TRAGEDY to TRIUMPH

“Baby Quinn” Kyles Moved the Nation to Embrace Donation

IN THIS ISSUE
Rose Parade Recap
Record-Breaking 2014
Mayors for Hope
Yessenia Waits
Cover Photo: In 1991, Quinn Kyles captured the nation’s attention as “Baby Quinn” and helped to put organ and tissue donation and transplantation front and center in the African-American community. Although Quinn’s life was cut tragically short in December, his legacy of hope and triumph lives on.

More Than Ever

For the second year in a row, Gift of Hope experienced a record-breaking year in carrying out its mission of saving and enhancing lives through organ and tissue donation.

National Donate Life Month

Gift of Hope calls upon residents of Illinois and northwest Indiana to celebrate and honor organ and tissue donation’s Circle of Hope during National Donate Life Month in April.

Springfield Office Open House

Gift of Hope celebrated the opening of its new Springfield satellite office at a March 19 open house for community residents and Gift of Hope’s professional partners.

Mayors for Hope

Gift of Hope is partnering with mayors and other civic leaders from more than 15 south suburban communities to educate people about the need for more minority donors.

Connections provides the Gift of Hope public and professional communities with news and information about Gift of Hope, organ and tissue donation and the importance of being a registered organ and tissue donor. We encourage you to share this newsletter with your friends and associates and learn more about donation by visiting GiftofHope.org.
Heart transplant recipient and Gift of Hope Advocates for Hope volunteer Kelvin Martin (right) was one of 30 people from across the country who told The Never-Ending Story of organ and tissue donation as riders on the 2015 Donate Life Float in the 126th annual Tournament of Roses Parade in Pasadena, Calif., on New Year’s Day. Kelvin learned he had congestive heart failure in 2005 at age 25. He survived three subsequent heart attacks and lived for nearly three years on a device that helped his failing heart do its vital job before receiving a heart transplant in January 2014.

“I am devoting my second life to raising awareness about organ and tissue donation,” says Kelvin, a Chicago resident who works as a disc jockey. “If I can touch just one person, that’s all I care about. But I intend to touch many more lives than that and share the message about the importance of being a registered donor.”

Kelvin expresses immeasurable gratitude to the donor and family who gave him the gift of life. “I hope one day to meet, or at least talk to, the donor family because I want to tell them how thankful I am for giving me a second chance at life.”
For the second year in a row, Gift of Hope experienced a record-breaking year in carrying out its mission to save and enhance lives through organ and tissue donation.

In 2014, Gift of Hope provided 1,024 lifesaving organs for transplant, an 11 percent increase over the previous year, thanks to the generous decisions of 336 donors and their families to offer hope and life through donation. In addition, 1,912 donors and their families authorized the donation of bone, skin, heart valves and other tissue for transplant during the year, shattering the previous record of 1,488 donors in 2013. (See table on p. 15 for more performance metrics.)

“These achievements underscore the remarkable dedication of Gift of Hope and its healthcare partners in their efforts to honor the decision to donate and bring lifesaving organs and tissue to people in need,” says Kevin Cmunt, President/CEO of Gift of Hope. “In 2014, we helped more people than ever before in our 28-year history and made a huge difference in the lives of many people. But none of this would have been possible without the generosity of the organ and tissue donors we were privileged to work with and their families’ willingness to look beyond their own grief to envision the lifesaving and healing potential of organ and tissue donation.”

Although hundreds of lives were saved as a result of Gift of Hope’s record-setting performance in 2014, the shortage of donated organs remains critical, Cmunt adds. “More than 5,200 Illinoisans and 1,500 people in Indiana currently are waiting for transplants, and the gap between the number of people waiting and available organs continues to slowly widen,” he says. “That’s why saying ‘yes’ to donation is so important and why we work so hard to educate the public about donation.”

About 5.7 million people have registered as donors in Illinois, and 3.2 million have registered in Indiana. “In Illinois, that’s just 57 percent of all people eligible to register in the state,” Cmunt says. “So we still have a long way to go to get those remaining 4 million Illinois residents to make the decision to save lives through donation.”

