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ILLINOIS COALITION ON DONATION FORMED

ROBI has joined other donation and transplantation advocates in Illinois to form the Illinois Coalition on Donation, a statewide effort to focus greater public attention to organ and tissue donation in Illinois.

Its first order of business: Organizing local and statewide events and campaigns for National Organ and Tissue Donation Awareness Week, April 21-27, 2002. Coalition members also are focusing on efforts to promote donation education in Illinois schools, work with religious communities during National Donor Sabbath and organize statewide participation in the Five Points of Life Ride. The ride is a cross-country bicycle ride to raise donation awareness, coming through Illinois in fall 2002.

“As organizations, all of us have worked together on many levels for many years,” says Kim McCullough, coalition chair and ROBI Assistant Manager for Public Relations. “Coming together as a coalition gives us an even greater unified voice in addressing the terribly critical need for organ and tissue donation in Illinois.”

The Illinois Coalition is one of more than 45 regional coalitions and 50 national businesses or associations making up the National Coalition on Donation, a not-for-profit alliance stressing the importance of organ and tissue donation through national media and awareness campaigns.

In Illinois, state coalition members include the Illinois Secretary of State Organ/Tissue Donor Awareness Program, the National Kidney Foundation of Illinois, Illinois Eye-Bank, Central Illinois Lions Eye Bank, the Illinois chapter of the American Liver Foundation, American Red Cross-Tissue Services, the Minority Organ/Tissue Transplant Education Program, Chicago Office, Organ Transplant Support, Inc., the Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation, and the Illinois Department of Public Health, Division of Transplantation.

Coalition functions include:

- A schools committee, to educate Illinois high school teachers and students about organ donation through trained volunteer speakers, state-approved teacher workshops for professional development credit, and a donation and transplantation curriculum aligned with state learning standards.
- A National Donor Sabbath Committee, promoting faith-based support for donation during the second weekend in November.
- The 2002 Five Points of Life Committee, to coordinate special events and publicity for the ride, which will include Illinois stops in Chicago, Lisle, Wilmington, Bloomington-Normal and Springfield.
- The 2002 NOTDAW committee, working with the Secretary of State's Life Goes On campaign to promote donor awareness throughout of Illinois during the third full week of April.

(more)

2001/02 Illinois Coalition on Donation officers are McCullough; Camille Deluhery, Education Coordinator with the Illinois Eye-Bank; Shelia George, Executive Director of the Minority Organ/Tissue

Transplant Education Program; and Hilary Cichosz, Organ Donor Awareness Associate for the National Kidney Foundation of Illinois.

Individuals are welcome to join coalition committees. For information, call McCullough at 630/758-2736 or Cichosz at 312/321-1500.

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