Every face is different. Every face is unique. Every face has a story behind it; a story that has the power to make a difference. In our mission we see many different faces, each one inspiring us to continue our journey to save lives. We see the faces of heroes, whose gifts of life saved others. We see the faces of fear on those patients desperately waiting for a second chance to live. We see the faces of hope thanks to the 890,000 Nevadans who have said YES to organ, eye and tissue donation.

Just like every face is different and unique, so is the contribution every one of our community partners makes to the mission of saving and enhancing lives through donation. As you read through our community report, you will see the many faces of those who make a difference in our community and the world. They are faces who provide vital services that allow us to facilitate the donation process. There are faces dedicated to changing the status quo and never accepting mediocrity on behalf of those we faithfully serve.

Behind the walls of our office you will find the faces of dedication and excellence. Each employee here remains devoted to our core purpose of giving hope, strength and life. You will find the faces of compassion who comfort a family through a difficult time, guide them through the donation process and help them see the incredible impact their loved one could have through donation. Our faces also represent vision, innovation and change. Each one of us at Nevada Donor Network is committed to making our community the best it can be while making the world a better place in honor of the donor heroes.

As you become familiar with each of these faces, we ask you to consider this; what does your face represent? How can you make a difference? Together we can make an impact on our community and give hope, strength and life to our families, friends, colleagues and neighbors. We believe in the power each face holds and that you can be a critical part of that difference.
Lauren Deschaine was the younger of two girls. Lola’s older sister Cortney is 13 years older, but they were very close. Lola was the aunt of Landon, age nine and Riley, age six. She loved them very much and they adored her. Lauren was very close to all of her family members and she loved her friends. She loved animals of any kind. Lauren was always a very giving little girl. She had a big heart and always spoke her mind with respect. Lauren loved God and her church from the time she was a little girl.

Lauren was wise beyond her years and child-like in spirit. An honor roll student who was involved in everything, Lauren wanted to become a writer. She was part of the homecoming committee and worked on the Coronado High School newspaper. Lola also had another passion, to help raise money for the teaching garden at Coronado. There were so many people who took on this endeavor but it was very close to her heart.

Lauren was just starting to think about getting her driver’s license when tragedy struck. While getting ready to go on stage to sing in May 2014, she got a bad headache. Lauren was taken to the hospital, where we were told she had suffered a stroke. Within 30 hours, we were told she would not survive. Two weeks prior, Lauren said “Mommy if anything happens to me, you know I want to donate my organs right?” Even if Lauren hadn’t told me her wishes, we would have done it anyways because she was such a giving person and that’s how she lived her life. She lived to make a difference in people’s lives. We are so proud that she did. Lauren donated both of her kidneys, saving the lives of two women. Meeting mothers of transplant recipients has helped me to be able to understand how much of a treasure it is to be a donor. I love that Lauren is living on, not just through her recipients but through every recipient out there. I seize every opportunity I get to talk about what an honor it is to be a part of a donor family and help others understand what an incredible impact one person can have on others.

“I love that Lauren is living on, not just through her recipients but through every recipient out there.”

Lauren’s kidneys saved the lives of 2 people.

by Catherine Guillet, Lauren’s Mom

“Seeing Lauren honored on the Donate Life Rose Parade Float was incredible. Our journey was filled with tears, laughter, joy, dancing, learning, friendships and mostly, healing. It was the most amazing experience of my life.”

“Seeing Lauren honored on the Donate Life Rose Parade Float was incredible. Our journey was filled with tears, laughter, joy, dancing, learning, friendships and mostly, healing. It was the most amazing experience of my life.”
In a hospital, we see many faces. We see the faces of doctors who heal patients and nurses who provide care and comfort to those facing a medical battle. There are many faces we don’t see who are critical to our success in saving lives through organ, eye and tissue donation. Pauley Marcelin is one of those faces. As a Clinical Nurse Educator at the VA of Southern Nevada, his dedication to donation comes in the form of education. From front line staff working with patients to administrative teams who handle patient paperwork, Marcelin helps Nevada Donor Network ensure every hospital staff member is provided with a lesson which includes information on who can donate, the need for donation, what organs and tissues can be donated, as well as best practices for hospitals to follow to maximize the gift of life and health through organ, eye and tissue donation.

“As a nurse educator, I believe in the work NDN is doing, saving lives in the community and I understand the importance of sharing this knowledge with my hospital colleagues. The more people we educate about donation, the more lives we can save together.”

