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‘Lifesaving Partners’ to be honored for 2003 achievements in support of organ/tissue donation

ELMHURST, Ill. (Dec. 1, 2003) – They may not be faster than a locomotive or leap tall buildings in a single bound, but they’re heroes all the same. They’re leaders creating legacies among thousands of people whose lives have been saved and improved through their work.

Fifteen physicians, healthcare professionals and civic leaders from throughout Illinois have been named 2003 Lifesaving Partners by Gift of Hope Organ & Tissue Donor Network for their outstanding achievement addressing the region’s critical need for organ and tissue donation.

The awards will be presented at a “Leadership & Legacies” reception and ceremony at the Chicago Historical Society on Dec. 8. **WGN Radio 720 personality Kathy O’Malley** will host the program and join **Gift of Hope President/CEO Jerry Anderson** to honor the 2003 Lifesaving Partners awardees:

- **Karen Bogdan**, RN, CCRN, Clinical Manager of Operations, and **Deborah Duey**, RN, BSN, Nursing and Clinical Nurse Educator, both of the Medical Intensive/Cardiac Care Unit at **Advocate Christ Medical Center**, Oak Lawn
- **Judy Brummer**, MD, Emergency Medicine, and **John Merkel**, MD, Family Practice, **St. Anthony’s Memorial Hospital**, Effingham
- **Jason Cropsey**, RN, Intensive Care Unit Nurse, **Provena Saint Joseph Hospital**, Elgin
- **S. Forrest Dodson**, MD, Director, Section of Abdominal Transplantation, **Rush University Medical Center**
- **Tracy K. Koogler**, MD, Assistant Professor of Anesthesia and Pediatrics, Director of Pediatric Critical Care Training Program, **University of Chicago Hospitals**
- **Leslie Livett**, RN, MS, Trauma Nurse Coordinator, **Provena Saint Joseph Medical Center**
- **Chris Sloffer**, MD, **OSF Saint Francis Medical Center**
- **Sister Joanne Vander Heyden**, Chaplain, **Provena United Samaritans Medical Center**
- **Chicago Sun-Times**, represented by **Michael Cooke**, Editor
- **Cathy Grossi**, senior director, health policy and regulation, **Illinois Hospital Association**
- **Adam Mehl**, Vice President, **Rossi Enterprises**
- **John Callahan**, **Grundy County Coroner**
- **Bruce Conley**, Owner and Funeral Director, **Conley Funeral Home**

Through Gift of Hope, the honorees also will be individually recognized by **WGN Radio 720 personality Spike O’Dell** during his show 5 a.m. to 9 a.m. weekdays, from Dec. 1 through Dec. 19.

(MORE)

The honorees were selected from among the thousands of hospital, forensic and business professionals in Illinois and northwest Indiana who work with Gift of Hope to coordinate donation, enable lifesaving transplants, support the families of donors, educate other healthcare professionals and draw public attention to the critical need for donation.

Gift of Hope reports that the region is poised to set a new record for donation and transplantation rates in 2003, yet the critical need for organ and tissue donors continues. More than 4,400 patients in Illinois await lifesaving organ transplants, in addition to thousands more in need of cornea, heart valve and other tissue transplants.

Nationally, an average of 17 people die each day waiting for transplantable organs that do not become available, while more than 100 new names are added to the national organ transplant waiting list

Gift of Hope Organ & Tissue Donor Network is the federally mandated organ procurement organization responsible for coordinating organ and tissue donation in Illinois and northwest Indiana. Through its work in 2002, 289 donors made available 929 lifesaving organs for transplant. Additionally, 947 families consented to tissue donation, enabling thousands of patients to receive medical transplants of heart valves, bones and other tissue.

Organs and tissues from a single donor can help more than 25 individuals. Everyone, no matter how young or old, can be a lifesaver by choosing to be a donor. To become a donor, sign a Uniform Donor Card (such as the card on the back of a driver's license) and, most importantly, inform family members of the decision. In Illinois, a family's consent is required before donation can occur.

For more information, contact Gift of Hope Organ & Tissue Donor Network at 888/307-DON8 or visit www.giftofhope.org.

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