

The Best of DONORNETWORKWEST

MAY RECAP 2025 NEWSLETTER



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Best of Donor Network West
Newsletter Library



Save Lives, Honor Donors, Celebrate Heritage

A year filled with an incredible focus towards saving lives is already near the halfway mark! May is here, and with it comes an imperative time of the year - Asian American, Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander Month!

Supporting organ and tissue donation within the Asian American, Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander communities is particularly vital due to matching donors with recipients of similar ethnicity and cultural background. Ethnicity and cultural factors play a role in organ and tissue compatibility. More donors from the same ethnicity and culture increase the chances of finding suitable matches for patients in dire need!

*“The meaning of life is to find your gift.
The purpose of life is to give it away.”*

— Pablo Picasso

A Mother's Heroic Love

Toni Kim's Living Donor Story

Toni Kim's journey to heroism began in 2023 with a visit to the pediatrician for her daughter, Jemmi. "Umma, I'm tired... Umma, hold my hand... Umma, can I sleep with you? A healthy, flourishing teenager started to sleep 12 - 15 hours a day and vomit regularly. We had no idea at the time, but her kidneys were barely functioning. I can't imagine all that her body was going through." said Toni Kim regarding her daughter before her transplant.

In the spring of 2023, Jemmi had to be rushed to the ER due to symptoms of Kidney failure, where Toni and her family learned that Jemmi's body was shutting down, and the doctors were shocked she even had the strength to walk on her own. They learned that she would ultimately need a kidney transplant, and soon. The doctors informed her that parents and family can donate, however, Toni and her daughter were not a match. This would mean that Jemmi would have to be on dialysis every other day for 4+ hours until a match was found.

Feeling devastated and yearning for answers, Toni wondered what she could do for her daughter, and Donor Network West had the answers she sought. She participated in the Kidney Pair Exchange program, which would add Jemmi to the national registry. Toni made the decision to become a Living Kidney Donor by "sharing my spare to someone that needs it." In November of 2023, Toni received the call that the match had been found for her spare kidney, and in that same call, was also informed that Jemmi's match had also been found.

On November 30th, 2023, Toni Kim donated her kidney, which successfully made it to the transplant recipient. The recipient's life ultimately changed for the better by receiving a second chance. On December 12th, 2023, Jemmi received her new kidney and a chance to live out her teenage years untethered, happy, and healthy.

The incredible Mother-Daughter duo is a full year and some months past surgery, and "all I can say is, I am beyond blessed, I am forever grateful. To all the mothers and caregivers who supported us through this journey, who carried us through our trials and tribulations, I honor you!" said Toni Kim.



THE PROTECTION AND LIMITS OF ATTORNEY-CLIENT PRIVILEGE

You are on round 7 of an email reply chain, and you realize that you and your colleague are sharing details in it that might be sensitive in a pending lawsuit. You cleverly add your legal representation to the email chain as a "cc" to keep the conversation "attorney-client privileged." Adding the attorney's name effectively hides everything from public view, much like Harry Potter's invisibility cloak, right?

Wrong.

What is "attorney-client privilege"? What does "attorney work product" protection mean? When do we invoke it, and how does it work?

When an attorney serves as in-house counsel, we are not always working in the capacity of an attorney. Sometimes, we are asked for our business advice. At times, our emails are a mixture of protected attorney-client privileged communications, requests for our strategic business thoughts, administrative requests, and simple "FYIs."

The law does not protect all of those communications just because an attorney is included in it. You may notice that some emails from your legal representation expressly state in bold letters (usually in the subject line or at the very top of the message) "ATTORNEY-CLIENT PRIVILEGED COMMUNICATION/ATTORNEY WORK PRODUCT." This is done on particularly sensitive emails, and it's done in that way so that, should the organization be involved in a lawsuit, your legal team will pay close attention to it when they receive demands for discovery from opposing counsel, ensuring that they do not inadvertently produce it.

