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April is National Donate Life Month: Are you a registered organ donor?

*Midwest Transplant Network celebrates lives saved
in 2018, continues momentum with Green Ribbon Campaign*

WESTWOOD, Kan. (March 28, 2019) — In honor of National Donate Life Month (April), Midwest Transplant Network is kicking off the second year of its [Green Ribbon Campaign](#) to increase the number of registered organ, eye and tissue donors in Kansas and Missouri. The efforts are part of a comprehensive, multiyear campaign by Midwest Transplant Network, the organ procurement organization that serves Kansas and western Missouri.

Its campaign's iconic symbol – the green ribbon – represents the generous act of giving hope and sharing life by saying yes to organ donation. Through multimedia awareness, community outreach and partner support, the Green Ribbon Campaign aims to inspire one simple but all-important action: Register as an organ donor.

Jan Finn, president and CEO of Midwest Transplant Network, says the Green Ribbon Campaign motivates people by instilling a sense of pride and celebration around the decision to donate life. The number of registered organ donors is climbing, and as a result, more organ transplants are taking place. In fact, 2018 was record-breaking.

"Due to the generosity of donors and their families, we facilitated 818 organ transplants to save the lives of grateful recipients last year," said Finn, adding that the donor registries for Midwest Transplant Network's service area received 171,000 new and renewed registrations for organ and tissue donors in 2018. "It is incredibly heartwarming to see so many people making the personal choice to give hope and share life with others in need."

However, the need for organ donation continues to outpace the number of registered organ donors. In Missouri and Kansas, nearly 2,500 people are waiting for organ transplants that could save their lives. Currently, 76.7 percent of adults in Kansas and 78.5 percent in Missouri are registered as organ donors. While those figures far exceed the national rate of 58 percent, the need remains critical. Finn says building on the successes of 2018 is a key goal for 2019 and beyond.

Helping to lead those efforts are the [Green Ribbon Champions](#), a diverse group of local leaders and well-known personalities who are passionate about organ donation. [Jeff Jones](#), President and CEO of H&R Block, became the first champion in June 2018. The list has grown to include [Bryan Busby](#), Chief Meteorologist at KMBC 9 News; [Sophia Dominguez-Heithoff](#), Miss Teen USA 2017; and [Alonzo Jamison](#), former University of Kansas basketball player.

Two new Green Ribbon Champions will join the lineup April 1 and May 1. While their identities aren't revealed until official launch, Finn did hint they each bring a lot of "team spirit" to the cause, with one champion from Columbia, Mo., and the other from Kansas City, Kan.

For those not already registered as organ, eye and tissue donors, the registration process is quick and easy. Individuals can sign up online at ShareLifeMidwest.com or at the DMV when obtaining or renewing a driver's license or ID card. Everyone can be a registered organ donor, regardless of age or medical history. The public is also encouraged to take part in these special events in April and May:

- **National Donate Life Blue & Green Day** on Friday, April 12 – [wear blue and green](#) to support the importance of organ donation. Take time to encourage family and friends to join the Organ and Tissue Donor Registry.
- **Donate Life Legacy Walk** on Saturday, May 11, at Berkley Riverfront Park in Kansas City – participate in a community 5K event to honor donor heroes and celebrate life. Learn more at mwtn.org/legacywalk.

More information about how to get involved in supporting organ donation is available online at mwtn.org/get-involved.

About Midwest Transplant Network

Midwest Transplant Network (MTN) has been connecting lives through organ donation since 1973. As the federally designated not-for-profit organ procurement organization (OPO) for Kansas and the western two-thirds of Missouri, MTN services include organ procurement and surgical tissue and eye recovery, laboratory testing and 24-hour rapid response for referrals from hospital partners. Midwest Transplant Network ranks in the top quartile nationally among OPOs, which reflects the organization's quality, professionalism and excellence in partnerships throughout the region. For more information, visit mwtn.org.

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