The selfless decision to be an organ and tissue donor goes a long way. A single organ donor can save up to nine lives and, when combined with tissue donation, a single donor can save or improve the lives of more than 25 people.

Among the many highlights for Gift of Hope in 2014, Cmunt points to gains made in donation authorizations among African-Americans and Hispanics in the organization’s service area. “Today, the diverse cultures we serve are more receptive to Gift of Hope’s message about choosing to be donors and are making this topic a matter of everyday conversation among family and friends,” he says. “As a result, we have raised the bar on introducing programs, services and campaigns to continue educating, inspiring and addressing their specific needs with community initiatives such as Hospitals for Hope, Scholarships for Hope, Mayors for Hope and the many other ongoing outreach efforts conducted at local community festivals and on college and university campuses throughout Gift of Hope’s service area. When the community unites to help address issues of mutual concern, the outcome is always positive.”

Cmunt also points to legislative accomplishments that occurred in 2014 as other major highlights that have positively impacted organ and tissue donation in Gift of Hope’s service area. These include changes to state laws that give some formerly excluded patients greater access to lifesaving transplants and allow thousands of undocumented aliens to register as organ and tissue donors when they apply for temporary driver’s licenses.

Although 2014 was a record-setting year for Gift of Hope, the organization will not rest on its laurels in 2015, Cmunt says. “We’ve raised the performance threshold for the organization, but we expect to raise it even higher in 2015 by establishing greater public awareness of our organization, strengthening our relationships with hospitals and transplant centers, and enhancing the way we provide medical management to potential donors. These and other strategies will help us improve donation outcomes and help us carry out our mission.”
Mayors for Hope Unites Community Leaders in Raising Donation Awareness

Gift of Hope is partnering with mayors, village presidents and other civic leaders from more than 15 south suburban communities to educate residents in those areas about the importance of organ and tissue donation and the need for more minority donors through its new Mayors for Hope initiative.

Gift of Hope’s Community Affairs Department has launched the new program, which targets primarily African-American and Hispanic populations in Chicago and 15 suburbs south of the city. The launch is timed to coincide with National Donate Life Month in April and will run parallel to a complementary Churches for Hope campaign in each community.

“Our efforts will help to dispel misconceptions and negative connotations about organ and tissue donation and of the medical field in general,” explains Jack Lynch, Gift of Hope’s Director of Community Affairs. Lynch and Marion Shuck, Gift of Hope’s Manager of Community Affairs, are spearheading the initiative with the help of each community’s mayor.

“More African-Americans receive than give. That’s the reality of organ donation today,” Shuck says. “And it’s a reality even more pronounced within this population because the diseases and conditions that can lead to the need for transplants are more prevalent in minority populations.”

Mayors for Hope is a community-based program aimed at educating African-Americans and Hispanics about donation and empowering them to increase minority donation rates, Shuck explains. The initiative will also strive to educate community residents about kidney disease, a leading chronic illness in minority populations — and the one that accounts for the greatest organ transplant need. In fact, of the more than 5,000 people on the transplant waiting list in Illinois, more than 4,500 are waiting for a kidney.

As part of their commitment to the Mayors for Hope program, each mayor will provide Gift of Hope with community contacts, resources and platforms to promote organ and tissue donation awareness. Participating towns include Burnham, Calumet Park, Dolton, Dixmoor, Ford Heights, Harvey, Hazel Crest, Lynwood, Markham, Matteson, Olympia Fields, Phoenix, Riverdale, Robbins and University Park.

Harvey Mayor Eric Kellogg is eager to spread the word in his city of 25,000 residents. A staunch supporter of Gift of Hope for decades, Mayor Kellogg admits organ donation has taken on added significance to him now that his niece, Monica Fox of Flossmoor, has been added to the kidney transplant waiting list in Illinois. “I never thought it would hit my immediate family,” he says. “When I learned about my niece, I was devastated.”

When Lynch reached out to Kellogg earlier this year, the mayor eagerly accepted the invitation to help lead the Mayors for Hope campaign. “As mayors, we have a broader voice, a louder voice, that can be used to champion this cause in our communities.”

