



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **AUGUST 1ST IS NATIONAL MINORITY DONOR AWARENESS DAY**

*More than 1,661 African Americans are awaiting transplants in North Carolina.*

**Winston-Salem, NC-** Carolina Donor Services, in conjunction with Donate Life America, recognizes Sunday, August 1st as National Minority Donor Awareness Day. During the annual National Minority Donor Awareness Day, African Americans across the country will be informed about exercising their choice to save a life... the life of a neighbor, a child, a friend, or even someone in their immediate family.

African Americans represent 36% of the thousands of patients who are awaiting a kidney transplant. Many are unaware of the critical need that exists within our community. "One donor can save or improve over 50 lives," said CDS Community Relations Coordinator, Beth Hinesley.

For George Pingho who was born in Sri Lanka and now lives in Winston-Salem, North Carolina, receiving a kidney transplant gave him a new lease on life. Mr. Pingho said, "To those of you who have been unsure of the need to be a donor or are uncertain of the consequences of leaving a part of your life behind, here is what I say to the family of my donor. There are no words to describe my humble gratitude for the gift your family gave to my family. It is a bittersweet moment in my life. Because of your unselfish gift, I have a new chance at life. I cannot imagine the pain you bear from your loss; I can

only pray that God Himself will wipe the tears from your eyes, give you hope and hold you close to His heart. I am convinced, beyond a shadow of a doubt, that my donor had a giving heart, that there were unfulfilled wishes in my donor's life. I want to assure you this gift will not have been in vain. I will strive to fulfill those wishes as they are sent to me. I will not let you down."

This year, **Carolina Donor Services** will tackle the donor crisis by focusing its efforts on sharing information. The organization will encourage donation while erasing fear and other obstacles faced by potential donors.

National Minority Donor Awareness Day is observed every August 1 to increase awareness of donation among minority populations. The event was first recognized in 1996 by President Clinton.

In North Carolina residents can take the following steps to donate life:

- Put the heart on your driver's license
- Register their wishes on-line at [www.donatelifenc.org](http://www.donatelifenc.org)
- Express your wishes to your family

#### **About Carolina Donor Services**

Carolina Donor Services is the federally-designated, not-for-profit organ and tissue donation organization serving 6.8 million people in 78 counties of North Carolina and Danville, Virginia. In North Carolina, over 3,000 people are currently waiting for an organ transplant, and nationally, more than 108,000 people are on the organ waiting list. For more information, visit [www.carolinadonorservices.org](http://www.carolinadonorservices.org); or call 1-800-200-2672