



NEWS RELEASE

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NJ SHARING NETWORK'S 5K CELEBRATION OF LIFE CONTINUES DOWN THE SHORE IN LONG BRANCH

New Jersey non-profit organization to raise awareness for organ and tissue donation with a 5K Walk & USATF Certified Race on Sunday, May 7

LONG BRANCH, NJ – The A-Team, hailing from South River, will join thousands of others for NJ Sharing Network's 5K Celebration of Life as the Bongiovi family celebrates Angela Bongiovi who passed away in 2012 and saved five lives as an organ donor. A-Team is just one example of the more than 200 teams who will be participating in this year's event to honor those who gave the gift of life, pay tribute to those who have received a transplant, offer hope to those currently waiting for a transplant and remember those who passed away while waiting for the gift of life.

NJ Sharing Network, the non-profit organization responsible for the recovery of organs and tissue for over 4,000 New Jersey residents awaiting life-saving transplants continues its 5K Celebration of Life with a 5K Walk and USATF Certified Race on Sunday, May 7 at the Great Lawn at the Ocean Promenade in Long Branch, NJ. The event kicked off on Sunday, April 2 at Bergen Community College in Paramus, NJ and will conclude on Sunday, June 4 at the organization's headquarters in New Providence, NJ. Every year, the 5K Celebration of Life

brings together thousands of walkers, runners and volunteers in support of NJ Sharing Network's life-saving mission.

"The 5K Celebration of Life truly provides a sense of community and support for both donor families and those who have received the gift of life," said NJ Sharing Network President and CEO, Joe Roth. "All three locations across the state of New Jersey enable us to reach even more of our supporters."

In addition to the Bongiovi family, other Monmouth and Ocean County residents will be present at the 5K Celebration of Life:

- Wall resident Chris Bautista lost his son, Luke, on May 6, 2016. Luke was only 15 years old. As an organ donor, Luke saved five lives: his heart went to a 14-year-old male from NY, his liver went to a 55-year-old man from NJ, his right and left kidney went to a 30-year-old male from NJ and a 27-year-old male from NJ, respectively, and his pancreas went to a 36-year-old female from PA. Luke was also a tissue donor and was able to give the gift of life to many others. In total, his gifts will help save and improve the lives of over 100 people. May 7 will be the one year anniversary of his recipients' transplants.
- Jackson resident Eileen Wiederspan received a kidney transplant in 2013. As the team captain of Eileen's Transplant Trotters, she will be joined by family and friends as they celebrate the gift that saved her life more than three years ago.
- Somerset resident Mary Ginsburg received a kidney transplant in 2010 from her longtime friend and Monmouth Beach resident, Esther Berko. As captain of Team Tink, Mary will walk with Esther to celebrate their friendship, the gift that connects them and the many memories they have been able to create because of that gift.

NJ Sharing Network hopes to raise \$1.25 million this year for its Foundation. The event supports the Foundation's mission of increasing the number of lives saved through innovative transplant research, family support, education and public awareness about the life-saving benefits of organ and tissue donation and transplantation.

Celebrating 30 years of saving lives, NJ Sharing Network achieved another record-breaking year by making 613 transplants possible in 2016, a 16 percent increase from 2015. Tissue donation also broke records with a 10 percent increase from the previous year.

Today, there are over 120,000 people waiting for a transplant and 22 die each day, but one donor can save eight lives and one tissue donor can restore health to over 75 others. In New Jersey, one person dies every three days waiting for an organ transplant.

New Jersey residents can help save lives by registering as an organ and tissue donor, having a conversation with family and friends and joining NJ Sharing Network at its upcoming events. To learn more, sign up for the 5K Celebration of Life and register as an organ and tissue donor, visit www.NJSharingNetwork.org.

About NJ Sharing Network

NJ Sharing Network saves lives through organ and tissue donation. Located in New Providence, the organization recovers organs and tissue and belongs to a national network that helps the 120,000 people waiting for a transplant. In 2016, more lives were saved than ever before. Thanks to the selflessness of New Jersey organ donors and their families who said yes to donation, 613 people are alive today. This year, the organization is celebrating 30 years of saving lives.