



INNOVATION WITHOUT LIMITS

ABOUT US

The Center for Organ Recovery & Education (CORE) is one of 56 federally designated not-for-profit organ procurement organizations (OPOs) in the United States, serving more than five million people in western Pennsylvania and West Virginia. CORE coordinates the recovery and matching of organs, tissues and corneas for transplant within our donor service area, and works tirelessly to create a culture of donation within the hospitals and communities we serve. CORE's life-saving mission aims to end the deaths of those on the transplant waiting list, while maintaining integrity for the donation process, dignity for the donors, and compassion for their families.

MISSION

To *Save* and *Heal* lives through donation.

VISION

Every potential donor will make *A Pledge for Life*.

VALUES

Compassion, Education, Innovation, Integrity, Life, Quality, Respect, Responsiveness.

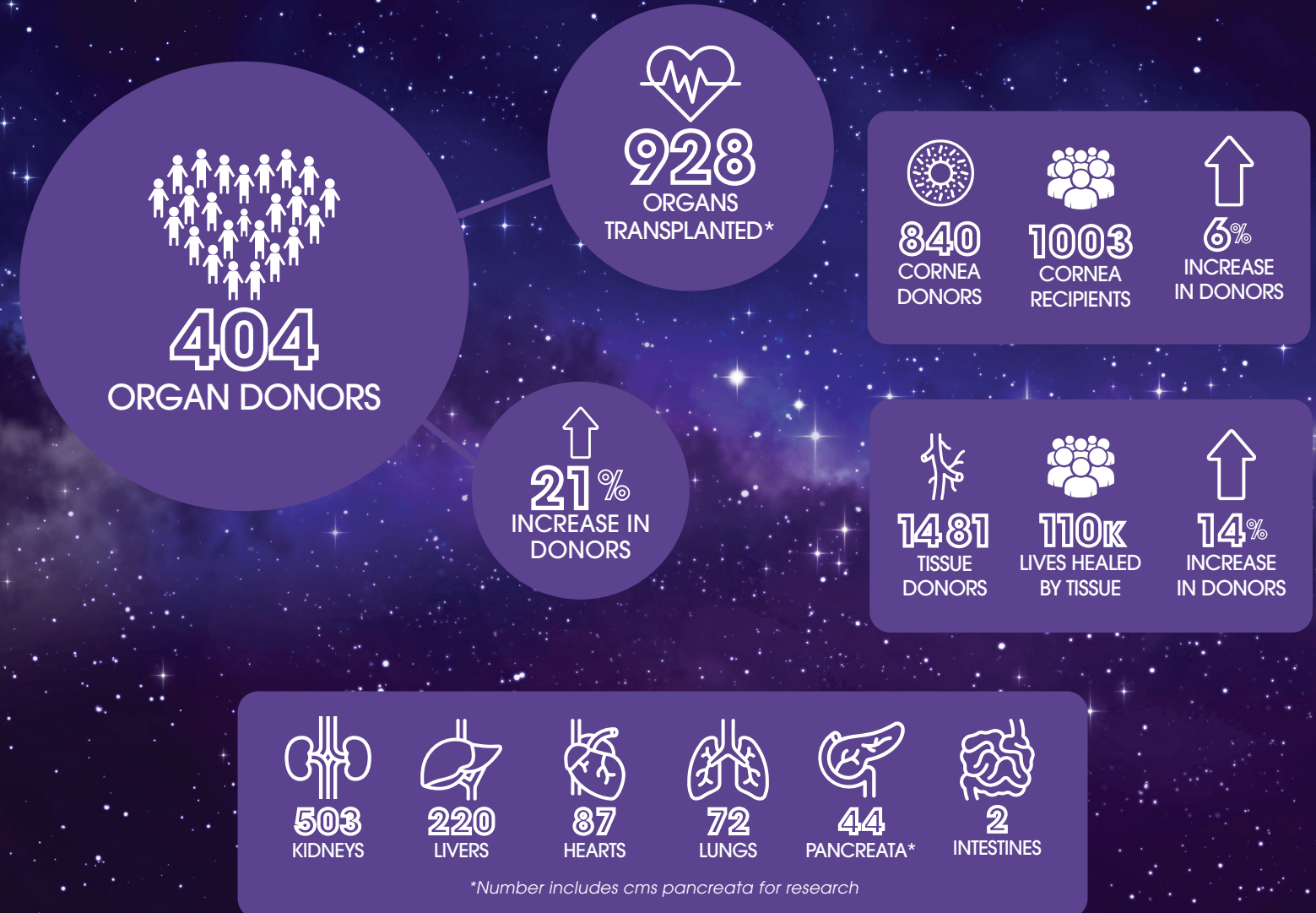
CORE COMPETENCIES

- A culture of transparency to drive performance excellence.
- Pursuit of every donor, every time with compassion and respect.
- Every organ, every time to save a life.



ALEX SIMMONS
2023 Kidney Recipient
Pittsburgh, PA

5th CONSECUTIVE 2023 RECORD BREAKING YEAR



CORE
will
always
push
the
boundaries
of
EXCELLENCE.

JILL MCGRAIL
CORE Team Member

2023: INNOVATION WITHOUT LIMITS

In the vast expanse of the universe, where the unknown awaits discovery by those with the courage to pioneer, opportunities also emerge each year, and with each potential donor, for CORE to embrace what we do not yet know.

With an unwavering commitment to do what we have never done before, and through a relentless pursuit of progress, in 2023, CORE did just that. We transcended boundaries in our mission to save and heal lives through donation and exemplified a true spirit of innovation, pushing the limits of what was previously thought possible.

The result was a fifth consecutive year of saving and healing lives across western Pennsylvania and West Virginia. Because of the altruism of 404 organ donors CORE made possible the transplantation of 928 organs and 1,003 corneas. Furthermore, the generosity of 1,481 tissue donors brought healing to more than 100,000 lives. Yet, our achievements are not ours alone.

