NASCAR DRIVER JOEY GASE HONORS LOCAL DONOR HEROES DURING RACE AT DAYTONA NATIONAL SPEEDWAY
When we look back on 2018, there is much to be proud of that Donate Life Florida (DLF) and member organizations, together with community partners such as the Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles, county tax collectors, the Agency for Health Care Administration (AHCA) and others, have accomplished to heighten understanding of the importance of organ, tissue and eye donation and transplantation in Florida. Highlights throughout the 2018 Annual Report provide just a glimpse of the programs, people and groups that work each and every day to honor the legacies of heroic organ, tissue and eye donors and celebrate the second chances that transplant recipients receive.

Nearly 11 million Floridians have registered on the Joshua Abbott Organ and Tissue Donor Registry, and our ability to save lives grows with each person who replies “yes” when asked, “Would you like to be an organ, tissue and eye donor?” Every “yes” provides more than hope for patients awaiting a transplant: registrations literally provide renewed life. 2018 was a record-breaking year statewide and nationally with more people receiving their second chance at life than ever before. In Florida, that translates to more than 1,300 lives saved through organ donation, and tens of thousands enhanced thanks to tissue and eye donation. Across the United States, more than 36,500 individuals received the Gift of Life thanks to 10,721 deceased donors, and hundreds of thousands of lives were enhanced by tissue and eye donation. Living donors helped an additional 6,900 patients come off of the national transplant waiting list. These numbers are truly a testament to donation education and the impact that one registered donor’s “yes” can have.

These are milestones to celebrate, yet we know there is still work to do. The national waiting list for an organ transplant exceeds 113,000 men, women and children – 5,400 of whom are our family, friends and neighbors here in Florida - who need us to keep pursuing our life-saving mission. DLF is committed to continuing its work on their behalf.

It is a privilege and honor to serve Florida’s donation and transplant community, and DLF is humbled to accept that charge.

Regards,
Betsy Edwards, Chairperson
Florida’s organ, tissue and eye donor registry is named for Joshua Abbott, the recipient of a lung transplant who passed away in 2006. Abbott’s story so moved the Florida legislature that, in 2009, Florida’s Agency for Health Care Administration chose Donate Life Florida to create a statewide donor registry to increase enrollment and educate Floridians about donation.

As of December 31, 2018, 10,523,193 individuals were enrolled in Florida’s Joshua Abbott Organ and Tissue Donor Registry. This represents a 111.71 percent increase since July 2009 when the new registry was launched, and an 8.7 percent increase in 2018, compared to the 9,885,940 registrants at the end of 2017.

637,253
PEOPLE ADDED TO FLORIDA’S REGISTRY IN 2018

3
RANKED 3RD IN ORGAN AND TISSUE DONOR REGISTRY ENROLLMENT IN THE UNITED STATES

49,292
PEOPLE ADDED TO THE NATIONAL DONATE LIFE REGISTRY THROUGH AN APPLE IPHONE HEALTH APPLICATION OR AT REGISTERME.ORG

MORE THAN HALF OF FLORIDA COUNTIES HAVE DONOR DESIGNATION RATES OF 55% OR HIGHER

REGISTRATIONS BY SOURCE

- 89.6% Driver License Transactions
- 10.4% Online and Mobile Applications

REGISTRATIONS BY ETHNICITY*

- 61.5% White
- 24.8% Hispanic
- 8.4% Black
- 2.5% Asian
- 2.8% American-Indian, Pacific-Islander or Other

REGISTRATIONS BY GENDER

- 54.5% Female
- 45.5% Male

REGISTRATIONS BY AGE

- 11.6% Age 17 and younger
- 33.3% Age 18-35
- 21.6% Age 36-50
- 20.4% Age 51-65
- 13.1% Age 65+

*Race field is optional.
The Joshua Abbott Organ and Tissue Donor Registry helps save lives. In 2018, more than 36,500 lives were saved through organ transplants in the United States of America. 2,305 of those lives were saved by organs recovered in Florida.*

Each county in Florida has a federally designated organ procurement organization (OPO) to support families through the donation process and honor donor designations. The following data indicates lives saved through organs recovered and transplanted by Florida OPOs in 2018. Saving lives is made possible through our partnership with Florida’s OPOs in both community education and in stewarding the Gift of Life.