Pauley Marcelin, MSN, RN
Clinical Nurse Educator, VA Southern Nevada Healthcare System

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Joi Surgeon’s job isn’t easy, but at the end of an emotionally exhausting day she knows she has made a difference. As a Donation Coordinator at Nevada Donor Network, Joi spends her day on the phone, speaking with families facing the most difficult moment of their lives; the loss of a loved one. She is the voice of compassion, guiding families through the delicate conversation about tissue and cornea donation, providing support and answering questions. These conversations are more than just a job for Joi; they hold special meaning because five years ago she received the gift of sight through a cornea transplant.

Joi and the rest of the Donation Services team work with our referral partners to determine if a patient is medically suitable for donation. After the first successful year of taking donation referral calls and providing personalized service to our partners, Nevada Donor Network plans to expand its outreach to referral partners, allowing NDN to honor the wishes of more registered donors and, in turn, save and enhance more lives through tissue and cornea donation.

“I am there to provide hope, strength and peace through the gift of tissue and cornea donation. I’m able to directly affect the lives of a hundred different people through transplantation, whether they are a donor family or a recipient like me. That makes it more than worthwhile to bear the grief and struggles of others on my own shoulders.”

Joi Surgeon
NDN Donation Coordinator
Cornea Transplant Recipient
For several years, Dinorah Arambula’s face was filled with pain and anticipation. High blood pressure was damaging her kidneys. Three times a week, she sat in a chair for three and a half hours while a dialysis machine did the work her failing kidneys were unable to do. This once active athlete was mentally and physically exhausted, barely able to climb a flight of stairs. Fast forward to 2016 and Dinorah’s face is filled with joy and gratitude. On February 5, 2016, she celebrated five years since the day a hero saved her life. Since receiving her kidney transplant, she has dedicated her life to honoring her donor and making the most of her second chance.

Just months after receiving the gift of life, Dinorah headed out to Red Rock to enjoy the view and her new lease on life. And she hasn’t stopped since. Now an avid hiker and climber, Dinorah is a proud member and hike leader with the Las Vegas 52 Peak Club, and she has climbed 52 different peaks at Red Rock, Mt. Charleston and Lake Mead. She recently made a trip to Mt. Whitney in California, the highest mountain in the lower 48 states. Unfortunately, weather conditions stopped her from making it to the top, but she is determined to head back and try again soon. Dinorah is training to participate in the 2016 Donate Life Transplant Games and is hoping to beat her previous accomplishment of winning 6 medals during the 2014 Games. She’s also training for the 2017 World Transplant Games in Spain.

Dinorah isn’t just the face of organ donation, she’s the face of hope, strength and life… inspiring others to give the gift of life.

105 ORGAN DONORS
322 ORGANS TRANSPLANTED
275 LIVES SAVED

38 HEARTS TRANSPLANTED
55 LUNGS TRANSPLANTED
69 LIVERS TRANSPLANTED
10 PANCREATA TRANSPLANTED
149 KIDNEYS TRANSPLANTED
1 INTESTINE TRANSPLANTED
Change isn’t always easy, but often necessary. That fact was recognized by Nevada Highway Patrol Trooper Karen Garretson, who saw an opportunity to save and enhance more lives through tissue and cornea donation. A brief conversation introduced her to Nevada Donor Network and the opportunity for a great new partnership with the Nevada Department of Public Safety (NV/DPS). A few conversations, meetings and trainings later, and NV/DPS was officially a referral partner, giving more Nevadans the opportunity to have their wishes to donate carried out. Just weeks after the partnership launched, two people killed in a fatal crash were able to give the gift of healing through tissue donation, all thanks to the dedication of Trooper Garretson and her colleagues. Moving forward, NV/DPS involvement in our community will continue to grow as they refer more possible heroic donors. The agency will also help to promote donation statewide through community events and outreach.

“As a first responder, I see injury and death far too often. I’ve taken an oath to protect and preserve human life, but sometimes circumstances are beyond my control. Nevada Donor Network provides an opportunity for me and other first responders to fulfill our obligations to help people even after we’ve exhausted all lifesaving options.”

Trooper Karen Garretson
Nevada Highway Patrol

Collaboration can sometimes be difficult, but when two organizations have one common goal of saving and changing lives, they rise above the challenges. The partnership between Nevada Donor Network and Clark County Office of the Coroner and Medical Examiner (CCOCME) is a perfect example. Collaboration starts every morning when a member of NDN’s staff is present during the coroner’s office daily meeting. The partnership continues at the hospital, where the CCOCME Investigators and the Forensic Investigative Response Support Team (FIRST) gather information and forensic evidence so organ recovery can proceed. These joint initiatives allow both organizations to complete the necessary parts of their cases while preserving the opportunity for a person to give the gift of life through organ, eye and tissue donation.

