

New Start news

800-642-8399

www.transplantfund.org

Fall 2007

Issue 30

NTAF Celebrates Life to Commemorate Its 25th Anniversary!

NTAF is celebrating 25 years of service October 2007 through October 2008!

To commemorate this 25-year milestone of dedicated service to patients in need of support, NTAF recently launched its *Celebrate Life* initiative, a year-long plan to increase the size of the National Marrow Donor Program (NMDP) Registry by 250 committed potential donors.

“NTAF is currently working with 116 marrow transplant patients,” said Lynne Coughlin Samson, Esq., NTAF Executive Director. “Almost half of them are awaiting transplantation. Several of these families are desperately raising funds for marrow donor drives themselves, in the hope of finding a match close to home. As an organization dedicated to improving access to care for vulnerable patients, NTAF is committed to this initiative to help patients like these.”

In support of this initiative, NTAF is sponsoring two marrow donor registration drives.

NTAF kicked off *Celebrate Life* with its first drive October 13 at The Leukemia & Lymphoma Society’s Light the Night® Walk in Berwyn, PA.

The drive was a huge

success! NTAF registered 61 new potential marrow donors to the NMDP Registry.

“I was completely delighted by the willingness of walkers [participants in the Light the Night®

Walk] to make the commitment to join the registry to help save a life,” said Samson.

NTAF’s second drive will be held at its third annual Organ Donor Awareness (ODA)

Community Luncheon April 25, 2008, at its headquarters in Radnor, PA.

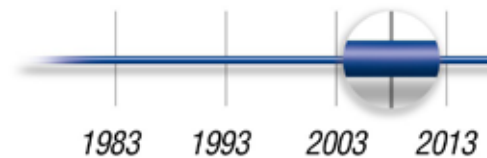
This year NTAF will also honor its founders Dr. Jack Kolff and Patricia Kolff, B.S.N., NTAF Founding Executive Director (1983 to 2003), at the luncheon.

“As a organization dedicated to improving access to care for vulnerable patients, NTAF is committed to this initiative to help patients like these,” said Samson.



NTAF Executive Director Lynne Samson (left) at NTAF’s first drive with sister, Sara Noon (swabbing cheek for tissue typing), NTAF’s first marrow donor registrant of the day.

NTAF Celebrating 25 Years...



NTAF’s 25-year timeline begins on page 3.

The Need is Great...

A marrow transplant can be a life-changing treatment for people with leukemia, lymphoma and many other diseases. For some, it is the best-- for others, the only-- hope for survival.

On any given day, more than 6,000 men, women and children are searching the NMDP Registry for a life-saving donor.

- Each year, more than 35,000 patients in the United States are diagnosed with leukemia or other life-threatening diseases that can be treated with a bone marrow or cord blood transplant.

- About 30 percent of patients in need of a marrow transplant are able to find a matching donor within their families. The remaining 70 percent, however, must search the NMDP Registry of Donors.

- There is no cost to register at a donor drive. All it takes to join the national registry of six million is a cheek swab and a few minutes of paperwork.

Source: The Marrow Foundation website: www.themarrowfoundation.org/donor

From the Executive Director



Dear Friends and Supporters:

Twenty-five years ago, lack of financial means left many patients without hope-- without a chance of receiving a life-saving transplant. Enter Jack Kolff, M.D., and wife, Patricia, B.S.N.

Dr. Kolff founded Temple University's first heart transplant program in 1978. He witnessed, day in, day out, patients being turned away from life-saving care due to a lack of financial resources. He and his wife, Patricia, shared a vision-- a vision that all people, regardless of their financial situation, should be able to receive life-saving transplants. The Kolffs made that vision a reality: in 1983 they founded the National Heart Assist and Transplant Fund (NHATF) to provide a resource to patients in need of guidance and support.

Two and a half decades later, \$50 million in funds have been raised and more than 3,200 patients and families have been assisted. Known today as National Transplant Assistance Fund (NTAF), we have grown to have a national reputation. We are the trusted financial safety net to which social workers and financial coordinators turn to help their patients with overwhelming uninsured expenses. Last fiscal year (FY), NTAF provided more than \$5.6 million in financial assistance to those in need.

