



Illinois High School Association, Donate Life Illinois Launch Campaign Encouraging Students, Fans, Families To Register As Organ, Tissue & Eye Donors

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ITASCA – The [Illinois High School Association](#) (IHSA) has teamed up with [Donate Life Illinois](#) – a coalition of Illinois organ, tissue, and eye donation and transplantation organizations – to encourage high school students to get educated about donation and “Say Yes” to joining [the Illinois Organ/Tissue Donor Registry](#) whether online or upon receiving their driver’s license at an Illinois Secretary of State Driver Service Facility.

The “Say Yes” campaign launching on [National Donor Day](#), February 14, marks the fifth annual partnership to raise awareness, encourage donor registration and celebrate Illinois student-athletes, their families, and communities for saying “yes” to organ, tissue, and eye donation.

Programs at all 44 IHSA finals events in 2022 will promote “Say Yes” with information on how to register as an organ, tissue, and eye donor. Illinois donation officials, donor families, and transplant recipients will take part in ongoing IHSA media interviews.

With their families’ support of the campaign to share the stories of their life-giving donations, Springfield-area cheerleader [Maddie Finch](#) and Morton wrestler Cord Pearce are featured in programs at IHSA Competitive Cheer and Boys Individual Wrestling finals this month.

More student-athletes, coaches, and IHSA staff throughout Illinois who became life-giving donors will be recognized at finals events and on social media throughout 2022.

“The IHSA is proud to work alongside Donate Life Illinois partners in its quest to promote organ, tissue, and eye donation,” said IHSA Executive Director Craig Anderson. “We know that many of our high school teams and students are already active in their communities and looking for ways to give back. ‘Saying Yes’ to donation is a simple and selfless way to help others, so we want to do everything we can to help educate high school students on their options to donate.”

“Donate Life Illinois is proud to once again partner with the Illinois High School Association to raise awareness and increase donor registrations in our state—offering hope for the thousands in need of transplants and empowering young people and their families with the information they need to ‘say yes’ to joining the Illinois Organ/Tissue Donor Registry,” said Donate Life Illinois Chair Marion Shuck.

Shuck, whose husband was a donor, serves as vice president of governmental relations and external affairs for Gift of Hope Organ & Tissue Donor Network.

In Illinois, the “Drive for Life” Act became effective January 1, 2018, amending the Illinois Vehicle Code to allow 16- and 17-year-olds to register their decision to be donors in Illinois’ Organ/Tissue Donor Registry.

It is important for 16- and 17-year-olds to discuss their decision with family members, who must provide consent for donation at the time of passing. Registering as a donor becomes legal consent at age 18. Family members remain involved with the donation process at the time of a registered donor’s death, working closely with Gift of Hope Organ & Tissue Donor Network, Mid America Transplant Services, or Eversight as the organ, tissue, and eye donation agencies serving Illinois.

To learn more and register as an organ, tissue, and eye donor, visit [donatelifeillinois.org](#).

About the Illinois High School Association

The Illinois High School Association (IHSA) governs equitable participation in interscholastic athletics and activities that enrich the educational experience, and provides leadership for the development, supervision and promotion of good sportsmanship in interscholastic competition and other activities in which its member schools choose to engage. Based in Bloomington, IHSA is private, not-for-profit organization with more than 800 member high schools in Illinois.

About Donate Life Illinois

Donate Life Illinois is a coalition of donation and transplantation organizations that work together to raise awareness about organ, eye and tissue donation in Illinois. Partner organizations are”

- Eversight, serving as Illinois' eye bank to coordinate cornea and tissue donation and transplantation in partnership with Gift of Hope Organ & Tissue Donor Network and Mid America Transplant, the organ procurement organization serving Illinois.
- Gift of Hope Organ & Tissue Donor Network and Mid America Transplant, the not-for-profit organ procurement organizations (OPOs) that coordinate organ and tissue donation in Illinois as part of the nation's organ donation system.
- National Kidney Foundation of Illinois, improving the health and well-being of people at risk for or affected by kidney disease.
- Illinois Secretary of State Organ/Tissue Donor Program, which manages the Illinois Organ/Tissue Donor Registry.
- Transplant Life Illinois, managing the official Illinois team for the Donate Life Transplant Games and working to support and empower families of donors, transplant recipients, advocates and all who are part of the state's donation and transplantation community.