As a result of this collaboration, Nevada Donor Network has seen an astonishing increase in shared cases between Clark County Coroner’s Office and Nevada Donor Network from 2013-2015. This partnership is fast becoming the model for Coroners and OPOs around the world. It was highlighted during the 2015 Congress of the International Society for Organ Donation and Procurement (ISODP) and is a topic of discussion among the International Association of Coroners and Medical Examiners (IACME).

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It is critical for coroner/medical examiner offices to work together with their organ procurement organizations. Good communication can lead to more recoveries, which ultimately leads to saving lives. Clark County has made this partnership a top priority and I encourage coroners and medical examiners everywhere to do the same.”

John Fudenberg, D-ABMDI - Clark County Coroner
One look at Hector Santiago and you would never know that 18 years ago he was hospitalized following a car crash, facing a dire prognosis and possible amputation. Unconscious for nine days after the accident, when he finally awoke, he learned he had several broken bones and would need years of surgeries and rehab to recover. Small tasks we take for granted, like feeding ourselves and brushing our teeth weren’t possible at first, but he never gave up. Today, Hector is the face of determination and perseverance. Hector is walking proof tissue donors save lives.

Hector received multiple tissue grafts. He needed tendons in both knees and elbows and bilateral bone screws in both femurs. His medial collateral ligament (MCL) needed repair. Vascular tissue was used to prevent the amputation of his lower extremities. The first two years after the accident were a physical and emotional struggle. He experienced personal setbacks, however he pushed himself and made a remarkable recovery.

After Hector fully recovered he began to reflect on the donor heroes who helped save his life. He thought about what he could say to thank their families for such a wonderful gift. He now lives every day thankful for his life. This inspiring journey eventually led Hector to Nevada Donor Network, where he works as a Donation Coordinator, helping guide grieving donor families through the donation process. He looks forward to supporting Nevada Donor Network through continued growth in the future and helping promote donation. When he’s not at work, he’s focused on living every day to the fullest, experiencing as much as he can in life and being a voice for others who need tissue transplants.

“The definition of a hero is a person who will go above and beyond what is necessary or required of them. In relation to being a donor, it is to do something for the greater good, for someone you don’t know … and there is no greater heroic act than that.”

Hector Santiago
Tissue Transplant Recipient
NDN Donation Coordinator

485 tissue donors. 460 musculoskeletal donors. 303 skin donors
117 heart valves. 136 vascular donors
Life has never been simple for Arlett Valencia. At age seven she was diagnosed with diabetes. By age 33, the disease had destroyed her kidneys, leading to a whole new way of life. For 1,207 days, Arlett was the face of perseverance while waiting for a lifesaving kidney transplant. Every night before bed, she hooked up to her dialysis machine, which performed the job of her failed kidneys while she slept.

It was a physical and emotional struggle, but through it all Arlett’s dedication to Nevada Donor Network never wavered. In 2013, she joined Nevada Donor Network’s Advocates for Life Program for volunteers, instantly becoming a powerful voice for the organization. She fought through her pain and promoted donation anytime she could while waiting for her own transplant. Her gift of a new kidney finally came on October 10, 2015. Just two weeks later, while she lay in the hospital recovering, Nevada Donor Network awarded Arlett as its Volunteer Champion of the Year. Since she wasn’t able to accept the award in person, her son Fabian accepted on her behalf while she watched live on her smartphone.

While her face is filled with joy from receiving the gift of life, Arlett’s journey is not over. She is now on the waiting list for a pancreas, hoping to rid her body of the disease that destroyed her kidneys. As she continues to wait, Arlett remains committed to inspiring others to register as organ, eye and tissue donors, hoping they will see gratitude not only in her face but in her actions as a dedicated Advocate for Life.

“Volunteering as an Advocate for Life fulfills me. When I was at my worst, before my transplant, volunteering made me feel a whole lot better. I just had to do it! I am grateful for my second chance at life and I love talking to people about my transplant. You never know if your personal story might touch someone and encourage them to register as a donor hero.”

Arlett Valencia
Kidney Transplant Recipient
Sydney Alderman, childhood wasn’t typical. It was filled with pain, doctor’s appointments and unanswered questions. However, today her life is just like that of any other teenager, all thanks to a heroic stranger who donated their corneas. When she was just three years old, Sydney was having problems with her eyes during sun exposure. Doctors first thought it might be pink eye. However, her mom Laurie soon realized the problem might be more serious. Sydney’s ophthalmologist performed a surgery, but it didn’t produce the expected results so the doctor recommended seeing a specialist. A consultation with that doctor finally gave the Aldermans an answer; Sydney needed a cornea transplant.

About a month later, while grocery shopping, Laurie got the call that there was a cornea for her daughter. At just five years old, Sydney had the surgery that would change her life. Thanks to the hero who gave her the gift of sight, she is in the process of applying to Las Vegas Academy, where she hopes to further her passion and talent for drawing. She spends most of her free time drawing and playing video games, activities she wouldn’t be able to do without her donor.