Even then, there is no magic bullet. In the discovery phase of litigation, counsel is required to keep a "privilege log" and indicate each document we seek to withhold on it. Opposing counsel can often review the documents and object to their categorization as a privileged conversation. It can ask the court to override the privilege, allowing it to be used as evidence in the lawsuit. Sometimes, the document can be used as long as the sensitive legal advice is redacted. The court examines the facts and contents of each case before deciding whether something is worthy of protection from discovery.

Attorney Client Privileged Communication

What is a privileged conversation or document, and why does it exist? Long ago, the courts and legislature decided that there is a public policy interest in ensuring that individuals can seek confidential advice from counsel. Often, an individual may plan to do take action that is actually not legally permissible. To increase the likelihood of complaint legal behavior, there is a compelling societal benefit to create a sanctuary of confidential communication between the potential law breaker and his/her attorney in the hope that wise counsel can guide the individual to change their path and navigate in accordance with the law. Additionally, justice is often depicted as a balancing scale. Justice requires equality between the arguments advanced in the adjudication of a case, and so, even an individual who may have committed a crime or a civil infraction must have equal representation to create balance on both sides of the scale: prosecutor versus defense, plaintiff versus defendant. Counsel cannot do a great job of protecting their client's rights if the client is afraid to confidentially confess every fact to their counsel, so the law creates a sanctuary to protect these conversations from disclosure.

But there are rules surrounding the privilege. For example, do not come to your legal team and tell them that you are going to physically harm your co-worker and expect them to keep that quiet. Future criminal activity is not protected just because you "fess up" your plans to a lawyer if you proceed to commit the crime despite the attorney's advice to do otherwise. Also, not every attorney you speak with is YOUR attorney. For example, I am technically the attorney for Donor Network West, so while the company will protect our employees if they are acting in the scope of employment and are brought into a lawsuit as a result of doing their job, I am not paid to represent your interests if you engaged in illegal or inappropriate behavior that subjects our company to a lawsuit. There may not be attorney-client privilege attached to our conversation. I may like you as a person, friend, and co-worker, but I am paid as an attorney for the organization. Thus, my duty is to the company and so the client relationship and the privilege attached flows to my employer (and those acting on behalf of my employer), just as the privilege flows with the financial and legal retention of a private attorney.

Attorney Work Product:

If I write a detailed legal analysis in response to a question posed by a client or create written strategic legal talking points or a legal document? This analysis represents legal advice and is protected by the "attorney work product" doctrine. In essence, this protects not only the factual answer but also how I arrived at the answer.

How do I ensure I am using Attorney-Client Privilege/Attorney Work Product correctly?

1. Remember that a communication seeking advice in anticipation of potential litigation or that specifically requests legal guidance on an issue is the most likely communication to pass the protection test and be deemed "privileged" by the court.
2. If you do send your legal representation an email, even if it's part of an email chain that predates their inclusion, please direct a specific legal question to them when you include them. For example, "Please note John Doe's idea in the prior email. Do you have any advice on how we should approach this issue legally?" In this example, the primary purpose you included legal representation for is to seek legal advice. A court is much more likely to maintain the privilege.
3. Not every communication with an attorney involved, even if it involves legal matters, requires protection. Use your internal red flag detector to consider whether you are dealing with a sensitive legal issue. When in doubt about treating a communication as one that is attorney-client privileged? Consult with your legal team, particularly before forwarding the communications to others directly.
4. Your legal team may respond to a complex email with a response like this: "As to the facts you presented, my business thoughts are as follows... In addition, there is a legal issue to consider. That issue is X, and you should consider doing the following to avoid a legal infraction." The court can more easily redact the business advice from the legal advice, thereby protecting the privileged part of the conversation.
5. Do not directly forward my legal advice to others. Instead, ask your legal team to forward it to those who need to know. If you (a non-attorney) forward it directly to others, it breaks the privilege. The privilege disappears because you included someone else in this confidential conversation outside of you and the attorney (me). The plastic protection bubble popped.

