



For Immediate Release

Contact: Anthony Borders 510 301-8247

Transplant Teen throws first pitch at Giant's game

SAN FRANCISCO – JULY 20, 2011 – **California Transplant Donor Network (CTDN)** and the world champion **San Francisco Giants** today drew attention to organ and tissue donation with the 14th Annual Organ Donor Awareness Day before a sell-out afternoon crowd.

Among the highlights was transplant teen Alfonso Garcia, 17, from Pinole who tossed out the first pitch in the AT&T Park contest with the Los Angeles Dodgers. Garcia was near death in 2010 with a failing liver but his health was restored with a transplant in January, 2010.

"I was born and raised in San Francisco and always been a Giants fan," he said. "Who would have imaged after all that we have gone through as a family that I would be tossing out the first pitch?"

Joining the teen on the diamond were "ball dudes" who had their own donation stories. Shagging foul balls were Matthew Crump, CTDN Director of Tissue Services and a tissue donation recipient and Megan Shaughnessy, a liver transplant recipient and a CTDN manager of clinical services.

Also, CTDN, the federally-designated organ and tissue recovery agency for northern and central California and northern Nevada, received a \$5,000 grant from the Giant's Community Fund to help spread the word about the need for more people to sign up as organ and tissue donors.

To draw awareness to the more than 21,000 people in California on list waiting for an organ, the Giants and CTDN also distributed a commemorative Giants baseball card to 20,000 fans which featured organ donation facts. Bullpen Coach Mark Gardner, whose late wife received a liver transplant, also received a grant to support his Step to the Plate Foundation.

Garcia, who is also a CTDN Donate LIFE Ambassador said, "I was on the edge of dying and, through a miracle, I am alive today. It's because of a donor family and their gift. I think about that donor every day."

To sign up as a donor, go to www.donateLIFEcalifornia.org or www.doneVIDAcalifornia.org or sign up at the DMV when obtaining and renewing a driver's license or state ID.

Details:

The **California Transplant Donor Network (CTDN)** saves and improves lives by facilitating organ and tissue donation for transplantation. CTDN helps 175 hospitals in 41 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 region's organ recovery organization. For more information, visit www.ctdn.org or call 1-888-570-9400.

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