To our donor hospitals, transplant centers, advocates, legislative and community partners, board members, and staff: your unwavering support has been – and will forever be – critical as CORE forges ahead into the future of donation and transplantation.

As CORE works to realize the promise of 2024, let us first pause to honor and recognize the shining stars of donation – our donors. Together, they form a constellation of countless bright stars in the night sky, each one symbolizing hope and resilience. May they, in 2024, and all the years beyond, serve as guiding beacons of light for all of us, illuminating the path ahead.



SUSAN STUART
President/CEO



LINDSAY PETROSKY
Board Chair

STRATEGY:

STARS ALIGN FOR SUCCESS

In our quest for excellence, CORE has mapped the donation process. Outlined here are strategic projects from 2023, each tied to a step in that process, and highlighted because of their success.

DESIGNATION

A CORE strategic goal focused on expanding marketing through partnerships with social media influencers. In November, we collaborated with the Goeller family, who had a large following on Facebook, with more than 100,000 followers, to announce that Lucas Goeller was listed for transplant again. This announcement was made on the Save Lucas social media platforms and in traditional media, along with boosted posts as part of a broader paid media strategy. The result: the campaign led to more than 700 new online donor registrations.

+700
DONOR
REGISTRATIONS

REFERRAL & EVALUATION

"Every Donor, Every Time" is the CORE mantra. Reflecting that commitment, in 2023, CORE expanded our definition of donors and actively pursued individuals who previously may not have been considered potential donors. To foster this "rule-in" mentality, CORE introduced Clinical On-Site Specialists (COSS) who assess potential donors and gather comprehensive clinical information. By embracing this mindset and pursuing every potential donor, CORE increased our pool of potential organ donors by 17% from 2022 to 2023.

▲17%
POTENTIAL
DONORS

AUTHORIZATION

In 2023, CORE implemented an updated resource deployment model, which included more organ and tissue designated requestors and post-approach interviews of the requestors and organ procurement coordinators. Data gathered resulted in targeted improvements, and a 5% increase in organ authorization rates. Looking ahead to 2024, CORE aims to further develop this model.

