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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

## **HHS honors Gift of Hope Organ & Tissue Donor Network for making a difference in the workplace**

CHICAGO, IL (June 22, 2004)—Gift of Hope, along with organ donor organizations from 14 states, was honored in June for contributions to U.S. Health and Human Services (HHS) Secretary Tommy G. Thompson's Workplace Partnership for Life initiative, which encourages private companies and organizations to provide donation education to their employees or members. To date, nearly 9,600 groups have joined the national initiative.

The 15 organizations were part of a pilot project that looked at innovative ways to recruit new Workplace partners, provide better assistance to new and current partners, and document successful activities that can be replicated around the country. Since October 2003, when the pilot began, more than 1,000 new Workplace Partners have been recruited. The honorees are part of a nationwide network of organ and blood donor groups that provide ongoing support to the Workplace Partnership.

The organizations are:

- Donor Network of Arizona
- Golden State Donor Services (California)
- LifeLink of Georgia
- Gift of Hope Organ & Tissue Donor Network (Illinois)
- Iowa Donor Network
- New Jersey Organ & Tissue Sharing Network
- New Mexico Donor Services
- Upstate New York Transplant Services
- Carolina Donor Services (North Carolina)
- Western North Carolina Organ & Tissue Donation Initiative
- LifeBanc (Ohio)
- Gift of Life Donor Program (Pennsylvania/Delaware)
- Mid-South Transplant Foundation (Tennessee)
- LifeGift Organ Donation Center (Texas)
- Utah Coalition for Organ, Eye & Tissue Donation
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"The Workplace Partnership gets employers and employees working together to save lives," said Secretary Thompson. "These honorees move us closer to our ultimate goal of donation-friendly workplaces across America."

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Secretary Thompson launched the Gift of Life Donation Initiative to focus national attention on the urgent need for donors. Under this initiative, several new efforts have been implemented, including the creation of the Workplace Partnership for Life campaign, the development of a model donor card, the Organ Donation Breakthrough Collaborative that targets the nation's largest hospitals, and a new donor education program designed for high school students.

Gift of Hope President/CEO Jarold A. Anderson added: "Building relationships with local and national businesses, and getting them involved in donation awareness activities helps to increase donation and give hope to the more than 85,000 people still waiting for transplants."

More information about the Gift of Life Donation Initiative is available at [www.organdonor.gov](http://www.organdonor.gov). For more information about Gift of Hope's Corporate Partners program, contact John Valencia at 630/758-2744 or [jvalencia@giftofhope.org](mailto:jvalencia@giftofhope.org).

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