



# Media Kit



# News Release:

## UNO PRSSA HOLDS ORGAN DONOR AWARENESS EVENT

(Omaha, Neb.) – Of the 106,000 Americans waiting for a lifesaving organ transplant, more than 500 of them are Nebraskans.

To provide more facts about organ donation among college students, [Maverick PR](#), UNO’s chapter of the Public Relations Student Society of America (PRSSA) has planned a series of events with the theme “Go Green-Donate Life.”

The event starts on April 20<sup>th</sup> with a panel led by the [Nebraska Organ Recovery System](#) (NORS) which will include a brunch.

“Students are one of the more open minded groups we target,” said Stephanie Lochmiller, public relations coordinator of Nebraska Organ Recovery System.

The second part of the event will be on Thursday, April 22 outside on the Student Center Plaza. Teams from five different UNO student organizations will compete in a “Build a Life” contest from 11 to 11:30 a.m. The band, Skypiper, will play from noon to 1 p.m. as well.

During this time, PRSSA volunteers will distribute tote bags made of recyclable materials full of swag, heart candy, Sun Chips, water and Crystal Light to all students who sign up to become organ donors or who show their driver’s license as proof they are registered donors.

Along with PRSSA and Maverick PR, the event is also sponsored by NORS and the [Chris Klug Foundation](#). NORS is the federally designated organ procurement organization for Nebraska and Pottawattamie County in Iowa. Chris Klug Foundation is a national advocacy group that promotes organ donation on college campuses.

“Our research shows that college students are among the most receptive audiences to organ donation but their predisposition to organ donation does not translate into advocacy or action,” said Chris Klug, the Olympic bronze medalist for snowboarding, who created his foundation after receiving a life- saving liver transplant.

This event is part of the chapter’s annual participation in the National Organ Donor Awareness Competition (NODAC). NODAC urges PRSSA chapters around the nation to hold informative events on their campuses to raise awareness about the importance of organ donation. The Rowan University chapter of PRSSA from Glassboro, NJ sponsors the competition.

Maverick PR, the University of Nebraska at Omaha chapter of the Public Relations Student Society of America (PRSSA) offers students a wide range of opportunities for professional development and community service. Founded in 1968, PRSSA is the largest, most respected and recognized organization for pre-professional students interested in public relations. Founded in 1968, PRSSA boasts more than 9,600 members with 284 chapters across the nation. In 2009, PRSSA awarded the UNO PRSSA chapter with its highest honor: the F.H. Teahan National Chapter Award for Outstanding Chapter.

For more information about this event, contact Jennifer Lane, event coordinator at (402) 659-0988 or [jllane@unomaha.edu](mailto:jllane@unomaha.edu).

# Feature Story:

## Kidney transplant recipient, 22, battles rejection but remains hopeful

Every day after work at the Millard Public Schools Daycare, Jordan Shaw goes home to sleep. He said he constantly sleeps after a day of work. He doesn't go out and party or enjoy a life that every other 22-year-old college student gets to enjoy. He said he needs something his own parents cannot even give him, something more vital than money or food-- a kidney.

Shaw started out life with a disease at the age of 2 called rhabdomyosarcoma, a rare cancer of the soft tissue. Although he won his battle with cancer, his organs were severely worn by the disease causing failure of his kidneys. At the age of 14, he started having life-threatening complications with his kidneys and had to go on dialysis at the age of 15. For a year Shaw watched people battle with the machine that kept his kidney and him alive. "For the first three weeks, I saw people who were beyond help and would never be off of dialysis until they would die. You can't even describe it."

At the age of 16, Shaw received his kidney transplant from a Kansas man, the first anonymous donor kidney transplant performed at the Nebraska Medical Center. He said the donor gave him a chance at life. Shaw has become a strong advocate of organ donation.

"I tell everyone to do it," he said. In high school I had friends that hadn't checked it on their driver's license and I told them about my story. It's so easy, why not do it? Plus, it really hits home with me. It doesn't cost anything and all you have to do is check a box."

Currently, Shaw is waiting for another kidney. He said in the last year his body has started to reject his new kidney. He remains positive for another one.

"Probably the worst part about it is you don't know how bad it is until you get the transplant and your body acts how it's supposed to," he said. "Right now I feel like a normal kid except for no partying and medicine every day but 90 little kids will do that to you."





# Feature Story:

Shaw could be on dialysis for the rest of his life if he chooses but he decided on a different fate. “I see a guy every time I go on dialysis that does it three times a week for three hours,” he said. “He is from out of town and he does it because it is part of his life routine.”

Shaw said he doesn’t want that routine in life. He gets used to the needles but doesn’t want to be hooked up to a machine the rest of his life. He also said, “Dialysis is the fastest way to max out your insurance.”

