



Advocate HANDBOOK



Center for Organ Recovery & Education

A Pledge for Life

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Kidney recipient Cybele Boehm and daughter Isabella in Charleston, WV.

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Welcome

The Center for Organ Recovery & Education (CORE) is pleased to welcome you as a CORE Advocate. CORE strives to provide individuals with an opportunity to make *A Pledge for Life* through organ, tissue and cornea donation. We hope you will join us in sharing this life-saving message throughout our community.

CORE's Advocate program is continually evolving, and our goal is to provide you with a worthwhile and challenging volunteer experience. This handbook was developed to help familiarize you with information about CORE and to assist you in understanding your rights and responsibilities as an advocate for our organization and our cause. As we continue to grow and change, we welcome new Advocates and encourage you to share your suggestions and comments at any time.

We hope your volunteer experience will be rewarding and look forward to working together to save and heal lives through donation.

Colleen Sullivan

Colleen Sullivan

Director of Communications, Donor Family Services & Fund Development

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Donor family member Ines Brady near her home in Pittsburgh, PA. Her husband, Michael, was a tissue donor.



1. The Organization

Heart recipient Gene Wolbert volunteering at Uniontown Hospital.

Mission & Vision

CORE is one of 58 federally designated not-for-profit organ procurement organizations (OPOs) in the United States, serving nearly five million people in western Pennsylvania, West Virginia and Chemung County, New York.

Like all OPOs, CORE coordinates the surgical recovery and matching of organs, tissues and corneas for transplantation within our service region. CORE is also entrusted with the privilege of supporting donor families during the donation process and beyond. CORE's **VISION** is that every potential donor will make *A Pledge for Life*, ultimately ending the deaths of those on the National Transplant Waiting List, all the while maintaining integrity for the donation process, dignity for the organ, tissue and cornea donors, and compassion for their families.

CORE partners with the staff from more than 140 hospitals, as well as funeral directors, coroners and medical examiners, to offer hope and a second chance at life to the thousands of people who are waiting nationwide for life-saving and healing organ, tissue and cornea transplants.

Through public education initiatives, awareness events and media campaigns, CORE works tirelessly to create a culture of donation within the hospitals and communities we serve. Our hope is that by fostering a greater understanding of donation and transplantation, we offer hope to those waiting, while also honoring the truest heroes of donation: the donors and their families.

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



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Values

CORE has a strong foundation of values that staff and Advocates must recognize and exhibit as they perform our life-saving mission:

COMPASSION

CORE honors its donors and donor families; without them, transplantation would not be possible. They are the heart of this organization and the foundation of our mission. We are respectful of the gift of life and give tribute to our donors by showing compassion for their families and their recipients.

EDUCATION

CORE recognizes that education is needed to uphold public trust and for the public to make informed donation decisions. We continually educate the community about organ, tissue and cornea donation, the need for donors, the donation process and common misconceptions.

INNOVATION

CORE is a long-standing pioneer in the organ and tissue procurement field. Through program development, service expansion and research, CORE's state-of-the-art approach has made it an award-winning organ procurement organization.

INTEGRITY

CORE would not exist without the trust and support of the community it serves. We rely on public oversight and, in return, offer transparency as we fulfill our mission. As a non-profit organization, we are fiscally responsible and maintain high performance standards.

LIFE

Most importantly, we value the legacy of life that our donors have left and the second chance at life that transplant recipients have gained as a result.

QUALITY

CORE upholds stringent clinical standards to ensure the quality of donated organs, tissue and corneas. We are compliant in all aspects of organ, tissue and cornea procurement.

RESPECT

CORE has respect for both death and life. We provide hope when life is lost, all the while maintaining the dignity of our donors.

RESPONSIVENESS

CORE operates in a fast-paced, detail-oriented manner. Our staff is available any time to meet the needs of our donors and their families, our hospitals and partners, and the community we serve.

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Living kidney donor Michaela
Alt near her home in Beaver
County, PA.



President & CEO



CORE President & CEO, Susan Stuart

*“Over and over, the
commitment
and enthusiasm shown by
our Advocates is extraordinary.
Their efforts to create a
culture of donation
throughout the communities we serve have
not only further strengthened that critical link
between donation and transplantation, but
have also offered CORE the opportunities to
care for donors
and their families, to give hope to those
waiting for life-saving organs
and tissues, and ultimately
to save and heal the
lives of so many.”*

Susan A. Stuart began her career in healthcare as a registered nurse, working in the trauma ICU at Allegheny General Hospital. It was here that she witnessed first-hand the comfort that donation offers donor families and the second chance at life that it offers recipients. In fact, Susan was so moved by the work CORE was doing on behalf of donor families and recipients that she left AGH and took a job as an organ and tissue procurement coordinator with CORE.

Over the next decade, Susan rose to the level of assistant executive director at CORE before becoming director of clinical operations at the University of Pittsburgh Medical Center (UPMC) in 1999. At UPMC, she oversaw the clinical operations of 150 critical care beds, and managed daily operations for UPMC's respiratory care and renal dialysis departments.