▲5%
ORGAN
AUTHORIZATION

MANAGEMENT & ALLOCATION

CORE is deeply dedicated to ensuring that every gift of life from an organ donation results in a life-saving organ transplant. To fulfill this commitment, CORE has proactively fostered strong relationships with donor hospitals and transplant centers. In 2023, a pivotal initiative was the development of abdominal allocation protocols for expedited placement. These protocols enabled CORE to extend the gift of kidneys and livers to an additional 182 recipients who would otherwise have been unable to receive a life-saving transplant.

+182
TRANSPLANT
RECIPIENTS

TRANSPLANT & RESEARCH

Innovative perfusion technologies are today reducing ischemic and inflammatory injuries both in-situ and ex-vivo. In 2023, CORE collaborated with transplant centers, both within and beyond our donor service area, to implement two specific technologies: Normothermic Regional Perfusion (NRP) and Normothermic Machine Perfusion (NMP). By integrating internal protocols to optimize the utilization and effectiveness of these technologies, CORE increased donation after cardiac death heart and liver transplants by 90% and 65%, respectively, compared to 2022.

▲90%
DCD HEART
TRANSPLANTS

▲65%
DCD LIVER
TRANSPLANTS

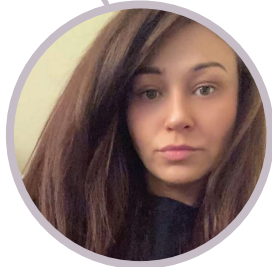
DONORS:

ILLUMINATING THE PATH AHEAD



CALVIN BEHM, *Organ Donor*

A loving son and younger brother, Calvin, 23, excelled at water polo. He pursued professional endeavors in Serbia, and later in Dallas, TX. But Calvin's impact in life now extends far beyond his athletic and professional achievements. In a testament to his selflessness and compassion, Calvin chose to register as an organ donor, offering the gift of life to four individuals when he tragically passed away at UPMC Hamot after an automobile accident in February 2023. Today, his family finds solace in the enduring legacy of Calvin's generosity.



JODY LANE, *Organ Donor*

Although this 32-year-old mother of three had not designated herself as an organ donor on her driver's license, her family recognized that it was the right choice to make. Despite the heartache of losing Jody unexpectedly, her family found comfort in the knowledge that she remains a hero in their hearts, as well as in the hearts of her two organ recipients. Giving of herself was a daily hallmark of Jody's character, as described by her loved ones, so it is fitting that she bestowed the gift of life in her passing.



DESIREE BURGE, *Organ Donor*

Desiree, a 39-year-old mother from Moundsville, WV, tragically suffered a stroke and became a donor at WVU Medicine J.W. Ruby Memorial Hospital in Morgantown, WV. She had harbored a lifelong dream of being an organ donor—a sentiment her father, Darrell Conner, shared with the recipient of Desiree's heart, Katherine Schroeder-Herrmann, during an emotional meeting that CORE made possible within months of Desiree's donation (see photo on page 18). Their story gained national attention, including in People Magazine and USA Today and on the show, Inside Edition.



KEITH LOWRY
500th AGH Heart
Transplant Recipient
Dunbar, PA

STARS:

CORE HOSPITAL PARTNERS

Hospitals throughout CORE’s donor service area actively participated in the 2023 PA and WV Hospital Challenges. The goal: to foster cultures of donation within their communities through marketing and clinical activities. In separate state awards ceremonies, CORE celebrated the participating hospitals for their achievements.

