

Media Release



For Immediate Release
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THUNDER BAY GARDEN OF LIFE

Engraved rocks placed to honour organ and tissue donors and their families

Thunder Bay – Trillium Gift of Life Network (TGLN) in partnership with Thunder Bay Regional Health Sciences Centre (TBRHSC) has dedicated a rock garden to commemorate organ and tissue donors and their families in the region.

Nishnawbe Aski Nation (NAN) Grand Chief Stan Beardy and his wife Nellie lost their son, Daniel, five years ago. Today there is a rock in the Garden of Life courtyard honouring Daniel's life.

“Giving the gift of life was a decision my wife Nellie and I made after the tragic loss of our son Daniel in 2004. By donating our son's organs and tissues for people in need of lifesaving transplants we were comforted by the fact that we could give someone a second chance at life,” said NAN Grand Chief Beardy. “This year we transcended language gaps by reaching out in the traditional languages of Ojibway, Cree and Oji-Cree to make critical, life-saving information available to First Nation people who have never had the opportunity to register their consent for organ and tissue donation, and I encourage everyone in our communities to seriously consider giving the gift of life.”

In 2004 the Garden of Life courtyard was created to honour organ and tissue donors. Today organ and tissue donor families laid special rocks with their loved one's name engraved in the garden.

“The Garden of Life honours donors and their families, who at a time of anguish and deep personal loss made the decision to provide those on the waiting list a second chance at life,” said Frank Markel, President and CEO of TGLN. “With the compassion and strength of donor families hundreds of lives are saved every year.”

Every three days someone dies waiting for a lifesaving transplant.

“The Garden of Life enriches our hospital. The garden offers a sanctuary where families can go to reflect,” said Ron Saddington, President and CEO of TBRHSC.

One organ and tissue donor can save up to eight lives and enhance as many as 75 others.

You can register your consent to donate your organs and tissue by visiting your local Service Ontario Health Card Services – OHIP office or outreach centre where you renew your health card. You can also register by downloading and filling out a Gift of Life Consent Form from www.giftoflife.on.ca and mailing it to the address on the form.

If you've already signed your donor card, please also register your decision and talk to your family about your decision.

For more details on Trillium Gift of Life Network, please visit our website at www.giftoflife.on.ca. You can also call 416-363-4001 or toll free 1-800-263-2833.

Trillium Gift of Life Network is a not-for-profit agency of the Government of Ontario and is responsible for planning, promoting, coordinating and supporting organ and tissue donation across Ontario and improving the system so that more lives can be saved.

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For more information contact
Carrie Hoto, Trillium Gift of Life Network, (m) 416-735-0099 (e) choto@giftoflife.on.ca