She will help coordinate donor drives and community awareness activities on the SIU-E campus and surrounding community as well as in the Metro-East St. Louis area.

Secretary of State Jesse White, Organ/Tissue Donor Program staff and volunteers

November 9-11

The 12th annual National Donor Sabbath on Nov 9-11 is a time to celebrate the miracle of organ/tissue donation in places of worship in Illinois and across the country. Everyone who visits a place of worship is encouraged to talk to their clergy or spiritual leaders regarding getting the donor message out to their congregations during the National Donor Sabbath. For materials, please call Sitha Hun at 800-210-2106. For ways to participate during the National Donor Sabbath, visit www.giftsofhope.org.

Life Goes On newsletter wins AAMVA International Award

The American Association of Motor Vehicle Administrators (AAMVA) awarded its highest honor in the Public Affairs and Consumer Education Competition to the Secretary of State’s Organ/Tissue Donor Program’s Life Goes On newsletter. The newsletter, first published in January 2003, is targeted toward Secretary of State facility employees who are on the front lines of organ/tissue donation, as well as donor organizations in the state. The newsletter beat out other government entries in the Midwest region before being recognized as the international winner.

“This award says a lot about our focus on our message to reach out to employees, donors, recipients and their families, procurement agencies and others involved with donor awareness efforts,” said Secretary of State Jesse White. “I am honored that our office’s donor publications have been recognized as some of the best in the nation, keeping Illinois at the forefront of donor efforts nationally.”

Other winning Secretary of State entries at the AAMVA regional level included the “You Decide” brochure and the “She Counts on You Too…” poster.

Jamie Booker — Jamie is the program’s new office manager in Springfield. Among her duties are fielding telephone calls, registering donors, answering e-mails and assisting regional coordinators with their requests.

Tonisha Daniels — A liver transplant recipient featured in the Secretary of State’s donor commercial in April 2006, Tonisha has joined the staff as a regional coordinator in Champaign. Now a freshman at the University of Illinois, she worked at a Driver Services facility over the summer and will help promote donation on the U of I campus and surrounding area.

Michael Henderson — A kidney recipient formerly with the Gift of Hope Organ and Tissue Donor Network in Elmhurst, Michael joins the donor program as a regional coordinator in the Chicago suburban area. Mike will help coordinate donor drives and community events, present programs to high schools and other donor awareness activities.

Regional coordinator Damarius Blanks, second from right, joins volunteer Cheryl Mangold (left), kidney recipient Jim Mangold and Christy Garrison, whose father died while waiting for an organ transplant, at a donor booth during a Peoria Chiefs baseball game.

“Spreading the word one event at a time”

Secretary of State Jesse White joins Chicago White Sox announcer Ed Farmer, far right, and two Chicago White Sox players at the White Sox autograph-signing event at the James R. Thompson Center.

Secretary of State Jesse White throws out the first pitch at a Southern Illinois Miners baseball game in Marion. Donor staff manned a donor booth during the minor league game and registered more than 300 people in the new registry.

Boy Scout Andrew Giese of Troop 408 coordinated a "You Decide" booth and the "She Counts on You Too…” poster.

Donor Program regional coordinator Kim Funk mans the donor booth in the Secretary of State’s tent at the Illinois State Fair.

Gift of Hope’s Roxanne White (left) joins Organ/Tissue Donor Program regional coordinators Mike Henderson and Margaret Pearson at a donor booth at Joliet’s Silver Cross Hospital.

Facts You Should Know

• A person can receive a kidney from a living donor with a different blood type if they undergo a process both before and after the transplant, which removes harmful antibodies from the blood as well as removal of the spleen. (Courtesy of the United Network for Organ Sharing.)

• A “domino transplant” makes some heart–lung recipients living heart donors by receiving both organs from a deceased donor and giving their own healthy heart to another person. Many times the heart–lung combined transplant works best when both organs come from the same donor. ( courtesy of the United Network for Organ Sharing.)

• The first living kidney transplant was performed in 1954 between identical twins Ronald and Richard Herrick in Boston. Richard, the transplant recipient, lived another eight years, dying from causes not related to his kidney transplant. Robert, the donor twin, is still living 53 years later in Maine.

Mike Papineau update

Regional coordinator Mike Papineau of the south Chicago suburbs has had some health setbacks this spring and summer. Suffering effects from rejection of his donor kidney, Mike has experienced seizures and has had a hip replacement. Due to his heart attack in February, he has been in and out of the hospital several times. Mike and his wife, Peg, hope he will be strong enough to have another kidney transplant soon.
Spreading the word one event at a time

Secretory of State Jesse White, Organ/Tissue Donor Program staff and volunteers fanned out across Illinois this summer to promote organ/tissue donation.

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Boy Scout Andrew Giese of Troop 468 coordinated a liver transplant recipient’s donor registration drive as part of his Eagle Scout project at the Arlington Heights Fourth of July parade. Andrew’s brother, Daniel, received a double lung transplant seven years ago from family members.

A liver transplant recipient featured in the Secretary of State’s donor commercial in April 2006, Tonisha has joined the staff as a regional coordinator. She will help coordinate donor drives and community events, present programs to high schools and other donor awareness activities.

Regional coordinator Mike Papineau update

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