



Taylor's Gift Foundation Expands Emotional Support Program for Donor Families to Nevada Donor Network

-Innovative Initiative Fills Gap for Families Whose Loved Ones Have Donated the Gift of Life -

LAS VEGAS (September 7, 2022) – Taylor's Gift Foundation, a nonprofit organization dedicated to supporting families of organ, eye, and tissue donors, announced today that Nevada Donor Network has partnered with them to offer its grief support program, "Kindred Hearts," designed specifically for donor families.

"Our goal with the Kindred Hearts program is to fill in a gap for families of organ, eye and tissue donors when it comes to emotional support," said Tara Storch, co-founder of Taylor's Gift Foundation. "We want to step into that space, providing donor families with caring support and also the ability to connect with people who have experienced similar emotional pain and trauma. We don't want financial constraints to ever be a reason that a donor family isn't able to get the emotional support they need, so all of our services have no fees."

Donor families from across the country who participate in the Taylor's Gift Kindred Hearts Program receive personal access to support groups and Caring Guides, trained to help them navigate through their grief journey. The groups are offered both virtually and in-person for individuals and family groups.

Twelve years ago, Storch and her husband, Todd, were searching for similar emotional support when they lost their oldest child, Taylor, in a tragic skiing accident. Taylor went on to become an organ donor, saving and improving the lives of five people. While this fact brought comfort to the Storches, it also surfaced many other emotions they weren't equipped to handle. Their own personal experience motivated them to create their nonprofit organization, Taylor's Gift Foundation, and subsequently, the Kindred Hearts Program.

"We look forward to offering the Kindred Hearts Program to our courageous families of donor heroes who have saved lives through organ, eye and tissue donation," said Shirley Lam, aftercare supervisor at Nevada Donor Network. "We are overjoyed with the opportunity to partner with Taylor's Gift, an organization founded by a donor family, that can understand, relate and provide effective grievance services to heal more families in need."

Dr. Macey Levan, Associate Professor of Surgery and Population Health for NYU Lagone Health and the Director of the Center for Surgical and Transplant Applied Research Qualitative Core, has been working with Taylor's Gift Foundation on the Kindred Hearts Program. Currently, she and her team are working on a pilot program and research study surrounding the program.

"Organ donation and transplantation can be difficult to understand, especially for a family suffering a traumatic loss. Our team of researchers is working on national efforts with Taylor's Gift Foundation's Kindred Hearts Program to improve the care of donor families by offering dedicated emotional support and improving the culture of organ donation in America. We know the Kindred Hearts Program can fill a community need that we have determined through our ongoing research," said Levan.

Donor families learn about the Kindred Hearts Program through social media, family, friends, medical professionals, and Organ Procurement Organizations (OPOs) like Nevada Donor Network. Taylor's Gift Foundation hopes to offer the Kindred Hearts Program across the country, so that donor families have open access to the emotional support they so desperately need as they cope with such devastating losses.

"We know, from personal experience, that organ donation for a donor family is a mix of grief and gratitude," said Storch. "It's grief from the sudden loss mixed with the gratitude that your loved one was able to save lives. Taylor's Gift is honored to offer free emotional resources so that no donor family ever grieves alone."

For more information about Taylor's Gift Foundation, visit www.taylorsgift.org. For more information about Nevada Donor Network, visit <https://www.nvdonor.org/>.

About Taylor's Gift Foundation

Taylor's Gift Foundation is a nonprofit 501(c)(3) organization that provides emotional support to organ donor families. Founded in 2010, Taylor's Gift has a long-standing history of helping individuals and families walk the path of grief. Led by a donor family, professionals, and trained volunteers, their programs provide a safe environment for families and individuals to express feelings and emotions and the opportunity to walk with others who are experiencing a grief journey similar to their own. In 2021, they launched the Kindred Hearts Program to help organ donor families receive emotional support. For more information, visit www.TaylorsGift.org.

About Nevada Donor Network

Nevada Donor Network is a federally designated 501(c)(3) not-for-profit organ procurement organization (OPO) committed to maximizing the gift of life and health through organ and tissue donation. Established in 1987, Nevada Donor Network is one of only 57 OPOs in the U.S. serving more than 3 million people in the state of Nevada and over 100,000 potential transplant recipients across the country. We work collaboratively with hospital staff and community partners to promote research and provide a strong support network to courageous donor families who've turned loss into hope.

At Nevada Donor Network, we encourage Nevadans to help individuals in need of life-saving transplants through education, research and action. Nevada Donor Network is a member of Donate Life Nevada, an affiliate of Donate Life America, whose state-wide efforts encourage Nevadans to register as organ, eye and tissue donors. For more information, please visit www.nvdonor.org.

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