In 2004, Susan returned to CORE to assume the lead role as president and CEO. Today, she's honored to lead a staff of more than one hundred employees who, like herself, believe that donation is the right choice for every grieving family as well as for the recipients who receive those precious gifts of life.

Susan currently serves on several boards of directors, which include Donate Life America and the United Network for Organ Sharing (UNOS). Susan is the past president of the Association of Organ Procurement Organizations (AOPO), which represents more than 50 federally-designated organ procurement organizations (OPOs) across the country. She most recently served as the president for the 2013-14 term.

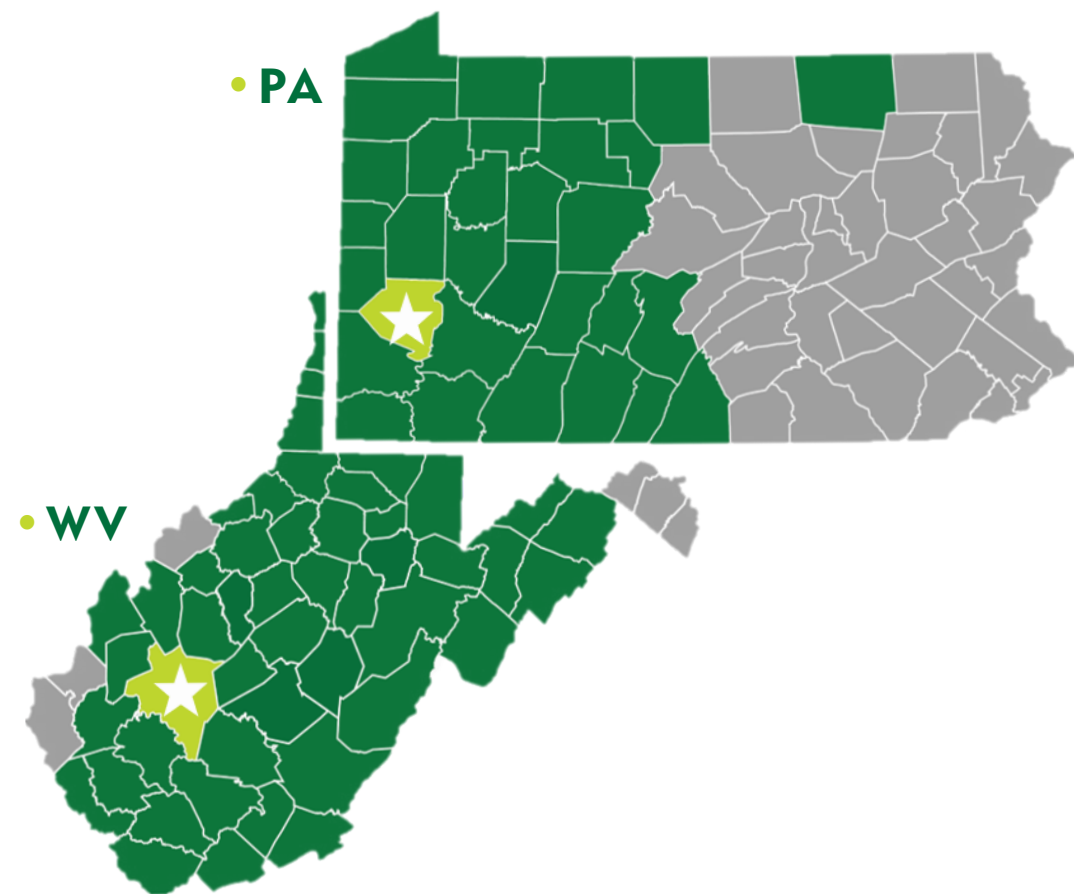
In 2016, Susan completed the year-long Baldrige Executive Fellows Program — nationally recognized as one of the top continuing education programs in leadership development worldwide.

She is active in many community activities, including volunteering with the Salvation Army, being a member of the Fox Chapel Rotary, serving as an honorary member of the Team Alleghenies Transplant team for the Transplant Games of America, and raising awareness for autism. Along with the CORE staff, she has participated in United Way's Days of Caring.

Susan holds a bachelor's degree in nursing from Duquesne University and a master's degree in public management from Carnegie Mellon University.



Donor Service Area



Hospital Partners

CORE serves more than 140 hospitals in western Pennsylvania and West Virginia. Seven of the hospitals also perform organ transplants:

- Allegheny General Hospital
- Charleston Area Medical Center
- UPMC Children's Hospital of Pittsburgh
- UPMC Hamot
- UPMC Presbyterian
- VA Pittsburgh Healthcare System
- WVU Medicine Ruby Memorial Hospital

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Then-waiting list candidate,
now-heart recipient Marty
Brown at his home in Corry, PA.

Vicky Keene of Charleston, WV was waiting for a double lung transplant at the time this photo was taken. She has since received that life-saving transplant.

2. Being an Advocate

Pay Tribute. Give Back. Advocate.

Thank you for deciding to volunteer for CORE and officially take an active role in CORE's life-saving mission as a CORE Advocate. The opportunities to advocate for organ, tissue and cornea donation are endless – whether you're remembering your loved one, celebrating the precious gift you received or honoring all those affected by donation.

