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'Lifesaving Partners' named for 2005 achievements supporting organ/tissue donation

ELMHURST, Ill (Dec. 9, 2005) – A select group of hospital and civic professionals from throughout Illinois and northwest Indiana have been recognized for outstanding achievement in their fields addressing the region's critical need for organ and tissue donation.

Named 2005 Lifesaving Partners by Gift of Hope Organ & Tissue Donor Network, the honorees were selected from among thousands of hospital, forensic and civic professionals who work 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.

The awards were presented at a ceremony in Chicago on Dec. 8 hosted by Gift of Hope and emceed by ABC 7 Chicago reporter Janet Davies. The honorees are:

- **Kathleen Cantos, RN, BSN, CCRN**, Manager, MICU, **Resurrection Medical Center**, Chicago
- **Lieutenant Michael Castalano** and **Officer David Hilgenberg**, of the **Melrose Park Police Department**
- **Raúl García**, Coordinator, Health Affairs with the **General Consul of Mexico**, Chicago
- **Willa Iglitzen Lang**, Executive Director, **National Kidney Foundation of Illinois**, Chicago
- **Joyce L. Maly, RN, BSN**, Nurse Manager, CCU/HTU, **Loyola University Medical Center**, Maywood
- **Bryan Mitchell, MD**, Forensic Pathologist, Burr Ridge
- **Betty Mushynski**, SINI-Clinical Team Leader, **Advocate Christ Medical Center**, Oak Lawn
- **Dean Olsen**, Reporter, **State Journal Register**, Springfield
- **Pastoral Services Staff, Rev. Dean Hokel**, Director, **Northwest Community Hospital**, Arlington Heights
- **Robyn Schenning, RN**, Patient Representative, **Condell Medical Center**, Libertyville
- **Connie Scott, RN, MSN**, Assistant Director of Nursing, Specialty Services, **Blessing Hospital**, Quincy
- **Aaron J. Simon**, Assistant Hospital Director, **University of Illinois Medical Center**, Chicago
- **Alison L. Walsh**, Administrative Director, Department of Cardiovascular Thoracic Surgery and Heart Transplantation, **Rush University Medical Center**, Chicago
- **Jean Rose-DeRenzy, RN, MS, CNRN**, Director of Program Development for Illinois Neurological Institute; **Janet Burnham, RN**, Clinical Nurse Educator of Neuroscience Critical Care Unit, **Diana Connell, RN**, Acting Manager of Neuroscience Critical Care Unit, at **OSF Saint Francis Medical Center**, Peoria.

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More than 4,500 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 18 people die each day waiting for transplantable organs that do not become available.

Gift of Hope is the federally designated not-for-profit organ procurement organization (OPO) responsible for coordinating organ and tissue donation in the northern three-quarters of Illinois and northwest Indiana. Since its inception in 1986, Gift of Hope has coordinated donations that have saved the lives of more than 10,000 organ transplant recipients, and improved the lives of hundreds of thousands of tissue transplant recipients.

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

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