



Gift of Life



Mid-South Transplant Foundation, Inc.

Summer 2026

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Planting Hope Honors Donation



Hope is a powerful thing. It moves mountains. It changes lives. On May 9, Mid-South Transplant Foundation (MSTF) joined with community partners and supporters at Shelby Farms Park in Memphis to “plant hope” for donation.

One donor hero can save up to eight lives through the gift of organ donation. That gift was honored by the planting of eight trees representing eight lifesaving organs, eight lives saved and the donor heroes who make it possible.

The Planting Hope event was a collaboration of MSTF, the Shelby County Health Department, the West Tennessee Chapter of the Tennessee Urban Forestry Council (TUFC), Memphis City Beautiful and Shelby Farms Park.

“Planting Hope came about through serendipity,” said Mary Beck, MSTF Community Relations Coordinator and one of the event’s organizers. “This year’s theme for Donate Life Month in April was ‘Leave a Legacy.’ It focused on trees as a symbol of connection and legacy. Through my Rotary membership, I met Angela Hill, Deputy Administrator, Pollution Control Section, Environmental Health Services & Sustainability with the Shelby County Health Department. The idea – Planting Hope – came together with Angela’s help, and our wonderful partners made it happen. I am so grateful to everyone involved.”

Planting Hope speakers included Beck;

MSTF Ambassador Gay Hannah, kidney recipient; MSTF Ambassador Tamika Smith, liver recipient; MSTF Digital Communications Coordinator ARTavius Veasey, kidney recipient; Wes Hopper, a certified arborist and owner of Urban Forestry Consulting who is with the West Tennessee Chapter of TUFC; and Dr. Bruce Randolph, Interim Director and Health Officer with the Shelby County Health Department.

“Today, we gather not just to plant trees, but to honor life, legacy and the incredible gift of organ and tissue donation,” Randolph said. “Each tree we plant is a powerful symbol of hope, renewal and the lives that continue because of the generosity of donors and their families.”

“Planting Hope,” Beck said, “is absolutely an opportunity to honor donation and all those involved. It’s also an opportunity to raise awareness. There are roughly 4,000 individuals in the Mid-South – Arkansas, Mississippi and Tennessee – waiting for a lifesaving transplant. Awareness is critical because it encourages people to take action. In this case, it encourages people to register as donors, and donor heroes save lives every day.”

The Planting Hope trees are each accompanied by a plaque that identifies the tree variety and the gift honored (heart, lungs, kidneys, pancreas, liver and intestines). Next time you are at Shelby Farms Park be sure to visit these trees. They were planted together near the Beaver Lake picnic area.



MSTF Thanks Communities for Blue & Green Day Mid-South Support

Thank you for helping MSTF celebrate another successful Blue & Green Day Mid-South and National Donate Life Month in April. Every day MSTF works to help change lives as part of the donation community. April, however, is special. Local communities – organizations, businesses, individuals, places of worship, schools and governments – come together to shine a bright light on donation and its impact. This year was no different.

MSTF appreciates everyone who posted online, put a yard sign on their lawn, decorated their office, wore blue and green, joined with their friends, family and coworkers to raise awareness or took any other action to support Blue & Green Day and Donate Life Month. You made a difference.

MSTF would like to give a special acknowledgment to Tina Ray, Supervisor of MSTF's Perfusion Lab. Ray worked with Whiskey Jill's (6160 Macon Road in Memphis) to organize a Blue & Green Day Mid-South celebration to cap the day. 2026 is the third year Ray has collaborated with Whiskey Jill's to honor Blue & Green Day.

To see a list of 2026 Blue & Green Day Mid-South partners, visit <https://midsouthtransplant.org/blue-green-day/partners/>.



Antique Car Show Benefits Transplant Patients



The 16th Annual Antique Car, Truck & Motorcycle Benefit in Memory of Daniel Brooks was held on Saturday, June 13, in Arlington, TN. Each year proceeds from the benefit help transplant patients. Organizer Kim Brooks, whose son Daniel was a double-lung recipient, said this year's event made it possible to gift six transplant recipients \$1,000 each.

MSTF Ambassadors Shemeka Malone, Janice Taylor and Gary Taylor represented MSTF at the 2026 Antique Car, Truck & Motorcycle Benefit.



Andria White

MSTF Welcomes New Community Outreach Manager

MSTF is excited to welcome Andria L. White as its new Community Outreach Manager. White joins MSTF with more than 20 years of experience in marketing, communications, project management and community engagement. Her career has taken her through nonprofit, higher education and K-12 education settings where she has led efforts focused on strategic planning, digital marketing, social media management, event coordination and stakeholder engagement.

