



NEWS

For Immediate Release

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The 2021 Donate Life Floral Sculpture to Honor Donation and Transplantation Professionals as Donation Healthcare Heroes on New Year's Day
2021 Donate Life Tribute to the Rose Parade, Community of Life, Honors Donation and Transplantation Professionals, who have been Instrumental during the COVID-19 Pandemic

(LOS ANGELES – Dec. 3, 2020) — As part of the Tournament of Roses 2021 TV special, “The Rose Parade’s New Year Celebration presented by Honda” airing on New Year’s Day, the Donate Life community will honor six donation and transplantation professionals, who have gone above and beyond their call of duty to make donation and transplantation possible during the current COVID-19 pandemic. These Donation Healthcare Heroes will be recognized with special plaques on the 2021 Donate Life floral sculpture.

The 2021 Donate Life floral sculpture, “Community of Life,” will highlight the arduous work of donation healthcare professionals who quietly, yet diligently, work every single day to make the gift of life possible.

“The need for lifesaving organ transplants and healing tissue transplants does not stop during the current COVID-19 pandemic, and donation and transplantation professionals have continued serving as first responders, saving and healing lives through organ, eye, and tissue donation,” said Tom Mone, Chairman of the Donate Life Rose Parade float committee and CEO of OneLegacy. “We wanted to recognize their efforts and their dedication to this mission, and we look forward to sharing their stories and inspire our local communities to Donate Life.”

The 2021 Donate Life Donation Healthcare Heroes are:

Dr. Patrick Smock, MD, Orthopedic Surgeon and tissue recipient, honored by Axogen. Through both his surgical and personal experience, Dr. Smock understands how important it is to repair an injured nerve as soon as possible. Throughout this challenging time, he has continued caring for patients and performing surgeries that are crucial to helping ensure that patients who suffer nerve injuries get the care they need, and ensuring a donor’s gift of nerve tissue has as much impact on others as possible.

Dr. Paul Stelzer, MD, Surgeon and Professor of Cardiovascular Surgery, honored by Cryolife. Dr. Stelzer is an incredible advocate for donation and transplantation. He has performed over 700 Ross

procedures for aortic valve replacement. Even during the COVID-19 pandemic and the impact that it had in NYC, Dr. Stelzer continued to perform these surgeries for the patients that needed them. CryoLife's last two honorees for the Donate Life float, Donna Pierce and Jeannie Sullivan, were both Ross procedure patients.

Jennifer Hayes, Procurement Transplant Coordinator, honored by Legacy of Hope. As a procurement transplant coordinator and in-house coordinator for Legacy of Hope, Jennifer was passionate about saving and enhancing lives through organ, eye, and tissue donation. She cared for countless donor families as they started their grief journey and facilitated transplants for grateful recipients. Unfortunately, Jennifer died August 28th, 2020 after battling COVID-19. She was only 47 years old.

Luci Pham, Advance Practice Coordinator, honored by LifeShare of Oklahoma. Luci Pham began work as an Organ Recovery Coordinator at LifeShare Transplant Donor Services of OK in 2016. Since then, she has moved into an Advance Practice Coordinator position. During the COVID-19 pandemic, Luci has helped the organ recovery team and LifeShare navigate uncharted territory while still focusing on their core purpose of saving lives.

Dr. Rosemary O'Meeghan, MD, honored by OneLegacy. Dr. O'Meeghan has inspired the donation and transplantation community personally and professionally, and her leadership and innovation in addressing perhaps one of the most pressing healthcare needs during the COVID-19 pandemic will remain for years to come. In 2019, Dr. O'Meeghan became the Referral Management Medical Director for OneLegacy. This role is solely responsible for referral management which entails being a champion for preserving opportunity for organ donation, peer to peer conversations on difficult donation referrals, leveraging community standards and regulatory practices, and hospital engagement.

Dr. Marwal Kilani, MD, Critical Care, honored by Specialist Direct. Dr. Kilani is a remarkable physician who, during end-of-life care, honors the family's wishes and the patient's decision of donation and transplantation while providing comfort, peace, and dignity. During the COVID-19 pandemic, the community that Dr. Kilani serves was greatly affected; the hospital she supports had the highest number of COVID-19 cases, contributing to a difficult healthcare climate. Even through all the challenges, she ensured that families were well cared for, providing them with empathy, solace, and compassion.

The 2021 Donate Life Rose Parade floral sculpture, "Community of Life," features a vibrant floral honeycomb built by bees, sharing the important message that we are stronger when we work together as a community. Donation healthcare professionals devote every single day to make donation and transplantation possible and the names of six Donation Healthcare Heroes will be featured within the floral sculpture.

This year's Donate Life Rose Parade Experience will include a total of 27 participants from all around the nation, featuring 21 donors who have given a second chance at life to others and six transplant professionals.

As the world's most visible campaign to inspire organ, eye and tissue donation, The Donate Life Rose Parade Experience inspires viewers to help the over 1 million people in need of organ, eye or tissue transplants each year. Register today to become an organ, eye or tissue donor by visiting [DonateLife.net](https://www.donatelife.net). To learn more about the 2021 Donate Life Floral Sculpture honorees, visit the Donate Life float website [here](#).

About Donate Life America

Donate Life America is a 501(c)3 not-for-profit alliance of national organizations and state teams across the United States committed to increasing organ, eye and tissue donation. Donate Life America manages and promotes the national brand for donation, Donate Life, and assists Donate Life State Teams and national partners in facilitating high-performing donor registries; developing and executing effective multi-media donor education programs; and motivating the American public to register now as organ, eye and tissue donors.

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