PA PARTICIPANTS

AHN Allegheny Valley Hospital	Titanium
AHN Canonsburg Hospital	Titanium
AHN Jefferson Hospital	Titanium
AHN West Penn Hospital	Titanium
AHN Wexford Hospital	Titanium
Conemaugh Memorial Medical Center	Titanium
UPMC Presbyterian	Titanium
AHN Allegheny General Hospital	Platinum
AHN Forbes Hospital	Platinum
AHN Grove City	Platinum
AHN Neighborhood Hospitals	Platinum
AHN Saint Vincent Hospital	Platinum
Armstrong County Memorial Hospital	Platinum
Butler Memorial Hospital	Platinum
Clarion Hospital	Platinum
Conemaugh Meyersdale Medical Center	Platinum
Conemaugh Miners Medical Center	Platinum
Conemaugh Nason Medical Center	Platinum
Excelsa Health Frick Hospital	Platinum
Excelsa Health Westmoreland Hospital	Platinum
Guthrie Robert Packer Hospital	Platinum
Millcreek Community Hospital	Platinum
Penn Highlands DuBois	Platinum
Penn Highlands Elk	Platinum

Titusville Area Hospital	Platinum
UPMC Altoona	Platinum
UPMC Children's Hospital of Pittsburgh	Platinum
UPMC East	Platinum
UPMC Hamot	Platinum
UPMC Magee-Womens Hospital	Platinum
UPMC McKeesport	Platinum
UPMC Mercy	Platinum
UPMC Passavant	Platinum
UPMC Shadyside	Platinum
UPMC Somerset	Platinum
UPMC St. Margaret	Platinum
VA Pittsburgh Healthcare System	Platinum
Warren General Hospital	Platinum
Wellspan Chambersburg Hospital	Platinum
Bradford Regional Medical Center	Gold
Excelsa Health Latrobe Hospital	Gold
UPMC Horizon- Greenville	Gold
UPMC Horizon- Shenango	Gold
UPMC Jameson	Gold
WVU Medicine Uniontown Hospital	Gold
Penn Highlands Brookville	Silver
Penn Highlands Clearfield	Bronze



DONOR FAMILY HONOR WALK

What started as a logistical solution to guide donor families from the Allegheny General Hospital auditorium, following a remembrance ceremony for their loved ones, to the hospital’s on-site donor memorial, turned into a deeply moving tribute. Led by three recent heart transplant recipients holding a sign that read, “Honoring the donors who saved our lives,” nearly 30 donor families embarked on a journey through the hospital. The hallways were lined with hundreds of staff members, each pausing to pay tribute in an honor walk to the donor families, acknowledging them as heroes of donation. This poignant event is now set to become an annual tradition through the partnership between the hospital and CORE.

LIGHTING UP THE NIGHT

UPMC Altoona has begun lighting the hospital blue and green to mark each donor case. The lights, installed specifically for this purpose, are the hospital’s way of honoring heroic donors with Donate Life colors, which symbolize the profound connection we all share through organ, tissue, and cornea donation—a true circle of life. Beyond their stunning visual, the hope is that these lights will serve as beacons of inspiration and gratitude, sparking conversations and encouraging registrations in and around the Altoona area. Among the donors honored at the unveiling ceremony were the three people who became organ donors after their deaths, incredibly, all within the same week and just the month before the initiative began. UPMC Hamot also honors donors by lighting the hospital exterior with blue and green lights.



“CORE applauds the incredible innovation and hard work of our hospital partners. These challenges spurred tremendous outreach and education efforts, ultimately strengthening the connection between donation and transplantation, and allowing CORE to save and heal more lives in 2023.”

