



A donor family attends a
Candlelight Memorial event
to honor their loved one's
selfless gift

INSPIRED
BY *life*

Mid-America
TRANSPLANT

2023 IMPACT REPORT

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT AND CEO

Thanks to the generous decisions of donor heroes and their families, 2023 was a milestone year for donation across our region. We approached more families than ever before for donation, and more families than ever said yes.

This act of generosity resulted in lifesaving gifts provided by 299 organ donors and 2,697 tissue donors. We are honored to continue their loved one's legacy.

We also are fortunate to witness firsthand how that legacy lives on. This past year marked the 10th anniversary of the Mid-America Transplant Family House, which has served as a home away from home for 404 transplant patients. Over a decade, patients and families were provided housing for over 33,000 nights. Experiencing their hope and healing inspires us to carry on our mission.

Mid-America Transplant continued to pursue operational excellence in 2023. We received a Global Distinction Award from the UNIVANTS of Healthcare Excellence. In addition, Linda Martin, our Vice President of Tissue Services, received the most prestigious award in the industry from the American Association of Tissue Banks, and Chief Medical and Research Officer Dr. Gary Marklin's clinical research was published in the New England Journal of Medicine. It is a privilege to serve alongside such respected industry leaders.

This year of impact would not be possible without the dedication of our staff and board, the collaboration of our partners, and most importantly, the generosity of our donors and families.

But even with this incredible impact, our work is far from over. More than 100,000 people are still on the waitlist. As we kick off 2024, we're committed to pushing ourselves further – because our work isn't finished until no one is waiting.

Sincerely,



A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kevin J. Lee". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first letters of the first and last names being capitalized and prominent.

KEVIN J. LEE

LIFESAVING AND LIFE-CHANGING GIFTS

2023: A Year of Generosity

Thousands of lives were healed and saved in 2023 through the generosity of donors and their families, the commitment of our staff, the dedication of our hospital partners, and protocols that produce even better results.

ORGANS TRANSPLANTED

299

ORGAN DONORS

selflessly chose to give the gift of life



801

ORGAN TRANSPLANTS

changed the lives of recipients
and their families



422 KIDNEYS



170 LIVERS



104 LUNGS



85 HEARTS



19 PANCREASES



1 SMALL BOWEL

TISSUE TRANSPLANTED

2,697

TISSUE DONORS

provided healing and hope for recipients



202,275

TISSUES

treated disease, restored
mobility, and extended life



417 HEART
VALVE DONORS



1,720 BONE
DONORS



1,819
CORNEAS

PROGRESS AND INNOVATION

MID-AMERICA TRANSPLANT PUBLISHES LANDMARK STUDY IN NEW ENGLAND MEDICAL JOURNAL

In November, Dr. Gary Marklin, Chief Medical and Research Officer at Mid-America Transplant, and co-principal investigator Dr. Rajat Dhar, Washington University School of Medicine, published a study in the New England Journal of Medicine that analyzes the impact of a certain medication in improving the management of donor hearts for transplantation. This marks the first time an organ procurement organization was the leader in developing a clinical research study that has been published in what is considered the most prestigious medical journal in the world.

"This is a great example of how rigorous clinical research can drive continuous improvement in organ donation," said Dr. Marklin. "By maximizing donation potential, we are able to be even greater stewards of the lifesaving gifts given to us by donor heroes and their families."



In the time-sensitive and intricate donation process, reliable transportation is essential. It requires precise logistical coordination with medical teams and multiple modes of transportation across hundreds of miles while following all clinical standards and national policies.

To increase the safety, efficiency, and effectiveness of transferring lifesaving gifts from generous organ donors to awaiting transplant recipients, Mid-America Transplant deployed a new fleet of six specially staffed and equipped SUVs to transport organ recovery teams, organs, and tissues.

The fleet has been deployed in partnership with Nationwide Organ Recovery Transport Alliance (NORA). NORA specializes in transport logistics for the organ and tissue donation community. Their drivers, many of whom have experience as emergency responders, receive specialized training as it relates to the human and technical aspects of organ recovery. NORA also handles flight logistics for both commercial and charter flights when necessary.



AWARDS AND HONORS

Achievements and Recognition

Thanks to the inspiring decisions of donors and their families, 2023 was a milestone year for donation across the region. We also celebrated our award-winning team for their dedication to our mission.



Mid-America Transplant Recieves Global Distinction Award from UNIVANTS of Healthcare Excellence

The UNIVANTS of Healthcare Excellence award recognizes interdisciplinary care teams around the world who have achieved measurable, innovative impact within the healthcare system.