You can find a fit that is unique to your interests and availability. We have a role for you on our team doing anything from registering new organ donors, sharing your story or helping at events. CORE Advocates are true ambassadors for organ, tissue and cornea donation, and its power to save, heal and transform lives.

HONOR

You will join a community of people affected by donation.

Our team of Advocates is driven by donor families, recipients, living donors and individuals waiting for a transplant. You'll not only make a difference, you'll also have your own support system.

HOPE

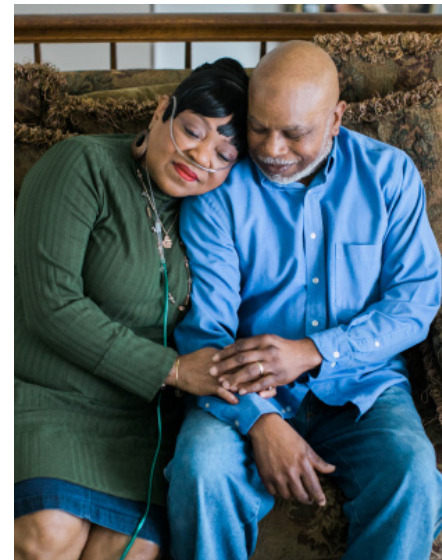
You will inspire others to register as donors.

There's a significant shortage of organs, tissues and corneas for transplant, so the need to act is crucial. You're uniquely qualified to champion this cause and can inspire others to contribute as well as offer hope to those waiting for a life-saving transplant.

HEAL

You will have the power to save lives.

No matter why you decide to spend your time advocating with us, your efforts help help those waiting by putting us one step closer to ensuring every person in need of an organ transplant receives one.



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Ways to Participate

DONOR DESIGNATION STATIONS

Advocates participating in donor designation stations will discuss organ, tissue and cornea donation with the public, and encourage people to register. Typical venues include health fairs, expos and community events. Advocates may recommend or schedule events on their own to host a donor designation station. Volunteers complete CORE Advocates 101 training prior to participating.

YOUTH EDUCATION COMMITTEE

Youth Education Committee members will conduct educational programs in local schools. Varying opportunities exist for different grade levels — middle schools, high schools, technical schools and universities. Advocates will also assist in relationship building with schoolteachers and administrators. All Advocates wishing to conduct presentations must complete the Youth Educator training prior to participation.

OFFICE ASSISTANT

Advocates in the Pittsburgh area may volunteer as office assistants at CORE's headquarters, offering critical support with office tasks such as entering data, assembling information packets and preparing mailings.

SPEAKER

As a CORE Advocate, you can volunteer to share your personal story with a variety of audiences. Your story could inspire someone else to make *A Pledge for Life*. Advocates wishing to be a CORE speaker must complete CORE Speaker Training.

DMV AMBASSADOR

Advocates across the service area may volunteer to make site visits to assigned PennDOT or West Virginia DMV locations in their neighborhood. They will build relationships with DMV techs and monitor the stock of organ donation awareness materials.

COMMUNITY HEALTH CENTER AMBASSADOR

Advocates may be CORE Ambassadors to a community health center in their neighborhood. Ambassadors will build relationships with health center staff, support donation awareness events in partnership with the health center, and help manage CORE materials and resources for the office.

SPECIAL EVENTS VOLUNTEER

Advocates may assist with annual CORE events including "A Special Place" donor memorial celebrations.



Opposite: DeSean Fountain was an organ donor after he was killed by a stray bullet when he was walking home from school. He was only 14 years old. His mother and sister honor his legacy as a donor in their Pittsburgh, PA home.

Advocacy Training

We want to be sure that you feel confident and prepared for whichever volunteer activity you wish to pursue. In addition to the education that you will receive at our quarterly Advocates meetings and Annual Advocate Kick-Off, the following trainings are available to ensure you're ready to advocate.

CORE ADVOCATES 101

All Advocates are required to complete this course. It is offered online during the application process or in-person as needed. Its purpose is to familiarize you with the basics of organ donation and CORE's role in the donation and transplantation process.

YOUTH EDUCATOR TRAINING

The Youth Educator Training is designed for Advocates who wish to take part in educating high school students across our service area. It will prepare Advocates to present CORE's basic youth educational PowerPoint and answer questions. The training is completed in three phases:

1. One-on-one review of presentation and content
2. Advocate shadows a CORE presenter
3. CORE staff member shadows an Advocate

CORE SPEAKER TRAINING

This is an opportunity for our Advocates to be trained to share their story with a variety of audiences, from clinical groups to community audiences to media interviews. An outline is provided prior to the training, and Advocates will have the opportunity to receive assistance in crafting their story for particular occasions. We will also share tips about speaking in all public settings.

Using VolunteerHub

VolunteerHub is a web-based software designed to create an enhanced volunteer experience. It enables CORE Advocates to view available volunteer opportunities, learn about the requirements and register with the click of a button.

Advocates are able to log on to view and manage their event schedules as well as review past participation hours that they've accumulated. CORE staff members utilize VolunteerHub to communicate via email and, occasionally, via text message so it is imperative that all Advocates create a profile on the Hub.