We are proud of our accomplishments. Over the past 25 years, our scope and our services have grown exponentially. At first, we served only heart transplant patients; now, we serve all solid organ, bone marrow and stem cell transplant patients. In FY 2000, we broadened our services even further to meet the needs of those with catastrophic injuries, with the addition of the Catastrophic Injury Program.

We have developed new services to meet the changing needs of our patients, harnessing the power of technology to provide more powerful, personal and effective fundraising resources. In the last several years, we have expanded web-based services to include personalized patient web pages, electronic applications, message boards and guestbooks for patients, and guidance in Internet-based fundraising. We have done all this while holding down costs.

As we continue to grow, one thing remains constant: our commitment to providing deeply personal, consistent, accessible and knowledgeable fundraising guidance to each and every patient who calls. Our service is anchored in our founding principles: compassion, empowerment and trust.

Our growth would not have been possible without the substantial and loyal support of those who give in honor of patients who cannot afford the medical care they need. We are deeply grateful for these life-saving contributions. We are also grateful to the foundations and corporations that support our organization and patients.

As we look forward-- after our best year ever, having raised more than \$6.5 million for patient care-- it is with mixed emotions that we celebrate 25 years of service. While it is desperately sad that there is so much need, we are gratified that we can provide hope to those in need as medical advances continue to offer patients more options.

While stem cell transplants and artificial organs are becoming medically viable options for many diseases, financing new therapies is always the hurdle. As long as there are new diseases being treated through transplantation and new programs giving patients hope of a "second chance," we will be here, a telephone call away, to listen and respond to patient needs with **compassion, knowledge and skill.**

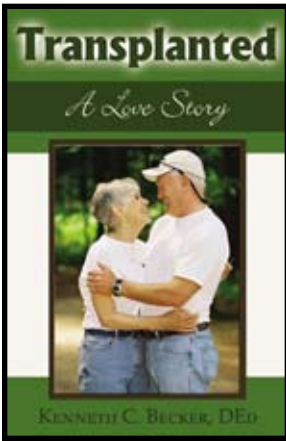
**NTAF Patient
Accepts Invitation
as Honorary Chair
for 25th
Anniversary!**

NTAF is delighted to announce that heart transplant recipient, NTAF patient and former Board member Tim Haahs will serve as Honorary Chair for the NTAF 25th Anniversary *Celebrate Life* Initiative, Marrow Donor Drive and ODA Luncheon.

Tim's compelling personal story is an inspiration to others. Thirteen years post-transplant, Tim heads Timothy Haahs & Associates, Inc., an engineering and architectural firm specializing in parking structures, and the winner of local and national awards. Blessed with health and success, Tim has built a company with a strong commitment to community involvement and helping the less fortunate. He donated the remainder of his NTAF fund to help other NTAF patients and has raised funds for several other community organizations. We are pleased to have Tim's vision to lead NTAF into the next quarter century.

NTAF Patients Get Published!

Now Available: “Transplanted: A Love Story” **Coming Soon:** “It’s Good to Know a Miracle”



Kenneth Becker, D.Ed., husband of NTAF patient and cancer survivor Margaret “Peg” Dosch, wrote a book from a caregiver’s perspective-- of the couple’s journey from Peg’s diagnosis, through failed cancer treatments, and finally to transplantation.

““Transplanted: A Love Story’ opens a window to the search for meaning and the importance of hope, love and

laughter during difficult times,” said Ken.

The book can be purchased directly through Wheatmark Press at 888-934-0888 ext.3 or online through www.wheatmark.com or www.transplanted-alovestory.com.

Scheduled for distribution in Spring 2008, “It’s Good to Know a Miracle: Dani’s Story,” details Dani Shotel Greene’s battle with acute myelogenous leukemia (AML) and the events that led to her recovery.

The wealth of detail in the book comes from family logs that were kept, at the insistence of Dani’s mother, Sue Shotel. The logs span the time from Dani’s diagnosis on September 11, 2002, until her release from Seattle Cancer Alliance, Seattle, WA, in May 2003. Dani was transplanted in 2003.

Look for information on purchasing Dani’s story in our upcoming E-News.



Dani with husband, Scott, on their honeymoon in 2005.