*Organ Procurement and Transplantation Network Data

Together, we’re sharing the life-saving mission of organ, eye and tissue donation in the community and making life possible for people like Gracyn DenBesten.

Gracyn was a perfectly healthy 9-year-old when she became suddenly ill. Her diagnosis was viral myocarditis. The common prognosis is one-third of patients will die, one-third live with complications, and one-third will need a heart transplant. Gracyn needed a transplant. She was kept alive for nearly five months by an artificial device known as the Berlin Heart when she received her lifesaving transplant. She and her family are eternally grateful for the miracle of organ donation, and her Gift of Life.

Today, Gracyn is a sophomore in college, thriving and living life to the fullest. Over the years she has shared her story through speaking, song, video, and writing, and has encouraged thousands of patients with her message of hope and strength. Because of her transplant, she can counsel hospitalized children, speak to graduating medical students, and raise vital support for sick kids through the University of Florida Dance Marathon. Gracyn feels beyond blessed and considers each day a gift.
One registered donor can heal the lives of more than 75 people and can restore the sight of two through tissue and eye donation. Thousands have received precious gifts that eased pain, enabled healing, and restored vision. The data below recognizes Florida’s 2018 tissue and eye donors who provided hope and healing to thousands through their gifts.

Tissue and eye donors touch the lives of thousands of individuals each year. This generous gift of healing and hope gives a new outlook on life for people like Mayra.

Mayra is a wife and mother who lives a full life keeping up with her family. She loves the outdoors, sports, and baking with her young sons. At the age of 25, she certainly didn’t expect a health scare to impair her vision and change her life.

Mayra suffered a mini stroke in her sleep and awoke to partial facial paralysis. Diagnosed with Bell’s Palsy, Mayra’s condition triggered Kerataconus disease, causing the vision in her left eye to diminish rapidly. Kerataconus is a degenerative and often hereditary eye disease that affects the curvature of the cornea—stretching it outward like the ends of a football. This disease causes swelling, pain and persistent blurred vision. Mayra could only see white with a few blurry smudges out of her left eye. She was in constant pain and had to stop doing many of the activities she loved.

Mayra underwent cornea transplant surgery; made possible by the generous eye donation of an anonymous donor at the end of their life. Through this Gift of Sight, Mayra is now able to return to her active life and is truly grateful to her donor and their family.

Every year, thousands of people are affected by a treatable form of blindness, and through the gracious decision to donate, these individuals gain the priceless and life-changing Gift of Sight. Choosing to become a donor is choosing to be part of the solution to eliminate corneal blindness.
FACE THE FACTS
EDUCATING OUR COMMUNITIES ON THE LIFE-SAVING MISSION OF ORGAN, EYE AND TISSUE DONATION

OurLegacy staff and volunteers educate thousands of families at the Tom Joyner Family Reunion in Orlando, Florida.

938 EDUCATIONAL ACTIVITIES STATEWIDE

MORE THAN 118,000 FLORIDANS REACHED THROUGH EDUCATION AND OUTREACH EVENTS

POPULATIONS REACHED BY EDUCATION

- 14.4% Driver License Office Employees
- 3.3% Higher Education
- 30.5% Secondary/Elementary Education
- 8.7% Workplace Partners
- 8.4% Multicultural
- 34.7% General Community

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Florida’s driver license underwent a redesign in 2018! The previous “organ donor” designation for registered organ and tissue donors has been replaced with a red heart symbol, now located on the lower right-hand side of the license. In conjunction with the new design, Donate Life Florida (DLF) launched a new statewide driver license office campaign encouraging licensed drivers to “Show Us Your Heart.” The year-round campaign emphasizes how customers can show their generosity of heart by registering as an organ, eye, and tissue donor during a driver license transaction.