Check out www.core.volunteerhub.com on your computer, tablet or mobile phone to get started!

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Jeremy Weyandt, a double lung recipient from Altoona, PA, with his son.





Living kidney donor JoAnne Burka in Charleston, WV.

Finding Advocate Opportunities

Although CORE does its best to present volunteer opportunities, with hundreds of active volunteers, CORE relies on its Advocates to identify ways to support our mission. The good news is that every day, someone is promoting some type of event – be on the lookout! If you’ve researched a lead that you think would be a good event or speaking opportunity, please contact your Volunteer Coordinator with the information. Events must meet budget considerations and be an appropriate venue. The event/ speaking opportunity will be evaluated for participation. Below are many examples of things that you can seek out independently in your local community.



POSSIBLE DONOR DRIVE LOCATIONS

- Community Day events
- Employer’s health fairs
- Employer’s benefit fairs
- Earth Day events
- Health festivals

POSSIBLE SPEAKING VENUES

- House of worship
- Rotary
- Lions
- Kiwanis

RECRUIT CORE ADVOCATES

- Transplant support groups
- Bereavement support groups
- Community events
- Friends and family
- Social media

SCHOOL PROGRAMS

The school you or your loved one attends may want to host an awareness event/donation drive. This could include a presentation during class, a school assembly, a sporting event or some other school activity. If you'd like to reach out to a school, or have already reached out to a school, please let our coordinator who oversees school education, Francesca Ferrante, know.

RELIGIOUS GROUPS

No matter what your denomination, all major religious groups support donation, viewing it as a generous act. Here are some ways to promote donation in a religious setting:

- Participate in National Donor Sabbath, a weekend dedicated to intensifying educational efforts among places of worship to promote understanding of organ, tissue and cornea donation.
- Include a message about donation in your bulletin/newsletter or on your website.
- Organize a candle-lighting ceremony or prayer vigil to honor donors, donor families, recipients and those who have signed donor cards.
- Host a donation workshop, prayer breakfast or health fair with an informational display on donation and presentations by donor families, transplant recipients, patients awaiting transplantation or transplant professionals.

If you'd like to reach out to a house of worship, or have already reached out to one, please let our coordinator who oversees religious education, Lisa Strother-Upsher, know.

MEDIA

We know that our Advocates are passionate about getting the word out about donation, but reaching out to the media blindly isn't always the best approach. Because it all comes down to telling the right story in the right way, we ask that you contact Katelynn Metz, our communications coordinator, if you'd like to approach the media with your story.

WORKPLACE PARTNERS

Small businesses or Advocate workplaces are often a great opportunity to spread awareness. Through partnerships on social media or at wellness or Human Resources events, if you'd like more information on CORE's Workplace Partners Program, please let our coordinator who oversees the annual CORE Small Business Challenge, Andy Nichols, know.

Kidney recipient Ron Jones in Logan, WV.



Annual Events & Observances

ADVOCATE KICK-OFF

The Advocate Kick-Off is held in **January** at CORE and in Charleston, WV. The purpose of this event is to receive high-level training from leaders in the donation and transplantation community, and have the opportunity to network and engage with Advocates from across CORE's donor service area.

NATIONAL DONATE LIFE MONTH

Held annually throughout **April**, National Donate Life Month was established in 2003. Every day in April, people across the U.S. make a special effort to celebrate the tremendous generosity of those who have saved lives by becoming organ, tissue and cornea donors, and to encourage more Americans to follow their fine example.

ADVOCATE APPRECIATION

The CORE Advocates volunteer recognition ceremony is held each year in Pittsburgh, Erie and Charleston. At these events, pins are awarded to volunteers at their 5-year mark of advocacy for CORE and at each milestone after that, in increments of 5 years. CORE also recognizes an Advocate of the Year and Rookie of the Year at each location. Advocates accruing more than 100 hours of volunteerism are honored at this event with the Presidential Volunteer Service Award.

In 2018, The Rudy Molnar Lifetime of Giving Award was added to the ceremony. This award, in honor of CORE Advocate and Board member Rudy Molnar, was created to recognize an individual's outstanding efforts furthering CORE's life-saving mission, especially in the field of volunteerism. Advocates are able to nominate their peers for recognition of this award.

ECHO DONATE LIFE

Held annually in **July**, ECHO Donate Life is an initiative focused on making the Donate Life message one of diversity and inclusion. It is about empowering multicultural communities to save and heal lives by registering as organ, tissue and cornea donors. ECHO stands for "Every Community Has Opportunity" and the goal is to equip people with tools and resources to have meaningful conversations about donation and transplantation. ECHO Donate Life was created in 2015 as a collaborative partnership between the Association for Multicultural Affairs in Transplantation (AMAT) and Donate Life America.

NATIONAL DONOR SABBATH

National Donor Sabbath is observed on the Friday through Sunday that falls two weekends before Thanksgiving in **November**. The 3-day observance seeks to include the days of worship of most major religions practiced in the United States. Faith leaders participate in services and programs to increase awareness of donation and transplantation, and the critical need for donors.