Olympia Fields Village President Debbie Meyers-Martin concurs. “Education really is the key,” she says. “While it’s understood that there’s a great need, there’s been a hesitation or fear surrounding organ donation among some cultures. Our role here is to dispel some of the myths associated with donation and encourage people to register.”

She and the other mayors will support Gift of Hope’s message by sharing information on their village websites, in newsletters, on cable-access channels and at community-wide events.

“My sister might still be here today if we’d known more about organ donation,” adds Dixmoor Mayor Dorothy Armstrong. “Maybe she could have had a kidney transplant. I look forward to working with Gift of Hope to build donor awareness and provide information about preventing diseases like high blood pressure and diabetes.”

The South Suburban Chapter of The Links, Incorporated, has also pledged its support to the Mayors for Hope campaign. The Links, Incorporated, is a women’s volunteer service organization committed to enriching, sustaining and ensuring the cultural and economic survival of African-Americans and other persons of African-American ancestry.

“Our goal is to save lives and turn tragedy to triumph,” Shuck says. “Each day, about 79 people receive organ transplants, but 21 people die waiting for a donated organ. By the mayors lending their voices to this cause, Gift of Hope can become a trusted partner in the community. We want to see a day when no one is waiting for the gift of hope — the gift of life — to arrive.”

Among the many civic leaders participating in the Mayors for Hope campaign are (l-r) Mayor Dorothy Armstrong, Dixmoor; Mayor Eric Kellogg, Harvey; Mayor Vivian Covington, University Park; and Village President Debbie Meyers-Martin, Olympia Fields.
Annual Funeral Director Seminar Set for May 5

Gift of Hope will hold its annual continuing education seminar for funeral service professionals on Tuesday, May 5, at the Northfield Inn & Suites in Springfield, Ill. The all-day seminar, offered at no cost to professionals in the funeral and forensics community, is a popular donation educational resource for funeral directors, embalmers, non-licensed funeral service staff and pre-need counselors and will offer continuing education credits for participation. Coroners, medical examiners and their allied staff members also are welcome and encouraged to attend the program.

This year’s program, *A Mission of Honor and Hope*, will cover a broad range of timely and informative topics designed to educate funeral and forensic service professionals about organ and tissue donation and how they can work with tissue recovery professionals to perform their respective duties while producing positive donation outcomes.

Free registration includes all seminar materials, continental breakfast and lunch. Registration will be conducted online at GiftOfHope.org and will open in late March. Space is limited so early registration is encouraged. Visit GiftOfHope.org to learn more about the 2015 seminar program and to sign up when online registration opens.

National Donate Life Month to Honor CIRCLE OF HOPE

Gift of Hope calls upon residents of Illinois and northwest Indiana to observe, celebrate and honor organ and tissue donation’s Circle of Hope during National Donate Life Month in April.

“The four groups of people directly touched by organ and tissue donation — donors, donor families, transplant recipients and people waiting for lifesaving and healing transplants — form a circle of hope that can transform hopelessness into hope and tragedy into triumph,” says Kevin Cmunt, President/CEO of Gift of Hope. “During National Donate Life Month, we ask the people of Illinois and northwest Indiana to honor that precious circle of life, and keep it intact, by choosing to be donors and inspiring their communities to embrace and advocate for donation.”

National Donate Life Month, observed throughout April, is a time set aside each year for donation advocates throughout Illinois and northwest Indiana to educate the public about organ and tissue donation and encourage people to register as donors. “During this special time, Gift of Hope works with hospitals, schools, businesses and community organizations throughout Illinois and northwest Indiana to partner with us in advocating for organ and tissue donation and to dial up their advocacy efforts,” Cmunt says. “We also take this time to recognize our donors, their families, transplant recipients and the healthcare professionals who help to honor the gifts of life made possible through donation and transplantation.” National Donate Life Month is one of many initiatives Gift of Hope takes part in throughout the year to raise public awareness of organ and tissue donation and the need for people to register as donors. During the month, it partners with Illinois Secretary of State Jesse White, whose office manages the Illinois Organ/Tissue Donor Registry, in holding media events and donor registration drives throughout Illinois to encourage people to sign up in the donor registry.

