

2024

**DONATE LIFE**  
*Month* **TOOLKIT**



*New York State*



Donors are  
*Super Stars*

**About Donate Life New York State**

Donate Life New York State is the statewide non-profit organization whose mission is to increase organ, eye, and tissue donation in New York State. Our goal is to ensure a life-changing transplant for every New Yorker in need.

Community Partners

# Welcome to National Donate Life Month

April is National Donate Life Month, and we're thrilled to partner with you on this critically important annual observance. With nearly 8,000 New Yorkers awaiting organ transplants and around 400 losing their lives annually due to donor shortages, your participation is crucial. Despite New York's high need for donors, only 48 percent of residents are registered – well below the national average of 64 percent.

This year, Donate Life New York State (NYS) invites you to be the shining star that saves and heals lives through organ, eye, and tissue donation. Our theme, "Donors are SuperStars!" reflects the light and hope we bring by registering as donors. Throughout April, we urge our friends and supporters to spread awareness in their communities about the importance of donation.

## 2024 Donate Life Month Theme: Donors are SuperStars!

This April, gaze at the night sky and the billions of stars that make up the universe. Stars remind us that even in the darkest night there is light, symbolizing the hope we bring by registering as organ and tissue donors. As a friend and supporter of Donate Life NYS, you play a significant role in our effort to save lives by making the community aware of the opportunity to “reach for the stars” and register their decision to be an organ, eye, and tissue donor. On behalf of New York's donation and transplant community, we thank you for the lifesaving work you do every day!

## Access a “Galaxy of Resources”

Embark on a celestial journey and visit Donate Life NYS' website where you'll find an online resource center that makes it easy for you to celebrate Donate Life Month. Visit [donatelifenys.org/dlm-partners](https://donatelifenys.org/dlm-partners) where you'll discover a galaxy of resources including social media posts, graphics, digital resources, press releases, PSAs, and much more!

**If your office needs additional materials or support during Donate Life Month, contact us at (518) 326-3237 or [info@dlnys.org](mailto:info@dlnys.org).**

# Reach for the Stars during Donate Life Month!

Thank you for joining our cosmic celebration of National Donate Life Month! This stellar observance aims to skyrocket the number of registered donors, illuminating the lives of those in need of organ, eye, and tissue transplants. Below are ten astronomically fun ideas to unveil the vast universe of opportunity to promote donor registration in your community, where donors truly are shining SuperStars.

## Ten Stellar Ways to Celebrate

### 1 Make your office decor out of this world

Think of ways to incorporate this year's theme, "Donors are SuperStars!" Did you know one donor can save 8 lives, mirroring the eight planets orbiting the Sun in our solar system?

### 2 Create a "Shining Stars" Wall of Fame

Transform a wall into a constellation of stars, each bearing the name of a customer who enrolled as a donor.

### 3 Host a kick-off event

Launch a mission-connected event, including speakers and volunteers. It's a stellar time to hold a press conference, issue a press release, or pass a county resolution. You can find sample materials on our website.

### 4 Conduct a Donate Life flag-raising ceremony

Contact us at [info@dlnys.org](mailto:info@dlnys.org) to request a Donate Life flag for your building.

### 5 Leverage the power of social media

Illuminate the digital universe using the sample posts and graphics found on our website. Connect with and tag [@DonateLifeNYS](#) on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram.

### 6 Designate "Donate Life" days

Encourage employees to orbit in Donate Life t-shirts or celestial blue and green attire – perfect for Blue & Green Day on Friday, April 12, 2024. Don't "space out" – make sure to capture the moment(s) for our Blue & Green Day photo contest!

### 7 Participate in our five cosmic contests

Offer a "constellation" prize or recognition to the employee who garners the most registrations each week, such as a gift card or a special parking space.

### 8 Partner with a local planetarium

Collaborate during Donate Life Month to enlighten the community about organ, eye, and tissue donation.

### 9 Promote in your office's cosmic communications

Include Donate Life content in your workplace's voice mails and hold messages. You can find sample scripts on our website.

### 10 Let the leadership ignite enthusiasm

Encourage employees to engage in Donate Life Month events, activities, and contests, illuminating the path to the universe of donation and transplantation.