Mid-America Transplant received the Global Distinction Award for enhanced resource utilization, reduced waste, and expedited transplantation through real-time donor screening for infectious disease.

The award is in recognition of our care collaborative work and process improvement from the adoption and implementation of new lab equipment that significantly transformed the efficiency of donor testing.



Linda Martin Receives Most Prestigious Award in Tissue Industry

Linda Martin, Vice President of Tissue Services, received the Jeanne C. Mowe Distinguished Service Award from the American Association of Tissue Banks (AATB). This is the highest honor possible for tissue professionals.

Since joining the organization more than 33 years ago, Linda has built strong partnerships with corneal transplant surgeons and tissue processors across the United States.

Linda has been a key driver on our quality and performance improvement journey. Some of her many contributions include growing the number of bone donors by 921%, heart valves by 320%, and corneas by 288% from 1990 to 2022.

NATIONAL DONATE LIFE MONTH

Inspiring Others to Say Yes

April is National Donate Life Month — a special opportunity to celebrate donor heroes and amplify the importance of donor registration.



600+

HONOR WALK
PARTICIPANTS

12

FLAG RAISING EVENTS

218

DONORS REGISTERED



Pictured above: A Donate Life flag is raised at a hospital in St. Louis; Donor families and recipients await the start of the Honor Walk at the Donate Life game at Busch Stadium; Chance, whose mother was a donor hero, prepares to throw the first pitch at the SEMO Donate Life Game; Heart recipient Caleb and his family at the Springfield Cardinals Donate Life Game.

COMMUNITY IMPACT

Connecting With Those We Serve

Equitable access to health care is core to our vision and mission. In 2023, we engaged with diverse communities to raise awareness and appreciation for organ, eye, and tissue donation.

PRIDE MONTH

Anyone, regardless of sexual orientation or gender, can give someone a second chance at life. We are working to ensure all identities are represented in donation. In June, volunteers and staff engaged with our community at PrideFest in St. Louis.



JUNETEENTH

We know that a person's zip code impacts their health outcomes and affects life expectancy. Our staff and volunteers hosted tables at two Juneteenth events, celebrating the diversity of our region while recognizing that there is still much to be done to improve social determinants of health in our community.

DIA DE LOS MUERTOS

In November, our Día de los Muertos celebration provided a unique opportunity for donor families to come together in celebration of their loved ones. Participants painted sugar skulls and lit candles, honoring the legacy of their loved ones through the gift of life.





A Home Away From Home

After six years, adapting to life without oxygen tanks was a welcome adjustment. From the age of 11, Sage had never been without them. Now, at nearly 18, she was tank-free for the first time in her adolescence.

In 2017, Sage's journey began in her home state of Florida with a case of the flu. Her condition escalated quickly and she was sent to her local hospital, then transferred to a larger hospital for more specialized care. Sage spent four months in the hospital, and when she finally went home, the oxygen tanks went with her.

Sage was extremely limited in her physical activity. She couldn't go to school, she couldn't spend time around friends, and she was tired all the time. The rest of her family felt limited as well, especially when it came to which activities they could do together. Sage didn't have much energy, and any plan had to accommodate her oxygen tanks.

Unfortunately, the level of pediatric care Sage needed was not available in Florida. St. Louis is home to world-class medicine, so in 2021, Sage began travelling for consultations. In January 2023, her family moved into the Family House while she awaited the call for a lung transplant.

That call came just under a month later. Thanks to her selfless donor, Sage has said goodbye to her oxygen tanks and now can enjoy more of life's adventures. After her transplant, Sage attended a Cardinals game, enjoyed the Cinco de Mayo Festival, and visited local museums.

In addition to the experience of local events and attractions, Sage's family is grateful for their time at the Family House. "It's become home," they said.

SAGE

Double Lung Recipient

THE FIRST 10 YEARS

Celebrating a Decade at the Family House

To ease the burden of securing a place to live for families awaiting or recovering from transplantation, Mid-America Transplant launched the Family House in 2013. In December, we celebrated 10 years of key milestones for this home away from home.

December 2013: Family House Opens

This low- or no-cost option provides comfortable mid-to-long-term housing for families who must relocate to St. Louis for life-saving transplant care.

July 2019: First Tissue Transplant for Guest at Family House

In a groundbreaking procedure, a mother stayed at Family House while her unborn baby received a successful in-utero tissue transplant.



December 2023: 400th Guest Moves In

11-year-old Jaxon arrived in St. Louis to await his lifesaving gift.