“We have an unending mission during National Donate Life Month,” Cmunt said. “Through donor registration stations, signage and donation stories channeled through mass media, social media, hospital community newsletters and hospital and workplace websites and intranets, we seek to educate our community about the importance of organ and tissue donation, encourage people to register as organ and tissue donors and share their donation decisions with family and friends.”
Open House Marks Formal Dedication of New Springfield Office

Gift of Hope staff and its many partners in donation from central Illinois attended an open house to celebrate the opening of the organization’s new office in Springfield, Ill. The event was held March 19 at the new building located at 2401 Memphis Drive in Springfield. A number of state and local dignitaries, including Lt. Gov. Evelyn Sanguinetti, attended the event, which marked for formal dedication of Gift of Hope’s new satellite facility.

“The new, 10,000-square-foot facility helps us strengthen the services we provide to people and organizations in central Illinois, and it gives Gift of Hope staff and volunteers and members of the local professional community a convenient, comfortable, state-of-the-art facility they can use for their educational outreach activities,” says Kevin Cmunt, President/CEO of Gift of Hope. “It also offers Gift of Hope team members and healthcare professionals in Springfield and surrounding communities additional opportunities to share our vision to honor the gifts of donors and donor families and to inspire our communities to embrace donation and share their stories.”

A food drive to benefit the Central Illinois Foodbank was also held in conjunction with the open house. Gift of Hope staff and organ and tissue donation advocates donated more than 1,000 lbs. of nonperishable items to benefit central Illinois residents.

Under the new rules, the fittest of recovered kidneys — based on donor age and medical history — will be offered first to patients who are expected to survive a transplant the longest, a protocol called “longevity matching.” “The hope is that these typically younger adults won’t outlive their new organs and need another that could have gone to someone else,” Dr. Jendrisak says.

The United Network for Organ Sharing, the federally mandated registration center for organ transplant candidates in the United States, produced the long-awaited changes. UNOS’ computer-based system matches donated organs with patients in need in accordance with strict federal guidelines intended to ensure equitable distribution of available organs.

UNOS has produced an informational brochure on the new kidney allocation system changes. You can download it from GiftofHope.org or from UNOS.org.
From TRAGEDY to TRIUMPH

‘Baby Quinn’ Leaves Lasting Mark on Organ and Tissue Donor Awareness
The year was 1991. George Bush Sr. was in the White House, Jay Leno was preparing to take over the reins of the Tonight Show from Johnny Carson and the Gulf War dominated the nightly news reports.

But another story was making headlines in Chicago and across the nation when word broke that an unborn baby by the name of Quinn Kyles would need a lifesaving heart transplant after birth.

“Baby Quinn,” as he came to be known, captured the nation’s attention and helped to put organ and tissue donation front and center in the African-American community.

Though Quinn’s life was cut tragically short by a car accident in December 2014, just days after celebrating his 23rd birthday, his life and legacy are a testament to the power of community.

Quinn’s story began in fall 1991 when his parents, Theresa and Dwain Kyles, received devastating news during a routine seven-month ultrasound. Their unborn child was diagnosed with a hypo-plastic left heart, a rare condition where the left ventricle of the heart — the part responsible for pumping blood through the body — had failed to develop properly. Unless Baby Quinn underwent a lifesaving heart transplant within weeks of his birth, he stood no chance of survival.

The Kyles were shattered by the news. “She was hysterical; I was just speechless,” Dwain recalls.

To further complicate things, Theresa discovered her health insurance wouldn’t cover the staggering cost of the surgery and follow-up care, estimated at nearly $500,000 for the first year alone. At that time, heart transplants for newborns were considered experimental.

Initially overwhelmed by the situation, Theresa and Dwain quickly sprang into action to raise money to pay for Quinn’s heart transplant. “People came out of the woodwork to help us do what we had to do,” Dwain says.