"My first introduction to transplant came while working with the American Society of Transplantation, and that experience stayed with me. It gave me a deep respect for the lifesaving work happening in this field and how transplantation is truly the gift of life," White said.



MSTF Participates in Juneteenth Luncheon

MSTF staff members attended the annual Memphis Juneteenth Freedom Luncheon at the Dwelling Place Christian Church on Friday, June 12. Roland Martin, host of the digital program "Roland Martin Unfiltered," was the keynote speaker. Dr. Telisa Franklin, MSTF's Multicultural Relations Coordinator and President and CEO of the Memphis Juneteenth Festival, organized the luncheon.

Juneteenth is celebrated annually on June 19. It became a federal holiday in June 2021, but its roots extend far deeper than 2021. Juneteenth commemorates the day in 1865 when enslaved African Americans in Texas received word of their freedom. They learned about the Emancipation Proclamation more than two years after it was signed on Jan. 1, 1863, freeing slaves in Confederate-controlled territories.

The 13th Amendment became law later in December 1865.



Members of the MSFT staff, pictured with TN State Rep. Justin Pearson (front row, center), attended the Memphis Juneteenth Freedom Luncheon on June 12.



The luncheon was organized by MSTF Multicultural Relations Coordinator and Memphis Juneteenth Festival President and CEO Dr. Telisa Franklin. Roland Martin was the event's keynote speaker.

MSTF, Methodist Unveil Butterfly Wall



About 40 people were present to celebrate the Butterfly Wall dedication on June 5, including (left to right) Archie Drake, President, Methodist University Hospital; Monica Wharton, Executive Vice President and Chief Operating Officer, Methodist Le Bonheur Healthcare; Kim Van Frank, Executive Director, Mid-South Transplant Foundation; and Leanne McQuown, Director of Major Gifts, Methodist Healthcare Foundation.

MSTF Supports LeMoyne-Owen Juneteenth Program

The LeMoyne-Owen College (LOC) Juneteenth Celebration on the Lawn was June 19. MSTF was one of the event sponsors, and MSTF Multicultural Relations Coordinator Dr. Telisa Franklin participated in the day-long event.

Pictured from left to right are Shelby County Circuit Court Judge Damita Dandridge, an alumna of LOC; Mr. United Negro College Fund (UNCF) Deven Ellis; Miss UNCF Brianna LeSure; Vice President of Advancement Dr. Rosalyn Nichols; Miss LOC Jiselle Anderson; Mr. LOC Toriano Miller, Jr.; and Franklin.

MSTF sponsored the new Butterfly Wall in the Garden Pavilion at Methodist University Hospital in Memphis. Staff from the Methodist Transplant Institute, Methodist University Hospital, MSTF and the Metal Museum attended its dedication ceremony on June 5.

The Metal Museum created the Butterfly Wall art installation. The wall provides a space for reflection and serves as a lasting tribute to the generosity of organ and tissue donors and their families. It also promotes a sense of gratitude for the restored lives of thousands of recipients and their families. Its tranquil presence honors those who gave and those whose lives were changed by acts of kindness.

"MSTF appreciates the partnership with Methodist University Hospital and Methodist Transplant Institute," said Kim Van Frank, MSTF Executive Director. "We are grateful to have had the opportunity to provide this beautiful piece of art for all to enjoy."



DLTN Reaches License Plate Goal



We did it!

1,000 PRESALES REACHED!

Thanks to **YOUR** support, Donate Life TN has reached our goal of **1,000 presales!**

TENNESSEE

DONATE LIFE Tennessee

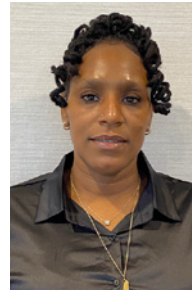
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Be an Organ & Tissue Donor

Thank you for helping us drive donation and save lives across Tennessee!

DONATE LIFE Tennessee

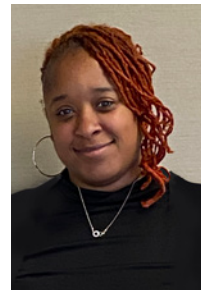
Spotlight



Erica Middlebrook



Britta Cruz



Emma Smith

Erica Middlebrook, Family Donation Coordinator, Organ, Britta Cruz, Family Donation Coordinator – Contractor, Organ, and Emma Smith, Donation Support Coordinator, Tissue, have received Hope and Life Recognition Awards for their exceptional work with donor families during the first quarter of 2026.