



You have the power to donate life



A Donate Life organization

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Sierra Vista Regional Medical Center to Receive National Medal of Honor

SAN LUIS OBISPO, CA – (July 28th, 2005) – **Sierra Vista Regional Medical Center** will receive an Organ Donation Medal of Honor. The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) gives **Sierra Vista Regional Medical Center** this national award for having achieved organ donation rates of 75% or higher in a 12-month period.

One of the Nation's most pressing public health issues is the widening gap between the supply and demand for organs and tissues. To raise awareness about the vital importance of organ and tissue donation to the Nation's health and to increase donation rates, HHS Secretary Tommy G. Thompson initiated the Gift of Life Donation Initiative in April 2001. The "Organ Donation Breakthrough Collaborative" formed in 2003, is a component of Secretary Thompson's initiative. Its purpose is to generate significant, measurable increases in organ donation by helping the national community of organ procurement organizations (OPO's) and hospitals to quickly identify, learn, adapt, replicate, and celebrate "breakthrough" practices that are associated with higher donation rates.

The California Transplant Donor Network will award **Sierra Vista Regional Medical Center** with a Medal of Honor on behalf of HHS and HRSA.

Where: Sierra Vista Regional Medical Center Auditorium

When: 6:00PM on Wednesday, August 3rd, 2005

The hospitals and OPOs receiving this award are being honored for their exemplary leadership and commitment to organ donors, donor families, and the nearly 88,000 patients on the national transplant waiting list. They also are being honored for the effective relationships they have developed with each other that have generated these life-saving results.

Fast Facts

- More than 88,000 people in the United States are waiting for organ transplants to save their lives. More than 2,300 of them are children under the age of 18. As of April 2, 2005, 8,400 of these men, women and children are in the Transplant Network's Northern and Central California service area.
- Each day, more than 17 people – one every 90 minutes – die in the United States because of a shortage of organ donors. In 2004, more than 6,000 individuals died on the U.S. organ-transplant waiting list because the organs they needed were not donated in time. About 13 people are added to the national organ transplant waiting list every day.
- One person can save more than seven lives through organ donation, and touch more than 50 others with tissue donation. To become a donor, go to **donateLIFEcalifornia.org**. At this website one can both officially record their wishes to be a donor and notify their family.

California Transplant Donor Network

The California Transplant Donor Network saves and improves lives by facilitating organ and tissue donation for transplantation. The Transplant Network helps 160 hospitals in 40 Northern and Central California and Northern Nevada counties offer the option of organ and tissue donation to families whose loved ones have died, coordinates deceased organ recovery and placement, and provides public education with the hope that every resident will become a donor. It is federally designated as this area's organ-procurement organization. For more information, visit **ctdn.org** or call 1-888-570-9400.

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