



Gift of Life



Mid-South Transplant Foundation, Inc.

Summer 2025

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Blue & Green Day Mid-South Highlights Community Support for Donation



2025 was another momentous year for Blue & Green Day Mid-South and Donate Life Month at Mid-South Transplant Foundation (MSTF). Blue & Green Day was April 11 this year. Donate Life Month is observed each April.

MSTF's social media following associated with these important dates jumped an incredible 104.7% from April 2024 (55,306) to April 2025 (113,220) across all platforms combined. Increases were seen for Facebook, Instagram, TikTok and YouTube.

More than 300 businesses and organizations and almost 200 individuals and families participated in Blue & Green Day Mid-South this year. Individual/family participation increased 30% over last year.

"I want everyone to know how much we appreciate their support for Blue & Green Day and Donate Life Month," said MSTF Executive Director Kim Van Frank. "Our community partners are phenomenal every day," she said. "We couldn't do the work we do without them. On behalf of Mid-South Transplant Foundation, I thank them for their unwavering support and for another successful April."

While there are several important dates

within Donate Life Month, for MSTF, Blue & Green Day Mid-South is among the most significant. It is a day set aside to turn communities blue and green to raise awareness for donation, and, therefore, it is an eventful day that embraces fun with a serious purpose.

On April 11, this spectacular day came to a close with beautiful lights dancing across the Mississippi River and a dance party at Whiskey Jill's on Macon Road in Memphis. For the second consecutive year, Tina Ray, Supervisor of the Perfusion Lab at MSTF, organized a Blue & Green Day Mid-South celebration at Whiskey Jill's for MSTF employees, friends, family and anyone else interested in joining the celebration.

Meanwhile in Downtown Memphis, the Mighty Lights on the cables of the Big River Crossing and Hernando De Soto bridges were lit in blue and green in support of donation – in support of the many lives changed, the many lives waiting and the donor heroes whose generosity and kindness make it all possible.

Next year, BGD will fall on April 10. Circle the date on your calendar!



Ambassadors Make Blue & Green Day Special in Their Communities



Individuals, businesses and organizations in communities throughout the MSTF service area participated in Blue & Green Day Mid-South 2025, making 2025 another incredible year for this special day and for Donate Life Month. Three MSTF Ambassadors decided 2025 would be extraordinary in their communities.

Ambassador Mimi Smith, a liver recipient, worked with groups such as the Panola Partnership in her community of Batesville, MS, to raise awareness for organ and tissue donation and celebrate Blue & Green Day Mid-South 2025. The Batesville business community threw its support behind those efforts by displaying Blue & Green Day



Mid-South yard signs, posters and window art in April. Batesville Mayor Hal Ferrell issued a proclamation proclaiming April 11 in honor of Blue & Green Day Mid-South.

On Blue & Green Day, Batesville

Main Street, which is part of the Panola Partnership, hosted a Blue & Green Day program in the town square. The event featured an information/registration tent and speakers with personal connections to donation. Smith was one of those speakers.

"I was so blessed to have received my lifesaving liver," Smith said. "I want my community to be aware of the facts about transplants and how they change lives for the better."

In Covington, TN, Ambassador Richard Edmondson, a heart recipient, also worked with his community to promote Blue & Green Day Mid-South. Blue & Green Day signs and posters were visible in the town square and beyond. Edmondson registered Unilever and Walmart, among many other businesses in his community.

Unilever showcased Blue & Green Day Mid-South on its corporate TV system, provided donor registration opportunities for employees and decorated breakrooms. Participating Walmart pharmacies, including Covington, actively promoted Blue & Green Day. A local Covington ice cream shop, Theo & Roe's Ice Cream Parlor, created a slushie in honor of Blue & Green Day, and Buff City Soap in Covington celebrated with a Blue & Green Day Mid-South specialty soap. The soap was also available in other participating Buff City Soap stores.

Edmondson, who did not limit his focus to Covington, encouraged – and got – Blue & Green Day participation from surrounding communities such as Dyersburg and Brighton, and he registered more than 20 Walmart stores, more than 30 Starbucks locations and several Buff City Soap venues, in addition to other businesses, in multiple communities. "A lot that I do is to honor my donor," he said.

