

Emergency Professionals

Connection



A newsletter published by Donate Life Arizona

New Life for a Lifesaver



Thanks to his lifesaving heart transplant, Dave Wipprecht has the chance to attend baseball games and spend more time with his three sons.

As a Phoenix firefighter, Dave Wipprecht firmly believes in miracles. In 2014, that faith was tested when Wipprecht began having difficulty breathing. Even though he was diagnosed with pneumonia, his breathing problems persisted and he checked into Banner Thunderbird Medical Center.

An echocardiogram revealed that his heart was four times its normal size. Wipprecht was given heart medication, but shortly afterward his leg started hurting. Doctors found blood clots throughout his body, due to his heart only functioning at 10 percent. Rushed into emergency surgery and then transferred to Mayo Clinic Hospital, Wipprecht was placed at the top of the waiting list for a new heart.

Throughout his three-and-a-half month stay at Mayo Clinic Hospital, hooked up to IVs and taking medication daily, Wipprecht maintained an optimistic attitude for

his wife and three young sons. In June 2015, his doctor told Wipprecht that they had exhausted all their options and predicted he only had nine days to live. Still, Wipprecht's positivity never wavered.

"I knew I'd get through this, knowing that I had to stay alive for my family," Wipprecht says.

His faith was rewarded when, six days later, he received news that a new heart was available. Wipprecht says that he woke up smiling after the successful surgery.

"I could breathe normally," Wipprecht says. "I felt new again."

Back at home just nine days later, Wipprecht took care of his new heart. After celebrating his two-year transplant anniversary, Wipprecht wrote a letter to his donor's family and hopes to meet them someday.

Even before his transplant experience, Wipprecht had always been a registered donor. Now donation has even more meaning. At the fire department, he and his fellow firefighters always did everything they could to save someone's life. On the sad occasion when that person might not make it, their efforts could still help save someone else's life through donation. Wipprecht proudly displays a Donate Life license plate and shares his story with others.

"I would encourage others to stay positive and tell them there's a reason for everything," says Wipprecht. "And if it's my time to go, then it's my time to help others."



Facebook.com/
DonateLifeAZ



@DonateLifeAZ



YouTube.com/
DonateLifeAZ



Pinterest.com/
DonateLifeAZ



@DonateLifeAZ



DonateLifeAZ

Contributors:

Tim Brown
Rhiannon Kneuen
Sara Pace Jones

Writers and Editors:

Irasema Celis
Alexa Citro
Becca Isbell
Kris Patterson
Ariana Peery
Miranda Reddy

Greetings

From President and CEO, Tim Brown
Donor Network of Arizona

Not only was April National Donate Life Month, it was also the month my only daughter got married. Watching her and my three sons grow up and start their own families has made me even more aware of how donation impacts people. It affects us in ways we may not realize until these special moments in life remind us just how lucky we are. Thanks to donation, more fathers have the chance to walk their daughters down the aisle at their wedding and family members have more chances to celebrate life in big and small ways.

Here at Donor Network of Arizona we often hear from donor families that it gives them comfort to know that the death of their loved one was not really the end, but that their memory will live on in others thanks to donation. These special events such as weddings and birthdays come with a whole host of emotions and meaning, especially to those who have lost a loved one. Thanks to the generosity and selflessness of donation, these losses can bring forth new hope and a second chance for recipients to experience these precious moments.

Emergency professionals work hard every day to save lives. Even when the situation looks dire and protecting families from grief is not an option, you still provide an opportunity for hope.



Tim Brown walked his only daughter, Amy, down the aisle at her wedding on Saturday, April 29.

By taking the time to treat your patient, you could end up saving someone's life and helping to honor the wishes of a family's loved one. This dedication to care gives families a source of comfort and hope in one of their worst moments.

Thank you for the work that you do to save lives, not only from us here at DNA, but from the countless families you impact every day with your meaningful work.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Tim Brown".

Join Us for a Day of Learning!



Donor Network of Arizona (DNA) is excited to present the 2017 Donation Symposium, "Gear Up: Loading Your Donation Toolbox," a free all-day conference that provides classes and educational resources tailored to meet the needs of donation partners, from nurses and emergency professionals to funeral home professionals and beyond.

This year, DNA will load up your donation toolbox with all the necessary tools to help donation succeed in Arizona. DNA will host the Donation Symposium on Thursday, Aug. 24, 2017, at Desert Willow Conference Center in Phoenix.

"DNA strives to present the tools for success to these professionals because they play such an important role in the donation process," says Kristine Roberts, professional education coordinator at DNA.