July 2017: 100th Guest Moves In

"We would have stayed at a hotel if it weren't for Family House.

This is so nice, so much better. It's a home. You can prepare meals without going out for every lunch and supper. You have privacy and quiet time."

- Kolleen, Liver Recipient



May 2022: Grand Opening of New Family House

Our new Family House doubled our capacity, with 21 fully furnished, single-family apartments designed to support patients and their families.



CELEBRATING THE GIFT

LIGHT IT UP GREEN

Honoring the generosity of donor families at the Family House



Family House shines green for three days each time one of our guests receives their lifesaving gift. This symbol of hope, gratitude, and community support occurs for one day in celebration of the recipient's second chance at life, a second day in honor of the donor hero and their family who made the selfless decision, and a third day to give hope to those who continue to wait.

IN 2023:



98

GUESTS
SERVED



6,348

NIGHTS
OCCUPIED



19

STATES
SERVED

"I'm so incredibly thankful for Mid-America Transplant Family House for letting us stay in an apartment. It's a beautiful place and it truly felt like a home away from home!!"

- Erin, Liver Recipient &
Former Family House Resident





Awaiting transplant at
the Family House



Mae Ola after transplant

MAE OLA
Double Lung Recipient

Stories of Faith and Gratitude

Mae Ola had been sick for a long time before finally getting a diagnosis in 2014. She had 10 liters of oxygen and two machines in her house, and couldn't walk very far. Her doctors gave her six months to live.

After she was listed for a lung transplant, Mae Ola moved into Mid-America Transplant's Family House to be closer to her hospital. Despite her illness and fatigue, Mae Ola enjoyed her stay at the Family House. She made new friends, loved the staff, and spent time with her brother, who stayed with her as her caretaker.

"I felt at home there," she said.

Her support team was the most important part of her experience. Her family, friends, church congregation, and doctors all told her, "You can do this!" Her pastor was right there with her as she went in for her transplant.

After her transplant, Mae Ola stayed at the Family House until August 2015. She has since spoken publicly about her experience and has joined an online support group. Her advice to those waiting is "Don't give up, no matter what the doctors say. Keep praying."

Now, oxygen-free, she has more energy to spend with her young granddaughter and even had the chance to switch roles and become her brother's caregiver when he was sick: a role she couldn't have taken on without her transplant. Eight years post-transplant, Mae Ola remains immensely grateful for her second chance at life.

OUR PARTNERSHIPS

Fans for Life

Together with our partners, we are working to increase the number of people on the national registry so more patients can receive the lifesaving and healing transplants they need.



Mid-America Transplant partnered with the St. Louis Cardinals to help baseball fans learn how they can be "Fans for Life" through donor registration. In addition to the Donate Life Game in April, we hosted registration booths at several games this season to share information about the impact of organ and tissue donation. Staff and volunteers also encouraged Cardinals fans throughout the region to sign up on the registry at FansForLife.org to give hope to those waiting.

Top: The brother of donor hero Cameron Lathrop and the wife of donor hero Tim Nelson throwing the first pitch at Cardinals games.

Below: The families of donor heroes Josh Belcher and Jai'vyon Falls were recognized at Hammons Field in Springfield, MO.



In partnership with the Springfield Cardinals, we continued our tradition of raising awareness around the importance of organ and tissue donation. At the April 21st game, attendees celebrated the generous donors and families who have given the gift of life.



Stories of Resilience

At the age of 18, Joe learned that his kidneys were failing. The discovery of his condition was incidental, coming alongside an unrelated doctor's appointment. However, when Joe reflected on his symptoms - fluid retention, difficulty concentrating, the increased fatigue throughout his teen years - the pieces began to fall into place.

Three months later, Joe had stage 5 kidney disease and was starting dialysis. "I had to drop out of school that year to adjust to treatments," he said. "I had treatment 3 days a week for 4 hours at a time. I couldn't travel and it felt as though I had been run through the gauntlet after every treatment, leaving me with no energy and my mind was foggy."

Joe continued dialysis for five years, until finally receiving a kidney transplant at age 24. He received a second transplant six years later, and has celebrated his donors' gifts in the best way he knows how - through sports.

Naturally competitive, Joe was unable to play sports in high school due to his illness. In 2022, he traveled to San Diego for the Transplant Games of America. Of the six sports in which he competed, he was most excited for track and basketball.

"These are the two sports that I had tried out for in school but had to withdraw from because I just did not have the energy even during tryouts."

