



## California Transplant Donor Network Honors The Life-Saving Contributions Of Unsung Hispanic Heroes

San Joaquin-Stanislaus Counties, California, September, 2005 – As the nation celebrates National Hispanic Heritage Month, the California Transplant Donor Network, acknowledges Hispanics who have made life-saving contributions that have been mostly unrecognized by the community. The contributions of these families have saved and improved lives via organ/tissue donation and transplantation.

“During this month, we honor all of the Hispanics in our community who have made life-saving and enhancing gifts and who have contributed to our society as a result of donation and transplantation. It is our hope that their acts of generosity and their accomplishments are both recognized and emulated by others so that more lives will be saved,” states Rita Vasquez, a Community Outreach Coordinator for the Transplant Network.

These Hispanic heroes are committed to making a difference in the lives of the nearly 90,000 people on the national organ transplant waiting, of which 15% (13,706) are Hispanic. But more heroes are needed. Last year alone, over 800 Hispanics died waiting for a life-saving organ transplant.

During National Hispanic Heritage Month, the Transplant Network, also aims to foster the community’s awareness and understanding of organ and tissue donation and dispel misconceptions held by Hispanics which may impede the donation process.

"The facts are that, if faced with a medical emergency, all efforts to save a life will be exhausted and death must be legally declared before donation is discussed with the family; all major religions support donation; there is no cost for donation; and donation does not interfere with funeral arrangements," stated Rita Vasquez, Community Outreach Coordinator for San Joaquin and Stanislaus Counties for the California Transplant Donor Network.

## **Hispanic Donation and Transplantation National Statistics**

\*In 2005:

As of August 12<sup>th</sup>, there are 88,755 persons on the national organ transplant waiting list.

Of these, 15% (13,706) are Hispanic.

10,441 Hispanics await a kidney transplant

2,692 Hispanics await a liver transplant

99 Hispanics await a pancreas transplant

247 Hispanics await a kidney/pancreas transplant

267 Hispanics await a heart transplant

168 Hispanics await a lung transplant

17 Hispanics await a heart/lung transplant

32 Hispanics await an intestinal transplant

\*In 2004:

Of 7,150 deceased donors, 949 were Hispanic (approximately 13%)

Of 7,004 living donors, 878 were Hispanic (approximately 12%)

27,036 persons received organ transplants. Of these, 3,256 were Hispanic (approximately 12%)

6,577 persons died while waiting for an organ transplant. Of these, 882 were Hispanic (approximately 13%)

\*Based on OPTN data as of August 12, 2005

For campaign materials:

For more information and campaign brochures in English and Spanish, the Hispanic community is directed to [www.ctdn.org](http://www.ctdn.org) or call 888-570-9400 or email at

[rvasquez@ctdn.org](mailto:rvasquez@ctdn.org).