WV PARTICIPANTS

Minnie Hamilton Health System	Titanium
Mon Health Marion Neighborhood Hospital	Titanium
Mon Health Medical Center	Titanium
Mon Health Preston Memorial Hospital	Titanium
St. Mary's Medical Center	Titanium
WVU Medicine Braxton County Memorial Hospital	Titanium
WVU Medicine Summersville Regional Medical Center	Titanium
Broaddus Hospital	Platinum
Cabell Huntington Hospital	Platinum
CAMC Memorial Hospital	Platinum
Davis Medical Center	Platinum
Grant Memorial Hospital	Platinum
Logan Regional Medical Center	Platinum
Mon Health Grafton City Hospital	Platinum
Mon Health Stonewall Jackson Memorial Hospital	Platinum
Pocahontas Memorial Hospital	Platinum
WVU Medicine Berkeley Medical Center	Platinum
WVU Medicine J.W. Ruby Memorial Hospital	Platinum
WVU Medicine Reynolds Memorial Hospital	Platinum
WVU Medicine United Hospital Center	Platinum
WVU Medicine Wheeling Hospital	Platinum
Beckley Appalachian Regional Hospital	Gold
Boone Memorial Hospital	Gold
CAMC General Hospital	Gold
CAMC Teays Valley Hospital	Gold
CAMC Women and Children's Hospital	Gold
Summers County Appalachian Regional Hospital	Gold
Webster County Memorial Hospital	Gold
WVU Medicine Camden Clark Medical Center	Gold
WVU Medicine Jackson General Hospital	Gold
WVU Medicine Potomac Valley Hospital	Gold
WVU Medicine Princeton Community Hospital	Gold
WVU Medicine St. Joseph's Hospital	Gold
WVU Medicine Thomas Hospitals	Gold
CAMC Greenbrier Valley Medical Center	Bronze
CAMC Plateau Medical Center	Bronze
Raleigh General Hospital	Bronze



CAMC Transplant Center

partnered with CORE staff and advocates to distribute compassionate care packages to kidney dialysis patients at two medical care facilities in Charleston, West Virginia. These thoughtfully

curated packages contained comforting essentials carefully selected to provide solace and support during the lengthy four-hour dialysis sessions, demonstrating our commitment to enhancing the well-being of those undergoing treatment.

WVU Medicine J.W. Ruby Memorial Hospital

saw a record year in 2023 with 58 organ, 63 tissue, and 49 cornea donors. Among these donors was an individual whose generosity made possible the 100th solid organ transplant by WVU Medicine and the WVU Medicine Transplant Alliance. This transplant, which rescued a man in his fifties from the grips of organ failure, signified a momentous chapter in the program's history. It stands as a testament to the dedication and expertise of WVU and CORE medical professionals, as well as the unwavering support of the West Virginia community.



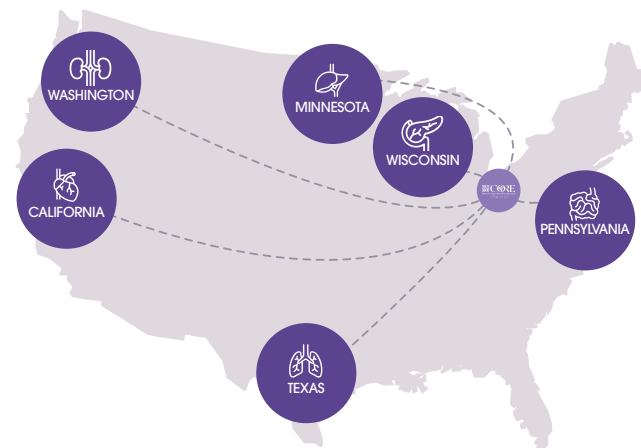
FARTHER THAN EVER BEFORE

Organs recovered from donors managed by CORE are now traveling farther than ever before, thanks to a new allocation model called continuous distribution, which eliminates strict geographical boundaries and prioritizes the sickest patients regardless of location.

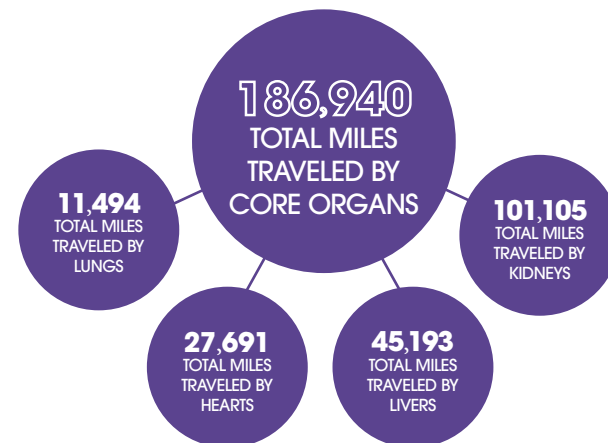
Before continuous distribution, 75% of CORE's organs were transplanted within a 125-mile radius. Now, around 75% are transported over considerable distances, necessitating the use of private planes. In 2023, organs recovered by CORE traveled to 30 states outside the CORE donor service area.

