



# Life Goes On

Secretary of State Jesse White • Summer 2016

*A newsletter for Secretary of State facility employees and other organ/tissue donation advocates*

The Organ/Tissue Donor Program had a dynamic National Donate Life Month in April — thousands of Illinoisans heard a positive message about organ and tissue donation. Many individuals throughout the state made the donor decision after attending presentations explaining the importance of being a donor.

We are proud to announce the Illinois Donor Registry topped 6 million registrants in May. Reaching this milestone was due, in part, to the efforts in April to expand public awareness about donation. Several individuals with heart-warming donor stories were featured on countertop displays in many Driver Services facilities. Sharing a personal story about donation resonates with many people who may still be unsure about signing up. Also, the 21st statewide Organ/Tissue Donor Student Poster Contest winners were announced in April. See the overall winner's artwork in this issue.

Remind friends and family to register at [www.LifeGoesOn.com](http://www.LifeGoesOn.com). Together we can make the waiting list a little bit shorter for those who desperately need a second chance at life.

*Jesse White*

Jesse White  
Secretary of State

## National Donate Life Month showcased by donor staff

### Illinois Donor Registry tops 6 million

The Organ/Tissue Donor Program had a successful month in April as National Donate Life Month activities showcased the program. Staff held numerous press conferences and public awareness events around the state introducing Secretary of State Jesse White to groups to talk about the importance of becoming a donor. Many of these events were held at Driver Services facilities, hospitals and businesses throughout the state. As a result of the many events showcased during National Donate Life Month, the Illinois Donor Registry reached a milestone of 6 million registrants when April numbers were reported.

"I was very pleased to be able to address not only Driver Services facility staff but also the public who visited their local facilities in April. The chance to talk with staff and reinforce our donor message with visitors was wonderful," said Secretary White.

Secretary White kicked off the month's events with a press conference held April 5 at the James R. Thompson Center in Chicago. Joining Secretary White to share their transplant journeys were Secretary of State employee and two-time kidney recipient Patrice Austin-Geiger; 14-year-old heart recipient Nicholas Lindblad; and two 7-year-old transplant recipients, Luke and Jake Swanson. Kevin Cmunt, CEO of Gift of Hope Organ and Tissue Donor Network, and Jack Lynch, director of Community Affairs and Gift of Hope's African-American Task Force, also joined Secretary White for the press conference.

Secretary White also held press conferences at several Driver Services facilities in April including Springfield, Quincy, Peoria, Champaign, Joliet, Chicago Heights and Bridgeview. He spoke about donation and presented facility staff with a countertop display featuring a local resident's donor

*(cont. on pg. 2)*



Secretary of State Jesse White (center) addresses the media during the launch of National Donate Life Month April 5 at the James R. Thompson Center in Chicago. Secretary White is joined by (from left to right) Gunnar Swanson and his twin brothers Luke and Jake, both liver recipients, and their mother Robin Swanson; Kevin Cmunt, CEO of Gift of Hope Organ and Tissue Donor Network; Patrice Austin-Geiger, two-time kidney recipient; Nicholas Lindblad, heart recipient; Jack Lynch, Gift of Hope's African-American Task Force; and transplant recipient Jose Betancourt.

## National Donate Life Month showcased by donor staff (cont. from pg. 1; cont. on pgs. 3 and 4)

story. At the Joliet Driver Services facility, liver recipient Jen Klouse was showcased on a countertop display. Jen participated in the Transplant Games, an Olympic-style athletic event for transplant recipients in June. Also at the Joliet facility, Lewis University nursing students were honored for having many donor registration drives on their Romeoville campus.

Frank Veach's kidney transplant story was featured at the Champaign facility. At the Chicago Heights facility, nursing students from Prairie State College in Chicago Heights received awards for holding many donor registration drives on their campus, and liver recipient Frank Costello's story was recognized on a countertop display. At the Bridgeview facility, heart recipient Paul Hughes was featured on a countertop display for his long-standing efforts at promoting organ and tissue donation

at the facility. Chuck Scholz's and Jackson Wepler's donor stories were featured at the Quincy facility. Nicholas Rogers' donor story was spotlighted at the Peoria facility, and Stacy Butler's story was highlighted in Springfield. Many other facilities including Sparta, Belleville, Jerseyville, Centralia, Rockford and Diversey Express promoted donor awareness during April and participated in National Blue and Green Day on April 15.

Secretary White and members of the Chicago White Sox organization held an autograph session April 22 at the Thompson Center in Chicago. Broadcaster Ed Farmer, who received a kidney from his brother 25 years ago; White Sox Hall of Fame member Harold Baines; White Sox pinch hitter Jerry Sands; and team mascot "Southpaw" was joined by Secretary White. Secretary White honored medical

personnel, transplant surgeons, staff and donor families at a flag-raising event at HSHS St. Mary's Hospital in Decatur. On April 19 at Swedish American Hospital in Rockford, the critical care unit staff accepted an award from Secretary White. On April 24, Secretary White honored donor families at the Organ Transplant Support's annual donor dedication and tree-planting ceremony at Naper Settlement in Naperville.

The Secretary held a press conference in conjunction with the Illinois Farm Bureau Family of Companies April 26 at Growmark in Bloomington. Members of the McLean County Life Goes On Committee, recipients, donor family members, and employees of Growmark, Country Financial and the IAA Credit Union participated in bringing attention to organ and tissue donation.



