Chicago Bears’ Charles Tillman receives Walter Payton award

Chicago Bears’ cornerback Charles Tillman was awarded the prestigious Walter Payton NFL Man of The Year Award on February 1 and honored during a Super Bowl ceremony on February 2.

A two-time All-Pro cornerback for the Bears, Tillman is a fierce competitor on the field, but felt absolutely helpless when he was informed in 2008 that his infant daughter, Tiana, needed a heart transplant. She received the heart she needed and today is a healthy active youngster.

Chicago Bears’ Charles Tillman receives Walter Payton award

A two-time All-Pro cornerback for the Bears, Tillman is a fierce competitor on the field, but felt absolutely helpless when he was informed in 2008 that his infant daughter, Tiana, needed a heart transplant. She received the heart she needed and today is a healthy active youngster.

A two-time All-Pro cornerback for the Bears, Tillman is a fierce competitor on the field, but felt absolutely helpless when he was informed in 2008 that his infant daughter, Tiana, needed a heart transplant. She received the heart she needed and today is a healthy active youngster.

A two-time All-Pro cornerback for the Bears, Tillman is a fierce competitor on the field, but felt absolutely helpless when he was informed in 2008 that his infant daughter, Tiana, needed a heart transplant. She received the heart she needed and today is a healthy active youngster.

A two-time All-Pro cornerback for the Bears, Tillman is a fierce competitor on the field, but felt absolutely helpless when he was informed in 2008 that his infant daughter, Tiana, needed a heart transplant. She received the heart she needed and today is a healthy active youngster.

A two-time All-Pro cornerback for the Bears, Tillman is a fierce competitor on the field, but felt absolutely helpless when he was informed in 2008 that his infant daughter, Tiana, needed a heart transplant. She received the heart she needed and today is a healthy active youngster.
Elgin Community College students gear up for “Be a Hero” campaign

For Beverly Felder, RN, BSN, MPA and Health Professions Retention Specialist at Elgin Community College, the “Be a Hero” Community College Challenge is an exciting one for her and her nursing students. As her team’s designated administrator, Beverly will oversee the work of two teams — Associated Nursing Students and Health Career Students — at campus donor drives and other activities aimed at increasing the donor registry.

“I’m always looking for opportunities for students to do community service projects. It benefits not just themselves but the community as well. They encourage each other and enjoy the challenges,” said Beverly.

Several of the students are interested in dispelling the many myths associated with donation. Joseph Klee, a second-year nursing student, said he has heard all the myths and actually believed some of them until this program came to his attention. “There are so many misconceptions about organ donation. In this project we are exposed to a topic we are unfamiliar with. As nursing students you can empower others with education and it only takes 30 seconds to do.”

Candice Hopman echoed the “education is empowerment” concept by adding that the Internet has lots of false information that many people take as fact. “There are lots of people dying because many (potential donors) believe the misconceptions about donation. Truths can help save lives. If we save just one person’s life this semester, it would be amazing.”

The overall winner was Alexandra Garcia, a senior at Bradley-Bourbonnais Community High School in Bradley. She received a $100 gift certificate to Barnes and Noble from Donate Life Illinois and her poster (above) will be displayed at Driver Services facilities, hospitals, libraries and other locations throughout the state. Other winners each received $50 gift certificates from Barnes and Noble.

“I would like to congratulate each of our winners as well as all the students who designed posters for this year’s contest,” said Secretary White. “These students displayed their artistic talents while also helping raise awareness about a very important, lifesaving program.”

Winners of each grade category for the contest were:

- **Grades K-2:** Anastasia Radovic, age 7, 1st grade, Hellenic American Academy, Deerfield
- **Grades 3-5:** Richa Patel, age 11, 5th grade, Hazel Dell Elementary, Springfield
- **Grades 6-8:** Bryce Shumaker, age 12, 7th grade, Our Lady of Lourdes, Decatur
- **Grades 9-12:** Alexandra Garcia, age 18, senior, Bradley-Bourbonnais Community High School, Bradley

Secretary of State Jesse White has announced the winners of the 2014 Organ/Tissue Donor Poster Contest, sponsored by the Secretary of State and Donate Life Illinois. The contest is open to all Illinois public and non-public school students in grades K-12. Winners were selected from four grade categories: K-2; 3-5; 6-8; and 9-12.

