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Radio Host JJ Hayes Becomes Advocate for Organ and Tissue Donation as a Green Ribbon Champion

WESTWOOD, Kan. (Oct. 7, 2019) — Midwest Transplant Network announced Wichita-based radio personality JJ Hayes as its newest [Green Ribbon Champion](#). Hayes has a personal connection to organ donation through his wife, Michelle, who received a lifesaving kidney transplant in 2017.

Wichita metro residents may recognize Hayes as co-host of the [“JJ and Tiny” Show on 101.3 KFDI](#), and listeners are likely to be familiar with Michelle’s story. Although her transplant took place in Kansas City, Hayes kept KFDI listeners updated throughout Michelle’s journey, with regular calls to the station to share her progress.



JJ Hayes, Green Ribbon Champion and co-host at 101.3 KFDI radio

“Once we got back to Wichita and the new normal took over, I had listener after listener talk about how they made a point of tuning in each and every day for these updates, because they went on the journey with us,” Hayes said.

Now that Michelle has recovered from her transplant and leads a healthy life, Hayes considers it his mission to encourage people to [join the registry](#) as organ, eye and tissue donors. He also regularly advocates for the National Kidney Foundation.

“If it were not for organ donation and the living donor who donated her kidney, my wife would not be here,” he said. “I wouldn’t have the quality of life with Michelle that I have with her. She would have succumbed to kidney disease.”

Today, Hayes and Michelle are close with Michelle’s donor, Cindy.

“We are family now,” Hayes said. “We will always be family. There’s that bond, that connection that is unbreakable at this point. We will always have Cindy and her family in our lives.”

Hear more from JJ Hayes in this [video](#).

Anyone can join the organ and tissue donor registry, regardless of age or medical history. The process typically takes less than a minute and can be completed online at [ShareLifeMidwest.com](https://www.sharelifemidwest.com), or in person at the DMV when obtaining or renewing a driver's license or ID card. It's a simple way to make a powerful difference: A single donor can save up to eight lives and improve many more.

Last year was a record year for organ donation in the community served by Midwest Transplant Network, which works in Kansas and western Missouri. The organization received nearly 171,000 new and renewed donor registrations -- the first step in giving hope and sharing life for nearly 2,500 Kansans and Missourians who are waiting for a transplant. A total of 818 organ transplants were facilitated last year as well.

Through the [Green Ribbon Campaign](#), Hayes said he looks forward to sharing his passion for donation even more broadly and reinforcing the importance of registering as a donor.

"If I were to measure the success of being a Green Ribbon Champion, I think it would be when that one person — just that one person — walks up to me and says, 'Thank you. I wasn't aware how easy it was to sign up to be an organ donor,'" Hayes said. "That's all the thanks I need."

About Midwest Transplant Network

Midwest Transplant Network has been connecting lives through organ donation since 1973. As the federally designated not-for-profit organ procurement organization (OPO) for Kansas and the western two-thirds of Missouri, Midwest Transplant Network provides services including organ procurement; surgical tissue and eye recovery; laboratory testing and 24-hour rapid response for referrals from hospital partners. Midwest Transplant Network ranks in the top 10% in the country among OPOs, which reflects the organization's quality, professionalism and excellence in partnerships throughout the region. For more information, visit [mwtn.org](https://www.mwtn.org).

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