Attendees will enjoy a full day of learning about tools that will help them not only do their job better but also improve outcomes for donation. Three plenary sessions are spaced throughout the day to provide insights to donation that are useful for all attendees. One session will highlight the entire donation process, and the roles that everyone can play in making donation a success. A guest speaker will review the best new technologies and innovations to save lives in another session. The last plenary session will explore new perspectives with which to view the donation process.

Tools shared at the Donation Symposium will help guests expand their view of donation and learn how their job affects this chain of generosity. **For more information about the Donation Symposium and to register for classes, visit www.RSVPdnaz.org.**

Saving More Lives Than You Know

Hope from Tragedy

The donation process is only made possible by the hard work and dedication of many moving pieces across a multitude of professions. Emergency professionals begin care when a tragedy strikes but don't often have the opportunity to see their work come full circle.

First responders from Air Evac/PHI Air Medical met Dante Pérez near the end of his life and gave him the best care possible as they rushed the 21-year-old to the hospital. The time spent caring for their patient at the beginning of a tragedy helped give life to others.

Donor Network of Arizona (DNA) writes letters to responding crew members involved in every case to give a better idea of the true impact they make in saving lives. DNA wrote a letter to the team who responded to Dante's accident so that they could hear about the ultimate impact of their lifesaving work.

"We truly appreciate the updates we receive from Donor Network of Arizona," says Nick Billings, clinical manager at Air Evac/PHI Air Medical. "It is common for our flight crews to never find out the final outcome of a patient we transport, but we pick ourselves up and prepare for the next flight. Our tireless care and work can, at times, feel futile in these tragic situations. Your heartfelt letters reinforce that every provider can make a difference with the care we provide. Saddened at the loss of one life, and truly blessed to play a small part in saving the lives of many others, by the selfless act of organ donation."



Dante Pérez became an organ donor at 21 years old after a fatal car accident in 2016.

A Hero's Legacy

Dante Pérez planned to become an EMT to help save lives, and even though his life was cut short, he still went on to save others. When he was only weeks away from graduating as an EMT from Cochise College, Dante suffered fatal injuries from a car accident.

Always active, Dante grew up in Sierra Vista, Arizona, and worked as a Jiu Jitsu instructor at Blackout MMA & Fitness, a gym owned by his family. In addition to his training in mixed-martial arts, Dante was a wrestler and golfer at Buena High School.



Dante's family is presented with the car bumper featuring Dante's photo at Blackout MMA & Fitness on Wednesday, March 15, 2017.



Dante Pérez worked as a Jiu Jitsu instructor at his family's gym and was trained in mixed martial arts.

"Dante was known for his kind spirit, and he always looked for ways to help others," says his father, José Pérez. "His students loved him and looked up to him."

Dante saved five lives and healed dozens more through his last gift of generosity – organ and tissue donation.

Dante's legacy as a hero now lives on in others. But that gift of life would not have been possible without the efforts of the emergency professionals he admired. Even when all seems lost for a patient, every act of care is vital to allow them the opportunity to save lives and give hope to donor families. Thanks to Air Evac/PHI Air Medical, Dante was able to give a second chance to others and ultimately fulfill his dream of saving lives.



To the team who cared for Dante...

Air Evac/PHI Air Medical

Attn: Responding Crew Member in Unit 356

Dear Valued First Responder:

In November 2016, a crew from your base was dispatched to assist a 21-year-old man who had been in a single-vehicle car accident. Upon your arrival at the scene, you found the patient unconscious and breathing on his own. You noted visible trauma. He was intubated and treated while en route to the hospital. His care was assumed by the staff of Banner – University Medical Center Tucson.

Because of your efforts and those of the hospital staff to save his life, this patient's family was comforted in the knowledge that every effort to help their loved one had been made. And when, ultimately, he succumbed to his injuries, his family made the generous decision to share life with others through organ donation. We would now like to share with you how this donor continues to make a difference for others, even upon his death.

This donor's gift of life offered a second chance to a 60-year-old woman in California when she successfully received the right kidney transplant. Prior to undergoing surgery, she had been facing a long and progressively debilitating demise slowed only by the frequent dialysis treatments. This transplant has spared her from this fate, and for that, she and her loved ones are very thankful.

Also, the gift of the left kidney transplant was given to a 46-year-old electrical engineer in Arizona. This man, who enjoys skiing and hiking, had been afflicted with end-stage renal disease caused by an autoimmune disorder, and was placed on the transplant waiting list in August 2016. He too has been spared from the need for continued dialysis treatments and he is so grateful for the generosity that made it possible.