Winners of the contest displayed their artistic talents while also helping raise awareness about a very important, lifesaving program.

Non-public school students in grades K-12. Winners were selected from four grade categories: K-2; 3-5; 6-8; and 9-12.

- **K-2:** Alexandra Garcia, age 18, senior, Bradley-Bourbonnais Community High School, Bradley
- **3-5:** Richa Patel, age 11, 5th grade, Hazel Dell Elementary, Springfield
- **6-8:** Bryce Shumaker, age 12, 7th grade, Our Lady of Lourdes, Decatur
- **9-12:** Alexandra Garcia, age 18, senior, Bradley-Bourbonnais Community High School, Bradley

The overall winner was Alexandra Garcia, a senior at Bradley-Bourbonnais Community High School in Bradley. She received a $100 gift certificate to Barnes and Noble from Donate Life Illinois and her poster (above) will be displayed at Driver Services facilities, hospitals, libraries and other locations throughout the state. Other winners each received $50 gift certificates from Barnes and Noble.

“I would like to congratulate each of our winners as well as all the students who designed posters for this year’s contest,” said Secretary White. “These students displayed their artistic talents while also helping raise awareness about a very important, lifesaving program.”

Donation around the state

Visually impaired donor signs up to be a donor at an event in Mt. Vernon.

- **ABOVE LEFT:** Jessica Perkett signs up to be an unimpaired donor at Lewis and Clark Community College in Godfrey during a joint donor drive with the Be the Match marrow registry.
- **ABOVE CENTER:** Juan C. Bean registers as donor and signs up for the Be the Match bone marrow registry at Southwestern Illinois College in East St. Louis.
- **ABOVE RIGHT:** Frances Robinson of Mt. Vernon registers to be a donor at an event in Mt. Vernon for Maggie Wheeler, who has autoimmune cirrhosis of the liver and is awaiting a new liver.

Fratrice received her first transplant from a living donor — her youngest sister — who was a perfect match. It lasted 11 years until November 2009 when she found herself in kidney failure once again. She suffers from Focal Segmental Glomerulosclerosis (FSGS), the disease that attacked her original kidney, and eventually it returned and attacked her transplanted kidney. She administered home-hemodialysis five days a week for three hours at a time with the assistance of her husband Frederick.

Fratrice waited 3-and-a-half years for her second transplant, and this time the gift came from a deceased donor. She is now back to work, attending church again and enjoying life to the fullest. Last September, four months after her second transplant, Fratrice and her husband adopted a baby boy, Frederick Elias, who is the joy of their lives. “I thank God that I’m only on two anti-rejection medications now, and our son is such a blessing to us,” said Fratrice. “I’ve always wanted to be a mother and now I feel my life is complete.”

Employee Connection

Never in her wildest dreams would Fratrice Austin-Geiger have imagined that not one but two kidney transplants would be in her future. Fratrice, 43, who works in Vehicle Services at 17 N. State St. in Chicago, received her first transplant in September 1998 and her most recent one on April 29, 2013.

Fratrice received her first transplant from a living donor — her youngest sister — who was a perfect match. It lasted 11 years until November 2009 when she found herself in kidney failure once again. She suffers from Focal Segmental Glomerulosclerosis (FSGS), the disease that attacked her original kidney, and eventually it returned and attacked her transplanted kidney. She administered home-hemodialysis five days a week for three hours at a time with the assistance of her husband Frederick.

Fratrice waited 3-and-a-half years for her second transplant, and this time the gift came from a deceased donor. She is now back to work, attending church again and enjoying life to the fullest. Last September, four months after her second transplant, Fratrice and her husband adopted a baby boy, Frederick Elias, who is the joy of their lives. “I thank God that I’m only on two anti-rejection medications now, and our son is such a blessing to us,” said Fratrice. “I’ve always wanted to be a mother and now I feel my life is complete.”

Fratrice received her first transplant from a living donor — her youngest sister — who was a perfect match. It lasted 11 years until November 2009 when she found herself in kidney failure once again. She suffers from Focal Segmental Glomerulosclerosis (FSGS), the disease that attacked her original kidney, and eventually it returned and attacked her transplanted kidney. She administered home-hemodialysis five days a week for three hours at a time with the assistance of her husband Frederick.