For now he remains hopeful and engages in programs around the community to help others through their struggles. He said particularly the ones who haven’t had to deal with the disease their entire lives. He talks to kids at the Nebraska Medical Center and Children’s Hospital clinics on how to cope.

He feels that college students have the power to spread the word. He talked about how he was in high school and how outgoing he is now. He believes that the age of 18-25 sparks revolution and productivity. “We have a voice in the community that we make people hear.”

# Nebraska Statistics:

- More than 100,000 people are on the waiting list for organ transplant in the United States.
- Currently, 490 Nebraskans are listed on the donor waiting list.
- Of the people on the donor list 273 are waiting for a kidney, 156 for a liver, 23 for a pancreas, 11 for a kidney/pancreas, 16 for a heart and 11 for an intestine.
- Currently, 50 people between the ages of 18-34 are on the donor waiting list.
- In 2009, the 103 donations recovered are from 45 deceased donors and 58 living donors.
- Currently there are 807 living registered donors and from 1988 to today, over 20,000 Nebraskans had life saving surgery.

The Organ Procurement and Transplant Network at [www.optn.org](http://www.optn.org)





# U.S. Statistics:

## What you need to know about organ donation:

- Roughly 77 people receive an organ transplant everyday in the U.S.
- More than 100,000 life-saving organs are needed for patients in the U.S.
- Every 13 minutes someone new is added to the organ transplant list.
- In 2009, a total of 28,464 transplants were performed across the U.S.
- In 2009, a total of 14,631 deceased and living donors were recovered.

## U.S. Department of Health and Human Services at [www.optn.org](http://www.optn.org)

- On average, 20 people die each day from the lack of available organs for transplant.
- 98% of all adults have heard about organ donation and 86% have heard of tissue donation.
- 90% of Americans say they support donation, but only 30% know the essential steps to take to be a donor.
- A national report card prepared by Donate Life America shows an increase of 9 million donor designations over the last 18 months, bringing the total number of registered donors in the United States to nearly 80 million.
- Anyone can be a potential donor regardless of age, race, or medical history.
- When you are on the waiting list for an organ, what really counts is the severity of your illness, time spent waiting, blood type, and other important medical information, not your financial status or celebrity status.
- An open casket funeral is possible for organ, eye and tissue donors. Through the entire donation process the body is treated with care, respect and dignity.
- There is no cost to the donor or their family for organ or tissue donation.

## Donate Life America at [www.donatelife.net](http://www.donatelife.net)

- One tissue donor can enhance the lives of up to 60 people.
- Right now 106,801 people are waiting for an organ transplant in the US.

## Nebraska Organ Recovery System at [www.nedonation.org](http://www.nedonation.org)

- Nearly 10 percent of the patients waiting for a liver transplant are young people under the age of 18.
- An estimated 10,000 to 14,000 people who die each year meet the criteria for organ donation but were not registered donors.

## The United States House of Representatives at [www.house.gov](http://www.house.gov)

# Backgrounder:

## Nebraska Organ Recovery System

Nebraska Organ Recovery System (NORS) is the federally designated organ procurement organization for the State of Nebraska and Pottawattamie County in Iowa. NORS is responsible for facilitating the donation process and serves about 1.7 million people in the area.

NORS mission is to maximize the recovery and quality of organs and tissues for transplantation while maintaining a sensitivity, compassion and respect for people of all cultures. NORS works with staff, donor families and educates the public on organ donation.

When someone passes away in a hospital, the hospital staff is required to call NORS. They will then do a medical screening with the hospital staff, in order to determine eligibility of the patient to be a donor.

If the patient is eligible to be a donor, NORS staff will arrive on site to speak with the family about the donation.

If the family consents to donation, or if the patient is on the Nebraska Organ Donor Registry, NORS will begin medical management of the patient. During this time, the patient's organs are placed at different transplant centers around the nation, an operating time is set.

When the time comes, the family is allowed to say their good-byes and the recovery process begins.

**Information taken from the Nebraska Organ Recovery System Web site at [www.nedonation.org](http://www.nedonation.org)**





# Backgrounder:

## Donor Dudes and Chris Klug Foundation

Donor Dudes is a national grassroots, high school and college youth outreach program, sponsored by the Chris Klug Foundation (CKF).

The goal of Donor Dudes is to educate high school and college aged students about the importance of organ and tissue donation, and increase the number of people who are taking action. With the help of students and outreach clubs, the group works to establish “Donor Dudes” chapters across the country.

The mission is to help spread the word in a fun way, and “eliminate the wait” for organ transplants by encouraging every single person to share his or her donation decision and make it known.

