The Alabama Organ Center dedicates itself to providing a better quality of life for those people who require organ and tissue transplantation, while respecting those families who share.

Today there are more than 3,470 candidates on Alabama’s organ transplant waiting list; 2,328 (67%) of those candidates are African American. Nearly all (more than 96%) of the African Americans on Alabama’s waiting list are waiting on a kidney.

There is a tremendous need to increase the awareness of the importance of registering to be an organ, eye and tissue donor in the African American Community. Thus, the need to create the African American Task Force (AATF).

The mission, goals and objectives of the AATF are as follows:

MISSION:
To support the overall mission of the Alabama Organ Center by providing education and community outreach specifically in African American communities, to change the culture, and dispel the myths related to organ and tissue donation in an effort to increase the number of registered African American organ donors in the State of Alabama.

GOALS:
1. Increase the number of African American donor designations in Alabama.
2. Provide organ donation education, outreach programs and events, specifically in African-American communities.
3. Develop lasting relationships with healthcare, public and professional organizations, high schools and historically black colleges and universities (HBCUs). Gain continued access within multicultural communities to disseminate organ donation education and donor designation.

OBJECTIVES:
1. By January 2016, increase the number of donor designations among African Americans in Alabama by 5%.
2. By January 2016, increase participation in community outreach programs and events located in the State of Alabama by 5%.
3. By May 2016, develop culturally sensitive brochures and materials that will be utilized and placed in various community settings and used during outreach events.

The Alabama Organ Center (AOC) is proud to announce that it has received full accreditation from the Association of Organ Procurement Organizations (AOPO). AOPO is dedicated to providing education, information sharing, research and technical assistance and collaboration with other healthcare organizations and federal agencies. The goal of the accreditation program is to ensure that the practices of organ procurement organizations, like the AOC, are not only compliant with regulations and standards set forth by government agencies and federal law, but also uphold AOPO’s tenets of maintaining public trust in donation and honoring every Gift of Life and every donor to the fullest.

The AFRICAN AMERICAN TASK FORCE

Katrina McTyer, President of the Delta Sigma Theta sorority, and a member of the AATF, talks to a student at Miles College as she registers to be an organ and tissue donor.

aopo
association of organ procurement organizations
THE ROSE PARADE

Representing more than 120 million registered organ, eye, and tissue donors across the nation, the 13th Donate Life Rose Parade float, “Treasure Life’s Journey,” was unveiled at the Association of Organ Procurement Organizations’ annual meeting in Phoenix, Arizona. The float and its many honored participants proudly represented the 2016 Rose Parade theme, “Find Your Adventure.”

Like an oasis discovered amidst a caravan’s journey across the desert, organ, eye, and tissue donation saves lives, renews hope, and sustains people, families, and communities. The float featured a colorful caravan with sixty donor medal-inspired floragraphs that honor the invaluable treasure of the gift of life. Twenty-four float riders continue to share in life’s adventures through the gift of organ donation. Sixteen living donors walked beside the float carrying provisions of fruit accented with flowers, symbolizing the life-sustaining gifts that have been given. Dedicated Roses placed by families created floral jewels that ornament the base of the float.

For the 5th consecutive year, the Alabama Organ Center sponsored a floragraph portrait of a deceased donor, on the Donate Life Rose Parade Float. The 2016 Rose Parade Honoree is Brian Faulkner.

Brian Faulkner will always be remembered for his kind smile, his caring heart, his quick wit and dry sense of humor. He had numerous friends from every walk of life. Brian was an avid Auburn fan, loved music of all kinds, and enjoyed boating and anything that allowed him to be outdoors. Most of all, Brian was a devoted father to Blake, adoring husband to Heather, and the epitome of a family man. He and Blake (who was 15 at the time of Brian’s death) had such a special bond. Blake adored his father and knew he could depend on his dad for anything.

Brian, a 1996 graduate of Muscle Shoals High School, studied criminal justice at the University of North Alabama. Brian began his career in the Colbert County District Attorney’s office where he orchestrated grand jury cases. He served his community for four years as an Alabama State Trooper and for the last six years as a corporal for the Alabama Bureau of Investigation. Brian always knew he wanted to pursue a career in investigation. He had a way of putting people at ease no matter what the situation was.

