

NATIONAL MULTIETHNIC DONOR AWARENESS MONTH



Joe Chairez

As a boy, Joe dreamed of becoming a police officer, driven by his love for others and natural ability to connect with people. In high school, he became student body president and football team captain, later studying criminal justice in college while attending the police academy. During this time, he shared with his father, Jess, his desire to become an organ donor—a decision supported by his mother and brothers, but difficult for Jess to accept. Months later, after a family dinner, Jess felt compelled to embrace Joe a second time, a moment he would cherish forever, as Joe tragically collapsed from an aneurysm the next day while on duty and was declared medically brain dead. Faced with an unthinkable decision, Jess recalled their conversation and felt divine guidance in honoring Joe's wish. "I stepped away to pray for guidance when suddenly, the memory of our discussion about organ donation flashed before me. 'By honoring your son, you will honor me.'" Joe saved four lives through the gift of organ and tissue donation, leaving a legacy of service, love, and selflessness.

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