



For Immediate Release
Jan. 14, 2015

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Arizona sets record for tissue donation, saves hundreds through organ donation in 2014

Arizona's 1,224 tissue donors, 933 cornea donors and 158 organ donors save and heal tens of thousands of lives

PHOENIX— Arizona achieved a milestone for tissue donation in 2014. The state saw its highest number of tissue donors ever, with 1,224 people giving the gift of life and healing. Over the next three years, these donations will help tens of thousands of people across the United States.

Arizonans also saved hundreds through organ donation. Last year, 158 organ donors saved 427 lives.

Nine hundred thirty-three cornea donors gave sight to more than 1,000 others.

While life-saving organ donations and sight-restoring cornea donations are familiar to many, the gift of tissue donation remains less understood.

Tissue donation includes tendons and ligaments, which restore mobility after injuries such as ACL tears; skin, which heals burn victims and aids in surgeries like breast reconstruction; heart valves, which often save infants and children with congenital heart defects; and bone, which prevents limb amputation, provides structural repair after trauma and restores damage from certain bone cancers.

The second-highest year for tissue donation in Arizona was 2011, when 1,173 people generously said yes to the gift of tissue.

More than 123,000 people in the U.S. are waiting for a life-saving organ transplant. Nearly 2,500 of those people are Arizonans. Each year, tissue donors heal hundreds of thousands across the country.

Arizonans can sign up as registered organ, cornea and tissue donors when they apply or renew their driver's license or ID at the Motor Vehicle Division (MVD). They can also become donors by signing up online at www.DonateLifeAZ.org or calling 1-800-94-DONOR.

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Donor Network of Arizona saves and heals the lives of Arizonans through our dedicated and passionate work as the state's only federally-designated, nonprofit organ procurement organization. Our job is to provide organs to save lives, tissues to heal lives and corneas to restore sight. We also provide public and professional education throughout Arizona to teach the community and healthcare professionals the importance and the need for organ, tissue and cornea donation.