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Meteorologist Bryan Busby Raises Awareness for Organ and Tissue Donation

As a Green Ribbon Champion, Busby encourages others to know the facts, register as organ donors

WESTWOOD, KAN. (July 2, 2018) — Bryan Busby, First Alert Chief Meteorologist for KMBC 9 News and a much-loved personality in the Kansas City area and beyond, believes that when it comes to forecasting the weather, knowledge is power.

It is that same belief that led him to learn about organ, eye and tissue donation, and to register as a donor. Now, he's partnering with Midwest Transplant Network as a Green Ribbon Champion to encourage everyone to do the same.

Busby once had some misconceptions about his eligibility to be an organ donor. Since he has diabetes, he once thought his medical condition prevented him from joining the Organ and Tissue Donor Registry. When he learned that virtually anyone can register, regardless of medical history or any other factor, he signed up right away.

"I think some people are nervous about organ donation, especially the older generation," Busby said. "But if you have the facts, as opposed to relying on rumors or speculation, you can throw those misconceptions out the window."

As a Green Ribbon Champion, Busby is dispelling common myths and misconceptions about organ donation. In doing so, he hopes to inspire others to learn the facts and register as donors.

"Despite education and awareness efforts, myths surrounding organ donation continue to exist," said Jan Finn, president and CEO of Midwest Transplant Network, the organ procurement organization serving Kansas and the western two-thirds of Missouri. "With his long-time community standing as a highly trusted news personality, Bryan Busby is perfectly positioned to spread the word that everyone can give hope and share life by registering as an organ donor."

Some facts about organ, eye and tissue donation that Busby wants everyone to know include:

- Today, nearly 2,500 people in Kansas and Missouri are waiting for lifesaving organ transplants. A single donor can save up to eight lives and improve up to 75 more.
- Anyone can register to be a donor, regardless of age or medical history.
- All major religions in the U.S. support organ, eye and tissue donation—it is viewed as a final act of love and generosity.

- Your decision to donate will never interfere with your own medical care. Organ, eye and tissue recovery takes place only after all efforts to save your life have been exhausted and death is legally declared. The doctors working to save your life are entirely separate from the medical team involved in recovering organs and tissues after death.
- Donating life is a gift. Neither you nor your family or estate will incur any costs related to your donation.
- In both Kansas and Missouri, the Organ and Tissue Donor Registry is first-person authorization. That means the choice to donate belongs to you and you alone. No one else may overturn your decision, and your family is not required to give final authorization before donation can occur. If you are 17 or younger, you may join the donor registry, but your parents or legal guardians will remain responsible for making the final decision. The registry will automatically update your status when you turn 18.
- The waiting list and need for organ transplants is ethnically diverse. Nationwide, minorities represent the largest group waiting for organ transplants—59 percent—and Caucasians account for 41 percent. While race is not a factor in determining a donor match, compatible blood types and tissue markers are more likely to be found among members of the same ethnicity, so it is important to have a large number of registered donors from all racial/ethnic backgrounds.
- Among U.S. adults, 95 percent are in favor of organ donation. While overall 73 percent of Kansans and 75 percent of western Missourians are registered organ donors, minority groups in each state represent a smaller percentage of registered donors.

The public will soon see Busby in his role as a Green Ribbon Champion in a variety of places across the region and online. Viewers can watch Busby tell his story in a video featured on ShareLifeMidwest.com, where they can also join the donor registry for Kansas or Missouri. Signing up is fast, easy and emotionally rewarding, as Busby attests:

“It’s really simple—go online at ShareLifeMidwest.com, click the box, 45 seconds to answer a few questions, and you’re done,” Busby explained. “You’ll feel good knowing your decision is going to help somebody else. It’s no different than making a monetary donation to a good charity, but this gift is priceless.”

Green Ribbon Champions—a diverse group of local leaders and well-known personalities who are passionate about making a difference in their communities by advocating for organ donation—are part of a new public awareness campaign from Midwest Transplant Network. H&R Block President and CEO Jeff Jones was recently announced as the first Green Ribbon Champion.

As Busby says, “When you register as an organ donor, you may not think you’re moving mountains, but for the individual or individuals you help—and their families—you will make a world a difference.” To join the Organ and Tissue Donor Registry in Kansas or Missouri, register online at [registeronlineat ShareLifeMidwest.com](http://registeronlineat.ShareLifeMidwest.com) or at the DMV when obtaining or renewing a driver’s license or ID card.

About Midwest Transplant Network

Midwest Transplant Network (MTN) has been connecting lives through organ donation since 1973. As the federally designated not-for-profit organ procurement organization (OPO) for Kansas and the western two-thirds of Missouri, MTN provides services, which include organ procurement and surgical tissue and eye recovery, laboratory testing and 24-hour rapid response for referrals from hospital partners. Midwest Transplant Network ranks in the top quartile nationally among OPOs, which reflects

the organization's quality, professionalism and excellence in partnerships throughout the region. For more information, visit mwtn.org.

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