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Monthly news and information about organ and tissue donation from LifeCenter Northwest. To subscribe to the Gift, [click here](#).

Partnering with hospitals and communities in Alaska, Montana, North Idaho, and Washington to save lives through organ and tissue donation.

# the GIFT



**LifeCenter**  
Northwest

Monthly Newsletter

July 2020

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## A Message From Our CEO, Kevin O'Connor



LifeCenter Northwest, in collaboration with [Donate Life America](#), will focus our outreach and storytelling on multicultural communities throughout August in observance of National Minority Donor Awareness Month. The roots of this observance date back to 1996, and it's centered on raising awareness of donation and transplantation in multicultural communities—in order to reduce the disproportionate number of people of color awaiting life-saving organs in our country.

Namely, [nearly 60 percent](#) of the 109,000 patients currently on the transplant waiting list are people of color (Black, Latinx, Asian/Pacific Islander, Native American), while people of color only represent [about 32 percent](#) of deceased or living organ donors.

While it's critical that we serve and nurture diversity year-round by encouraging donation within communities of color, we strive to make a measurable impact now by partnering with national organizations to build trust and create a positive culture around organ, eye and tissue donation.

[According to our partners at the United Network for Organ Sharing](#), organ transplantation can be successful regardless of the ethnicity of the donor and recipient. However, transplant success rates increase if the donor and recipient share compatible blood types and tissue markers. Therefore, it's vital that we expand the pool of donors, now and always, to ensure transplantation success for as many people as possible.

Please join us in telling stories, connecting with your community and celebrating the strides we've made—without forgetting the vital need for ongoing work to create a truly effective and equitable donation system for all.

**- Kevin O'Connor, President and CEO of LifeCenter Northwest**

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# In The News

*Notable news stories about LifeCenter Northwest and donation.*

- The Washington Post: [He was finally ready to ask for help. Then the pandemic hit.](#)
- The New York Times: [In astounding test, scientists revive damaged lungs for transplant](#)
- Yale News: [Yale, Cambridge pioneer new way to make kidneys safe for transplant](#)
- American Heart Association: [Organ transplants make a turnaround from COVID-19 decline](#)
- Fred Hutch Science Spotlight: [Expedited SARS-CoV-2 testing saves lives of transplant patients](#)

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## 2019 Hospital Award Feature: MultiCare Deaconess Hospital



Our annual Excellence in Improvement Award honors a hospital that made significant gains in compliance metrics in the last year.

Since being purchased by the MultiCare Health System, the donation culture at MultiCare Deaconess Hospital in Spokane, Wash. has shifted significantly. The hospital began implementing “timeouts” for vented patients prior to any end-of-life decisions to ensure they are preserving the opportunity for donation. LifeCenter Northwest staff have been asked to attend meetings and trainings to provide education and resources to staff. The new leadership at Deaconess is incredibly supportive of donation and is working to update donation-related policies and procedures. In 2019, Deaconess started organizing Honor Walks and has seen tremendous staff turnout.

In the time since these efforts have been implemented, the hospital has seen an improvement in donation outcomes. Their overall conversion rate increased from 67 percent to 83 percent; the timely vented referral rate increased by 6 percentage points; their collaborative request rate rose from 11 percent to 86 percent; and their number of organs transplanted per donor increased from 3.0 to 4.6.

You can check out Deaconess' full award write-up in our [2019 Annual Report](#).

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[Click here to find your hospital representative and CEU opportunities](#)

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**LifeSaver Award: Dr. Corey White, Providence St. Peter Hospital**



Each month, LifeCenter Northwest selects a LifeSaver Award winner. This award honors and recognizes those who demonstrate a commitment to improving donation outcomes and culture through their actions, time and energy.

We are proud to announce that Dr. Corey White, a Neurology Specialist from Providence St. Peter Hospital in Olympia, Wash. is our latest LifeSaver Award winner!

Dr. White was nominated by several members of LifeCenter Northwest's clinical staff, who explained how his kindness, compassion and collaboration have been crucial to numerous successful donation cases.