CORE relies on Washington County, PA-based Skyward Aviation for our aviation transportation needs. Utilizing their two Learjet 31 aircraft to transport medical teams and organs to hospitals across the United States, Skyward now averages nearly 40 life-saving missions monthly.

Since continuous distribution took effect over the last 24 months, CORE's transportation costs have increased two-fold. The increased transportation costs are recognized as necessary expenses to maintain the quality and efficiency of the transplantation process.



CORE organs and the farthest each was transplanted in 2023.



Delivering
healing
today
and
hope
for
TOMORROW.

ANSLEY STIGERS
Heart Recipient
Somerset, PA

REACH: IN THE COMMUNITY

LAX FOR LIFE

In October, CORE collaborated with Mercyhurst University men's lacrosse, led by former player and heart transplant recipient Ryan Scoble, to organize the inaugural Lax for Life event at Saxon Stadium. Six teams, including college and high school squads, participated in exhibition games, accompanied by concessions, raffle baskets, and local vendor booths. All proceeds from the event were donated to CORE. Notably, Ryan Scoble underwent his transplant in 2021, and just four months later, his father, Steve, also received a life-saving heart transplant, adding a poignant twist to their story.

Pictured above: Ryan Scoble speaks to the crowd. He was joined by Janice Derner, whose 14-year-old daughter, Sophie, was an organ donor.



HUNT. FISH. DONATE LIFE.

CORE advocates showed strong support at the West Virginia Hunting and Fishing Show in Charleston. CORE t-shirts were distributed to existing donors and those who registered to become donors. A record-breaking forty-three people signed up to become organ donors at this event. Since 2019, individuals obtaining hunting and fishing licenses in West Virginia have the option to register as organ donors. Since its inception, over 40,000 Mountaineers have pledged to donate their organs.

Pictured above: living donor and CORE volunteer Pam King at the 2022 West Virginia Hunting and Fishing Show.



ADVOCATE APPRECIATION PICNICS

This year's Annual Advocate (Volunteer) Appreciation event took a different approach from our usual dinner format, opting for a casual picnic setting—a joyful return to in-person gatherings after a four-year pandemic-induced hiatus. CORE hosted two picnics, one in Charleston and the other in Pittsburgh, to express sincere appreciation for our dedicated volunteers. At both gatherings, guests received a CORE polo shirt as a token of our gratitude. These picnics serve not only as a gesture of appreciation but also as a means of energizing our volunteers for their vital community work and promoting awareness for our cause. We look forward to returning to our traditional dinner format in 2024 to continue celebrating our volunteers' invaluable contributions.

Pictured top: CORE'S Director of Public Affairs and Donor Family Services, Colleen Sullivan (right) speaks to tissue recipient and CORE advocate Chip Crawford at the 2023 Advocate Appreciation Picnic. Middle: CORE Advocates Arthur Young and Ella Rawlings. Bottom: The Pleasants; husband Frank is a heart transplant recipient.



Honoring donors and caring for their FAMILIES.

DARRELL CONNER
Donor Dad
Moundsville, WV

SPECIAL PLACE DONOR CEREMONY

CORE hosted our annual "A Special Place" ceremonies on Sunday, September 10, and Sunday, October 15, to honor the selfless contributions of our 2022 organ, tissue, and cornea donors from Western Pennsylvania and West Virginia.

In Pittsburgh, 239 organ donors, 856 tissue donors, and 732 cornea donors were remembered, collectively saving 585 lives and benefiting nearly 70,000 individuals. More than 700 family members gathered at CORE's headquarters for touching moments including the re-dedication of the memorial wall, a symbolic balloon release, and a dove release. American Idol contestant Nate Walker performed a moving tribute, and heartfelt stories were shared by speakers such as Janice and Ryan Derner, parents of organ donor Sophie, age 14, and heart transplant recipient Victor Wilson. Attendees later convened for a reception at the Pittsburgh Shrine Center, where a touching video tribute honored the donors.