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Heart recipient Faith Kilkeary and her mom, Julie, at their home in Wexford, PA.



Standards

AN EXTENSION OF OUR WORKFORCE

CORE is so glad to have you participate in activities and events to support our mission. We value your advocacy so much that we really think of you as an extension of our workforce. In being a true representation of our organization, we ask that you keep in mind these guidelines for participation. We want to be sure that every person that meets our CORE staff and Advocates is left with a positive and professional impression which reflects our CORE values and standards.

DRESS CODE

Advocates are encouraged to wear their “Advocates for Life” name badge for all volunteer opportunities. Below is a list of acceptable attire based on the different volunteer opportunities (unless otherwise noted).

- Donor designation stations or casual community events: CORE provided shirt, black/khaki pants or nice jeans or shorts (summer), and nice shoes (sneakers in the summer only)
- Sharing your story/speaking: Professional dress
- CORE administrative: Business casual dress

GUIDELINES FOR PUBLIC EVENTS

- Please review this handbook and resource guide prior to arriving at a donor designation station or community event. This preparation helps ensure efficiency and success throughout all of our community outreach efforts.
- We encourage you to share your personal experiences with donation and/or transplantation. However, please use caution while talking about your experience and remember that some details may be too graphic, emotional or uncomfortable for the general public. It is wise to restrain from details and instead express a broad view of your experience, including how the experience has positively affected your life.
- Please ensure that every new donor designation card is filled out completely.
- A minimum of one “active” Advocate or CORE staff member must remain at the booth/designation station at all times.
- Be sure to maintain a neat, tidy and secure booth at all times.
- Please be cordial and polite to the public at all times, regardless of differing opinions or views on organ, tissue and cornea donation.

Heart recipient Jameson McKain at his home in Washington, PA.



Policies & Procedures

ACTIVE VOLUNTEER STATUS & PARTICIPATION REQUIREMENTS

Advocates must volunteer or participate in at least one CORE activity within a 12-month period to maintain “active” status in the CORE Advocates program. Advocates that do not fulfill a minimum of one volunteer opportunity within 12 months will be changed to an “inactive” status and will not continue to receive volunteer communications.

CONFIDENTIALITY AND CONDUCT

Advocates will be interacting with CORE staff and might have access to information of a sensitive and confidential nature. All Advocates are required to sign a Confidentiality Agreement upon the start of their volunteer relationship with CORE, agreeing that all privileged information remains confidential. Additionally, CORE requires all Advocates to sign off in agreement of CORE’s Code of Conduct to ensure appropriate behavior and professionalism is maintained throughout an Advocate’s term of service.

WORK ENVIRONMENT

The majority of all CORE Advocate opportunities take place at various venues and locations within the greater western Pennsylvania and West Virginia communities. Some Advocates assist on an administrative level in the office. All Advocates helping with administrative tasks will be provided with a work space, appropriate equipment and access to necessary resources to accomplish assigned projects. Advocates working in the office are encouraged to take breaks and lunch at their leisure.

VIOLENCE IN THE WORKPLACE

CORE strongly believes that all Advocates should be treated with dignity and respect. Acts of violence will not be tolerated. Any instances of violence must be reported to the Volunteer Coordinator and/or the Human Resources Department. All complaints will be fully investigated. CORE will promptly respond to any incident or suggestion of violence. Violation of this policy will result in disciplinary action, up to and including immediate termination from the CORE Advocates program.