Additionally, a 57-year-old California man is alive and well today thanks to the gift of a liver transplant. This father-of-four had been suffering from liver failure and was in need of this lifesaving transplant. He had been placed on the expedited waiting list in November 2016. He and his loved ones are so thankful that he was able to undergo this surgery in time. Of course, they understand that this precious gift came to them from a place of great compassion and kindness, and they are humbled by this donor family's generosity at such a difficult time.

The gift of the heart transplant saved the life of a 36-year-old truck driver in California. This man had coronary artery disease, and a heart transplant offered him his only hope for survival. He was placed on the transplant waiting list in November 2016. There are no words to adequately express how thankful he and his wife are for his renewed health and for the hope that this gift has given them.

Finally, we were able to successfully recover vascular tissue and bone tissue for transplantation. This sharing of life will offer hope and possibility to as many as twenty people. Life enhancing tissue procedures will allow people to lead normal and healthy lives and their gratitude is great.

It is always so important for us to express gratitude for all those who are part of the care that is extended to patients and their families. Thank you for continuing to actively support this patient early on in the process. Because you did not decelerate care and treated this patient, he was able to give the gift of life. We are often the voices of those who cannot survive without a transplant; thank you for making those voices be heard!

Sincerely,
Tim Brown, President and CEO

Emergency Medical Service & Fire Departments	Jan. - June 2017 *Total Organ, Eye and Tissue Donors
Air Evac Services	6
AK Chin Fire Department	1
American Medical Response	36
Avondale Fire Department	3
Avra Valley Fire District	1
Buckeye Fire Department	4
Bullhead City Fire Department	1
Chandler Fire Department	12
City of Peoria Fire Department	1
Clark County Fire Department	2
Daisy Mountain Fire Department	1
Drexel Heights Fire Department	4
El Mirage Fire Department	4
Fort Mohave Mesa EMS	1
Fry Fire Department	1
Gila River Fire Department	3
Gilbert Fire & Rescue	4
Glendale Fire Department	8
Golden Shores Fire Department	2
Green Valley Fire District	1
Guardian Medical Services	3
Kingman Fire Department	1
Lifeline	11
LifeNet-Native Air	4
Mayer Fire Department	2
Mesa Fire Department	19
Montezuma-Rimrock Fire District	1
Mountain Vista Fire District	1
North County Fire & Medical District	1
Northern Arizona Consolidated Fire District	1
Northwest Fire Department	3

Emergency Medical Service & Fire Departments	Jan. - June 2017 *Total Organ, Eye and Tissue Donors
Oracle Fire Department	1
Page Fire Department	2
Peoria Fire Department	6
PHI Air	2
Phoenix Fire Department	82
Pierce Fire District	1
Pinetop Fire Department	1
PMT	1
Rincon Valley FD	1
Rio Rico Medical & Fire	1
River Medical	6
Rural Metro	16
Scottsdale Fire Department	3
SEAZ City of Yuma Fire Department	2
Sells IHS EMS/Rescue	1
Show Low EMS	3
Sierra Vista Fire Department	1
Sononita-Elgin Fire Department	1
Sun City Fire Department	4
Sunrise Fire Department	1
Superstition Fire and Medical District	2
Surprise Fire Department	1
Taylor-Snowflake Fire & Medical	1
Tempe Fire Department	4
Three Points Fire District	1
Timber Mesa Fire Department	1
Tolleson Fire Department	1
Tri City Fire Department	1
Tucson Fire Department	35
Yuma Fire Department	2

*These statistics reflect the number of donor cases directly impacted by EMS involvement during the given time frame.

Major religions support
donation as an act
of generosity and a
GIFT OF LIFE.

There are no health
requirements
or age limits on
**HOPE &
GENEROSITY.**
Anyone can register to be
a donor!

Not sure if you're already
registered? Reaffirm
your decision and
REGISTER AGAIN!

3,129,061

(as of August 2, 2017)

WHAT CAN BE DONATED?

ORGANS

HEART

Provides years of active living

LUNGS

Allow unaided breathing

KIDNEYS

Save patients from dialysis and early death

LIVER

Restores life

INTESTINES

Aid digestion

PANCREAS

Eliminates insulin dependency for diabetics

TISSUE

CORNEAS

Restore sight

TENDONS

Rebuild joints

VALVES

Repair cardiac defects

VEINS

Re-establish circulation

SKIN

Heals burn patients

BONES

Prevent the need for amputation