Getting the Word Out

“Share a Heart with Baby Quinn” became the slogan of the highly publicized campaign to help the Kyles raise the $300,000 needed to pay for the transplant at Ann & Robert H. Lurie Children’s Hospital of Chicago.

Successful Chicago attorneys, the Kyles called on their influential friends to help. Entertainer Stevie Wonder, whom Theresa was working for at the time, rushed to town to hold a fundraising concert at the Chicago Theater in November. Not only did the sold-out performance help Quinn’s cause but it also raised national awareness of organ and tissue donation in the African-American community like never before.

“The Chicago Bears were also instrumental in raising awareness and funds, in particular Willie Gault and the late Dave Duerson,” Dwain says. “The Bears held an additional fundraiser and promoted our plight.”

Other well-known personalities that lent their celebrity and support to Baby Quinn’s cause included R&B band Jodeci, The Emotions, the Rev. Jesse Jackson and TV news personalities Robin Robinson, Art Norman and Mary Dee.

The ‘Heart’ of the Matter

The Kyles were highly successful in generating buzz about Quinn’s cause and raising funds for the surgery. Administrators at Lurie Children’s Hospital took notice and agreed to authorize the transplant while deferring billing for up to a year so Theresa and Dwain could negotiate with their insurance company. They were elated.

“Quinn put organ donation in the African-American community on the map.”

--The Rev. Jesse Jackson

But in the midst of their frenzied fundraising efforts, the Kyles had overlooked one very important detail: finding a donor heart for their son. Jack Lynch, Director of Community Affairs for Gift of Hope, had been following the Kyles’ story in the news and reached out to them to discuss the organ and tissue donation process.

But the Kyles didn’t return his calls. “I understood the financial challenges they were strapped with, but the most important component in all of this was a heart,” Lynch explains. “Ninety percent of organs recovered are from adults. Quinn needed a very tiny heart from a newborn, which was a rarity. Their challenges became even larger.”

With still no response from the Kyles, Lynch “forced” himself into a fundraising event the Chicago Bears were hosting before Quinn’s birth. “I explained who I was and I told them, ‘Organs are not sitting on the shelf waiting,’ ” he remembers.

Lynch laid it all out on the table and told the Kyles that locating a suitable pediatric heart that would be compatible with Baby Quinn’s blood type and size would be extremely difficult.

The Kyles quickly realized their work wasn’t done yet.

“Jack tried to track us down for probably two months,” Dwain remembers. “He called us, but we didn’t know who he was. We were crazy trying to run around and raise this money.
“Jack made a very important point. He said, ‘It’d be great to raise the money, but what are you going to do with the money without a heart to transplant?’ Thus began our journey to find out about organ transplantation.”

Once the Kyles understood the gravity of the situation, they and Lynch formed a united front from that moment on. With Lynch’s help, the Kyles and about 75 family members, friends and associates secured a location, assembled a phone bank and began calling hundreds of hospitals across the nation to alert them about Baby Quinn’s need for a donor heart.

That, combined with numerous appearances on TV and radio news shows, garnered even more attention for their cause. But as the Kyles became more aware of the plight of others on the waiting list, their once-narrow focus broadened. No longer were they speaking in terms of Baby Quinn only. They were advocating for everyone waiting for an organ or tissue transplant. If Baby Quinn wasn’t able to get his heart, their tireless efforts might help someone else’s child receive one.

“It was magnificent,” Lynch says. “They did the rounds on all of the talk shows. You couldn’t turn on the radio or TV without seeing them. They were everywhere. The Kyles wanted to do whatever they could to help people on the waiting list. They were the most unique couple I had ever met. No one had ever done what they did.”

Baby Quinn and the Kyles were so widely publicized that legislators took up the cause, too. For example, Illinois State Sen. Mattie Hunter introduced legislation requiring schools to teach students about organ and tissue donation and transplantation.

“They raised the bar of acceptance (of organ and tissue donation) in the African-American community,” Lynch adds. “They never took their foot off the gas.”

All in all, it was truly a community effort, one where the entire village came together, Dwain says. And it underscored a fundamental message: “We need to be aware of organ donation before we are in need of an organ transplant,” he says.