Brian was riding his motorcycle on a beautiful Sunday afternoon on March 9, 2014, when he left the road and hit a telephone pole. Brian was airlifted to Huntsville Hospital where his doctor gave him a 50/50 chance of survival. Brian spent 10 days in NICU before he was pronounced brain dead on March 18, 2014. Brian impacted so many lives, and this impact was evident during his time spent in the hospital. There were several victims and family members from other states that came to see Brian during the hospital stay. They wanted to let his family know what a kind, caring, and compassionate man he was, and how he had helped them with cases he had been assigned to. The troopers and ABI Agents did not leave Brian’s side until his body was laid to rest on March 22, 2014. His wife knew how Brian felt about organ donation. He once said, “When I am gone, make sure everything I have can go to someone that needs it. I want someone to have a second chance at life.” After death, he continues to help people through organ donation.

A DONOR DAUGHTER’S STORY

My mother’s name is Karen Daw. She was born August 13, 1957 and died January 25, 2015. She was an organ donor and her liver saved someone’s life.

She had 6 children and 11 grandchildren. Momma gave her love freely with no conditions and no expectations. She had many accomplishments to be proud of.

As a registered donor, we were proud to fulfill her wishes to be an organ donor. She saved a life when she left us. She died with her family and friends all around her. I hope her story inspires others to love and save lives.

We know she lives on in us as well as in the person she saved. There really is no greater gift.

Sincerely, Suzy Lawrence and Siblings (Terri McPherson, Elizabeth Boone, Jake Sims, Michael Sims and Justin Daw)
WHAT WE’VE BEEN UP TO

AOC Ambassadors from the Huntsville area met in October to review some data updates, policies & procedures, and, most of all, get to know each other. Pictured, starting from the left is Bob Boyer, Tom Yelle, Swampna Kahan (our newest Ambassador), AOC staff member Brie Holland, Cathy Warren and Wanda Ebanks Landman.

The AOC was a proud sponsor of the Vulcan Classic basketball game where the Crimson Tide battled the Oregon Ducks. Jan Jones, kidney/pancreas recipient, dances with Big Al during a halftime announcement.

CONGRATULATIONS David Lee Miller, liver recipient, and AOC Ambassador, on his bronze medals at the 2015 World Transplant Games that were held in Argentina.

AMAZING OPPORTUNITY

Neil Moody, whose son, Shane, was an organ donor, wants to establish a support group for donor families and recipients and their families for folks who live in the Dothan Area. The Alabama Organ Center is also looking for Ambassadors. As an Ambassador (volunteer) we may ask you to help us at local health fairs, speak to organizations, as well as other opportunities where we can raise awareness of the importance of being an organ, eye and tissue donor.

If you live in the Dothan area and would like to participate in the support group and/or volunteer with the Alabama Organ Center, please contact Neil Moody either by phone or email. You can reach Neil at 334-350-0650 or anmoody@southernco.com.

APRIL IS NATIONAL DONATE LIFE MONTH. CELEBRATE NATIONAL BLUE & GREEN DAY ON APRIL 15TH.
Recovery

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ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

Would you like to help organ and tissue donation awareness? Make a donation to the AOC/UAB Education Fund. Mail your tax-deductible donation to the Alabama Organ Center, 502 20th Street South, Birmingham, AL 35233.

Recovery is published by the Alabama Organ Center (AOC), the designated organ procurement organization for the state of Alabama. Our purpose is to provide organs and tissue to all persons who are in need of transplantation while respecting those donor families who share. In partnership with state-wide hospitals, AOC serves as the link between those who donate and patients waiting for organ and tissue transplants.

NATIONAL DONOR SABBATH
WAS HELD NOVEMBER 13-15, 2015

Observed annually two weekends before Thanksgiving, National Donor Sabbath is a time when the donation and transplantation community and members of faith communities come together to focus on the lifesaving and healing gifts passed on through organ, eye and tissue donation. This three-day celebration highlights the important role faith plays in many people’s lives and how it influences someone’s decision to help others by registering as a donor. Nearly 124,000 men, women and children are in desperate need of lifesaving transplants, and thousands more can be healed through tissue and corneal transplants. The key to solving this public health crisis is having more people to register as donors.

The Alabama Organ Center invited houses of faith, with a membership of 500 or more, to celebrate National Donor Sabbath by sharing the message of donation with their congregation and encouraged them to register. Research has shown that one of the main reasons people refuse to register is the belief that it is against their religion. All of the world’s major religions consider organ donation to be a final act of love and generosity. With your help, we can eliminate this all too common misconception and offer this lifesaving and healing opportunity as a true act of compassion.

The photos below are of some of the houses of faith who responded to our offer to provide materials so they could include organ, eye and tissue donation in their message during National Donor Sabbath.

NOTE: The photos were taken from their websites.