PHOTO 1 — Joliet Driver Services facility employees and donor advocates surround Secretary White during his visit to the facility on Blue and Green Day April 15. Many facility staff members sport Donate Life Joliet shirts for the occasion.

PHOTO 2 — Nursing students from Lewis University in Romeoville join Secretary White at the Joliet Driver Services facility for Blue and Green Day April 15.

PHOTO 3 — Recipient Frank Veach helps Secretary White present his donor story in a countertop display at the Champaign Driver Services facility in April.

PHOTO 4 — Employees at the Belleville Driver Services facility celebrate Blue and Green Day April 15 at the facility by hanging balloons and wearing Donate Life Illinois shirts.

PHOTO 5 — Recipient Frank Costello (left) is featured in



# LIFE GOES ON. BE AN ORGAN/TISSUE DONOR.





a countertop display presented to the Chicago Heights Driver Services facility by Secretary White on Blue and Green Day April 15. Frank's brother, Sam Costello, is the facility's assistant manager.

PHOTO 6 – (From left to right) Heart recipient and Bridgeview resident Paul Hughes; Secretary of State Jesse White; Bridgeview Driver Services facility employee Brenda Griffin; two-time heart recipient Reverend Stephen Richardson; and facility employee and cornea recipient Ron Hayes welcome Secretary White during his visit to the facility on Blue and Green Day April 15.



PHOTO 7 – Secretary of State Jesse White holds a press conference at the Peoria Driver Services facility. White is joined by (from left to right) Kevin Cmunt, CEO of Gift of Hope Organ and Tissue Donor Network; Secretary White; and Gift of Hope staff Ron Skolek, Gina Martin, Michelle Reed and Lisa Dodson.



PHOTO 8 – Secretary White presents a plaque to Rockford Central Driver Services facility staff members in April for their ongoing support of organ and tissue donation. (From left to right) Bob Jakeway, kidney recipient; Mary Caccatori, assistant facility manager; Secretary White; Lori Cass, facility manager; and Kelvin Martin, heart recipient and countertop display feature story.

PHOTO 9 – Organ Transplant Support's annual donor family dedication featured the planting of a tree on the grounds of Naper Settlement April 24 in Naperville in honor of the lifesaving gift of donors. From left: Kevin Cmunt, CEO of Gift of Hope Organ and Tissue Donor Network; donor family member Patsy Ann Tracy; Secretary of State Jesse White; donor family member Anita Tracy; Mayor Pro Tem of Naperville Kevin Coyne; and Susan English, liver recipient and president of Organ Transplant Support.



PHOTO 10 – Secretary White honors critical care unit nurses from Swedish American Hospital in Rockford for their dedication to organ and tissue donation in April at the medical facility.

PHOTO 11 – Secretary of State Jesse White is joined by members of the Chicago White Sox organization at an autograph signing at the James R. Thompson Center April 22. (From left to right) White Sox mascot "Southpaw," Secretary White, White Sox Hall of Fame member Harold Baines, White Sox announcer and kidney recipient Ed Farmer, and White Sox pinch hitter Jerry Sands.



PHOTO 12 – Eight-year-old bone marrow recipient Kane Schertz is shown with his family and Secretary of State Jesse White at the Illinois Farm Bureau Family of Companies press conference in April in Bloomington.





ABOVE LEFT: Staff at St. Mary's Hospital in Decatur attend a flag-raising event at the hospital in April in honor of National Donate Life Month. ABOVE RIGHT: Kevin Carroll, vice president of Energy and Logistics for Growmark in Bloomington, is presented with a plaque recognizing the Illinois Farm Bureau of Companies for its effort in promoting donation during a press conference held in April at the Bloomington company.



## Donor Poster Contest winners honored

### Be the miracle they're waiting for

The Organ/Tissue Donor Program held its 21st statewide Organ/Tissue Donor Student Poster Contest this year. Secretary White honored the winners at a ceremony in Springfield in April. Allison Davis, 16, from Wheaton Warrenville South High School in Wheaton was selected as the overall winner for students in grades 9–12 (Category 4). The 10th grader's art-

work, themed "Be the miracle they're waiting for," has been displayed at many locations throughout the state. Other winners included:

- Grades K–2 (Category 1): Elizabeth Merino, 1st grade, Nathanael Greene Elementary School in Chicago.
- Grades 3–5 (Category 2): Cade Graham, 5th grade, St. Joseph Catholic School in Freeburg.

- Grades 6–8 (Category 3): Ocean Reinhardt, 6th grade, Albers Elementary School in Albers.

Winners received award certificates presented to them at the poster contest ceremony from Secretary White. In addition, the winners received gift cards to Barnes and Noble Bookstore, compliments of Donate Life Illinois.



LEFT — The 2016 Organ/Tissue Donor Program Poster Contest over-all winner Allison Davis, a student at Wheaton Warrenville South High School in Wheaton, displays her winning artwork and accepts a plaque from Secretary of State Jesse White in Springfield in April. Pictured with Allison are State Rep. Jeanne Ives and State Sen. Michael Connelly.

RIGHT — Visitors to the Ray and Joan Kroc Community Center in Chicago show support for organ and tissue donation in April.



LEFT — Employees at the Diversey Express Driver Services facility celebrate Blue and Green Day April 15.

RIGHT — Secretary of State Jesse White visits Crain Communications in Chicago in April to promote Donate Life Month.