On a smaller scale – but no less exciting – Ambassador Sara Beth Silverman, a kidney-pancreas recipient, organized her neighborhood in East Memphis. Silverman and about 20 neighboring households put yard signs on their lawns to raise awareness for Blue & Green Day Mid-South.

"I was excited that so many of my wonderful neighbors opted to post Blue & Green Day signs in their yards," Silverman said.



"Many responded by sharing that a family member or friend had been touched by donation in one way or another. A neighbor had even worked as a nurse in one of our transplant centers! It was particularly special that my neighborhood wanted to join with me in supporting organ and tissue donation."

MSTF thanks Smith, Edmondson and Silverman for their energy, efforts and creativity in turning their communities blue and green. Everyone who

helped promote Blue & Green Day is a Blue & Green Day Mid-South hero. Awareness saves lives.

For a list of Blue & Green Day Mid-South partners, visit <https://midsouthtransplant.org/blue-green-day/partners/>.



Cities Proclaim April 11 in Honor of Blue & Green Day

Seventeen cities and one county issued proclamations supporting Blue & Green Day Mid-South 2025.

Arkansas: Forrest City, Helena-West Helena, Horseshoe Lake, Hughes, Marion and Wynne

Mississippi: Batesville, Corinth, Olive Branch and Senatobia

Tennessee: Atoka, Bartlett, Bolivar, Germantown, Lakeland, Memphis, Shelby County and Somerville



Atoka, Tennessee



Batesville, Mississippi



Corinth, Mississippi



Wynne, Arkansas



Bartlett, Tennessee



Senatobia, Mississippi



Germantown, Tennessee

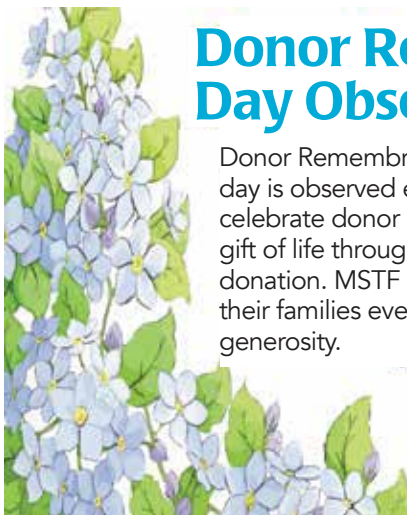
Medical Community Celebrates Donate Life Month



Hospitals, transplant centers, dialysis clinics and other medical facilities in the MSTF service area celebrated Donate Life Month and Blue & Green Day Mid-South this April. They raised Donate Life flags, lit up facilities in blue and green, invited speakers to share their experiences, facilitated donation information/registration tables and created other opportunities to spotlight the gift of life. MSTF thanks these organizations for their support, care and partnership. A listing of Donate Life Month/Blue & Green Day Mid-South partners can be found at <https://midsouthtransplant.org/blue-green-day/partners/>.

Donor Remembrance Day Observed

Donor Remembrance Day was April 30. The day is observed each April to honor and celebrate donor heroes who have given the gift of life through organ, tissue and eye donation. MSTF honors these heroes and their families every day for their kindness and generosity.





Biggby Coffee Raises Money, Awareness



Biggby Coffee at 200 S. Germantown Parkway in Cordova, TN, raised \$1,050 for MSTF during Donate Life Month (April) through its "RoundUp for Mid-South Transplant" promotion. The promotion ran for a week leading up to Blue & Green Day Mid-South on April 11. This is the third consecutive year Biggby Coffee has supported donation through a Donate Life Month/Blue & Green Day fundraiser.

"We thank Mr. Jabin Newhouse, owner of Biggby Coffee, and his phenomenal staff for their support," said Kim Van Frank, MSTF Executive Director. "Biggby Coffee is an incredible neighbor and community partner."

Brighton High School Registers 252 Donors on Blue & Green Day

The Brighton High School HOSA (Health Occupations Students of America) organization in Brighton, TN, promoted Blue & Green Day Mid-South in a big way in 2025. HOSA members registered 252 donors on Blue & Green Day Mid-South. They also produced four TikTok videos explaining organ and tissue donation this year. The videos were showcased throughout the week leading up to Blue & Green Day on April 11.

