



STATE DONATION REGISTRY INCREASED DRASTICALLY:

NORTHWEST RALLIES TO ENCOURAGE ORGAN, EYE, AND TISSUE DONORS TO REGISTER THEIR WISHES

GOVERNOR GREGOIRE ENCOURAGES STATE EMPLOYEES TO “MAKE A DIFFERENCE”; AREA HOSPITALS HOLD SPECIAL EVENTS

Seattle, WA—(May 19, 2008) –From hanging posters to raising DONATE LIFE flags to giving all employees 5 minutes to register their wishes online, and even hosting students to shadow transplant surgeons, state employees and hospital staff across the Northwest have come together to raise awareness of organ, eye, and tissue donation. The results have been astounding: The Living Legacy Foundation has seen the largest spike in a single week of online registered donors in the history of the donor registry. An averaged week is about 60 registered donors. This last week has resulted in over 600 registered donors, 10 times as many as an average week.

Governor Chris Gregoire joined Virginia Mason Medical Center, Children’s Hospital and Regional Medical Center, and Spokane’s Sacred Heart Medical Center in the Living Legacy Foundation’s “Give 5, Save Lives” program, in which employers give all employees 5 minutes out of their work day to go online and register their wishes regarding donation.

“As state employees, we each have an opportunity make a significant impact through the work we do everyday on behalf of the great State of Washington. We also have an opportunity to contribute through small, individual acts that make a big difference. It is for this reason that I write to you today about organ, eye, and tissue donation,” read Governor Gregoire’s email to all state of Washington employees.

Virginia Mason Medical Center, Swedish Hospital Medical Center, and Sacred Heart Medical Center also participated in a special “work shadow” program. Local area students were chosen through an essay contest to shadow transplant surgeons throughout one day, to explore their interest in pursuing a career as a transplant surgeon themselves. Nine students total were able to participate in this program.

Additionally, University of Washington Medical Center, Virginia Mason Medical Center, Swedish Hospital Medical Center, Sacred Heart Medical Center, and

Children's Hospital and Regional Medical Center all honored April's "National Donate Life Month" initiative by displaying posters or table tents, raising a DONATE LIFE flag above their facility, and/or placing articles in their internal newsletters.

"The kind of support we have recently received from the Governor's Office as well as area hospitals makes a great, positive impact on organ, eye, and tissue donation," said Megan Erwin, Executive Director of the Living Legacy Foundation. "The need is reaching a critical level and there is no greater time than now to encourage donation."

There are nearly 100,000 people on the national wait list, waiting for life saving transplants, with 1,500 of those here in the Northwest. The Living Legacy Foundation is a nonprofit organization providing education and outreach programs in support of organ, eye, and tissue donation, to ensure that everyone is given the opportunity to make their own informed and personal decision to donate life.

www.donatelifetoday.com.

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