At the Transplant Games, he had the energy to earn seven medals: 4 gold, 1 silver, 2 bronze. Joe plans to attend the Games again in 2024, and sees this as another opportunity to honor the gift.

"I'm living because of my selfless donor who has saved and changed my life forever."



JOE
Kidney Recipient

ONLINE LEARNING PLATFORM FOR UNDERGRADUATE NURSING STUDENTS

In October 2023, Mid-America Transplant hosted an open house for nursing faculty utilizing the Online Nursing Education Platform.

The online platform provides nurse educators with current, comprehensive information about organ and tissue donation for inclusion in nursing school curriculums. Nursing students will also have a clearer understanding of the role of the organ procurement organization.

Made possible by a grant from the Mid-America Transplant Foundation, the platform was developed in partnership with Dr. Linda Heitman and Southeast Missouri State University. The pilot study was first launched in 2019.

Since Launching in 2019:

- 3,913** Students have completed the platform
- 11** Schools of Nursing are currently participating
- 20** Faculty utilizing the platform

EXCELLENCE IN EDUCATION

We work together with our education partners to ensure comprehensive information about organ and tissue donation is presented to students entering the nursing and mortuary science fields.

The Mid-America Transplant Foundation is committed to the ongoing development of a skilled workforce by supporting students in the fields of nursing and mortuary science, which have critical roles to play in the success of organ and tissue donation. In 2023, 22 students from 3 universities received grants and scholarships from the Foundation.



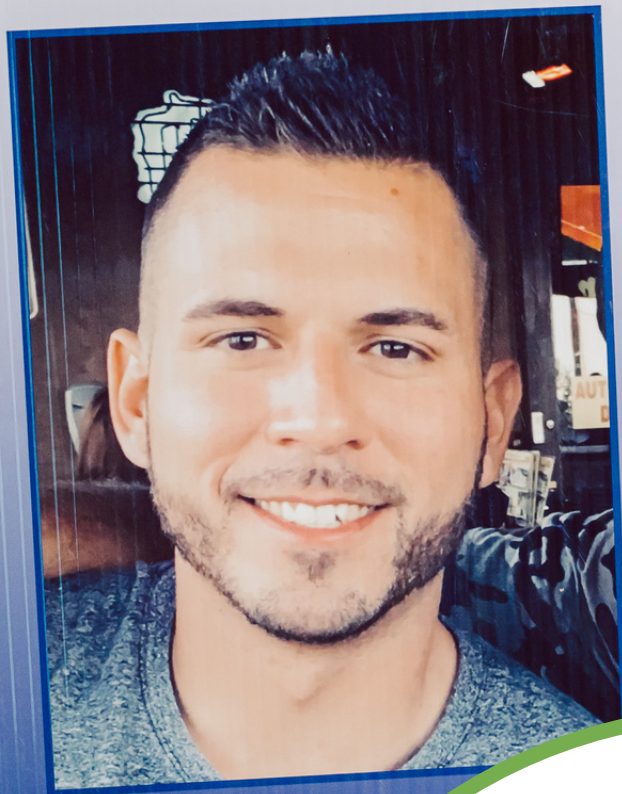
Pictured left: Nursing students from Southern Illinois University Carbondale and St. Louis Community College



Bottom row: Scholarship recipients and educators from Missouri State University and Southern Illinois University Carbondale. The students visited for a presentation, site tour, and lunch with clinical leaders.



Nicholas Joseph McNamee



Stories of Gratitude

"I was diagnosed with end-stage renal failure in 2016. When I was first registered for my kidney transplant, I didn't realize that I needed a liver as well. After my transplants, the first thing that my daughter said to me was, 'Your color is so much better.' I didn't realize that I looked that sick.

My donor Nick has been a perfect match for me health-wise. All of my numbers look wonderful and my doctors couldn't be more pleased. Nick's mother, Gina, gave me a lovely necklace and some of his ashes, so I take him with me and we spread his ashes in different places. When we went to the Cumberland Gap, a place often referred to as Kentucky's Niagara Falls, I spread some of his ashes there. As I did that, the ashes turned into a rainbow. It was just amazing.

I'm so grateful that Gina wrote to me. I was struggling with what I was going to say and since I got my letter from her first, it was easier to put a face and a story to the person. Since then, she has given me a photo album full of pictures of Nick. When we first met, all I could say to her was, 'Thank you. Thank you for sharing Nick with me and my whole family.'

I am just ever so grateful."

PEGGY
Kidney/Liver Recipient



Mid-America
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Become
an
Organ
Donor