Remember, the best tool to use when you need to ask your legal representation about something that you think is highly sensitive, and that requires you to give them background? Your voice. Please pick up the phone and give them a call. They will follow it up with verbal or written legal advice, and it will be written appropriately in anticipation of potential litigation and marked as "Attorney Client Privileged" communication.



A Symbol that Doesn't Waver

Donate Life Flag Raisings

The Donate Life Flag is more than a flag — it's a symbol of hope, healing, and legacy. It honors donors, celebrates second chances, and inspires hope for those still waiting. Join us in raising awareness and say 'yes' to organ, eye, and tissue donation.



Proclaiming your Support

Donate Life Proclamations

Donor Network West and many of the cities we serve often come together during Donate Life Month to reaffirm their proclamation to honor and observe Donate Life Month. During these events, we recognize the selflessness and generosity of organ, eye, and tissue donors who have saved and enhanced lives. These are heartfelt moments that celebrate the incredible impact of donations on individuals and their families.



Innovation and Hope in Nursing

John Muir Nurse Symposium

Julie Gabbard, Donor Network West's Donation Program Consultant, Leslie Barratt, Donor Mother of Joe Barratt, who donated his heart to Ted Jung, and Ted himself, were all in attendance for John Muir Medical Center's Nurse Symposium. It was an excellent opportunity for the nursing community of John Muir Health to learn more about the gift of life, its importance, and how they can help facilitate successful outcomes in organ and tissue donation, transplantation and research.



Light it Up for Donate Life Month!

The Annual Reno Arch Lighting

On April 1st, we lit the Reno Arch up blue 🌊 and green 🍀 to kick off National Donate Life Month! Donate Life Month is the opportunity to honor our donors, recipients and our partners. During the event, we presented two of our partners for being powerful advocates for organ, eye and tissue donation.

Check out our award winners for the night:



Outstanding Community Award

🏆 Latino Arte and Culture

Outstanding Hospital Partner Award

🏆 Saint Mary's Regional Medical Center ICU



Mission Champions Live at DNWest

MarCom Lunch and Learn

Our Marketing department's first Lunch and Learn was a hit, and we're so grateful for our attendees across the organization, both in person and via Zoom. If you showed up, wave those pendants around like you just don't care! Everyone that attended either in person or via Zoom will be receiving their gifts, and we're so glad you had an opportunity to learn more about how you can and will be a mission champion for Donor Network West.



Celebrating AAHNPI Heritage

May is here, and with it comes an imperative time of the year - Asian American, Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander Heritage Month! This annual celebration is an opportunity to honor the rich cultural heritage and contributions of the Asian American, Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander communities in the United States.

Supporting organ and tissue donation within the Asian American, Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander communities is particularly vital due to matching donors with recipients of similar ethnicity and cultural background. Ethnicity and cultural factors play a role in organ and tissue compatibility. More donors from the same ethnicity and culture increase the chances of finding suitable matches for patients in dire need!



Giving Thanks To The Ones Who Make It Happen

National Nurses Week

National Nurses Week took place from 5/4 - 5/10, giving our organization and healthcare partners everywhere to give hanks to the incredible nurses who support donation and bring hope to donor families and recipients every day.



Teachers Guide the Future

Teacher Appreciation Week

At the beginning of the first full week of May, we have an amazing opportunity to celebrate Teacher Appreciation Week! During this time, we celebrate the educators who go beyond the classroom — teaching compassion, inspiring hope, and opening hearts to the power of organ, eye, and tissue donation. Thank you for guiding the next generation to save and heal lives.