Against the Odds

Baby Quinn came into the world on Dec. 2, 1991, and just 13 days later — on his mother’s birthday — he received a donor heart. “Renee Ferguson of WMAQ-TV proved pivotal in raising media attention and ensuring that the donor heart eventually got to Quinn and arrived successfully,” Dwain says. Quinn was a fighter from the start, smiling through his breathing tube and eagerly accepting cuddles throughout the many medical procedures he endured. “So many people felt as if he had a special place in their hearts,” Dwain says. “He was Baby Quinn — Chicago’s Baby Quinn. They rallied to give him a chance at life, and he lived each day with a prescient appreciation.”

For the next 23 years, Quinn filled the lives of his family and friends with endless joy. He excelled in school, played soccer with passion and won two state titles in Illinois Young Authors competitions.

He channeled his love of broadcasting and music by majoring in radio at Columbia College. His future seemed bright. But on Dec. 22, 2014, that bright light went dark when Quinn died in a car accident, just days after his 23rd birthday. Although his dreams — and the dreams of his loved ones — were cut short, his legacy lives on.

From Tragedy to Triumph

Quinn entered the world with much fanfare, and he left it the same way. Stevie Wonder, with whom Quinn shared a close, lifelong relationship, sang at his memorial service. The Rev. Jesse Jackson and TV personality Robin Robinson spoke eloquently of the impact he had on the world — and on organ and tissue donation.

“Quinn put organ donation in the African-American community on the map,” the Rev. Jackson said at Quinn’s service.

In January of this year, Gift of Hope presented Dwain with the Tragedy to Triumph award. “This is a particularly bitter-sweet moment for me,” Dwain told the 200 Gift of Hope staff members who assembled at the special presentation. “But what I want you to know is that the work you do — but for the work that you do — 23 years of Quinn’s life would not have been part of ours. Twenty-three years ago, we would have been trying to figure out what this child’s life might have been. Having that opportunity to see him grow up, see that he turned out to be a good person, see that he made his mark on the world — he really did — meant everything to all of us who were a part of his short life.”

As for the impact that Quinn and the Kyles had on organ and tissue donation awareness, Dwain says he is encouraged but admits there’s still more work to be done. “There are still challenges in the community, particularly in the African-American community, because there are religious issues and all kinds of issues that get in the way of people choosing to do the right thing. But I can say that the work you do at Gift of Hope is making a difference.”

Dwain, who remains a vocal advocate for organ and tissue donation, resists characterizing the end of Quinn’s story as one of tragedy. “Focusing on how Quinn died tends to
minimize the importance of his life,” he explains. “For 23 years, we enjoyed the life of a courageous young man whose life almost didn’t happen at all. We could easily have lost him at childbirth. The tributes given at his memorial service by his contemporaries made it clear that we had been blessed with a life that valued other lives and a son whose empathy for the challenges of others endeared him to most who came across his path.

“The strength and quiet resolve Quinn displayed throughout his life provided me personally with the motivation and inspiration to push through my own challenges. I cannot imagine my life or our family’s lives without Quinn’s sense of humor and infectious laugh. I wouldn’t want to. Accordingly, while it will never be the same without him, and our grief will certainly haunt us for years to come, I prefer to deal with those real-life challenges than with the thought of what life might have been like had we buried Quinn as an infant, leaving us only with tragedy.”
Yessenia Wallace is the first to admit she’s not a patient person. Waiting for anything runs counter to her vibrant, take-charge approach to life. “I want everything done now,” she admits. But since she was placed on the organ transplant waiting list two years ago, the effervescent 26-year-old has learned to curb her impatience about the future and focus more on the day-to-day.

Yessenia’s story begins in 2005 when she developed what she thought was a simple cold and sore throat. But instead of clearing up in a few days, Yessenia’s illness grew worse. She had trouble breathing and grew weak. Eventually, she wound up in the hospital seriously ill.

After a battery of tests, doctors discovered Yessenia had blood clots in her lungs and diminished kidney function. The culprit was lupus, a chronic inflammatory disease where the body’s immune system attacks its own tissues and organs. Unfortunately, Yessenia’s kidneys took the brunt of the assault.