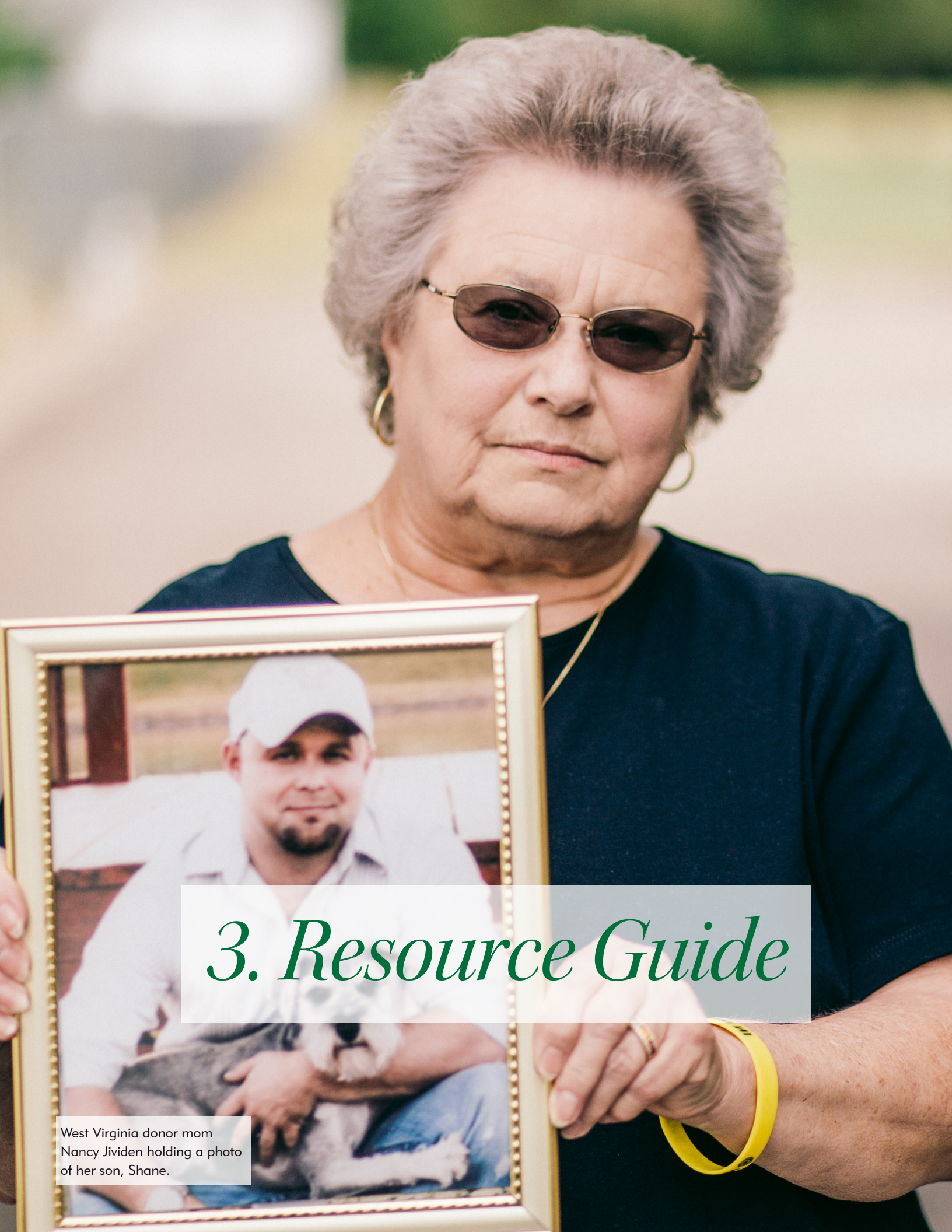
SAFETY TRAINING

CORE Advocates must receive annual safety training on topics including active shooter situations, hazardous driving and slips/falls.

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Rosie Vargas, Cranberry, PA, when she was awaiting her second liver transplant. She has since received a life-saving liver and is healthy.

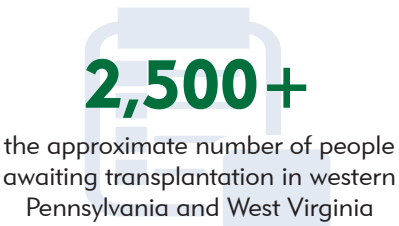
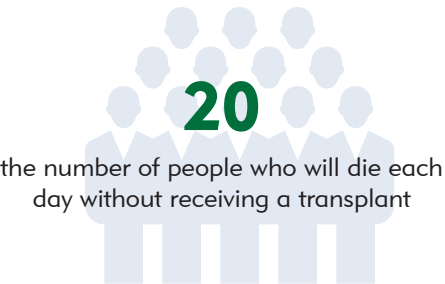
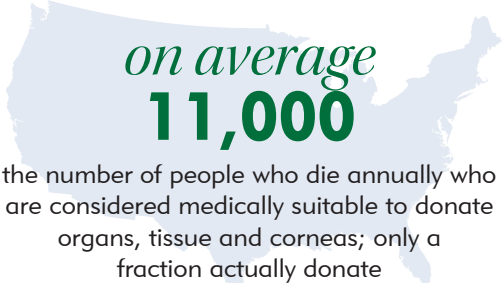




West Virginia donor mom
Nancy Jividen holding a photo
of her son, Shane.

3. Resource Guide

By the Numbers



Dispelling the Myths

| MYTH | FACT |
|--|--|
| My body will be mutilated and disfigured if I would donate. | Doctors maintain the utmost respect for the donor and organs are removed in a routine operation similar to other types of surgeries. Organ and tissue donation will not interfere with traditional funeral arrangements such as an open casket. |
| Organs go to people who didn't take care of theirs. | Organs go to people who were born with or developed diseases that have caused organ failure. Less than 5% of those waiting need a transplant because of their own behaviors or choices. For those people, they must achieve and sustain sobriety before they can be listed for a transplant. |
| I am too old to become an organ donor. | No one is ever too old or too young to give the gift of life. Every potential donor is evaluated on a case-by-case basis at the time of their death to determine which organs and tissue are suitable for donation. |
| I am too sick to donate. | Few illnesses or conditions prevent someone from being a donor. People with diabetes, heart disease, cancer, hepatitis and even HIV have saved lives through organ and tissue donation. At the time of death, CORE reviews medical and social histories to determine suitability for donation. Although someone may not be able to donate blood, it does not always prevent the individual from donating organs and/or tissue. |
| My family will have to pay for costs related to my donation. | Donors and their families are not responsible for any costs related to donation. All costs are incurred by the organ procurement organization. |

| MYTH | FACT |
|---|---|
| My religion does not support donation. | All major religions consider organ donation to be an individual decision, or support it and see it as the final act of love and generosity toward others. |
| Wealthy people are the only people who receive transplants. | Financial and celebrity status do not determine who receives a transplant. A national computer network, maintained by the United Network for Organ Sharing (UNOS), matches organs according to height, weight and blood type, followed by medical urgency and then time accrued on the waiting list. Age, race, gender, religious affiliation or financial status are not factors that determine who receives a transplant. |
| There is no difference between brain death and being in a coma. | Brain death is pronounced when there is a lack of blood and oxygen flow to the brain. Brain death is the medical, legal and moral determination of death. To verify brain death, a series of tests are performed over a period of time, and more than one diagnosis is required before the donor's family is presented with the opportunity to donate. There is no recovery from brain death. |



