

Illinois High School Association & Gift of Hope Organ and Tissue Donor Network Kick-off Virtual Registration Drive

Register to become an organ and tissue donor august 7th - 9th at bit.ly/GOHRegister

ITASCA, IL, USA, August 7, 2020
[/EINPresswire.com/](http://EINPresswire.com/) -- The Illinois High School Association and Gift of Hope Organ & Tissue Donor Network Launch First Ever Virtual Registration Drive – August 7th – 9th, 2020

The first ever SAY YES! virtual registration drive to become organ and tissue donor kicks-off Friday, August 7th thru the 9th, 2020. This is a joint effort between the [IHSA](#) and [GOH](#) to bring awareness and increase registration amongst 16 and 17-year-olds students. On January 2018, the “Drive for Life” Act became law in the state of Illinois, allowing this age group to register for the state’s First-Person Consent Organ/Tissue Donor Registry when they receive their driver’s license or ID.

Since 2018, the IHSA and GOH joined forces to bring awareness and increase registration amongst HS athletes, students, coaches and administrators about the importance and the need to register as organ and tissue donors.

Olivia “Livi” Sonetz was a force of nature — energetic, kind, unstoppable, fearless and unforgettable. Tragically, Livi, who was a senior at Normal Community West High School in Normal, Ill., died on March 7 after an automobile accident one day earlier. Through the gift of donation, Livi saved three lives with her organ gifts, and her tissue gifts have already helped to heal many others.



Say Yes!
Registration Drive

OLIVIA SONETZ

6/13/00 - 3/8/18

ORGAN AND TISSUE DONOR

NORMAL WEST HS
NORMAL, IL



giftofhope.org

Register to become an organ and tissue donor
bit.ly/GOHRegister

In 2015, during the Illinois High School Association state softball finals, an incident illustrated Livi's remarkable commitment to delivering high-octane performances on the field. Livi was struck in the mouth by a grounder while playing second base. Four of her front teeth were pushed back at a 45-degree angle. Livi left the game and came back an inning later determined to help her team out. She got a base hit, made a play in the field and stole second base. "Becoming an organ/tissue donor is a selfless act that can help save the lives of others. We're fortunate to be able to partner with Gift of Hope and encourage everyone, including all high school students at least 16 years of age, to have a conversation with your family and loved ones and consider registering to become an organ/tissue donor." – Craig Anderson, Executive Director, IHSA.

In Illinois, 1,450 African Americans, 800 Hispanic Americans and 240 Asian Americans are on the transplant waiting list. National Minority Donor Awareness Month (NMDAM) provides the perfect opportunity to spread the word about the need for lifesaving organs and empower minorities to "SAY YES" to organ and tissue donation by becoming registered donors and by authorizing donation on a loved one's behalf.

By joining the First Person Consent Organ/Tissue Donor Registry, 16- and 17-year-olds will be giving consent to donate their organs and tissue at the time of their death, with a single limitation. The procurement organizations, Gift of Hope Organ and Tissue Network and Mid-America Transplant, must make a reasonable effort to contact a parent or guardian to ensure that they approve of the donation. The parent or guardian will have the opportunity to overturn the child's decision. Once the 16- or 17-year-old turns 18, his/her decision would be considered legally binding without limitation.

"At Gift of Hope, our mission is to save and enhance the lives of as many people as possible through organ and tissue donation," said Kevin Cmunt, President and CEO of Gift of Hope. "Giving 16- and 17-year-olds the opportunity to register to become organ and tissue donors can turn a tragic loss into a rewarding renewal legacy of life. Both organizations are encouraging the public at large to SAY YES during the Virtual Registration Drive, Friday, August 7th – 9th, 2020, by registering at : bit.ly/GOHRegister.

About Gift of Hope Organ & Tissue Donor Network

Gift of Hope Organ & Tissue Donor Network is a not-for-profit organ procurement organization (OPO) that coordinates organ and tissue donation and provides public education on donation in Illinois and northwest Indiana. As one of 58 OPOs that make up the nation's donation system, we work with 180 hospitals and serve 12 million people in our donation service area. Since 1986, we have saved the lives of more than 23,000 organ transplant recipients and improved the lives of hundreds of thousands of tissue transplant recipients through our efforts.

About the IHSA

Founded in 1900, the Illinois High School Association (IHSA) is a private, not-for-profit organization with more than 800 member high school schools in the Land of Lincoln. The IHSA's

mission is governing the equitable participation of over 400,000 high school students competing in nearly 40 sports and activities. Headquartered in Bloomington, the IHSA strives to promote academics, sportsmanship, safety, good citizenship, and the lifelong values that are the foundation of interscholastic participation. Visit [IHSA.org](https://www.ihsa.org) for more information or connect with the IHSA on Social Media via Facebook, Twitter, Instagram & and YouTube. The Future Plays Here!

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