



**KATY TANG**  
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**SUPERVISOR KATY TANG ANNOUNCES SPECIAL RECOGNITION OF ORGAN AND TISSUE DONORS BY THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS**

*In an effort to raise awareness about the importance of organ and tissue donation, both living organ donors and deceased organ and tissue donors will be honored by the San Francisco Board of Supervisors for giving the gift of life*

Today Supervisor Katy Tang announced that she would be honoring both living organ donors and deceased organ and tissue donors at the Board of Supervisors with the goal of encouraging more people to register as organ and tissue donors. The Supervisor announced that at Tuesday's Board of Supervisors meeting she would request the Board to adjourn in the memory of recent community members who generously donated their organs and tissues to people waiting for a life-saving transplant. Supervisor Tang was joined by Donor Network West, the federally designated Organ Procurement Organization for Northern and Central California. Donor Network West works to connect deceased organ and tissue donors to recipients in need.

"I want to do something to honor the lives of people like Robert Fugate who saved five lives by donating his kidneys, liver, lungs and heart – people like Robert who had the foresight to register as donors," said Supervisor Katy Tang. "By saying their names out loud and telling their stories on the public record, I want to bring attention to the importance of organ and tissue donation in San Francisco because we desperately need more people in this city to register as organ donors."

In April, Supervisor Tang sponsored a [resolution](#) declaring April National Donate Life Month, and shared a new partnership between the San Francisco Department of Public Health (SFDPH), the San Francisco Health Service System (SFHSS), the San Francisco Unified School District (SFUSD), and Donor Network West. As a result of the collaboration between the city and Donor Network West, students in SFUSD and city employees would receive more education about organ and tissue donation. SFDPH also began educating primary care physicians working in their clinics throughout San Francisco, focusing their efforts in areas where donor registration may be lower, such as in the Chinatown, Mission, and Castro neighborhoods.

"By collaborating at all levels of government, we can improve education and awareness about the importance of organ and tissue donation," said Barbara Garcia, San Francisco Director of Health. "We know that disparities in organ transplantation particularly affect Asians, African Americans, Latinos and American Indians. With this special recognition by the Board of Supervisors, we hope the message is clear that we deeply value the members of our community who register as organ and tissue donors."



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A deceased organ donor can save up to eight lives by donating their heart, pancreas, intestines, liver, two kidneys, and two lungs. A deceased tissue donor can enhance up to 75 lives by donating their eyes, cornea, skin, heart valves, veins, and bones and connective tissues. Living organ donors typically donate one kidney or a portion of their liver and are an important part of reducing the national organ waiting list.

“We are able to fulfill our mission of saving and healing lives because of the generous decisions made by donors and their families every day. We thank and commend the City of San Francisco and its Board of Supervisors for honoring them for their life-saving gifts,” said Cindy Siljestrom, CEO of Donor Network West. The support of City leaders brings hope to the thousands of people waiting for a transplant.”

Supervisor Tang will continue to adjourn one Board of Supervisors meeting each month in the memory of organ and tissue donors who gave their organs through San Francisco hospitals and will read their name into the public record. Next April, during Donate Life Month, the Supervisor will also hold a special ceremony for living organ donors from San like Cyndi Kahn, a San Francisco resident who gave her kidney to a person who was one of 117,000 people on the national waiting list.

“My friend told to me that he was very thankful to me for saving his life – but I said to him that he saved my life because he gave me a purpose,” said Cyndi Kahn. “Organ and tissue donation is not only saving for the recipient – it could be saving for the donor. For donor families, donation means that their loved one is alive in someone else, and that is very healing.”

“I want to eliminate the stigma around organ and tissue donation and tell real stories about real people whose lives were saved because of organ donation,” said Supervisor Tang. “These are young children, mothers, fathers, grandparents, teachers, students – and we never know when it may be ourselves or someone we love waiting so desperately for that phone call that will change our lives. The more people who register as donors, the more lives we can all save.”

According to the United Network of Organ Sharing (UNOS), there are approximately 665 San Franciscans waiting for one or more life-saving organs, and over 117,000 people waiting nationally. Last year, only 67 of those San Franciscans were transplant recipients. In San Francisco, about 291 of patients waiting for an organ transplant are Asian, but last year in the entire state of California only 77 individuals of Asian descent gave their organs and tissue through deceased donation. Every year, the waiting list for organs grows, but the number of donors and transplants remains about the same – 22 people die every day in the United States waiting for a life-saving transplant.

For more information, please contact Supervisor Katy Tang’s office at (415) 554-7460 or [Ashley.Summers@sfgov.org](mailto:Ashley.Summers@sfgov.org).

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