

Donate Life Champion Award Recipient

Award Recipient	State	Connection to Cause
Arizona Diamondbacks	Arizona	Major League Baseball team which hosts the annual Donate Life Day, and are big supporters of Donate Life Arizona.
John Brockington	California	Retired NFL player and kidney transplant recipient. He and his wife Diane (his donor) have created the John Brockington Foundation to promote donation in the San Diego area and within the sports community.
Ben Davidson (posthumously)	California	Defensive lineman for the Oakland Raiders (NFL), supporter of the John Brockington Foundation.
Justin Feria	California	Heart transplant recipient, runs half-marathons, works for the San Deigo Padres, volunteers with Donate Life San Diego.
Mark Gardner	California	Coach with San Francisco Giants (Major League Baseball), his late wife received a transplant, inspired 15 year relationship between Giants and local organ recovery organization.
Chris Klug	Colorado	Liver transplant recipient who received a bronze medal in snowboarding at the SLC Olympics 18 months later. Created the Chris Klug Foundation and Donor Dudes to promote donation.
Stephanie Del Preore	Connecticut	Late father received liver and kidney transplants giving him 8 years of additional life. She's the head coach of women's basketball at University of Bridgeport Knights, helped create a Donate Life Day, participates in fundraising events.
University of Connecticut Women's Basketball Team	Connecticut	UConn Huskies Women's Basketball team hosts the Donate Life UConn Game each year, where doctors scrimmage transplant recipients and donor families at halftime, bringing the Donate Life message to center court.
Jill Morton	Florida	Her late mother received 2 kidney transplants, Jill is also a kidney transplant recipient. Very active since childhood in top level amateur tennis leagues, Transplant Games medalist competing in tennis, cycling, track, golf.
Tom Toy	Florida	Leader of Team "Mission Time 4:13", coordinates physical fitness related charity fundraisers, has multiple friends affected by transplant.
Abbate Family	Georgia & North Carolina	Donor Family, son played for Wake Forest football team. Their story inspired the movie "The 5th Quarter" and they created the 5th Quarter Foundation to promote donation.
Terry Hoebelheinrich	Idaho	Several friends have received transplants or are on the waiting list. Terry serves as a race coordinator for the Sawtooth Relay, a 62 mile running event.
Decatur Derby Dames	Illinois	Roller Derby team which has held a donor designation drive and conducted public awareness events.
Deterding Family	Illinois	Donor family of Teddy, Robyn is Director of Campus Recreation at the University of Illinois and has partnered with Gift of Hope on the Guinness World Record for most donor designations.

Award Recipient	State	Connection to Cause
Anthony Diaz	Illinois	Pediatric bilateral cornea recipient, involved with soccer, baseball, swimming. He's a youth advocate for donor designation and is featured in a PSA for the Illinois Eye-Bank.
Gina Ferguson	Illinois	Living kidney donor and triathlete, works as a heart transplant coordinator.
Connie, Brittney & Jarrett Payton	Illinois	Walter Payton played for the Chicago Bears NFL team; died of liver disease while promoting the need for more organ donors. The Walter and Connie Payton Foundation continues to support organ donation.
Family of Paco Rodriguez	Illinois	Paco died from boxing injuries and became a donor. His family shared his story on ESPN's E: 60 to promote donation, particularly among the Hispanic/Latino community.
Charles Tillman	Illinois	NFL player with the Chicago Bears whose daughter received a heart transplant. He has shared his family's story in the media to promote donation.
Nate Weimer	Illinois	Nate received a double lung transplant at age 9, and a kidney transplant 7 years later. Is active in basketball and bowling, winning medals at the Transplant Games. Formed a bowling team for NKF event called Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles, and inspired 53 people to join the donor registry.
Jesse White	Illinois	Sister received a kidney transplant, Jesse started the Illinois Donor Registry in his capacity as Secretary of State. Started an internationally known gymnastics/tumbling team.
Washburn University	Kansas	Washburn University football team player Jermon Watson became an organ donor in 2011. The team did a lot to promote donation in his memory, and the school has hosted the annual Run for Life donor awareness event for 17 years.
Joe B. Hall	Kentucky	Former University of Kentucky men's basketball coach whose friend needed a heart transplant. He has recorded PSAs, and regularly advocates for donation on his call-in radio show.
Skip Bertman	Louisiana	Retired LSU Tigers athletic director and legendary baseball coach whose friend's daughter received a liver transplant. Offered his name and presence in PSAs to promote donation.
Dick Cass	Maryland	Dick has served as President of the Baltimore Ravens since 2004. In 2006, at the age of 60, Cass became a living donor when he donated a kidney to a college friend. He has since used his position with the Ravens and his involvement on community boards to promote living donation.
Ma'ake Kemoeatu	Maryland	Ma'ake, former Baltimore Ravens defensive lineman donated a kidney to his brother, Chris, formerly with the Pittsburgh Steelers. Since his living kidney donation, Ma'ake and Chris, have appeared on various television programs promoting the importance of organ, eye and tissue donation and sharing their living donation story.
Andy Najar	Maryland	DC United soccer player who worked with Living Legacy to promote donation within the Latino community in posters, commercials, etc.
Torrey Smith	Maryland	Baltimore Ravens wide receiver who partnered on a unique PSA.