Resources to support these cosmic activities can be found on our website at [donatelifenys.org/dlm-partners](https://donatelifenys.org/dlm-partners). Have a creative idea you'd like to share? Illuminate us! Email [info@dlnys.org](mailto:info@dlnys.org) or call (518) 326-3237.

# Galactic Giving Fundraising Ideas

Fundraising is critical to advance our mission to save lives through organ, eye, and tissue donation. Nearly 90% of funds go directly fuel initiatives driving donation.



## Why Fundraise?

**Save Lives:** Fundraising directly supports Donate Life NYS's mission, offering hope to New Yorkers awaiting transplants, especially those within your community.

**Community Impact:** Your efforts fortify community bonds and demonstrate the power of united action.

**Team Spirit:** It fosters camaraderie, boosts morale, and promotes a positive work environment.

## Six Stellar Ways to Cultivate Generosity

### 1 Social Media:

Initiate a Facebook Fundraiser campaign dedicated to supporting Donate Life New York State, leveraging the power of social networks to spread awareness and gather donations.

### 2 Personal or Community Yard Sale for Life:

Organize a yard sale where proceeds directly contribute to Donate Life New York State's initiatives, turning unwanted items into life-saving resources.

### 3 Handcrafted Sale:

Sell handmade items, with proceeds supporting Donate Life New York State's efforts to promote organ donation education and registration.

### 4 Bake for a Cause:

Rally support with a bake sale fundraiser, enticing participants with delicious treats while raising funds and awareness for Donate Life New York State's mission.

### 5 Fitness Challenge:

Organize a fitness challenge or class fundraiser, encouraging participants to get active while supporting Donate Life New York State.

### 6 Local Business Collaboration:

Partner with local businesses to raise funds through various initiatives such as round-up donations, donation jars, or special events, amplifying the reach of Donate Life New York State within the community.

# Blue & Green Day Photo Contest



## 1 Submit Your Photos

Friday, April 12, 2024 until Sunday, April 14, 2024

Visit Donate Life NYS' Facebook page and add your best blue & green photo in the comments of the pinned post. All photos must be posted by 11:59 p.m. EST on Sunday, April 14, 2024.

Categories include:

- Adults & Families
- Clinical Partners
- DMV
- Food & Art
- Light it Up! (Blue & Green Lights)
- Groups & Communities
- Home & Garden
- Kids & Teens
- Pets

\*Please make sure to submit original photos – photos with collages, borders, or filters cannot be accepted.

## 2 Vote for Community Choice Award Winner

Vote by liking your favorite photos submitted for the contest until April 18, 2024 at 11:59 p.m. EST. The photo with the most likes will be the **Community Choice Award winner** and receive a **\$50 Amazon Gift Card!**

## 3 Top Five Photos to National Photo Contest

The five photos with the most likes will be **submitted to the national photo contest** held by Donate Life America for a chance to **win a \$100 gift card!**



For more information, visit [donatelifenys.org/dlm-partners](https://donatelifenys.org/dlm-partners) or contact us at [info@dnys.org](mailto:info@dnys.org) or (518) 326-3237.

# Megan Dolan's Story of Hope



**Megan Dolan** embraces her role as a mother of 13-year-old twins, Vienna and William. “I love being my kids’ mom,” shares the 47-year-old Rotterdam woman. “I think it was what I was put on this earth to do.”

However, a genetic disorder inherited from her late mother’s side of the family threatens her own family’s future. Diagnosed with polycystic kidney disease (PKD) at the young age of six, Megan struggles with the same devastating disorder that has already affected six other relatives, including her own mother.

The threat became imminent two years ago when Megan received the heart-wrenching diagnosis of end-stage renal disease. Commencing peritoneal dialysis at home every night in July 2022, she faced a daunting reality. Having witnessed her own mother’s two decades on dialysis, Megan sank into a dark depression, thinking, “Well, my life is over now.”

Juggling the challenges of her work responsibilities and raising two active adolescents while on dialysis has been difficult. “I could just never get ahead,” she reflects, “but my main priority was just being there for my kids.” Yet, Megan perseveres.