Planned Giving

NTAF is pleased to announce the establishment of the **Enduring Hope Fund** to recognize and thank those individuals who have decided to help NTAF through planned giving. We hope that you will remember NTAF, and all those who cannot afford medical care, in your Will and other long-term financial plans. There are a variety of planned gifts

that provide both tax advantages and income to the contributor, while benefiting NTAF in the future. Our most enduring legacy is helping others live with hope!

For more information on planned giving or to become one of the inaugural members of the Enduring Hope Fund please contact Executive Director, Lynne C. Samson, Esq., at 800-642-8399.

A History of Raising Funds and Hope...

Dr. Jack Kolff begins the first heart transplant program in Philadelphia at Temple University Hospital.

Dr. Kolff, his wife, Patricia, B.S.N., and Dr. Mike Deeb found National Heart Assist and Transplant Fund (NHATF) to provide funding for transplants, which, at the time, were still considered experimental by insurance companies.

IRS awards the 501(c)(3) nonprofit designation.

Two employees in a small office in Haverford, PA continue the mission “to assist end-stage heart disease patients with their emotional, social and financial needs.”

Executive Director Patricia Kolff appears before the PA Senate Health and Welfare Committee to appeal for more insurance coverage for transplant candidates.

1978

1979

1980

1981

1982

1983

1984

1985

NTAF Family Gives Back

Submitted by Greg Matthews's wife, Rolanda, and son, Daryl. Adapted by Shannon McMonagle, New Start News Editor.

In 2000, Greg Matthews was diagnosed with Primary Sclerosing Cholangitis, a very rare liver disease that affects the bile ducts. At that time, we had no idea what was to become of our lives. The doctors told us that Greg would eventually need to be listed for a liver transplant.

In October 2002, Greg was finally listed. At that time, they told us that we needed to start thinking about fundraising and referred us to NTAF. What a wonderful organization NTAF is to help people through such an awful time in their lives. We had no idea how to start fundraising, but NTAF walked us through it and pointed us in the right direction.

In March of 2003, we got the call that there was a match for Greg. We never thought that day would come. I remember Greg telling us that he hated the fact that someone had to die to save his life. Everyone in his situation must feel the same way. Greg called his donors the "Donor Angels;" without them, he would not have gotten through his illness. Greg had his transplant and he felt brand new in no time.

Greg had a year and a half of having a second chance at life before his disease came back. As we tried to process the fact that we were going to

have to go through all the sickness again, we decided that we needed to fundraise once again. NTAF was there for us every step of the way. This time we decided to have a chicken dinner benefit. I remember Greg just standing there looking around. He couldn't believe that so many people [approximately 700] had come to this benefit for him. He was overwhelmed. All he could say was "Thank you. You all have a friend for life."

We got Greg's second call for another chance at life in December 2006. We again looked forward to him getting better, and hoped this would be the last time he would have to go through this ordeal. As it turned out, it was.

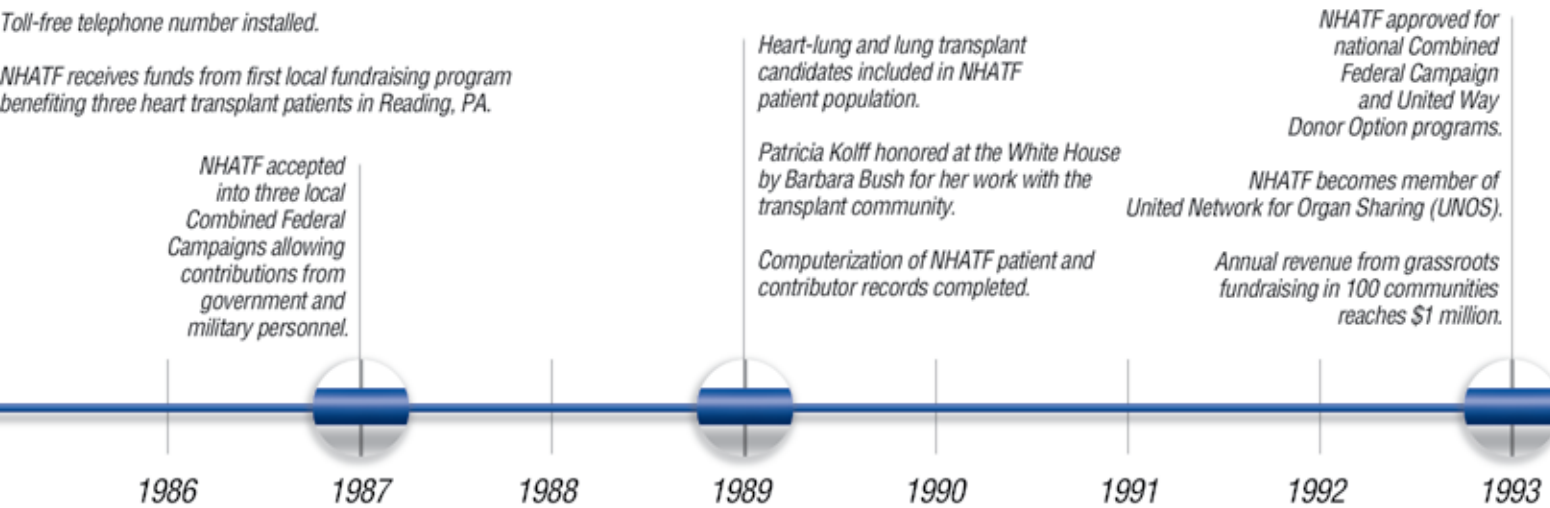
Greg passed away three months after his transplant, still in the hospital. He developed an infection that the doctors couldn't find, and it eventually turned into sepsis. We lost Greg on February 27, 2007.