A Mother's Love

Happy Mother's Day

This Mother's Day 🌸, we celebrated mothers' incredible strength, love, and selflessness in all forms. To the amazing moms who gave life—and gave again through organ, eye, and tissue donation, to the mothers who said “yes” during unimaginable grief. To those who received the gift of more time and the moms who stood by their children, partners, and loved ones through transplant journeys, you are the heart of hope, healing, and legacy. 💖



Officer Joe Chairez

A Hero in Life and Passing

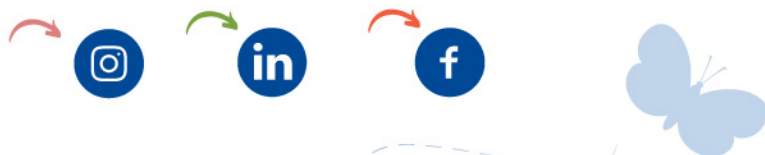
For 24 years, Jess and Theresa Chairez have shared their son Officer Joseph "Joe" Chairez's legacy of service and generosity. After Joe became an organ donor in 2000, saving four lives, they've honored his memory by advocating for organ and tissue donation across their community. Their dedication reminds us all of the lasting impact one “yes” can make. On Peace Officer Memorial Day, we remember and honor heroes like Joe whose service continues through the lives they've saved. 💚💙



How To Save a Life

EMS Appreciation Week

This National EMS Week 🚒, we extend our heartfelt thanks to the dedicated emergency medical services professionals who respond with skill, speed, and compassion. Your partnership helps make the #GiftOfLife possible—thank you for all you do to support organ, eye, and tissue donation.



Working Together To Save Lives In California

Lobby Day 2025

This past Donate Life Month on April 23rd, all four of California's organ procurement organizations (OPOs) gathered on the steps of the State Capitol on Tuesday, together with @donatelifecalifornia - the nonprofit that runs California's donor registry.

California has more people on the transplant waiting list than any other state: 20,000. The math is staggering — of the 103K patients on the national waitlist, approximately 20% live here in the Golden State. There are efforts underway in Sacramento to expand educational efforts, including legislation by @asmsolache to provide information to incoming college students (AB 466). Research shows that more teenagers are waiting to get their driver's licenses, so this information would increase awareness among students who may not have had the chance to register as organ and tissue donors at the DMV.



Coming Together As One

To every donor family and friend, transplant recipient, ambassadors, advocates, team members and the entire City of Reno. Thank you. This inaugural Together As One Banquet on the Virginia Street Bridge was an incredible opportunity for us to come together for a fantastic evening, and it would not have been possible without your attendance, support and sponsorship.

More highlights from this incredible event will be coming this week, so stay tuned!



We had an incredible hold of the city for the day, grabbing the eyes of multiple news stations in Reno. Check out some of our news features as well:



KRXI-TV (Reno, NV) - ARC Reno



Live Look: Together As One | Videos | 2news.com



KRNV-TV (Reno, NV) - News 4 at 11 Weekend



KOLO (ABC) - KOLO 8 News Now @ 5PM"

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MONDAY, JUNE 30th, 2025

Join us for the 2nd Annual Chipping Away for Hope Golf Tournament, honoring the life of R.C. Owens, aka Alley Oop, a 49ers legend and kidney transplant recipient. Golf tickets are currently sold out, but there is still space to join us for dinner!

Hosted by the Donor Network West Foundation, Executive Director Bubba Paris, and NFL friends, this event supports Donor Network West's lifesaving mission, bringing hope to those impacted by organ and tissue donation in Northern California and Nevada.

The official website and more details can be found here:



In June, We Celebrate Pride

At Donor Network West, we believe in the power of unity, acceptance, and equality for all. As we join hands with the LGBTQIA+ community during this special month, we proudly stand as allies, embracing the diversity that enriches our world. Pride is about celebrating love in all its forms and who you love doesn't change your ability to save lives through organ donation.

Inclusivity lies at the heart of our mission. We firmly believe that no matter your gender identity or sexual orientation, everyone deserves equal access to life-saving organ and tissue transplants. Our commitment extends to creating a safe and affirming environment for all, free from discrimination and prejudice. We strive to ensure that every person, regardless of who they are or who they love, has the opportunity to live a full and healthy life.



DONOR
NETWORK WEST
FOUNDATION
RUN/WALK



STRIDE FOR HOPE

Walking to honor organ, eye and tissue donor heroes

Join us!