Following a six-month work leave, Megan has emerged with renewed strength and purpose. Now, she is actively engaged as a peer advocate counseling other newly-diagnosed patients, turning her personal struggle into a source of inspiration.

Listed on the national organ transplant list, Megan implores her fellow New Yorkers to consider enrolling as organ, eye, and tissue donors on the New York State Donate Life Registry. In her plea, she asks, “What do you have to lose? Look at what you have to gain. You could save so many lives with organs you don’t need anymore.”

Above all, a transplant holds the promise of allowing Megan to continue savoring the joys of motherhood. “I want to have experiences with my kids before it’s too late,” she said. “I want to stick around for my kids, my family, and my husband.”

Megan's journey is not just a personal struggle; it's a testament to resilience, hope, and the transformative power of organ, eye, and tissue donation. Through her story, she invites others to be the bearers of hope for the nearly 8,000 patients in NYS in need of lifesaving organ transplants. Register today as an organ, eye, and tissue donor at [donatelifenys.org/register](https://donatelifenys.org/register).

# Annual Donate Life Observances



## February 14: National Donor Day

A day to honor donors who have given the gift of life, patients who have received a donation, those who are currently waiting, and those who died because the organ they needed was not donated in time.

## April: National Donate Life Month

An entire month of activities to help encourage Americans to register as organ, eye, and tissue donors and to honor those that have saved lives through the gift of donation.

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
31	1	2	3 Donate Life Living Donor Day 	4	5	6 Spirit Week  Dress Up Your Pets
7 Make Blue & Green Treats 	8 Thank Your Healthcare Heroes! 	9 Write a Message of Hope 	10 Donate Life Flag Raising Day 	11 Create Donate Life Rocks 	12 National Donate Life Blue & Green Day 	13
14	15 Volunteer Appreciation Week 	16	17	18	19	20
21 National Pediatric Transplant Week (April 21-27) 	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29 	30 				

## August: National Multiethnic Donor Awareness Month

A nationwide observance to save and improve the quality of life of diverse communities by creating a positive culture for organ, eye, and tissue donation.

## September: National DMV Appreciation Month

A time for the donation community to say “thank you” to our DMV partners who serve as the front line of donor registration, helping more than 6.5 million New Yorkers enroll as organ, eye, and tissue donors to date.