“Having a cornea transplant makes me feel special, but also sad that someone had to die for me to get it. But I know they were a good person.”

Sydney Alderman, Cornea Transplant Recipient

“If she wouldn’t have had her transplant she would have been blind by nine in that left eye. I just think it’s a real special gift.”

Lori Alderman
Sydney’s Mother

1,008 Cornea Donors
1,545 Corneas Transplanted
2015 data
Every day, our dedicated donation partners play a key role in helping Nevada Donor Network save and improve lives. They are the faces of advocates, the faces of commitment and the faces of teamwork. Without these devoted champions, our success would not be possible.

**the 2015 infinity award**

Nevada Donor Network is proud to honor Dr. M. Gabriela Gregory as the recipient of the company’s top honor, our Infinity Award. The honor is bestowed upon a person or organization for going above and beyond regular job duties to promote organ, eye and tissue donation. The nominations and votes came from Nevada Donor Network’s staff. The 2015 winner of this top award was the only nominee to receive multiple nominations from several NDN staff members. As a neurologist at Sunrise Hospital & Medical Center, Dr. Gregory has been a very strong advocate for donation in her personal life, as well as her professional career. She has aided in many brain death determinations and pronouncements, while offering support to families in both English and Spanish. Additionally, she serves as a pronouncing physician for Donation after Circulatory Death cases and will offer her support and assistance at all hours of the day and night to assist us with this process, even if she is not on call. Dr. Gregory, a member of Nevada Donor Network’s Advisory Board, is a strong advocate for donation who goes above and beyond to help save and enhance lives through donation.

Individual, media, community and funeral home nominees and award winners are selected by Nevada Donor Network staff.
Simon Keith isn’t your typical not-for-profit executive. He’s an innovator. He thinks big. He doesn’t let anything stand in his way, especially fear. Simon has been largely responsible for much of the growth Nevada Donor Network has experienced. As our staff grew, so did the need for more space. Enter Simon’s entrepreneurial expertise. He led NDN through the process of becoming only the second organization in the state to receive Nevada’s New Market Tax Credit. The program is aimed at encouraging capital investments in low-income communities and creating new jobs. The program helped NDN purchase and remodel the largest building on its campus, sparking a chain of renovations and expansions that will bring new life to the community and provide an innovative work environment for our team, allowing us to continue to bring the highest level of service to our dedicated partners.

“Identifying non-traditional forms of capital and leveraging NDN’s status in the community is smart business. This single transaction could do more for the growth of NDN than any other single event in its history as we continue to build a world class organization”

Simon Keith

NDN Chief Operating Officer

Behind every successful not-for-profit organization is a board of trusted advisors who share a common goal of helping the organization succeed. Nevada Donor Network is guided by a Governing Board, responsible for budget and finance, personnel and general operating functions and an Advisory Board, responsible for identifying and removing barriers to organ, eye and tissue donation. Each of these faces comes from a different background with different expertise, but all have the same passion for saving lives through organ, eye and tissue donation. One of the faces who has helped guide Nevada Donor Network through its remarkable transformation over the years is Esther-Marie Carmichael, an expert in regulatory compliance and quality assurance. She is proud to have witnessed NDN’s revitalized commitment to the needs of our community and the personal needs of a remarkable team that is passionate about its mission, purpose and values guided by strategic anchors. Carmichael is pleased with NDN’s cultural transformation which fuels creative ideas that continue to provide greater opportunities for improved life and health to the Nevada community through innovative partnering with healthcare providers in Nevada, other states and abroad.

“It has been rewarding and a joy to witness the transformation of NDN’s culture, which has produced results beyond all expectations placing NDN among the top organ and tissue procurement organizations in the nation. It is truly an honor and a privilege to serve on this remarkable board.”

Esther-Marie Carmichael

NDN Governing Board Member

NDN Advisory Board

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NDN Governing Board Member
Thank you to our hospital partners. Our success would not be possible without you.

Boulder City Hospital
Centennial Hills Hospital Medical Center
Desert Springs Hospital Medical Center
Desert View Hospital
Battle Mountain General Hospital
Dignity Health St. Rose Dominican Hospitals, Rose de Lima Campus
Dignity Health St. Rose Dominican Hospitals, San Martin Campus
Dignity Health St. Rose Dominican Hospitals, Siena Campus
Grover C. Dills Medical Center
Mesa View Regional Hospital
Mike O'Callaghan Federal Medical Center
Mountain's Edge Hospital
MountainView Hospital
North Vista Hospital
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VA Southern Nevada Healthcare System
Valley Hospital Medical Center
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