HOSA members set up an information/registration table on Blue & Green Day to give fellow students and staff an opportunity to register as donors. The Brighton High School Chemistry Club supported HOSA's Blue & Green Day activities by crafting a blue and green tea for the event table.

Other schools that participated in Blue & Green Day Mid-South or Donate Life Month celebrations include Alcorn Career and Technology Center in Corinth, MS; Crosstown High School in Memphis; Dyersburg State Community College – Dyersburg, Covington and Trenton in Tennessee; Northwest Mississippi Community College – Senatobia, DeSoto Center in Southaven and Lafayette Yalobusha in Oxford; and the Ole Miss Rotaract Club at the University of Mississippi in Oxford.



Le Bonheur Honors Pediatric Transplant Week



On April 21, Le Bonheur Children's Hospital and MSTF raised a Donate Life flag to honor donor heroes and their families during National Pediatric Transplant Week. National Pediatric Transplant Week, which is observed during the last full week of April each year as part of National Donate Life Month, focuses on the message of ending the need for the pediatric transplant waiting list. Ten-year-old Lyric Everhart, Le Bonheur's first heart recipient, her mother, grandmother and great-grandmother joined Le Bonheur and MSTF for this event.





Medtronic Rededicates Donor Garden at New Location

Medtronic rededicated its Medtronic SGT (Spinal Graft Technologies) Tissue Donor Memorial Garden with a ribbon-cutting ceremony on April 15. The garden was previously part of Medtronic's campus on Swinnea Road in Memphis. It was recently moved to the company's new facility at 5300 Airways Blvd. The garden honors donor heroes while also serving as a reminder to employees of the important work they do every day.

MSTF was invited to be part of the ceremony at the new location. The bronze plaques in the garden featuring descriptions such as "Father," "Mother," "Husband" and "Sister" were originally part of a donor garden created by MSTF at its previous location on Madison Avenue in Memphis. In May 2007, MSTF moved to its current location in Cordova, which could not accommodate the garden.



MSTF Celebrates Juneteenth

Members of the MSTF staff attended the 32nd Annual Memphis Juneteenth Freedom Luncheon on June 12. The luncheon was held at the Holiday Inn – University of Memphis. Dr. Telisa Franklin, MSTF's Multicultural Relations Coordinator, is the President and CEO of Memphis Juneteenth. Prominent journalist Roland Martin was the keynote speaker at the event.

MSTF Provides Workplace Education

Zola Burgess, MSTF Community Outreach Coordinator, and Kylie Peck, MSTF Assistant Supervisor of the HLA Laboratory, spoke to employees at Buckman in Memphis on April 24. Peck discussed the HLA Laboratory's role in facilitating successful solid organ transplants, while Burgess talked about the need for organ and tissue donation.

Burgess manages MSTF's Workplace Partners for Life program. Workplace Partners is a national initiative. The purpose of the program is to encourage members of the public to register as donors. MSTF invites all businesses, corporations and associations to join so that employers – large and small – can promote organ and tissue donation in their workplaces and help save lives in their communities.





Donate Life Tennessee License Plate Available Soon



The Donate Life Tennessee license plate has been approved by the state legislature and will be available soon. Individuals who pre-ordered the plate will be contacted to purchase it. You can still pre-order at <https://go.dcid.org/DonateLifeTNLicensePlate>.

Spotlight

Emma Smith, Donation Support Coordinator – Tissue, received an MSTF Hope and Life Recognition Award for her exceptional work with donor families during the first quarter of 2025.



Emma Smith

Congratulations

MSTF HLA Technologist II Emily Jirik, MT(ASCP), CHT(ACHI), successfully completed her Certified Histocompatibility Technologist exam in December 2024.



Emily Jirik

MSTF Staffer Named Rotarian

Mary Beck, MSTF Community Relations Coordinator, was inducted into the Rotary Club Memphis Central on April 25. She was sponsored for membership by Dr. Telisa Franklin, Rotarian and MSTF Multicultural Relations Coordinator.



Telisa Franklin (L) & Mary Beck (R)