

The David Foster Foundation & two-time heart transplant recipient Simon Keith want to Keep The Beat for Heart Month

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TORONTO, ONTARIO, CANADA, February 6, 2024 /EINPresswire.com/ --

Did you know that roughly every 40 seconds someone will have a heart attack? This is one of the alarming statistics that highlights the importance of cardiovascular health and the reason The David Foster Foundation is partnering with famed Canadian, former professional soccer player and two-time heart transplant recipient Simon Keith C.M. of The Simon Keith Foundation to 'Keep the Beat' for February's Heart Month.



The David Foster Foundation Logo



The Simon Keith Foundation Logo

As of the end of 2023, there are over 4,400 Canadians awaiting a life-saving organ transplant.



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*HCol Michael Ravenhill, CEO,
The David Foster Foundation*

This need is underscored by the fact that 90% of Canadians say they support organ donation, but only 32% have actually registered their decision. What is more surprising is that this donor rate continues to be one of the lowest for a developed and progressive country.

Partnering again with Simon Keith was important as he is the perfect spokesperson to help promote both Heart Month and the need for more registered organ donors given his personal struggles and achievements. Simon is the first athlete in the world to play a professional sport after receiving a heart transplant. Due to an illness and the

need for a second heart transplant, Simon was inspired to share his humanitarian efforts

globally and founded The Simon Keith Foundation (www.thesimonkeithfoundation.com) in 2012, with the goal of providing financial support to youths who have undergone a life-saving organ transplant who desire a return to an active and healthy lifestyle.

Simon has become a well-known leader on the topics of organ donation, transplantation and patient advocacy, and was awarded the Order of Canada in 2022, recognized as one of Canada's highest honors for individuals who shape Canadian society, ignite imaginations and unite communities.

"Keep The Beat is the perfect theme and slogan to help not only draw awareness to the fact that cardiovascular heart disease is one of the leading causes of death but also the continuing need for heart and organ transplants," says HCol Michael Ravenhill, Chief Executive Officer at The David Foster Foundation. "Throughout the month, we will be sharing across billboards, our social channels and across our digital outreach to help inform, educate, and create a better awareness about the importance of becoming an organ donor this month."

"As a two-time heart transplant recipient, it is important for everyone to do their part in helping raise awareness of the importance of getting checked out and reduce any stigmas or concerns around organ donation," added Simon Keith C.M.

Founded by famed Canadian David Foster, The David Foster Foundation is a national non-profit Canadian charitable organization dedicated to providing financial support for non-medical expenses to Canadian families with children in need of pediatric organ transplants. Over the past 38 years, the Foundation has assisted over 1,450 families with children in need of life-saving organ transplants.

There are multiple ways for people to support the David Foster Foundation:

- 1) Visiting us at www.davidfosterfoundation.com to see the options available to help us;
- 2) Registering to become an organ donor – it takes only two minutes to register – and making sure to share your wishes with your family;
- 3) Follow @DavidFosterFoundation on Instagram and search for us on Facebook for the latest updates.

About The David Foster Foundation

The David Foster Foundation provides financial assistance to families of children for all non-medical expenses while their child is going through the major organ transplant process. Thanks to its annual fundraising efforts and the generous support of Life Legacy Members, national partners, and donors, families receive financial support for day-to-day expenses such as mortgage/rent, car payments, travel expenses, utilities, groceries and more while their child is going through the major organ transplant process.

The success of the David Foster Foundation would not be possible without the generous support of Life Legacy Members including Jim & Sandi Treliving, AWIN Group of Dealerships, GAIN Group,

Jim Pattison, TELUS, Paragon, The Slight Family Foundation, The Suzanne and Walter Scott Foundation, Walter & Maria Schneider, Joan & Paul Waechter, Kyle MacDonald & John Franklin, James Wilson & Vivian Roy, The Anschutz Foundation, Argyros Family Foundation, and the Newton Glassman Charitable Foundation in Partnership with the Catalyst Capital Group.

The Foundation is also supported by National Partners WestJet, Aird & Berlis LLP, National Post, ALLVISION, and Schnitzer Steel, and Community Partners Boston Pizza, Oak Bay Beach Hotel, Tom Lee Music, Gib-San Pools, DeerFields Clinic, StayWell, RBC Dominion Securities, and The Hillyard Stephen Group. For those who wish to have a deeper involvement with the organization, there are a number of ways to contribute including the donation of Avion Rewards and Aeroplan miles, all of which will directly help families going through the organ transplant process.

The Foundation has recently joined the American Society of Transplantation (AST) Living Donor Circle of Excellence, a no-cost recognition program which celebrates companies that offer paid sick leaves to employees who become living donors.

The Foundation also promotes organ donor awareness and registration in both Canada and the United States. For more information, visit www.davidfosterfoundation.com.

About The Simon Keith Foundation

The Simon Keith Foundation is dedicated to providing financial support primarily to youths who have undergone a life-saving organ transplant who desire a return to an active and healthy lifestyle. In addition to helping people with their non-medical expenses, the Foundation strives to increase organ donor registration through public awareness campaigns. For additional information please go to www.thesimonkeithfoundation.com.

Note to editors/producers: Michael Ravenhill and Simon Keith are available for interviews.

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