



**DRAMATIC REUNION BETWEEN DONOR FAMILY
AND ORGAN TRANSPLANT RECIPIENTS –
PART OF DONATE LIFE MONTH EVENT**

**For immediate release
April 17, 2009**

**Contact: Lisa Godwin (Donate Life Northwest)
503-819-0050
godwinwriter@gmail.com
-or-
Mary Jane Hunt (Donate Life Northwest)
huntma@ohsu.edu
503-494-2288**

WHAT: The family of Evan Burke – a 21-year-old Oregon man who died in 2005 and became an organ donor – will be reunited with three people who received Evan’s organs. The reunion is part of an event to celebrate Donate Life Month in April. The event also features a campaign reminding younger Oregon drivers to place a “D” on their driver’s license, a recognition for the many agencies involved in organ procurement and transplants, and unveiling of the 11th annual Threads of Life quilt to honor donors and recipients.

WHEN: **1:30 p.m., Sunday, April 19**

WHERE: **OHSU campus – Vey Auditorium at Doernbecher, 11th floor, 3181 SW Sam Jackson Pkwy., Portland, OR 97239**

DETAILS: Lucille and Jim Burke of Medford will talk about their son, Evan, who was struck by a car at age 21 and died. As a young driver, Evan had marked a “D” on his driver’s license and had shared his wishes about organ donation with his parents. The Burkes will talk about carrying out their son’s wishes – and about how they have come to know three special people who received Evan’s heart, liver and corneas. The three recipients, as well as the Burkes, are scheduled to participate in the event and will be available for interviews.

About 100 people are expected to attend the event, which also features representatives from DMV; Portland-area hospitals that have state-of-the-art transplant programs; organ procurement agencies that facilitate the recovery of organs, eyes and tissues; and donor families that designed the squares for this year's Threads of Life quilt.

DONOR FACT SHEET

- There currently are 2,200 people in the Pacific Northwest who are waiting for lifesaving organ transplants. There are thousands more who suffer from blindness, medical conditions or debilitating injuries that can be treated successfully with donated corneas or tissues.
- In Oregon, people can register their wishes to become an organ, eye and tissue donor in three equally important ways: (1) Put a "D" on your driver's license, permit or ID card, (2) register online at www.donatelifenw.org or (3) request a paper form by calling 1-800-452-1369.
- In 2007 Oregon established a state-wide donor registry, which is a secure, confidential database listing everyone who has indicated their decision to become a donor. The database is accessible only to official organ, eye and tissue procurement agencies.
- In 2008, there were nearly 80 million people in the U.S. who were enrolled in state donor registries. There are more than 2 million in Oregon and nearly 3 million in Washington who are registered.
- Donated organs, corneas and tissues save and enhance the lives of recipients many times over. On average three organs are transplanted per donor, and tissue from one donor can improve the lives of 50 people.
- DMV plays a vital role in the donor designation system – about 97 percent of all registered donors record their decision at DMV. As of Dec. 31, 2008, about 50 percent of Oregonians issued a driver's license/permit or state ID card had marked a "D" on their records.

###