This campaign was in addition to DLF’s signature Donate Life Month campaign held annually in April. This themed campaign encourages driver license offices across Florida to increase donor registration rates among customers while helping increase funds for DLF through a friendly competition for “Highest Voluntary Contributions Raised.”

**NEARLY 90% OF FLORIDA’S REGISTRATIONS COME THROUGH DRIVER LICENSE OFFICES**

**$48,288 RAISED BY DRIVER LICENSE OFFICES ACROSS FLORIDA THROUGH THE 2018 DONATE LIFE MONTH, “MISSION: POSSIBLE” CAMPAIGN**

**SAVE LIVES, SAY “YES”!**

2018 STATEWIDE ORGAN DONOR REGISTRATION RATES

**Donor Designation Rate (DDR): The percentage of customers who say “yes” when asked, “Do you want to be an organ donor?” during a driver license transaction.**
Together, honoring local donor heroes, Justyn Meyer and Geoff Wasden

NASCAR driver, Joey Gase, is an advocate of the life-saving mission of organ, eye and tissue donation. At the young age of 18, Joey lost his mother and made the courageous decision to give the Gift of Life through the donation of her organs and tissues. His mother’s generous legacy helped 66 individuals receive new life, hope and mobility.

Today, Joey continues to honor his mother and other organ and tissue donor heroes through his work. On July 6, 2018, Donate Life Florida partnered with Joey to spotlight two donor heroes and promote the importance of organ, tissue and eye donation at Daytona International Speedway for the NASCAR Xfinity Series—Coca-Cola Firecracker 250.

Donor heroes, Justyn Meyer and Geoff Wasden, were honored and recognized for their life-giving gifts with photos displayed on the hood of Joey’s race car. Both of their families were in attendance to raise awareness and honor their legacies of life. This meaningful and unique race car display has caught the eyes of fans in the community and beyond—serving as an important reminder of the difference one person can make as a registered organ, eye and tissue donor.

JUSTYN MEYER

When Justyn Meyer got his driver license, he registered as an organ donor. He was an avid computer gamer who graduated from Lecanto High School, then took classes at the College of Central Florida and worked at Publix. When Justyn was just 21 years old, he was killed in a tragic car accident in Ocala, Florida.

As a registered donor, Justyn donated five organs to recipients ranging from 26 to 61 years old, and enhanced many more lives through tissue and cornea donation.

“After Justyn passed away, I registered as a donor,” Donna Peavy Askew, Justyn’s mother, said. “I had been one of the people who didn’t want to, but after he passed, I saw how much good it can do. I’ve had multiple family members register since Justyn’s death. They’re amazed with how many people donation can help and save.”

GEOFF WASDEN

Geoff grew up in Orlando, Florida, and was a graduate of Winter Park High School. He was a happy, outgoing, funny kid who loved animals and cooking. He was full of passion, competitiveness and sportsmanship. This led him to join team sports like baseball, football and lacrosse. He brought joy and laughter to his peers—as a stagehand with the International Alliance of Theatrical Stage Employees and as a cook for Kentucky Fried Chicken.

Geoff died in February 2016 at the age of 19. He had registered as an organ and tissue donor when he received his driver license. As an eye and tissue donor, Geoff helped restore the sight of a 45-year-old woman and a 70-year-old man—and provided life-saving care and healing for hundreds more through the donation of heart valves, bone and connective tissue.
Girl Scout Troop 552 earned Donate Life patches by learning about donation and promoting donation in their communities.

Runners line up for the 10th Annual GR8 to DON8 8k Run for Organ Donation in Central Florida.

Life Alliance, the South Florida based OPO, hosted its first Game of Life kickball sporting event on April 7, 2018 at Legacy Park in Doral, Florida.

Donors honored their loved ones at the Pensacola Blue Wahoos baseball game.

