



Working
Together to
Save Lives



PRESS RELEASE
For Immediate Release

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April Is National Donate Life Month

Greenville, SC – March 29, 2017: *Donate Life South Carolina* and *Sharing Hope SC* will celebrate **National Donate Life Month** this April. Kicking off the month-long celebration, *Donate Life South Carolina* and the **South Carolina Department of Motor Vehicles** will hold a joint press conference at 10:00 AM on April 12, 2017 on the 1st floor lobby of the South Carolina State House in Columbia. This press conference will announce the results of a three year renewed partnership plan between those two organizations to increase the number of registered donors in the state. **The Honorable Governor Henry McMaster of the State of South Carolina** will announce April as **Donate Life Month** in South Carolina. **Senator Katrina Shealy** of Lexington County will also announce a Senate resolution designating April 12th as **Donor Day** in South Carolina, recognizing the life-saving attributes of all types of living and deceased donation.

Several other speakers for this special day will also be featured. **Former NFL coach and player Sam Wyche** will share his powerful story of receiving a new heart and the miracle of his life-saving transplant. Also speaking will be two women who met through their children, became friends and discovered that one was a perfect match to give the other a kidney and the “gift of life” through living donation. In addition, a mother whose son died and was a donor will tell his story of saving several lives by making the decision be a donor.

Donate Life Month honors the generosity of organ, eye and tissue donors and their families. It also commemorates those who have either received or continue to wait for life-saving transplants. **Donor Day** honors the generosity of all facets of donations including living, blood, bone marrow and research. In addition to the joint press conference, numerous other events will be taking place across the state to commemorate **Donate Life Month**:

The larger events include:

- 1.) **Donate Life At The Heritage Classic:** April 10th – April 16th **The RBC Heritage**, presented by Boeing volunteers, staff and board members, will be supporting Donate Life Month by wearing Donate Life pins and Polo Shirts that represent Donate Life SC, RBC Heritage and the SCDMV partnership. We have also asked all the professional golfers competing in the event to wear the pins to show their support of organ donation.
- 2.) **National Blue and Green Day:** On April 21, 2017, the public is encouraged to wear blue and green, hold events and fundraisers, and partner with other community organizations in an effort to spread awareness about organ, eye and tissue donation and transplantation. **Over 30 South**



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Carolina DMV offices will be participating to show support for organ, eye and tissue donation. Several hospitals across the state will also recognize this day.

More than half of the U.S. adult population are registered as donors in the United States and over 1.8 million are in South Carolina. Still, the number of people in need of transplants continues to rise. Currently, approximately **120,000** people are on the national transplant waiting list and over **1000** of those are on the South Carolina waiting list. In fact, an average of 22 people in the U.S. die each day because of the shortage of lifesaving organs. The solution to this problem is to continue educating the public about the lifesaving effects of donation and transplantation. We encourage everyone to make their decision known by signing up on the state's donor registry.

"Donate Life Month serves as an opportunity to make or renew the commitment to saving lives and a chance to honor the lives of those who have given and received the **Gift of Life,**" states **Donate Life South Carolina** CEO Tracy Moore. "This year, on April 12th at the State Capitol, we will honor all donors, living and deceased, who have made the decision to help others through donation."

Individuals can also register to be an organ, eye and tissue donor at DonateLifeSC.org or Registerme.org. Also, now individuals can register in seconds to be an organ, eye and tissue donor through the Health/Medical app on iPhones. Everyone is then encouraged to always check **"YES"** to donation when filling out the **SCDMV** credentials form and remain in the registry. By doing so, the heart and "Y" symbol will indicate one's legal authorization to become a donor when registering through the SCDMV.

SCDMV Driver's License Registered Donor Symbol:



Without more donors, many on the waiting list will die waiting. It is hoped that the designation of April as **Donate Life Month** will call attention to the need for more donors in South Carolina as well as inform the public about the South Carolina Organ and Tissue Donor Registry.

To get more information or to set up an interview with someone touched by donation/transplantation contact Mark Johnson, Media Relations Coordinator for Sharing Hope SC, at 1-800-462-0755 or 843-763-7755.

About Sharing Hope SC ([Sharing Hope SC.org](http://SharingHopeSC.org))

Sharing Hope SC is the designated Organ Procurement Organization (OPO) for organ recovery services in South Carolina. Sharing Hope SC actively provides organ and tissue donor services to 62 hospitals throughout the state. Sharing Hope SC also helps support and educate families at an emotionally devastating time, so they can make well-informed decisions about organ and tissue donation.

About Donate Life South Carolina (DonateLifeSC.org) Donate Life South Carolina is the statewide organization whose mission is to promote organ and tissue donation for transplantation and provide patient assistance for South Carolina transplant recipients. Donate Life South Carolina established and maintains the South Carolina Organ and Tissue Donor Registry.