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Your Story Matters! Help Us Share It.



Donate Life Northwest educates and encourages people to sign up on their state donor registry. Why? To offer hope to the parents of an 11-year-old boy given six months to live unless he receives a heart transplant. To give grieving families the knowledge their loved one left a selfless legacy. To join in celebration of lives saved and sight and mobility restored because a person's decision to donate was known and honored at their time of death. Because organ, eye and tissue donation is about one human being offering the gift of life to another. This is why we ask for you to share your [Story of Hope](#).

Our submission questions are meant to help you focus on the most compelling parts of your story. From the information you provide, Donate Life Northwest will build a cohesive written piece that tells your Story of Hope.

Your [Story of Hope](#) might then be used to educate students in our high school curriculum, be featured on outreach literature, or even highlighted by our national campaign. Simply put, your story will make a difference. **Can we count on your help? [CLICK HERE](#) to share your story!**

Team Northwest Brings Home The Gold

Team Northwest – Donate Life Northwest sponsored Transplant Games team served up some fierce competition against the 49 other teams who traveled to Houston this July. The team, comprised of 11 athletes from Oregon, Washington, and Montana won 35 medals (26 Gold, 4 Silver, 5 Bronze)! Athletes medaled in swimming, track and field, bicycling, 5K run, triathlon, table tennis, and darts. The highly sought after Team Cup went to Team Colorado. However, Team Northwest earned the highest point average out of the 50 groups, but didn't qualify for the Cup based on a technicality.

The competition was just one part of the experience. Nearly 4,000 people attended opening ceremonies. Looking at these people amassed together in one stadium, one couldn't help but think about each individual life extended because of a donor. At the Donor Tribute event, athletes and donor families had a chance to reflect on their gifts and give thanks. At Closing Ceremonies, a two-year old transplant recipient was recognized as the youngest participant, inspiring our very own living donor athlete, Blake Adams to comment, "by just being there, this child inspired a new goal of mine – to hang around long enough to one day go and be recognized as the oldest participant."

All participants, medal winners or not, prove that a healthy, vibrant life is possible after transplant. As for Team Northwest, we're just getting warmed up! Many on the team will participate in Hood to Coast next month as part of the Transplant Trotters. Several have expressed interest in joining the World Transplant Games in Argentina next summer. Then on to Cleveland in the summer of '16!

Do you want to join the team? Team Northwest manager [Stephen Rice](#) is recruiting living donors, transplant recipients, and donor families. The Team Cup will be OURS!



Donate Life Northwest on the Move



Last year, Donate Life Northwest participated in over 250 different events and presentations all across Oregon and SW Washington – we even went to towns like Helix and Siuslaw. This year, we are hoping to connect with even more folks across the Pacific Northwest! Starting in the fall, we travel to Ontario, Oregon and then see where the wind takes us.

Will the wind bring us near you?

Would you like to be a Donate Life Northwest Ambassador? We might just be in your town! [See what upcoming events and trainings are happening near you!](#)

eyeNews: Vision for Saving Sight

Lions VisionGift is the local, non-profit eye bank with a commitment to innovation and research that makes them a world leader in advancing sight-saving uses for generous donations of eyes and tissue.

“S” for Sight

New preparation techniques have contributed to increased use of corneal transplants where only the innermost layers of this clear “windshield” of the eye are replaced. Though a superior solution for many patients, this very thin layer can sometimes unnoticeably flip over during surgery, causing the graft to fail. Lions VisionGift has solved this problem by marking the cornea layer with a tiny “S” so surgeons can easily spot and correct an inversion.



Older Can Be Better, and Other Surprises

Transplant science is always progressing. Don't let age or terrible eye sight deter you from registering to be a donor! With this newer inner-layer type of transplant, corneas from 60, 70 or 80-year-old donors can be much easier for the surgeon to handle – while donations from younger donors can have advantages in other cases. Many are also surprised to learn that most vision-impairing conditions - glaucoma, macular degeneration, cataract surgery, severe near or far-sightedness, etc. - will generally not affect the clear cornea's suitability for transplant. In some cases, corneas from donors who lived their entire lives completely blind have given sight to others.

New Ocular Options

With recent advances, even corneas not suitable for typical transplant can be used to restore sight in new ways. Lions VisionGift has improved surgeon's options for using donated grafts in many types of sight-saving surgery. Through rigorous research, they have developed new ways of preparing, storing and using donated:

- * Cornea tissue, not clear enough for typical cornea transplant;
- * Sclera tissue, the white part of the eye;
- * Pericardium, the very strong tissue that forms a sack around the heart.

Just a few months after introduction, surgeons are already reporting great success using these surgery-ready, shelf-stable tissues to cover and protect valves that relieve glaucoma pressure, and for emergency injury repair.

Research Matters

Lions VisionGift's goal for every donation is transplant, whenever possible. At the same time, when transplant is not an option, donors and families who agree to research uses are also helping save sight. As with all of Lions VisionGift's work, groundbreaking research is only possible thanks to generous eye donors.

Photo of cornea recipient, Lynda Myers, courtesy Bitna Chung Photography.