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Donate Life Louisiana encourages Louisiana residents to  
Get their  on for National Donate Life Month

*New Orleans, LA-* April is National Donate Life Month, and Donate Life Louisiana plans to take advantage of this opportunity to raise awareness and gain new members on the donor registry, as well as dispel rumors commonly associated with organ donation.


Today, there are more than 106,000 people nationwide waiting for life-saving organ donations, with 1,800 of those individuals living in Louisiana. In 2007, 9,612 people were removed from the waiting list because they died or were too sick to receive a transplant. Of those, 150 were in Louisiana.

More compellingly, one donor has the ability to save up to nine lives, restore sight to two people, and enhance the lives up to 50 more through tissue donation.

Established in 2003, National Donate Life Month serves to heighten donor awareness and increase registered donors. There are currently 1.8 million names on Louisiana's Organ and Tissue Donor Registry; which is almost 40 percent of the state's population. Donate Life Louisiana wants to increase that number to 2.2 million, or 50 percent of the state's population, by 2014.

"This is goal is attainable and extremely critical," says Jeanette Slakey, executive director of the Legacy Donor Foundation. "The need of organ, eye and tissue donation vastly exceeds the number of donors and an average of 20 people die each day waiting for a life-saving organ transplant."

The Legacy Donor Foundation partnered with the Louisiana Organ Procurement Agency (LOPA) to form Donate Life Louisiana and bring a cohesive face to organ donation education and awareness in Louisiana.

In 2008, Donate Life Louisiana launched “Get your  on” a successful marketing campaign that utilizes billboards across the state featuring the eye-catching phrase. The campaign urges individuals to registers as an organ donor and display their support with a small heart on their drivers’ licenses.

Although Louisiana’s Organ and Tissue Donor Registry is 1.8 million names strong, there are still myths and misconceptions that prevent people from registering as an organ donor. Anyone can potentially be a donor regardless of age, race or medical history. It is illegal to buy or sell organs for translation or to distribute organs based on wealth, citizenship or celebrity status. Donation is no cost to the donor or their family, does not prevent open casket funerals and is supported by all major religions and even seen as an unselfish act of kindness. In addition, the decision to donate will not interfere with life-saving medical care.

Registering as an organ and tissue donor is as simple as adding the donor heart designation to your driver’s license, learner’s permit or state identification card. For more information, please visit [www.donatelifela.org](http://www.donatelifela.org).

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