Award Recipient	State	Connection to Cause
Bob & Vicki Emery	Massachusetts	Driver/Spotter for NASCAR. Vicki works for the Maine Transplant Program, and hosted a Donate Life Day at the Speedway.
Jay Heaps	Massachusetts	MLS Soccer, head coach of the New England Revolution, whose late mother received a lung transplant, and who hosts a Donate Life event.
Detroit Tigers	Michigan	Major league baseball team, fostered a relationship with local Donate Life affiliates for almost 15 years, annually hosts a "Donate Life" game at the stadium, sends mascot to LIFE Walk/Run. PR staff member became donor in 2011.
Suzy Merchant	Michigan	Women's basketball coach with the Michigan State University Spartans, who has created a PSA and hosted donor drives at home games.
University of Michigan Athletic Department	Michigan	Partners in the "Wolverines For Life" campus group promoting organ, tissue, eye, blood and marrow donation. Included donor awareness activities at football press conferences, lent support in PSAs, and hosts the area's largest blood-marrow-organ donor drive at Michigan Stadium annually.
Derrick Nix	Mississippi	Ole Miss Football running back coach and kidney transplant recipient.
Robin Roberts	Mississippi	Good Morning America anchor, former basketball/tennis sportscaster, bone marrow transplant recipient in Sept 2012. Uses her celebrity status to promote organ donation alongside marrow donation. Interviewed Facebook founder when FB added organ donor designation to Timeline.
David Eckstein	Missouri	Former player for the MLB's St. Louis Cardinals, whose father and 3 siblings received kidney transplants. Has supported many donor registry drives, visited kids waiting for transplants in the hospital, and plans to be a living kidney donor. Wrote a children's book about organ and tissue donation.
Larry Hughes	Missouri	Former NBA player whose younger brother received heart transplant at age 11 and became a donor at age 20. Larry hosts multiple community events and campaigns to promote donation.
Jordan Stevens	Nebraska	Race director of annual run/walk to promote donation, his daughter received a heart transplant. Coordinates many media promotions of donation and the run/walk.
Simon Keith	Nevada	Retired UNLV & Cleveland Crunch soccer player, and a heart transplant recipient. Wrote a book about his experience, created a foundation to promote donation and serves on the governing board at Nevada Donor Network.
New Hampshire Fishercats	New Hampshire	Minor league baseball team which hosted a donor awareness event.
Nancy Dodge	New Mexico	Two-time kidney transplant recipient, Donate Life ambassador. Athlete in the high jump, shot put and 100 meter race at the Transplant Games. Active volunteer for more than 20 years.
Buffalo Sabres	New York	NHL team, hosted blood drive with organ/tissue donor registry registrations and promotion.