Greg would do anything for anyone, and now we want to continue his legacy. We are currently putting together a cookbook to sell in Greg's memory. We plan to donate the profits to NTAF families that are in a similar situation like ours. If you would like a cookbook, please let us know at rgmatt952@yahoo.com. The cookbook will have approximately 200 recipes and will sell for \$10.00. The cookbook will be available in early Spring 2008.



The Matthews (from left): Greg's son, Daryl, his daughter, Neeley, Greg, and his wife, Rolanda.

"Greg would do anything for anyone, and now we want to continue his legacy."

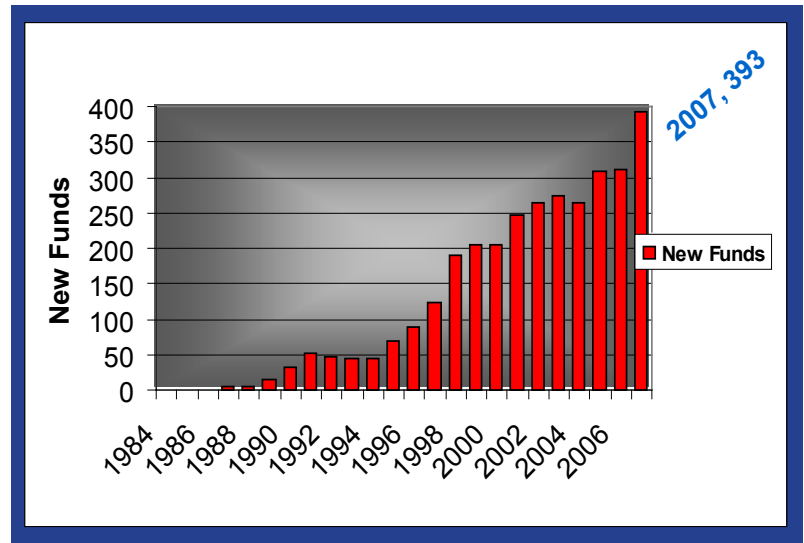


25 Years and Counting!

NTAF has a 25-year record of success helping families address the financial hardships arising from uninsured medical expenses related to transplantation and catastrophic injury. We are proud of our accomplishments. Since 1983, NTAF has:

- Provided information, assistance and referrals to **14,900** patients.
- Assisted more than **3,200** patients in grassroots fundraising campaigns.
- Helped patients raise more than **\$50 million** for their uninsured expenses.
- Provided direct financial assistance to **2,986** patients.