Yessenia and her family were stunned at the diagnosis and worried about what the future might hold. For years, she faithfully went to see her doctors — sometimes as many as five a week — to manage her deteriorating condition. In 2011, she was diagnosed with advanced kidney disease and was told kidney failure was an eventual reality. “I knew what was going to happen,” she says. “I just didn’t know when.”

In February 2013, doctors put her on the waiting list for a kidney transplant, and in May that same year she began continuous cyclic peritoneal dialysis (CCPD) seven days a week, a regimen she continues today. For nine-and-a-half hours every night, a machine cleanses the impurities from her blood until she receives a new kidney that will do it for her.

“They told me right off the bat there’s a 7 percent chance that I’ll find a donor,” she explains. That’s because Yessenia has O-negative blood. Unlike people with other blood types, individuals with blood type O can receive blood or organs only from a type O donor. “For a while, I thought I was going to die,” she explains. “Who’s going to donate to me? The average wait span for a kidney is five years in Illinois.”

While dialysis does the work of her failing kidneys, Yessenia says it’s not without its own set of challenges. She can’t work anymore, and traveling, something she once loved to do with her husband, is on the back burner, too. The equipment is cumbersome, and there are cords and tubing to contend with. Flying is difficult, and even a lengthy car drive can be too much to bear when fatigue sets in.

“I’m tied to a machine nine-and-a-half hours, so that doesn’t leave me a whole lot of mobility,” she says. “I want to be able to go out and do normal, everyday stuff.”

Even little things like taking a bath are out of the question. “The good days are fine. I don’t think about it as much, but when I have those bad days it’s like, ‘When is this going to end?’”

Yessenia’s condition is also hard on her husband and family. “It’s difficult for them to see me healthy-looking on the outside while knowing how unhealthy I really am on the inside.”

Despite the ongoing trials of day-to-day life, Yessenia prefers to stay positive. In fact, she’s channeled her energies into educating others about the importance of organ donation. Two years ago, she contacted Gift of Hope and signed on as a volunteer for the Advocates for Hope program. When her schedule permits, Yessenia helps spread the word about organ and tissue donation in the Peoria area.

“People really want to hear our story,” Yessenia says. “It really is giving someone else the opportunity to be great. You can be someone’s hero even after you’re gone.”

Yessenia has big plans once she gets a kidney. She looks forward to working, traveling and, most importantly, starting a family. “My husband and I want to have kids,” she says. “My doctors said I can become pregnant two years after my transplant, so I’m definitely looking forward to that.”

For now, though, she waits — as patiently as any 26-year-old can — for the day a kidney will give her the life she dreams of.
Gift of Hope works in partnership with 180 hospitals and nine transplant centers to meet the ever-growing demand for donor organs and fulfill the organization’s vision — that every opportunity for organ and tissue donation is successful. Here’s a look at key donation performance metrics for Illinois and northwest Indiana hospitals and the contributions these hospitals are making to give hope and life to others.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hospital</th>
<th>Organ Donors</th>
<th>Donation Conversion Rate</th>
<th>Donation Authorization Rate</th>
<th>Timely Notification Rate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Adventist Bolingbrook Hospital</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adventist Hinsdale Hospital</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adventist La Grange Memorial Hospital</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advocate BroMenn Medical Center</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advocate Christ Medical Center</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advocate Condell Medical Center</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advocate Good Samaritan Hospital</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advocate Illinois Masonic Medical Center</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advocate Lutheran General Hospital</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advocate Sherman Hospital</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alexian Brothers Medical Center</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blessing Hospital</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carle Foundation Hospital</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Centegra Hospital: McHenry</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Central DuPage Hospital</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community First Medical Center</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community Hospital of Munster</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Decatur Memorial Hospital</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Edward Hospital</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elmhurst Memorial Hospital</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evanston Hospital</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Franciscan St. Anthony Health</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Franciscan St. James: Chicago Heights</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Franciscan St. Margaret Health: Hammond</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Freeport Memorial Hospital</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Galesburg Cottage Hospital</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Genesis Medical Center: Illini Campus</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Glenbrook Hospital</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gottlieb Memorial Hospital</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Holy Cross Hospital</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ingalls Memorial Hospital</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kishwaukee Community Hospital</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Loyola University Medical Center</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MacNeal Hospital</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Memorial Medical Center</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mercy Hospital and Medical Center</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Methodist Hospital: Northlake</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Methodist Hospital: Southlake</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Metro South Medical Center</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mount Sinai Hospital Medical Center</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>95</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Hospitals with at least one organ donor through 12/31/14. Note: Data subject to change due to Gift of Hope’s quality assurance process.
## Organ Donors
Donors from whom one or more organs were recovered for the purpose of transplantation. This includes both donation after brain death, or DBD, donors and donation after circulatory death, or DCD, donors.

