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**For immediate release**

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## **20 Gift of Hope Hospital Partners to Receive HHS Medal of Honor for Organ Donation Rates**

ELMHURST, Ill. (Sept. 19, 2008)—The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) will award 19 Illinois hospitals and one northwest Indiana hospital with the national Medal of Honor for their work in saving and enhancing lives through organ and tissue donation. The hospitals all work with Gift of Hope Organ & Tissue Donor Network, the organ procurement organization that coordinates organ and tissue donation in the northern three quarters of Illinois and northwest Indiana, and are among 413 hospitals across the country being honored for exemplary leadership and commitment to organ donors, donor families, and the nearly 100,000 patients on the national transplant waiting list.

The 413 winners represent hospitals with eight or more potential organ donors during the 26-month award period ending in June 2008, who sustained a donation rate of 75 percent or higher from among eligible donors for at least a year. The percentage reflects the rate at which potential donors at the time of death actually become lifesaving donors.

Five Illinois honorees are receiving the Medal of Honor for the fourth consecutive year, meaning every year since its inception: Advocate Good Samaritan Hospital, Downers Grove; Advocate Lutheran General Hospital, Park Ridge; Central DuPage Hospital, Winfield; OSF Saint Francis Medical Center, Peoria; and The University of Chicago Medical Center, Chicago.

HHS and the Boston-based Institute for Healthcare Improvement established the 75 percent goal in April 2003 as part of an ongoing national initiative called the Organ Donation Breakthrough Collaborative. Through it, organ procurement organizations like Gift of Hope, hospitals and key national healthcare leaders share and apply best practices to their work with potential donors, their families and the donation process. The Breakthrough Collaborative's success has directly contributed to the continuing increase in number of organs transplanted each year since 2003. In 2007, 28,357 patients received transplants, compared with 25,472 in 2003.

Representatives of the current award-winning hospitals and organ procurement organizations will be recognized at a formal dinner and ceremony on Oct. 24, 2008, at the Fourth National Learning Congress on Organ Donation and Transplantation in Nashville.

A complete list of hospital honorees in Gift of Hope's donation service area appears on page 2.

*(more)*

**2008 Gift of Hope Hospital Partner HHS Medal of Honor Winners**

- Advocate Christ Medical Center, Oak Lawn
- Advocate Good Samaritan Hospital, Downers Grove
- Advocate Lutheran General Hospital, Park Ridge
- Carle Foundation Hospital, Urbana
- Centegra Hospital – McHenry
- Central DuPage Hospital, Winfield
- Condell Medical Center, Libertyville
- Holy Cross Hospital, Chicago
- Mount Sinai Hospital, Chicago
- Northwestern Memorial Hospital, Chicago
- OSF Saint Francis Medical Center, Peoria
- Our Lady of the Resurrection Medical Center, Chicago
- Provena St. Joseph Medical Center, Joliet
- Resurrection Medical Center, Chicago
- Rockford Memorial Hospital, Rockford
- Rush University Medical Center, Chicago
- St. John's Hospital, Springfield
- St. Margaret Mercy Healthcare Centers – North Campus, Hammond, Ind.
- The University of Chicago Medical Center, Chicago
- University of Illinois Medical Center at Chicago

Additional information on HHS' donation initiatives and the Organ Donation and Transplantation Breakthrough Collaborative is available at [www.organdonor.gov](http://www.organdonor.gov).

Gift of Hope Organ & Tissue Donor Network is proud to serve as the federally designated not-for-profit organ procurement organization (OPO) that coordinates organ and tissue donation and services to families of donors 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 14,000 organ transplant recipients, and improved the lives of hundreds of thousands of tissue transplant recipients. As one of 58 organ procurement organizations that make up the nation's organ donation system, Gift of Hope works with 183 hospitals and serves 11.7 million residents in its donation service area.

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