Fratrice waited 3-and-a-half years for her second transplant, and this time the gift came from a deceased donor. She is now back to work, attending church again and enjoying life to the fullest. Last September, four months after her second transplant, Fratrice and her husband adopted a baby boy, Frederick Elias, who is the joy of their lives. “I thank God that I’m only on two anti-rejection medications now, and our son is such a blessing to us,” said Fratrice. “I’ve always wanted to be a mother and now I feel my life is complete.”
Elgin Community College students gear up for “Be a Hero” campaign

For Beverly Felder, RN, BSN, and Health Professions Retention Specialist at Elgin Community College, the “Be a Hero” Community College Challenge is an exciting one for her and her nursing students. As her teams’ designated administrator, Beverly will oversee the work of two teams — Associated Nursing Students and Health Career Students — at campus donor drives and other activities aimed at increasing the donor registry.

“I’m always looking for opportunities for students to do community service projects. It benefits not just themselves but the community as well. They encourage each other and enjoy the challenges,” said Beverly.

Several of the students are interested in dispelling the many myths associated with donation. Joseph Klee, a second-year nursing student, said he has heard all the myths and actually believed some of them until this program came to his attention. “There are so many misconceptions about organ donation. In this project we are exposed to a topic we are unfamiliar with. As nursing students you can empower others with education and it only takes 30 seconds to do.”

Candice Hopman echoed the “education is empowerment” concept by adding that the Internet has lots of false information that many people take as fact. “There are lots of people dying because many [potential donors] believe the misconceptions about donation. Truths can help save lives. If we save just one person’s life this semester, it would be amazing.”

The overall winner was Alexandra Garcia, a senior at Bradley-Bourbonnais Community High School in Bradley. She received a $100 gift certificate to Barnes and Noble from Donate Life Illinois and her poster (above) will be displayed at Driver Services facilities, hospitals, libraries and other locations throughout the state. Other winners each received $50 gift certificates from Barnes and Noble.

“I would like to congratulate each of our winners as well as all the students who designed posters for this year’s contest,” said Secretary White. “These students displayed their artistic talents while also helping raise awareness about a very important, lifesaving program.”

Donor Poster Contest winners announced

Elgin Community College “Be a Hero” Campaign designated administrator Beverly Felder (back, second from right) with students (front) Joseph Klee, Candice Hopman, Nicole Cikauskas, (back) Janay Wheeler, and Donor Program staff member Margaret Pearson.

Secretary of State Jesse White has announced the winners of the 2014 Organ/Tissue Donor Poster Contest, sponsored by the Secretary of State and Donate Life Illinois. The contest is open to all Illinois public and non-public school students in grades K-12. Winners were selected from four grade categories: K-2; 3-5; 6-8; and 9-12.

The overall winner was Alexandra Garcia, a senior at Bradley-Bourbonnais Community High School in Bradley. She received a $100 gift certificate to Barnes and Noble from Donate Life Illinois and her poster (above) will be displayed at Driver Services facilities, hospitals, libraries and other locations throughout the state. Other winners each received $50 gift certificates from Barnes and Noble.

“I would like to congratulate each of our winners as well as all the students who designed posters for this year’s contest,” said Secretary White. “These students displayed their artistic talents while also helping raise awareness about a very important, lifesaving program.”

Winners of each grade category for the contest were:

Grades K-2: Anastasia Radovic, age 7, 1st grade, Hellenic American Academy, Deerfield
Grades 3-5: Richa Patel, age 11, 5th grade, Hazel Dell Elementary, Springfield
Grades 6-8: Bryce Shumaker, age 12, 7th grade, Our Lady of Lourdes, Decatur
Grades 9-12: Alexandra Garcia, age 18, senior, Bradley-Bourbonnais Community High School, Bradley

Elgin Community College “Be a Hero” Campaign designated administrator Beverly Felder (back, second from right) with students (front) Joseph Klee, Candice Hopman, Nicole Cikauskas, (back) Janay Wheeler, and Donor Program staff member Margaret Pearson.