DLF Supporters show off their Donate Life spirit at various events in 2018.
The Escambia County Tax Collector’s Office celebrated National Donate Life Month 2018 with the unveiling of a community landmark, newly dedicated to the organ, tissue and eye donation cause.

Staff of the Lee County Tax Collector’s Office at a Tree of Life unveiling, dedicated to organ, tissue and cornea donor hero, Alexis Bonadies.

More than 700 attendees participated in the 6th Annual Run 4-Life in Hollywood, Florida.

South Florida Donor Programs celebrated National Blue and Green Day at the Miami-Dade Fire Rescue Headquarters located in Doral, Florida.
DONATE LIFE ROSE PARADE FLOAT
HONORING LOCAL DONOR HEROES AT THE 2019 TOURNAMENT OF ROSES, ROSE PARADE

Celebrating its 16th year, The Donate Life Rose Parade® float continued its mission to save and heal lives by sharing the Gift of Life and delivering the message of organ, eye and tissue donation to the world.

The 2019 Donate Life Rose Parade® float, Rhythm of the Heart, highlighted the musical diversity and rhythms of Africa. Djembe drums from Senegal, along with a Kuba drum from the Congo, carefully integrated 44 floral portraits in their beautiful design, honoring the brave lives of deceased donors. Three Florida donor heroes were represented on the float, Michael Davis, Bryan Herrington and Anand Persaud.

continued on page 22

Recording artist, Alex Boyé, leads the Donate Life Rose Parade® float, "Rhythm of the Heart," down Colorado Boulevard in Pasadena, California.

Donor families put the finishing touches on their loved one’s Floragraphs before they are sent to Pasadena, California to be placed on the float.
Michael Davis was a 19-year-old college sophomore, who aspired to attend law school after graduation. Michael was an adventurous, fun-loving, kind-hearted free spirit, who always lived life to the fullest. On Christmas Eve 2015, Michael suffered a traumatic brain injury when the car he was riding in was rear-ended by a careless driver. He did not survive. Michael registered as an organ donor at age 16 while getting his driver license. His donated heart, lungs, kidneys, pancreas and liver saved five lives. His corneas restored the gift of sight to two, and his tissue donations enhanced 273 lives nationwide. Michael’s decision to be an organ donor was a tribute to his father, who lost his life to liver cancer when Michael was 9-years-old.

Overlooking the floragraphs was a dramatic double Senufo mask giving thanks and remembering those who have gone before. Twenty-six living donors or transplant recipients rode or walked beside the float. Rising over the rear of the float were spectacular chiwara headdresses from Mali; these stylized antelope headdresses are featured in dances that teach youth the value of community. In the same way the donation and transplantation community come together to share the importance of donation.

The Donate Life Float was given the Judges Award for outstanding float design and dramatic impact. As the world’s most visible campaign to inspire organ, eye and tissue donation, the Donate Life Rose Parade® float continued to inspire viewers to save and heal more than one million people in need of organ, eye and tissue transplants each year.

Boy Scouts of America lead the Donate Life Rose Parade® float, Rhythm of the Heart, with Judges Award banner in recognition of its outstanding float design and dramatic impact.

Bryan Herrington, husband, father of five, youngest sibling of four, was always one to help and serve where needed. After graduating from Florida State University, he headed to Orlando to find work in graphic arts and provide for his children. There he met his wife, Terri, and eventually they moved back to Pensacola, Florida to help his parents with the family roofing business. On July 13, 2004, Bryan lost his footing and fell off a roof while at work. He never recovered. Bryan was a registered organ and tissue donor and he gave the Gift of Life to Mary Jo with functioning lungs. Jeff with a left kidney and pancreas, Howard with a liver, and his heart and right kidney to another recipient. His tissues have helped more than 10 burn victims.