In Charleston, West Virginia, 41 families gathered at The Clay Center to recognize 120 organ donors and 333 cornea and tissue donors. Speakers including Paul Ronk, Larry Moore, and David Ball shared poignant reflections, while families pinned homemade quilt squares in remembrance of their loved ones. The ceremony concluded with a moving donor family honor walk, uniting attendees in remembrance and gratitude.



FOCUS

ON THE CORE EYE BANK



AMANDA YUHAS, CTBS

Technical Ocular Specialist/Community Liaison, CORE

Although a CORE staff member for more than a decade, Amanda recently joined the CORE eye bank. In her new role, Amanda will provide surgeons, surgical staff, and the eye banking community with her expertise in ocular knowledge.



AARON WANG MD, PHD

Corneal Transplant Surgeon

A surgeon at Pittsburgh's Glaucoma Cataract Consultants, Dr. Wang specializes in corneal transplantation and minimally invasive glaucoma surgeries. Dr. Wang recently gave CORE volunteers a glimpse into the latest in cornea transplant technology at the CORE Advocate Kick-Off!

EBAA ACCREDITATION

With a 99% site inspection performance score, the CORE Eye Bank received a three-year re-accreditation from the Accreditation Board of the Eye Bank Association of America (EBAA) for the following eye banking functions: Recovery, Processing, Tissue Storage, Final Distribution, Tissue Evaluation, and Donor Eligibility Determination. The recognition was awarded during the recent EBAA Annual Meeting held in Dallas, TX.



LES LUNT

*Cornea Recipient
Belle Vernon, PA*

After Les developed Fuchs Dystrophy, he required corneal transplants to restore his sight. Dr. Aaron Wang performed the transplants that allowed Les to see clearly again. He is excited to do all of the things he once loved, like tinkering with his gadgets and reading the newspaper – now without glasses: "I'm so appreciative of CORE and all of the work that they do to give so many people hope, healing, and a second chance at life...also, Dr. Wang has been so great throughout this entire process. And I am extremely grateful to my donors and their families because without them I would not be sharing this story of my restored vision."

Pictured above: Les with his wife and his granddaughter and namesake, Leslie Lash, who is not only a CORE Professional Services Liaison, but also had the honor of delivering her grandfather's cornea before his transplant. Pictured right: Dr. Wang, Les Lunt, CORE COO Kurt Shutterly, and Leslie Lash.



AWARDS AND ACCOLADES



AOPO LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT AWARD

Susan Stuart, CORE President/Chief Executive Officer

Susan Stuart was honored with the prestigious Association of Organ Procurement Organizations (AOPO) Lifetime Achievement Award in recognition of her significant contributions to the field of donation. From her early days as a front line nurse to her current role as President/CEO of CORE, Susan has, for more than three decades, tirelessly worked to advance the field, saving and healing countless lives while providing solace to grieving families and hope to those awaiting transplants. Her notable achievements include pioneering the “routine referral” initiative, which is now federal law, and leading CORE to win the Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award in 2019. The award was announced at the 2023 AOPO Annual Meeting in Orlando.



PITTSBURGH BUSINESS TIMES C-SUITE AWARD

Kurt Shutterly, CORE Chief Operating Officer

Kurt Shutterly was honored as a distinguished leader among Pittsburgh executives. He received the prestigious Pittsburgh Business Times C-Suite Award in recognition of his exceptional leadership, significant contributions to CORE, and active involvement in the community. Accompanied by his wife, mother, and children, Kurt graciously accepted the award in person at the awards dinner held in November at the Westin Hotel in Pittsburgh.

2023 USE OF FUNDS





204 Sigma Drive
Pittsburgh, PA 15238

www.core.org

800-DONORS-7

contactcore@core.org