Donation around the state

Donor Program regional coordinator Brian Bach (far right) joined other donor advocates at the Illinois Consortium & Medical Examiners Association Training Course in Mt. Vernon in February. Left to right is Jason Coogan, Gift of Hope; Janet Streitamps, Mid-America Transplant Services; Rey Mayfield, Gift of Hope; Randy Odenwelder, president of the association and Randolph County coroner; and Debbie Lanter, Mid-America Transplant Services.

For Beverly Felder, RN, BSN, and Health Professions Retention Specialist at Elgin Community College, the “Be a Hero” Community College Challenge is an exciting one for her and her nursing students. As her teams’ designated administrator, Beverly will oversee the work of two teams — Associated Nursing Students and Health Career Students — at campus donor drives and other activities aimed at increasing the donor registry.

“I’m always looking for opportunities for students to do community service projects. It benefits not just themselves but the community as well. They encourage each other and enjoy the challenges,” said Beverly.

Several of the students are interested in dispelling the many myths associated with donation. Joseph Klee, a second-year nursing student, said he has heard all the myths and actually believed some of them until this program came to his attention. “There are so many misconceptions about organ donation. In this project we are exposed to a topic we are unfamiliar with. As nursing students you can empower others with education and it only takes 30 seconds to do.”

Candice Hopman echoed the “education is empowerment” concept by adding that the Internet has lots of false information that many people take as fact. “There are lots of people dying because many [potential donors] believe the misconceptions about donation. Truths can help save lives. If we save just one person’s life this semester, it would be amazing.”

The overall winner was Alexandra Garcia, a senior at Bradley-Bourbonnais Community High School in Bradley. She received a $100 gift certificate to Barnes and Noble from Donate Life Illinois and her poster (above) will be displayed at Driver Services facilities, hospitals, libraries and other locations throughout the state. Other winners each received $50 gift certificates from Barnes and Noble.

“I would like to congratulate each of our winners as well as all the students who designed posters for this year’s contest,” said Secretary White. “These students displayed their artistic talents while also helping raise awareness about a very important, lifesaving program.”

Winners of each grade category for the contest were:

Grades K-2: Anastasia Radovic, age 7, 1st grade, Hellenic American Academy, Deerfield
Grades 3-5: Richa Patel, age 11, 5th grade, Hazel Dell Elementary, Springfield
Grades 6-8: Bryce Shumaker, age 12, 7th grade, Our Lady of Lourdes, Decatur
Grades 9-12: Alexandra Garcia, age 18, senior, Bradley-Bourbonnais Community High School, Bradley

Elgin Community College “Be a Hero” Campaign designated administrator Beverly Felder (back, second from right) with students (front) Joseph Klee, Candice Hopman, Nicole Cikauskas, (back) Janay Wheeler, and Donor Program staff member Margaret Pearson.

Donation around the state

Donor Program regional coordinator Brian Bach (far right) joined other donor advocates at the Illinois Consortium & Medical Examiners Association Training Course in Mt. Vernon in February. Left to right is Jason Coogan, Gift of Hope; Janet Streitamps, Mid-America Transplant Services; Rey Mayfield, Gift of Hope; Randy Odenwelder, president of the association and Randolph County coroner; and Debbie Lanter, Mid-America Transplant Services.

For Beverly Felder, RN, BSN, and Health Professions Retention Specialist at Elgin Community College, the “Be a Hero” Community College Challenge is an exciting one for her and her nursing students. As her teams’ designated administrator, Beverly will oversee the work of two teams — Associated Nursing Students and Health Career Students — at campus donor drives and other activities aimed at increasing the donor registry.

“I’m always looking for opportunities for students to do community service projects. It benefits not just themselves but the community as well. They encourage each other and enjoy the challenges,” said Beverly.

Several of the students are interested in dispelling the many myths associated with donation. Joseph Klee, a second-year nursing student, said he has heard all the myths and actually believed some of them until this program came to his attention. “There are so many misconceptions about organ donation. In this project we are exposed to a topic we are unfamiliar with. As nursing students you can empower others with education and it only takes 30 seconds to do.”

Candice Hopman echoed the “education is empowerment” concept by adding that the Internet has lots of false information that many people take as fact. “There are lots of people dying because many [potential donors] believe the misconceptions about donation. Truths can help save lives. If we save just one person’s life this semester, it would be amazing.”