The Chris Klug Foundation (CKF) is a nationally recognized 501 c(3) nonprofit organization located in Aspen, Colorado.

Founded in 2004 by Chris Klug, a liver transplant recipient and Olympic medalist snowboarder, CKF and Donor Dudes is dedicated to promoting lifesaving donation and improving the quality of life for donors, donor families, organ transplant candidates and recipients.

CKF and Donor Dudes are both passionate in educating high school and college-aged kids about the importance of organ and tissue donation, and increase the number of people who are taking action.

**Information taken from the Chris Klug Foundation Web site at [www.chrisklugfoundation.org](http://www.chrisklugfoundation.org)**



# Panelist Biographies:

## **Doug Bremers, Manager**

- Donate Life Services, The Nebraska Medical Center

Bremers began working in organ recovery at Nebraska Organ Retrieval System in 1988. He joined the recovery aspects for heart, liver, pancreas, kidney and intestine and a public and professional education on organ and tissue donation. He is also a member of the Acute Bereavement Service (ABS) team and a hospital representative to the United Network for Organ Sharing which assists donor families and recipients in to correspondence with one another.

## **Jennifer J. Lederer, Tissue Procurement Manager**

- Lions Eye Bank of Nebraska

Lederer is a certified eye bank technician and a member of the Eye Bank Association of America (EBAA). Her responsibilities include obtaining medical information on potential eye tissue donors from Nebraska hospitals, procuring donor eye tissue throughout the Omaha area and processing donor corneal and scleral tissue for transplantation and implantation. From May of 1993 to May of 1997, she served as a tissue procurement technician and coordinator.

## **Stephanie Lochmiller, Public Relations Coordinator**

- Nebraska Organ Recovery Services

Lochmiller also serves as the vice president of the Nebraska Organ and Tissue Donor Coalition. She holds a bachelor's degree in journalism/PR/advertising and speech communication from the University of Nebraska at Omaha and has a background in non-profit community relations and fund-development.

## **Jessica Johnson, Clinical Coordinator**

- Nebraska Organ Recovery System

Johnson has been a RN-PACU at the University of Nebraska Medical Center and an RN at Lakeside Hospital. She is a graduate of the University of Nebraska Medical Center. Her responsibility for NORS is to increase the number of donors within the hospitals particularly to help the ones on the waiting list to receive an organ.

## **Sarah Prenosil**

- Heart transplant recipient

Prenosil is a 2009 University of Nebraska at Omaha graduate in Exercise Science and will be starting her master's program in the fall of 2010. She has worked as an intern at Creighton University Medical Center in its cardiac rehabilitation program. She received a heart transplant at the age of 14 in 2000.

# Frequently Asked Questions:

- **What is organ donation and transplantation?**

- Organ donation is the process of removal and transplantation of viable organs from donor to recipient. Recipients have to be matched with the donor organ in order to reduce the recipient's rejection of the new organ.

- **Why should I join the Nebraska Organ Donor Registry?**

- Over 100,000 people in the United States are waiting for organ transplantation. Without a life-saving transplant, these people will die. One organ donor can save the lives of up to 8 people and enhance up to 60 more through tissue donation.

- **How do I sign up to be on the Nebraska Donor Registry?**

- You can register when you renew your driver's license, a small red heart will then appear on your license to indicate that you are registered with the Nebraska Organ Registry. Or you can register online.

- **Who can be an organ donor?**

- People of all ages and background can be organ donors. If you are under age 18, your parent or guardian must give you permission to become a donor. If you are 18 or older you can show you want to be a donor by signing a donor card. You should also let your family know your wishes.

- **Who cannot be an organ donor?**

- People with certain medical conditions cannot donate an organ. This includes people with:
  - HIV
  - Actively spreading brain cancer
  - Certain severe, current infections

In some cases, if you have another disease or chronic medical condition, you can still donate your organs.

- **Will my religion allow me to donate my organs?**

- Most major U.S. religions approve of donation and consider it the ultimate act of giving.

- **What organs and tissues can I donate?**

- Organs that can be donated include the heart, lungs, liver, pancreas, small intestine, and kidneys. One organ donor can save up to 8 lives.

Tissues that are recovered in Nebraska are bone, tendon, connective tissue, heart valves and corneas. Donated skin is especially beneficial to burn victims.





# FAQ:

- **Who manages the distribution of organs?**
  - The United Network for Organ Sharing (UNOS) maintains the Organ Procurement and Transplantation Network (OPTN). Through the UNOS Computer System, organ donors are matched to waiting recipients 24 hours a day, 365 days a year.

## Sources:

<http://www.womenshealth.gov/>

<http://www.organdonor.gov/>

<http://www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/medlineplus.html>