Award Recipient	State	Connection to Cause
Carolyn Glaspy	North Carolina	Mother of donor Chris Henry, who played in the NFL with the Cincinnati Bengals. Strong advocate of donation, speaking nationally and sharing her son's story and meeting his recipients in a Thanksgiving Day special on CBS.
Bobby & Brenda Height	North Carolina	Bobby received heart transplant, formerly of the NY Yankees MLB team. Both volunteer with DLNC and LifeShare of the Carolinas. Featured in HRSA campaign for people 50 and over.
Michael Jordan	North Carolina	NBA star who participated in an Ad Council campaign to promote donation in the late 90's, including posters and PSAs.
Charlotte & Emmitt Ray	North Carolina	Their son, Jason Ray was the UNC Tarheels men's basketball mascot when he became a donor. His parents started the Jason Ray Foundation, and created a video shown to Drivers' Ed classes.
Tom Walter	North Carolina	Head coach of Wake Forest men's baseball team. Was a living kidney donor to a freshman team member who hadn't yet played a game, and has been a big advocate ever since. Their story was featured on ESPN's E:60.
Jay Williams	North Carolina	Former Duke and Chicago Bulls basketball player turned TV announcer (CBS and ESPN). His mom received a kidney transplant. Shared his story as part of Facebook/ABC News Timeline campaign.
Bernardo Anor	Ohio	Columbus Crew soccer player who received a tissue transplant to repair his torn ACL. Now serves as an ambassador for donation, in partnership with his team, particularly within Hispanic/Latino communities.
Ickey Woods	Ohio	Retired Cincinnati Bengals NFL player whose son was an organ donor. Co-founder and spokesperson for the Jovante Woods Foundation, very active supporter of donation.
Jeff Mitchem	Oregon	Avid bicycle racer for team PEDAL, whose friend and competitor became a tissue donor. Jeff now educates and advocates for donation.
Philly Roller Girls	Pennsylvania	One of the Roller Derby team's members worked at Gift of Life Donor Program. The team did fundraising for the Gift of Life Family House and registered new donors at their events.
Pawtucket Red Sox	Rhode Island	Minor league baseball team which hosts a donor awareness event each spring.
Landon Powell	South Carolina	Player for the MLB's Houston Astros and a two-time tissue recipient who will someday need a liver transplant due to an autoimmune disease. Created and hosts annual "Donors on the Diamond" event to promote donation.
Memphis Redbirds	Tennessee	Minor league baseball team which hosts donor registry drives. Team members wore organ themed jerseys at the 2011 donor awareness game.
Robert Boudwin	Texas	Team mascot for the Houston Rockets NBA team whose father received a double lung transplant in 2012. Riley created a PSA to promote donation and has been fundraising for the cause.

Award Recipient	State	Connection to Cause
Riley Nelson	Utah/Idaho	Heart transplant recipient, transplant games, bowling, bball, relay, vball, on commercial to promote donation.
Dylan Peters	Vermont	Nationally ranked snowboarder who became an organ donor. Had been active with the Chris Klug Foundation. Was honored in the Tournament of Roses Donate Life Parade Float in 2012, and his family continues to promote donation.
Sports Backers	Virginia	Nonprofit organization focused on making Richmond a very physically active community. They have promoted donation for 9 years, including coordinating the Richmond Marathon and its promotion of donation. Supportive in fundraising and advocacy efforts. Assisted with the 2011 Virginia Transplant Games.
Quincy Wilson	West Virginia	Legendary West Virginia University football player who played with his friend Chris Henry. Walter Peyton was his godfather. He advocates for organ, tissue and eye donation. Quincy created the WV Legends football camp in Chris Henry's memory, where donation is promoted at charity basketball game against local high school team.
Erik Compton	DLA	PGA golfer and heart transplant recipient who is sharing his story in partnership with Donate Life America.
Boomer Esiason	DLA	Retired NFL quarterback and current color commentator whose son has cystic fibrosis. Formed the Boomer Esiason Foundation, which promotes organ donation.
Danell Leyva	DLA	Olympic gymnast whose friend was a donor in early 2012. Danell wore a green Donate Life bracelet throughout his Olympic competitions.