## November and December: Season of Giving

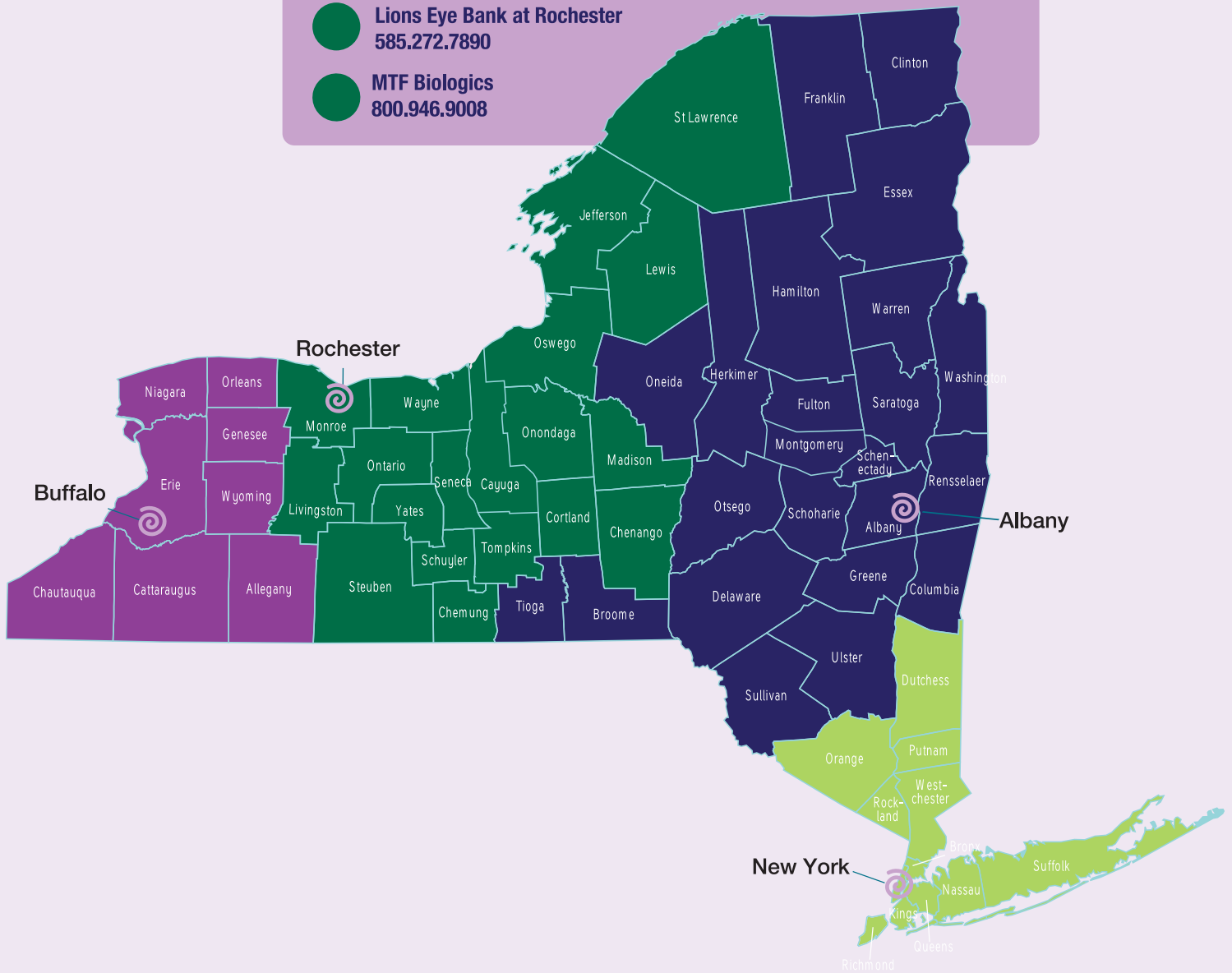
Spread the joy of giving during the holiday season by supporting Donate Life NYS through various festive fundraisers. Your financial contributions are crucial to saving and healing lives through increased organ, eye, and tissue donation. Explore ideas like candy cane or bake sales, holiday-themed auctions, ugly sweater contests, gift-wrapping stations to make a meaningful impact.





# Contact Your Local Partners

- Center for Donation & Transplant**  
518.262.5606
- Lions Eye Bank at Albany**  
518.489.7606
- Finger Lakes Donor Recovery Network**  
585.272.4930
- Lions Eye Bank at Rochester**  
585.272.7890
- MTF Biologics**  
800.946.9008
- LiveOnNY**  
646.291.4444
- Eye-Bank for Sight Restoration**  
212.742.9000
- ConnectLife**  
716.529.4300



# Top 8 Frequently Asked Questions About Organ and Tissue Donation

## 1 What is the New York State Donate Life Registry?

The New York State Donate Life Registry is a confidential database of people who have authorized the donation of their organs, eyes, and/or tissues after their death.

## 2 Who can join the New York State Donate Life Registry?

Anyone age 16 and older can enroll in the New York State Donate Life Registry.

## 3 Am I too old or too sick to join the Registry?

No one is too old or too sick to enroll in the New York State Donate Life Registry. Doctors conduct a thorough evaluation of potential donors, including laboratory testing, to ensure donated organs and tissues are safe for transplant.

## 4 If I join the Registry, will my medical care be affected?

If you are sick or injured, the number one priority is to save your life. Hospitals, EMS, doctors, and nurses cannot access the Registry. Organ and tissue recovery agencies check a potential donor's registration status at the time of death to see if they were enrolled in the Registry.

## 5 What does my religion say about organ and tissue donation?

All major religions approve of organ and tissue donation and transplantation, viewing it as an act of love and charity. If you have questions or concerns, you should discuss them with your religious or spiritual leader.