[Check out the full story about Dr. White on our blog.](#)

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**New Organ Utilization Coordinator Team Will Bring Efficiencies, Better Partnerships and More Lives Saved**



Welcome to Tamiko Panzella,  
our new organ utilization  
program manager!



LifeCenter Northwest is thrilled to share that we've taken a major step forward by forming our new Organ Utilization Coordinator (OUC) team. Our new OUC team will be exclusively dedicated to the allocation/placement of organs for transplant and research, as well as all the accompanying logistics. Most importantly, this team will empower us to successfully transplant more organs—and save more lives.

“Having a dedicated resource whose sole function is to maximize organ utilization through organ allocation is extremely valuable,” says Dominic Adorno, LifeCenter’s Vice President of Clinical Operations. “This off-site team can adeptly and efficiently handle all the logistics of placing organs, allowing our on-site clinical staff to focus on donor management and organ recovery.”

We're excited to welcome Tamiko Panzella, an experienced organ allocation professional, as LifeCenter Northwest's new organ utilization program manager. Tamiko will lead the OUC team and comes to us after nine years at Donor Network West—the Organ Procurement Organization (OPO) in Northern California and Nevada—where she developed strong relationships with transplant surgeons and programs across the country.

[Check out our blog post for the full story on Tamiko and our new OUC team.](#)

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## COVID-19 + Donation

Transplant procedures across the nation—and the world—slowed in March and April at the early stages of the COVID-19 pandemic. However, by embracing mission-focused innovation and collaboration, LifeCenter Northwest and our partners found creative new

ways to maximize the gift of life.

For an in-depth look at how we've evolved our operations during the pandemic, [check out this blog post](#).

For a snapshot look at how COVID-19 has affected donation, check out this flyer we designed for our hospital partners:

# COVID-19 + Donation



**1.) Transplant surgeries should be considered high priority.**  
Surgeries should not be postponed, per guidance from the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services.

**2.) Recipients are in greater need.**  
Despite the extreme generosity of donor families during this pandemic, we've seen a decrease in transplantation.

**3.) We appreciate you!**  
We commend hospital staff for bravely caring for organ donor patients—and all patients—during this pandemic.

**Any missed organ donation opportunity puts lives at risk. This is why, despite the challenges presented by the COVID-19 pandemic, we're focused on honoring donation decisions and maximizing the gift of life.**

LifeCenter Northwest Data   March - June	
2019	2020
92 organ donors	92 organ donors
277 organs transplanted	251 organs transplanted

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## August: National Minority Donor Awareness Month (NMDAM)



National Minority Donor Awareness began over 20 years ago out of the need to bring a heightened awareness to donation and transplantation in communities of color. This year, for the first time, it'll be celebrated the entire month of August as we work to reduce the disproportionate number of people of color waiting for lifesaving organs in our country.

Materials, resources and graphics for NMDAM are [available on Donate Life America's website](#). Stay tuned to LifeCenter Northwest's social media channels (and the upcoming August edition of this newsletter) for more storytelling focusing on donation in communities of color.

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## 2020 Virtual Donation Celebration



When our in-person Donation Celebration events in Montana and Washington were canceled earlier this year, we decided to take our celebrations virtual, in partnership with SightLife.

Our 2020 virtual Donation Celebration celebrates everyone in our donation community and features special video messages as well as an interactive "memory wall" full of meaningful photos.

[View our new virtual Donation Celebration festivities here.](#)

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**Story of Hope: Frank Perez (Tissue Recipient)**



Frank had to stop working when his left toes were amputated due to osteomyelitis—a serious bone infection. Soon, Frank began to have problems with his right foot too. Frank's podiatrist suggested a treatment to save his right foot: donated human adipose tissue.

Amazingly, Frank's foot began healing within a week and is now back to normal. Frank is extremely grateful to his tissue donor and is no longer slowed down by his feet.

"I am saddened for the family who lost their loved one, but so much good came of it," Frank said. "I can continue to take care of my family. I get up every morning and take walks, climb ladders and can go fishing again."

**By making the referral call within 60 minutes of clinical triggers and time of death, you can change a life: Call 1-888-543-3287**



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