

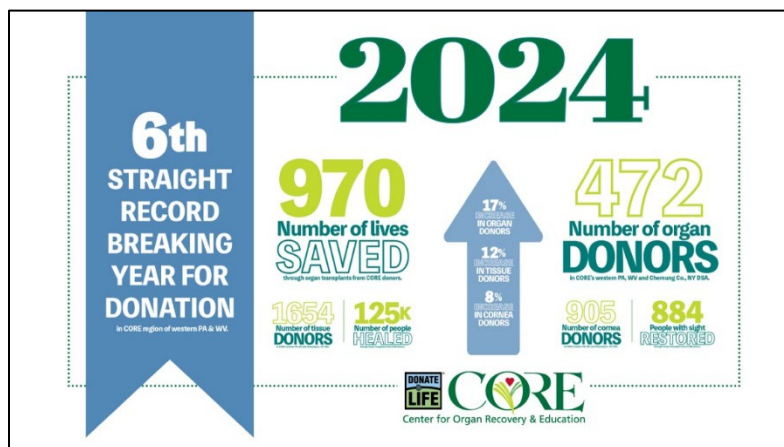


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## Historic Year for Organ Donation as CORE Reports Record-Breaking Numbers in the Region

2024 was the sixth consecutive year saving and healing more lives through donation than ever before.



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CONTACT CORE FOR DONOR FAMILY, RECIPIENT AND WAITING CANDIDATE INTERVIEWS**

**PITTSBURGH, Pa. (Jan. 14, 2025)** — The Center for Organ Recovery & Education (CORE) has broken records for the sixth consecutive year, saving and healing more lives through organ, tissue, and cornea donation than ever before.

In 2024, the selfless contributions of **472 organ donors** from CORE’s service area—spanning western Pennsylvania, West Virginia, and Chemung County, New York—resulted in **970 organs donated for life-saving transplants**, marking a remarkable **17% increase in organ donors** from the previous year. This achievement underscores CORE’s leadership among the nation’s more than 50 organ procurement organizations (OPOs).

Among those donors was **James Forish**, 65, of Greensburg, Pa., who was able to give the gift of life as a donor after his passing in August 2024. According to his daughter, Cassidy Gamble, who serves as an organ procurement coordinator at CORE, her father’s donation has brought comfort to her family. "My dad was incredibly giving, so there was no question that he'd want to be a donor. Knowing that his legacy continues has helped our family heal," she says.

**Susan Stuart**, President/CEO of CORE, expressed her gratitude, saying, "Breaking records for six straight years is a testament to the generosity of our donors and their families, the commitment of our partner hospitals and transplant centers, and the passion of the CORE team. Together, we're giving second chances and changing lives."

**Azaar Myers**, 4, of Glenshaw, Pa., received a life-saving liver transplant in April at UPMC Children’s Hospital of Pittsburgh. Her mom, Tajah, credits CORE, but most especially Azaar’s donor and donor family for her daughter’s bright future. "I’m overwhelmed thinking how many people are experiencing a second chance at life because of the donors in 2024," Tajah says. "And I predict 2025 will be another record-breaking year!"

CORE's life-saving efforts in 2024 made possible:

- **462 donated kidneys**
- **257 donated livers** (+16%)
- **101 donated hearts** (+16%)
- **87 donated lungs** (+21%)
- **61 donated pancreata** (including those for research) (+39%)
- **2 donated intestines**

However, the need remains urgent, with more than 100,000 people nationwide awaiting transplants. Stuart urged everyone to consider making a difference: "One donor can save up to eight lives and heal 75 others. Registering as an organ, tissue, and cornea donor is a simple step that can change the world for someone else. Visit [core.org/register](https://www.core.org/register) today to sign up."

**Cliff Sinopoli**, 65, of Kennedy Township, Pa., is one of those more than 100,000 people waiting for a life-saving donation. He's been listed for a heart transplant at Allegheny General Hospital for nearly three years. He says knowing that generosity broke records in 2024 makes him optimistic. "There are so many people in need, every year has got to be a record-breaking year," Sinopoli says. "One day, I hope to be able to tell my donor family, that because of the wonderful gift their loved one made, someone was able to live a life that had a positive impact on many people,"

In addition to organ donations, CORE reported a record number of **905 cornea donors**, an **8%** increase over 2023, and **1654 tissue donors**, reflecting a **12%** rise. These gifts restored sight to **884 people** and provided healing through tissue transplants—including bone repairs, skin grafts, and heart valve replacements—for nearly **125,000 others**.

Specifically, in western Pennsylvania, in 2024, 345 generous people were organ donors after their deaths, donating 682 organs for life-saving transplants, 1,106 were tissue donors, each of them healing as many as 75 others through tissue transplants, and 716 cornea donors from western Pennsylvania meant restored sight for 703 people through corneal transplants. In 2024, 2,286 people in Pennsylvania received life-saving transplants, 1,748 due to the generosity of deceased donors and their families and 538 thanks to living donors.

In CORE's West Virginia territory, which spans nearly the entire state apart from six counties, an incredible 127 individuals became organ donors after their passing. Through their generosity, 288 organs were transplanted, giving others the gift of life. Furthermore, 535 tissue donors brought healing to over 40,000 people, while 178 cornea donors gave the precious gift of sight to 169 individuals.

"This sixth year of breaking records will further motivate and inspire CORE to continue striving for excellence," Stuart said. "Yet, it goes without saying that everyone at CORE is driven not by a desire to break records, but by a dedication to generous donors, their brave families, hopeful waiting list candidates, and thankful transplant recipients. This is an incredible achievement for them as much as it is for us."

#### **About CORE**

The Center for Organ Recovery & Education (CORE) is one of the more than 50 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 service region, and works tirelessly to create a culture of donation within the hospitals and communities we serve. CORE's mission is to Save and Heal lives through donation, ultimately ending 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. For more information, visit [www.core.org](https://www.core.org) or call 1-800-DONORS-7.

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