## 6 Is there any cost to my estate or family for donating my organs, eyes, and tissues?

No, there are no costs to your estate or family for you to become a donor. Your family pays for your medical care and funeral arrangements, but never incur costs for the donation process. The transplant recipient, typically through their insurance, pays costs related to donation.

## 7 Will I be able to have an open-casket funeral if I donate my organs, eyes, and tissues?

Organ, eye, and tissue donation doesn't interfere with having an open-casket funeral. The donor's body is clothed for burial and treated with care and respect, so there are no visible signs of donation.

## 8 How can I enroll in the Registry at home?

You can find more information and enroll online at any time by visiting [donatelifenys.org/register](https://donatelifenys.org/register).

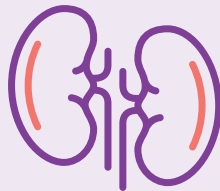
# Get The Facts About Organ and Tissue Donation



**One organ donor can save 8 lives**

**and heal 75 more through eye and tissue donation**

**Nearly 8,000**  
New Yorkers are waiting for a lifesaving organ transplant



**More than 1,000**  
have been waiting more than five years

**Nearly 400**  
New Yorkers died in 2023 because the organ they needed wasn't donated in time



**Every 8 minutes**  
another person is added to the national transplant waiting list

**No one is too old or too sick to register**  
Anyone age 16+ can join the NYS Donate Life Registry



**Registering as a donor does not interfere with medical care**  
Donation becomes an option only after death has been determined



**All major religions**  
support organ and tissue donation, viewing it as an act of love and generosity



**There is no cost to the donor's family or estate for organ and tissue donation**



*New York State*

# New York State County Data

Statewide, 48% of the population has enrolled in the New York State Donate Life Registry.  
 Donor Designations on December 31, 2023

County	Donor Designations <small>Number of residents enrolled in New York State Donate Life Registry</small>	Donor Designation Share <small>Percentage of residents age 18+ enrolled in NYS Donate Life Registry</small>	County	Donor Designations <small>Number of residents enrolled in New York State Donate Life Registry</small>	Donor Designation Share <small>Percentage of residents age 18+ enrolled in NYS Donate Life Registry</small>
Albany	144,701	56%	Oneida	92,430	51%
Allegany	23,382	63%	Onondaga	237,476	64%
Bronx	312,416	29%	Ontario	66,310	73%
Broome	95,061	60%	Orange	146,616	49%
Cattaraugus	43,162	72%	Orleans	18,973	58%
Cayuga	39,107	64%	Oswego	61,671	66%
Chautauqua	68,995	68%	Otsego	30,693	63%
Chemung	47,942	73%	Putnam	44,929	57%
Chenango	24,301	66%	Queens	546,461	29%
Clinton	43,115	66%	Rensselaer	74,220	57%
Columbia	35,300	68%	Richmond	129,672	34%
Cortland	23,857	64%	Rockland	99,335	41%
Delaware	22,050	59%	Saint Lawrence	49,343	57%
Dutchess	134,814	56%	Saratoga	135,426	71%
Erie	459,969	61%	Schenectady	71,806	58%
Essex	23,096	74%	Schoharie	15,225	62%
Franklin	24,706	64%	Schuyler	10,590	74%
Fulton	24,843	59%	Seneca	15,295	57%
Genesee	32,801	71%	Steuben	54,257	74%
Greene	24,180	59%	Suffolk	617,656	51%
Hamilton	3,271	74%	Sullivan	30,942	49%
Herkimer	26,736	56%	Tioga	28,336	74%
Jefferson	67,284	76%	Tompkins	66,016	73%
Kings	723,827	35%	Ulster	88,509	58%
Lewis	13,986	68%	Warren	37,779	70%
Livingston	33,659	66%	Washington	29,681	60%
Madison	37,040	67%	Wayne	47,650	67%
Monroe	373,703	62%	Westchester	369,251	47%
Montgomery	20,503	54%	Wyoming	21,205	64%
Nassau	439,864	40%	Yates	12,089	63%
New York	807,141	60%	<b>NYS TOTAL</b>	<b>7,584,116</b>	<b>48%</b>
Niagara	111,536	66%			