The overall winner was Alexandra Garcia, a senior at Bradley-Bourbonnais Community High School in Bradley. She received a $100 gift certificate to Barnes and Noble from Donate Life Illinois and her poster (above) will be displayed at Driver Services facilities, hospitals, libraries and other locations throughout the state. Other winners each received $50 gift certificates from Barnes and Noble.

“I would like to congratulate each of our winners as well as all the students who designed posters for this year’s contest,” said Secretary White. “These students displayed their artistic talents while also helping raise awareness about a very important, lifesaving program.”

Winners of each grade category for the contest were:

Grades K-2: Anastasia Radovic, age 7, 1st grade, Hellenic American Academy, Deerfield
Grades 3-5: Richa Patel, age 11, 5th grade, Hazel Dell Elementary, Springfield
Grades 6-8: Bryce Shumaker, age 12, 7th grade, Our Lady of Lourdes, Decatur
Grades 9-12: Alexandra Garcia, age 18, senior, Bradley-Bourbonnais Community High School, Bradley

Elgin Community College “Be a Hero” Campaign designated administrator Beverly Felder (back, second from right) with students (front) Joseph Klee, Candice Hopman, Nicole Cikauskas, (back) Janay Wheeler, and Donor Program staff member Margaret Pearson.
**Donate Life “Blue and Green Day” is April 11**

Rock your blue and green on Friday, April 11, to show your support of organ/tissue donation! National Blue and Green Day is one of Donate Life America’s initiatives to register new organ, eye and tissue donors. Facility employees are encouraged to sport blue and green work-appropriate shirts that day and to add blue and green touches to their facilities with balloons, banners and other blue and green decorations. When facility patrons ask what the blue and green symbolizes, tell them it’s for donor awareness and ask them to join the registry! Facility employees are encouraged to take pictures of their Blue and Green Day activities.

---

**Chicago Bears’ Charles Tillman receives Walter Payton award**

Chicago Bears’ cornerback Charles Tillman was awarded the prestigious Walter Payton NFL Man of the Year Award on February 1 and honored during a Super Bowl ceremony on February 2.

Tillman is a fierce competitor on the field, but felt absolutely helpless when he was informed in 2008 that his infant daughter, Tiana, needed a heart transplant. She received the heart she needed and today is a healthy active youngster.

Organ/Tissue Donor Program Staff:

To contact a Donor Program staff member in your area, please call the Springfield toll-free phone number at 1-800-210-2106 or email lgo@ilsos.net.

**Liver transplant almost a Christmas present**

For most of us, a Christmas present of a new liver is not on our list. But for John Obremski, 62, director of environmental services at Presence Saint Joseph Medical Center in Joliet, it was pretty much the only thing on his Christmas list back in 1997.

In September 1997, John, then in his mid-40s, was placed on the active waiting list for a liver. He was suffering from primary sclerosing cholangitis (PSC), the same rare liver disease that affected former Chicago Bears running back Walter Payton. John waited for a new liver while doctors kept his disease at bay with medications. In October 1997, he received the call that there was a liver for him, but it turned out not to be a suitable organ for him. So he continued waiting. Finally, two days after Christmas 1997, John received his belated Christmas present.

"I think it’s harder on the family than the person going through it," John said. "Caregivers and family are awesome people. They are there for you when you’re not quite sure what’s what.” He credits his wife Diane and their sons Steven and Brian for helping him keep a positive outlook and taking care of him during his ordeal. Diane and John just celebrated their 39th wedding anniversary, a milestone they would not have reached without the gift of transplantation.

John says it’s been “an interesting ride and that each day is a bonus. No one knows what the future holds for any of us. I never thought this was in my future. But I got to see my sons get married; they were in college at the time of my illness.”

"I was so thankful to be blessed to receive a transplant, but I was also sad, realizing that 17 other people died that same day while waiting for a transplant.” Today, people can help alleviate the shortage of organs, he added, by easily signing up to be donors.

---

**For most of us, a Christmas present of a new liver is not on our list. But for John Obremski, 62, director of environmental services at Presence Saint Joseph Medical Center in Joliet, it was pretty much the only thing on his Christmas list back in 1997.**