Saturday
Sept. 13th

Iron Horse Middle School
San Ramon, CA

Saturday
Sept. 20th

Woodward Park
Fresno, CA

5k.DNWest.org

Register Today!
\$5 OFF through Aug. 1st



PROMO CODE: **EARLYS**

The Stride Continues!

Join us this September for our annual Stride for Hope Run/Walks, a heartfelt event dedicated to honoring the gift of life through organ, eye, and tissue donation. These events will be held on two different dates and locations. This inspiring gathering unites donor families, transplant recipients, and community partners in a shared mission to raise awareness and celebrate the power of donation. Whether you run, walk, or cheer from the sidelines, your participation helps support ongoing efforts to spread the life-saving message of donation and ensure that more lives are transformed through this incredible gift.



The below media coverage includes stories published May 17 – May 23, 2025.

Together as One Fundraiser benefiting Donor Network West

KOLO-TV (Reno, NV)

I'm here with Donor Network West to talk about a really unique fundraiser happening next weekend on the Virginia Street Bridge. Matt Graves here, the vice president of donor operations with the non-profit, to talk to us about the Together As One event.

5/23/2025 | [Tweet](#) [Share on LinkedIn](#)

St. Mary's Regional Medical Center Supervisor and Kidney Transplant Recipient to be Recognized at the Reno Aces Game on May 23

Nevada Business Magazine

Orozco will run the bases during the second inning at the Reno Aces' Home Run for Life game, presented by Donor Network West, Friday, May 23, 2025, at Greater Nevada Field as the Reno Aces take on the Albuquerque Isotopes.

5/22/2025 | [Tweet](#) [Share on LinkedIn](#)

'It's the greatest feeling to know I helped someone live'

By Jovi Dai | East Bay Times

Kristin Holtsman, who coordinates operating room setup, patient safety and team support at Donor Network West in Oakdale, California, committed to becoming a living donor herself. "When I started at Donor Network West, I learned about the path of living organ donation," she said. "A few years later, my cousin donated a kidney to my uncle — that was my first personal connection to a living donor. Watching the change it made for my uncle planted the seed for me."

This story was widely syndicated by publications throughout the region, and published both online and in-print.

5/20/2025 | [Tweet](#) [Share on LinkedIn](#)

Kidney transplant recipient to be recognized at Reno Aces game Friday

KTVN-TV (Reno, NV)

Donor Network West will recognize Reno resident Alondra Orozco during the Home Run for Life game at Greater Nevada Field on Friday, May 23, to raise awareness about the impact of organ donation. Orozco, a supervisor at St. Mary's Regional Medical Center, was first diagnosed with kidney disease at age 19. At the time, she was starting college and undergoing dialysis. Her father, Andres Orozco, donated a kidney to her, which she described as a significant experience that brought them closer together.

5/20/2025 | [Tweet](#) [Share on LinkedIn](#)

Respiratory therapist's quick thinking helps save 4 lives through organ donation

By Vanessa Villafuerte | KSEE-TV (Fresno, CA)

At one point, it wasn't clear whether the patient's body would remain stable long enough to reach the operating room. "We didn't know if the patient would remain stable enough to make it to the OR," Kristin Eachus, in-house coordinator with Donor Network West, said. But Angel Bolanos, a military-trained therapist with decades of experience, knew how to operate the specialized ventilator needed and didn't hesitate to act.

5/17/2025 | [Tweet](#) [Share on LinkedIn](#)

Key Broadcast Clips

Donor Network West's mentions in TV and radio clips.

MedWatch Today - KSEE-FRES (NBC)

KSEE-TV (Fresno, CA)

The admitted patient had been in a vehicle collision, and found himself submerged in a canal and sustained an anoxic brain injury that he couldn't recover from. Fortunately, in this event, this patient happened to be an organ donor. Donor Network West saves lives through organ and tissue donation. Kristin Eachus is the in-house coordinator, and works closely with Community Regional, meeting with nurses to review cases and find potential donors.