Heart recipient Brandy Sweeney at home in WV with her family.



Using the Right Words

Language is very powerful; it can perpetuate misconceptions or offer a space for awareness. Help CORE foster a better understanding of donation and save lives by using the correct donation terminology.

In 2005, the Association of Organ Procurement Organizations (AOPO) standardized appropriate donation terminology. AOPO reasoned that avoiding words and phrases that cause concern among donor families and the general public would increase both understanding and acceptance of the donation process. This terminology is unanimously supported and used by the American Society of Transplantation (AST) and American Society of Transplant Surgeons (ASTS), and has been adopted by the American Journal of Transplantation.

To show respect and sensitivity to those who give the gift of life and their loved ones, we request that only appropriate terms be used when referring to organ, tissue and cornea donation.

APPROPRIATE TERMS INAPPROPRIATE TERMS

| | |
|--|------------------------|
| "Recover" organs | "Harvest" organs |
| "Recovery" of organs | "Harvesting" of organs |
| "Donation" of organs | "To harvest" organs |
| "Deceased" donation | "Cadaver" donation |
| "Deceased" donor | "Cadaveric" donor |
| "Mechanical" support or "ventilated" support | "Life" support |
| Organs, tissue and corneas | "Body parts" |
| "Brain death" | "Coma" |
| "Enhanced" risk | "High" risk |

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Anna Oldham with her children in Bedford, PA. Her son, Jason, age 7, was an organ donor.

The Organ *Donation* Process



TRAUMA/INJURY

The opportunity for organ, tissue and cornea donation most often results from an individual sustaining an injury that causes brain death, which means the brain has stopped working and will not work again. Common causes of brain death are motor vehicle crashes, head injuries or strokes, as well as drug overdoses.



LIFE-SAVING EFFORTS EXHAUSTED

A person is evaluated for organ donation only after all life-saving measures have been taken. The sole purpose of first responders, hospital staff and doctors is always to save a patient's life. The hospital staff working to save a patient's life are separate from the transplant team. A patient is not evaluated for donation until tests confirm that recovery is not possible.



DEATH

Organ donation requires a patient to be in a hospital and on a ventilator when the individual is pronounced brain dead. If a patient experiences cardiac death, which means the heart has stopped and will not work again, the individual will be evaluated for tissue and cornea donation. Hospital personnel notify the OPO, such as CORE, of each death within their hospital.



DONOR EVALUATION

An initial screening, done by the OPO, determines the donor's suitability for organ, tissue and cornea donation. If found to be a suitable candidate, and after authorization has been confirmed or obtained, the OPO works with the donor's family to compile a complete medical and social history before proceeding.



MATCHING & RECOVERY

The donor's information is entered into a national database and the computer matches the organs with transplant candidates in most critical need. A team of organ transplant surgeons and OPO staff recovers the organs, tissue and corneas.



FOLLOW-UP CARE

Following recovery of the organs, tissue and corneas, the donor's family can proceed with funeral arrangements. Donor families receive bereavement care for a minimum of 13 months after their loved one's donations.

The Organ *Transplantation* Process



THE DIAGNOSIS

Many diseases can destroy the body's organs. In fact, half the people who receive heart transplants are healthy until a virus destroys their heart muscle. Kidneys often are damaged by untreated high blood pressure or diabetes, while the liver can be damaged severely by hepatitis, hereditary illnesses or environmental causes.



PLACEMENT ON THE LIST

A physician determines that, because of end-stage organ failure, a patient could be helped through transplantation. The patient then goes for evaluation to a hospital that performs organ transplants. After undergoing a series of tests by a medical team to determine if the patient meets the requirements for a transplant, the patient's name is entered on the national transplant waiting list. Major insurers will cover the costs of transplants, as will Medicare.



WAITING

Depending on how sick a patient is and when an organ becomes available, he or she may have to wait anywhere from one day to several years for a transplant. Medical urgency — not time on the list — is the primary factor in determining who receives priority. Another name is added to the national transplant waiting list every 10 minutes. More than 6,500 people die every year without receiving a second chance through transplantation.



THE CALL

Through CORE, the transplant surgeon accepts an organ for a transplant candidate. If the patient is not in the hospital, the surgeon or a transplant nurse will call the candidate, who has to get to the transplant hospital typically within four hours. The physicians and nurses ensure that the candidate is prepared for the transplant. If the first candidate on the list who matches the donor has a cold, fever or other condition that will make them unstable for surgery, the organ will be offered to the next candidate.



