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## **California organ donor's mother, Arizona recipient's family meet**

*Seven-month-old Lukas Clark's heart saved the life of now 4-year-old Jordan Drake*

**PHOENIX**— On Saturday, Jan. 30, 2016 at 10 a.m., a California donor family and Arizona recipient family will gather with Donor Network of Arizona (DNA) and Phoenix Children's Hospital (PCH) staff to honor the legacy of 7-month-old Lukas Clark and celebrate the renewed health of 4-year-old Jordan Drake. The event will take place at PCH, located at 1919 E. Thomas Road in Phoenix, at the hospital's cardiology unit.

After Lukas' sudden death in June 2013, his mother Heather Clark made the generous decision to donate Lukas' organs, saving three lives. "I knew if Lukas could prevent another family from experiencing the loss that I felt, that's what I needed to do," says Heather.

Hundreds of miles away, a little girl was fighting for her life.

At just 18 months old, Jordan had spent most of her life inside the walls of PCH due to a congenital heart defect. She underwent six heart surgeries and suffered seizures, a stroke and brain hemorrhaging because of her failing heart. Fearing her tiny body could not handle another setback, doctors told Jordan's family that a transplant could be their only hope for her survival.

On June 22, 2013, Jordan's family learned that there was a heart available for her. Her mother Esther Gonzales says it is a day she will never forget. "You never fully understand organ donation until you're looking at your loved one slipping away, and the only thing that can save them is a gift from another family. I spent that night before Jordan's transplant crying for her donor family, whoever they were. I knew they had just lost a child."

As time passed, Gonzales and Heather exchanged letters, interacted on social media and spoke on the phone until they decided that they could not wait any longer to meet in person.

"It's a miracle that we connected and that Jordan is living happy and healthy with Lukas' heart beating inside her," says Heather. "I'm so in love with this little girl that I've never met. I can't wait to wrap my arms around her."

"We owe Jordan's life and all of the memories we've made with her to Heather and Lukas," says Gonzales. "'Thank you' will never be enough."

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The families will meet for the first time privately on Friday, Jan. 29, 2016. Footage of their initial meeting will be available for media to use in their broadcast.

Members of the media are invited to attend the media event on Jan. 30, 2016 at PCH to meet and speak with Heather, Esther and Jordan.

PCH's Heart Transplant Program Director Dr. John Nigro, who recovered Lukas' heart and performed Jordan's transplant surgery, will field questions about the transplant. DNA, the state's federally designated, nonprofit organ procurement organization (OPO) will field questions about organ, eye and tissue donation.

"This remarkable event has given us the opportunity to help others in the face of personal tragedy, and it provides a strong message of hope for all of us," said Dr. Nigro.

While DNA honors donor and donor family wishes in Arizona, it is just one of 58 OPOs across the United States working to save and heal lives through organ, eye and tissue donation. OneLegacy, a California OPO, facilitated Lukas' gifts of donation and works to support Lukas' family and the population of 20 million others in its region whose lives may be touched by donation.

"OneLegacy is honored to have played a part in this incredible journey, providing a bridge to hope for two families who – thanks to organ donation – are now connected forever," said Tom Mone, CEO of OneLegacy. "With more than 122,000 people across the country waiting to receive a transplant, we hope others will be inspired by Heather's generous example of choosing to Donate Life."

Learn more about organ donation and how to register as a donor at [donatelife.net](http://donatelife.net).



### **About Donor Network of Arizona**

Donor Network of Arizona saves and heals lives through our dedicated and passionate work as Arizona's federally designated, nonprofit organ procurement organization. Our job is to provide organs to save lives, tissues to heal lives and corneas to restore sight. Arizonans can sign up as registered organ, eye and tissue donors when they apply for 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](http://www.DonateLifeAZ.org) or calling 1-800-94-DONOR.

### **About OneLegacy**

OneLegacy is the non-profit organization dedicated to saving lives through organ, eye and tissue donation in seven counties in Southern California: Los Angeles, Orange County, Riverside, San Bernardino, Ventura, Santa Barbara and Kern. Serving more than 200 hospitals, 11 transplant centers and a diverse population of nearly 20 million, OneLegacy is the largest organ, eye and tissue recovery organization in the world. For more information, call OneLegacy at (800) 786-4077 or visit [www.onelegacy.org](http://www.onelegacy.org).

### **About Phoenix Children's Hospital**

Phoenix Children's Hospital, Arizona's only hospital honored by U.S. News & World Report's Best Children's Hospitals, provides world-class inpatient, outpatient, trauma, emergency and urgent care to children and families in Arizona and throughout the Southwest. As one of the largest children's hospitals in the country, Phoenix Children's provides care across more than 75 pediatric specialties. The Hospital is poised for continued growth in quality patient care, research and medical education. For more information about the Hospital, visit [www.phoenixchildrens.org](http://www.phoenixchildrens.org).