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Tribhawan “Anand” Persaud was a friend to all. His cheerful heart and winsome smile were a gift to all who knew him. Growing up in Guyana, Anand explored the outdoors and sought adventure wherever he would go. He was a leader in his village. Anand invested in the youth of his village by tutoring students. In 2002, the Persaud family moved to America to pursue their dreams and seek a life of opportunity for their only son. Anand loved to travel and embraced his new life in America. He worked hard and made plans to earn his college degree. Tragically, Anand passed away in an accident at the age of 21. Knowing Anand’s giving spirit, his parents said “yes” to organ donation which resulted in Anand saving six lives.
## IN THE NEWS

**MAKING THE MOST OF LIFE-SAVING MEDIA MESSAGES**

| PRINT: | 19 ARTICLES AND PLACEMENTS IN NEWSPAPERS AND MAGAZINES |
| WEB: | 38 WEBSITE ARTICLES AND PLACEMENTS |
| TELEVISION: | 71 TELEVISED BROADCAST STORIES AND INTERVIEWS |
| RADIO: | 3 RADIO BROADCAST STORIES AND INTERVIEWS |
| FACEBOOK FANS: | 4,592 |
| TWITTER FOLLOWERS: | 2,257 |

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**OVERTIME**

"Receiving my kidney transplant allowed me to lead a fulfilling life, be a father to my son, and enjoy years as a high school football referee. Today, I can do all that seemed impossible before receiving my Gift of Life."

- Walter, Kidney Recipient

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**GIVE SOMEONE THE GIFT OF OVER TIME**

WE ARE ALL ONE TEAM. JOIN WALTER AND HELP SAVE LIVES AS A REGISTERED ORGAN, EYE AND TISSUE DONOR AT DonateLifeFlorida.org
Your generosity makes life happen

Thank you for your generous support. Your gifts help Donate Life Florida educate the public about the life-saving benefits of organ, eye and tissue donation. Donate Life Florida is a non-profit 501(C)3 organization, dedicated to motivating Floridians to designate themselves as organ, eye and tissue donors. Your monetary donations are tax deductible to the maximum extent allowed by law. 18.9% of our 2018 support came from people like you. The community can help support Donate Life Florida educational programs through: tributes and memorials, gifts in lieu of flowers, and matching gift programs. To make a gift today, visit us online at DonateLifeFlorida.org

$160,258 DOLLARS RAISED IN 2018

- 34.3% Donor Program Membership
- 18.9% Online and Memorial Donations
- 46.8% Tax Collector/DMV

CHAIRPERSON:
Betsy Edwards, LifeLink® of Florida

VICE CHAIRPERSON:
Ashley Moore, LifeLink of Florida

TREASURER:
James Rosa, Lions Eye Institute for Transplant and Research

SECRETARY:
Coral Denton, LifeQuest Organ Recovery Services

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR:
Christopher Carroll, Donate Life Florida

DIRECTORS:
Janna Aboodi, OurLegacy
Ruth Duncan Bell, MPA, LifeLink of Florida
Elizabeth Fout Caraza, Florida Lions Eye Bank
Patricia Darrigan, Legacy Donor Services Foundation
Kathleen Giery, APR, CPRC, LifeQuest Organ Recovery Services
Gary Greene, OurLegacy Tissue Bank
Cynthia Hacker, Life Alliance Organ Recovery Agency
Jennifer Krouse, LifeLink Tissue Bank
DiAnn McCormack, CorneaGen
Louanne White, LifeNet Health of Florida
Jason Woody, Lions Eye Institute for Transplant and Research
The 2020 Rose Parade theme, *The Power of Hope*, honors the opportunity to look beyond challenges of the moment and light a path to a brighter future.

The 2020 Donate Life Rose Parade® float, *Light in the Darkness*, shares the "Power of Hope" by highlighting Southeast Asia’s Diwali, or the Festival of Lights, a celebration of light shining in darkness. Organ, eye, and tissue donation is often the first spark of light families see when in their darkest of moments, the opportunity to honor their loved ones’ legacy provides hope and light to both grieving donor families and grateful recipients.

*Tune in to America’s New Year Celebration, the 131st Rose Parade, on Wednesday, January 1, 2020, followed by the 106th Rose Bowl Game.*