THE TRANSPLANT

Once the organ arrives at the hospital, the transplant can begin. The length of time necessary for the organ transplant will depend on many factors, including the type and number of organs being transplanted.

Transplantable Organs & Tissues

HEART ■

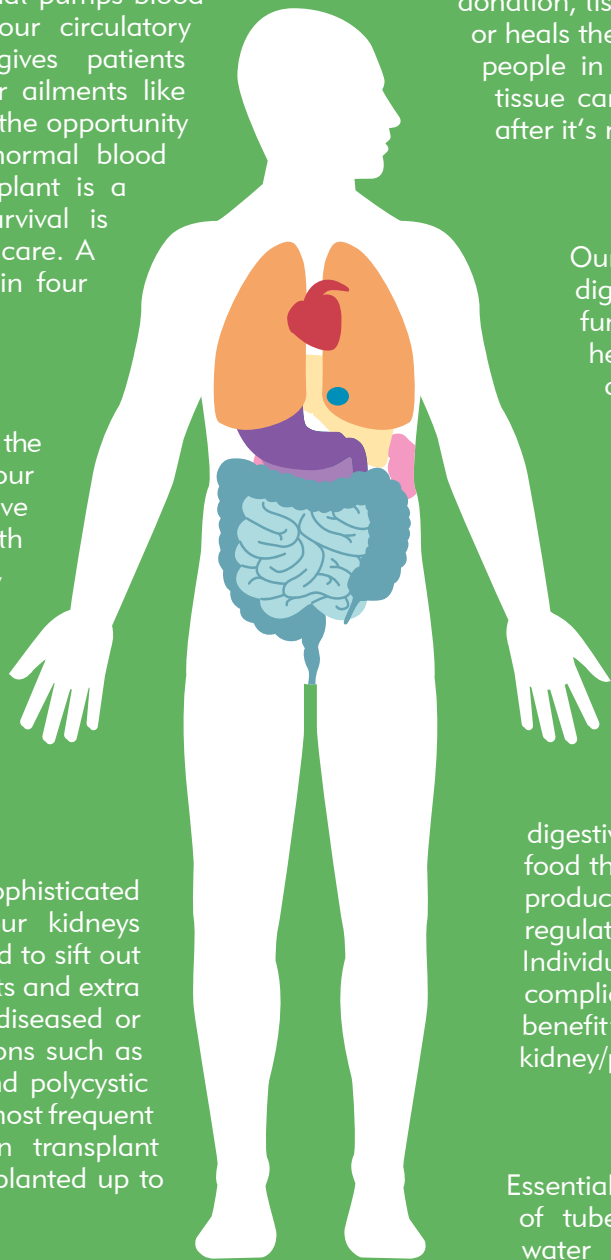
The heart is a muscular organ that pumps blood through the blood vessels of our circulatory system. A heart transplant gives patients with congenital heart disease or ailments like cardiomyopathy and myocarditis the opportunity to have a normal heart with normal blood circulation. While a heart transplant is a major operation, chance of survival is good with appropriate follow-up care. A heart must be transplanted within four hours.

LUNGS ■

Lungs extract oxygen from the atmosphere and transfer it into our bloodstream. Donated lungs save the lives of those afflicted with conditions such as cystic fibrosis, pulmonary hypertension, pulmonary fibrosis and end-stage chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD). Lungs must be transplanted within six hours.

KIDNEYS ■

These organs are essentially sophisticated trash collectors. Every day, your kidneys process about 200 quarts of blood to sift out about two quarts of waste products and extra water. Donated kidneys replace diseased or damaged kidneys due to conditions such as high blood pressure, diabetes and polycystic kidney disease (PKD). This is the most frequent and the most successful organ transplant procedure. Kidneys can be transplanted up to 48 hours after being recovered.



TISSUE & CORNEA ■

Although less widely publicized than organ donation, tissue and cornea donation saves or heals the lives of more than one million people in the U.S. each year. Donated tissue can be used for up to five years after it's recovered.

LIVER ■

Our liver is the workhorse of the digestive system and performs 500 functions that help keep the body healthy. Donated livers replace diseased or damaged livers due to conditions such as birth defects or bile ducts as well as infections like hepatitis. A liver can be replaced with all or part of a healthy donor liver, from a living or deceased donor. Livers can also be split into two segments for transplantation.

PANCREAS ■

The pancreas creates digestive juices that help break down food that has left the stomach. It also produces the hormone insulin which regulates the body's sugar level. Individuals who have severe complications from diabetes can benefit from pancreas and/or combined kidney/pancreas transplants.

INTESTINES ■

Essentially, intestines are a long system of tubes that absorb nutrients and water from the food we consume and processes them in stages. Most intestinal transplants are performed on infants or children to heal conditions such as twisted or blocked intestines, or short gut syndrome (SGS). Intestines are often transplanted with a liver and pancreas. Intestines must be transplanted within 12 hours.

Diana Headlee-Bell from Washington County, PA, has received three life-saving kidney transplants throughout her life.





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