This story aired three additional times throughout the weekend, and was published online here.

5/19/2025

The below media coverage includes stories published May 17 – May 23, 2025.

Bay Area Proud: Life-Saving Donation - NBC Bay Area News Tonight

KNTV-TV (San Jose, CA)

Donor Network West, based in San Ramon, is the sole nonprofit connecting organ donors with recipients for all of northern California. Working there for 23 years has given Luis Mayen a front row seat to witness every side of the miracle that is organ donation.

5/17/2025

Live organ donation rising, but need is growing: 'It's the greatest feeling to know I helped someone live'

By Jovi Dai | East Bay Times / San Jose Mercury News

BAY AREA - In the Bay Area, more than 7,600 people are waiting for organ transplants.

Maxwell's Note: This story means a lot for Donor Network West! Donyale John, Kristin Holtsman, Cindy Zbin

May 20, 2025 at 7:08 a.m.

Rural Nevada's first birth tissue donation program comes to Winnemucca

By Lydia Snow | Elko Daily Free Press

WINNEMUCCA - Humboldt General Hospital has partnered with Donor Network West to bring the first birth tissue donation program to rural Nevada. They bring the program to expecting parents who are willing participants. "We thought it was important to offer this opportunity to all mothers, not just the large population centers," Matt Graves, vice president of tissue operations at Donor Network West, explained.

This story also published in print.

5/02/2025 | [Tweet Share on LinkedIn](#)

Rural Nevada parents now have the chance to heal others through birth tissue donations

By Maria Palma | KUNR-FM (Reno, NV)

Humboldt General Hospital has teamed up with Donor Network West to launch the region's first birth tissue donation program. Parents can choose to donate birth tissue after childbirth. The goal is to help burn victims, surgery patients, or even advance medical research. The idea is to offer a way for parents to donate placentas and umbilical cords, which are typically discarded after delivery, said Matt Graves, vice president of tissue operations at Donor Network West.

5/01/2025 | [Tweet Share on LinkedIn](#)

Key Broadcast Clips

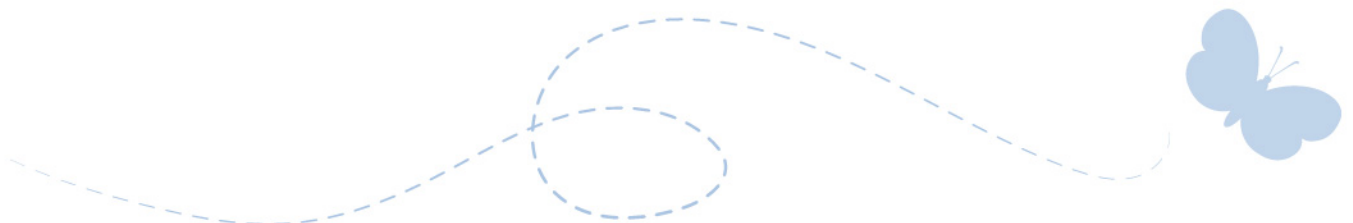
Donor Network West's mentions in TV and radio clips.

Rural Nevada parents now have the chance to heal others through birth tissue donations

KUNR-FM (Reno, NV)

A new hospital partnership is giving parents the option to donate birth tissue for medical use and research. As KUNR's Maria Palmer reports, Humboldt General Hospitals teamed up with Donor Network West to launch the region's first birth tissue donation program. Giving birth at Humboldt General Hospital now comes with a new option. Parents can choose to donate birth tissue after childbirth.

5/01/2025





DONOR NETWORK WEST



@mydnwest

There are plenty of events and celebrations that we're privileged to be a part of! The best way to stay updated on everything we have going on is to follow us on social media @MyDNWest across all platforms! Our Instagram is a fantastic place to start, or maybe you enjoy Facebook. Either way, we're everywhere, and we'll see you there!

