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BRIDGE TO HEALING

Losing a loved one is a heartbreaking experience no one should have to go through alone. The journey toward healing can be filled with ups and downs. But for those whose loved ones gave the gift of life, that journey can be quite unique. Many donor families find a special kind of comfort through the LifeShare Carolinas Bridge to Healing program.

The program serves as a bridge of connection and support for our donor families as they navigate the grief process. Support is given through consistent communication with families, community-building opportunities, free grief counseling, support groups, and special ways to honor their loved ones. We can also help donor families who want to communicate with the recipients of their loved one's gifts.

Much like the bridge in the program's logo, the grief journey starts out heavy. But as time passes and family members begin to heal, we hope the burden of loss becomes lighter. Our hope is for every family who comes through the Bridge to Healing program to feel supported in the donation journey and grief process and find a sense of belonging and community with others who have walked a similar path.

Our program coordinators Lauren and Brianna are honored to have the opportunity to work with donor families, "The choice to consent or support your loved ones' decision to participate in the donation process in a time of immense loss is a brave one and we want our work to respect the beauty and sacrifice of that choice."

If you're a donor family member and you're interested in connecting with our Bridge to Healing program, email Info@LifeshareCarolinas.org.



REMEMBERING OUR *Heroes*

This year the donation community came together to pay tribute to donor heroes across the United States during the first Donor Remembrance Day. Organ procurement organizations, transplant centers, and other donation supporters invited their communities to participate in the celebration by planting a virtual forget-me-not in honor of their hero who gave the gift of life through organ, eye, and tissue donation. More than 10,000 dedications came in from around the country. The Donor Hero Remembrance Garden will remain online throughout the year. It can be found at <https://www.aopo.org/donor-remembrance-day/>



CONNECT WITH US ON SOCIAL MEDIA

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-  @LifeShareCarolinas



Show your Donate Life pride on social media using **#DonateLife**



Donate Life Month

This year, Donate Life Month looked a little different than in years past. While we weren't able to be in our community celebrating together, we all celebrated in our own ways. The LifeShare team couldn't gather for a group photo, so we all put on our blue and green and had a Zoom call to celebrate Donate Life Month and National Blue & Green Day.

This year's Donate Life Month theme was inspired by a springtime scene of a garden that included symbols of hope, courage, and the renewal of transformed life. The garden depicted an ecosystem of plants, insects, and other components working together to form an interconnected living system. Much like the garden, we each have the potential to nurture and enrich our communities through organ, eye, and tissue donation.

We thank everyone who took the time to celebrate Donate Life Month in their own way, honoring all donors, registered donors, donor families, recipients, caregivers, and the 110,000 people waiting for a second chance at life.



THIS APRIL WAS ANYTHING BUT TYPICAL in our hospitals. While working long days caring for patients during a global pandemic, many of our incredible hospital partners still found time to celebrate Donate Life Month. Some held small, socially distant flag raising ceremonies, while others simply made sure the LifeShare/Donate Life flag was flying high above their facility. We are grateful for the hard work and dedication shown every day by our hospitals not only to care for their patients, but to honor the wishes of those who chose to give the gift of life.

LIFESHARE LINK



As night fell and the sun rose on the final day of Donate Life Month, Wells Fargo's Duke Energy Center shined bright in blue & green.



ADAPTING *to save lives*

THE PAST SEVERAL MONTHS HAVE BEEN CHALLENGING IN MANY WAYS.

As the world battles a global pandemic, LifeShare Carolinas remains committed to saving the lives of those desperately waiting for a lifesaving transplant. When the COVID-19 virus began to spread in the United States, LifeShare Carolinas had to adapt to keep our donors, donor families, hospital partners, community, and teammates safe.

Our office closed in mid-March, asking staff to work from home. Our clinical teams have limited their visits to hospitals and are only going on-site to perform critical donor case-related functions. Our family services team adapted and began supporting our donor families over the phone. Donation can't happen without the full support of our donor hospitals, so our hospital development team began regular phone check-ins and launched a new LifeShare Town Hall Series, providing virtual education to hospital staff on a number of donation topics. LifeShare had to cancel all community events indefinitely and move community education and volunteer orientation to online platforms.

Through this difficult time, LifeShare has remained committed to keeping everyone safe while fulfilling our mission of giving hope, life, and healing through organ, eye, and tissue donation.

HEALTH CARE HEROES

The pandemic has changed our lives in many ways. But one thing has remained constant - the dedication and commitment of our local hospitals. From Charlotte to Asheville and all the way to the Tennessee border, staff at the 41 hospitals served by LifeShare have never wavered. We want to send a special thank you to those dedicated healthcare heroes who have put their lives at risk every day to protect our communities.



HELP LIFESHARE SAVE LIVES

By making a financial contribution to LifeShare Carolinas, you can help to save lives by raising awareness of organ, eye, and tissue donation. Some ways to contribute include:

- In lieu of flowers, LifeShare may be designated to receive memorial contributions
- Contributions can be made in honor of a transplant recipient, donor, or other loved one

If a contribution was made in honor of someone else, the person named or the donor's family is notified. All contributions are tax-deductible and are used for public education purposes.

Contributions can be made online at LifeShareCarolinas.org/Contribute. You can also make a check payable to LifeShare Carolinas and mail to LifeShare Carolinas, PO Box 32861, Charlotte, NC 28262.



5000-D Airport Center Parkway
Charlotte, NC 28208



LIFESHARE PROUD

by Tracy Barker

Before coming to LifeShare, I worked in the Surgical Trauma ICU at Carolinas Medical Center as a healthcare tech. In that role, I worked with LifeShare staff often, assisting them with order entry, printing paperwork, and fielding phone calls while they were on the unit.

In the ICU, we had the privilege of caring for many patients who were organ donors, but we also had transplant recipients come to our unit right after receiving the gift of life. I

was able to speak with the recipients while they were recovering and hear how grateful they were for the gift they had been given. Seeing the tragic side of life working in the trauma unit was hard but being able to see the positivity on the other side was a light for me while working in a world of loss.

One day, a couple LifeShare team members approached me and mentioned a role they thought would be a perfect fit for me. Given my experience with donation and LifeShare, I was interested and pursued a change. It turned out to be a great fit and I loved the role. Teaching the hospital staff about donation and making sure they had the resources and knowledge to move donation forward was very rewarding.

I always thought the work LifeShare did was very difficult emotionally, and now that I am here, I see it first-hand. Being in the moment of a family's grief is very heartbreaking but experiencing the other side of giving life is very rewarding. And seeing the healing our donor families get from their loved one's donation makes it all worth the emotional rollercoaster.

I have since moved into a quality role with LifeShare, where I have the ability to affect change in our organization and help shape the processes and procedures that lead all of our LifeShare teams to do the best job they can. I am honored to know that in my role, every little thing I do helps in achieving LifeShare's mission of giving hope, life, and healing.