## Donation Authorization Rate
The rate at which authorization for donation is obtained, expressed as a percentage.

## Donation Conversion Rate
The rate at which potential donors are converted to actual donors, expressed as a percentage.

## Timely Notification Rate
The rate at which hospitals contact Gift of Hope after a death or within one hour after an individual meets the criteria for imminent death and before the withdrawal of life-sustaining therapies, expressed as a percentage.
STATE OF DONATION

The number of people waiting for heart, liver, kidney, lung, pancreas or small bowel transplants as of January 31, 2015.

Illinois Organ & Tissue Donor Registry

5,713,839
As of January 31, 2015

57%
Of adults (18 or older) in Illinois are registered as organ and tissue donors.

300
In 2014, more than 300 people registered for transplants in Illinois died while waiting.

18
An average of 18 people die each day while waiting for a transplant.

Make a Difference!
REGISTER TO BE AN ORGAN AND TISSUE DONOR
GiftofHope.org

Every 10 minutes, a new person is added to the national transplant waiting list.

One donor can save or enhance the lives of more than 25 people.

Organ Donors 2014* 336
Organ Donors 2013* 323
% Change +4.02%

Organs Transplanted 2014* 1,024
Organs Transplanted 2013* 919
% Change +11.43%

Organs Per Donor 2014* 3.05
Organs Per Donor 2013* 2.85
% Change +7.02%

Tissue Donors 2014* 1,912
Tissue Donors 2013* 1,488
% Change +28.50%

Bone Donors ** 2014* 1,328
Bone Donors ** 2013* 946
% Change +40.38%

Heart Valves Recovered ** 2014* 204
Heart Valves Recovered ** 2013* 204
% Change +0.00%

Skin Donors ** 2014* 1,329
Skin Donors ** 2013* 1,151
% Change +15.46%

*Through December 31, 2014
**Subset of Tissue Donors

* Based on data from the Organ Procurement and Transplantation Network
Mission Smile for Hope Brings Holiday Joy to Children

Gift of Hope and its Hispanic Affairs staff once again brought smiles and joy to children awaiting organ transplants in Chicago-area hospitals and to community organizations that serve underprivileged children as part of its annual Mission Smile for Hope campaign held during the recent holiday season. People and community businesses in Chicago’s Latino communities and Gift of Hope staff donated more than 1,000 toys that were delivered to Chicago Children’s Advocacy Center, University of Illinois Transplant Center, University of Illinois Children’s Hospital, Mt. Sinai Children’s Hospital and El Hogar del Niño, which provides childhood education and support services to people in Chicago’s Latino community.

Calendar of Events

March 21
Advocates for Hope Orientation
Rockford, Ill.

April 1
National Donate Life Month

May 5
A Mission of Honor and Hope: Funeral Directors Seminar
Springfield, Ill.

May 23
Advocates for Hope Orientation
Urbana-Champaign, Ill.

August 1 – 7
National Minority Donor Awareness Week

September 26
Advocates Summit: Tools for Telling the Donation Story
Springfield, Ill.

October 9
Lifesaving Partner Awards Event
Hyatt Lodge at McDonald’s Campus
Oak Brook, Ill.

For more information on these and other events, visit GiftofHope.org.