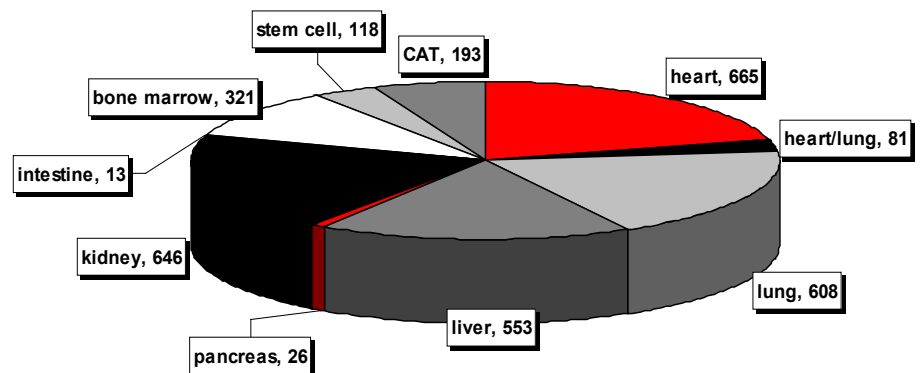
Campaigns Opened Per Fiscal Year (FY) FY: October 1 - September 30



Breakdown of Patient Expenses (FY 2007)

- Medical Services & Medications 70.26%
- Relocation/Transportation 12.49%
- Rent/Utilities 6.32 %
- Insurance Premiums 5.07%
- Funeral Costs 2.36 %
- Fundraising 3.49%

NTAF Patients



NTAF Disbursed \$5,652,346 for patient expenses in FY 2007!

Seven employees move NHATF to larger quarters in Bryn Mawr, PA.

NHATF Board of Directors approves inclusion of all solid organ, stem cell, and bone marrow transplant candidates among population served.

Name change to National Transplant Assistance Fund (NTAF) reflects expanded services.

www.transplantfund.org website created.
\$1,000 matching challenge grant policy instituted.

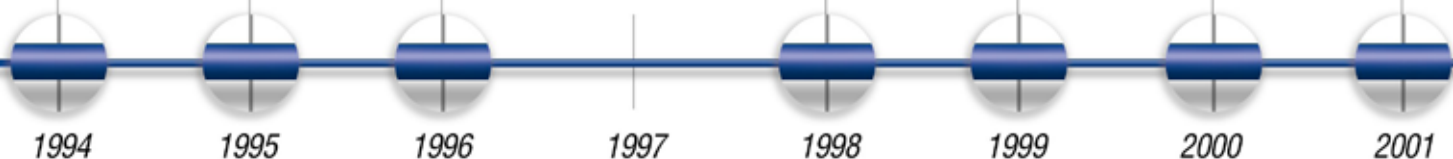
Associates List established and distributed to potential patient families.

Kidney recipient Asher Wolf hikes Appalachian Trail to promote organ donor awareness - tracked on website.

NTAF featured on The Visionaries, a public television program shown across the country.

NTAF services expanded to include people with catastrophic spinal cord or brain injury.

NTAF relocates to Newtown Square, PA with 12 employees.
NTAF expands by hiring first Director of Development.

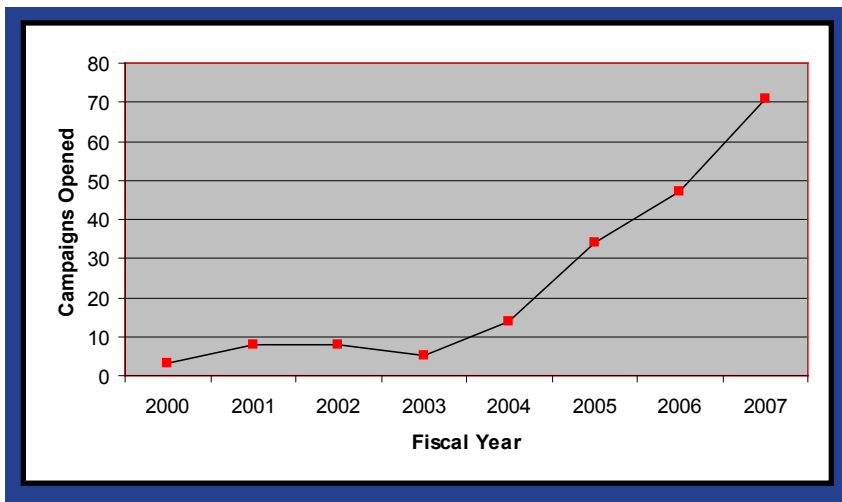


Catastrophic Injury Program Continues to Grow

In 2000, NTAF expanded its services to include individuals with spinal cord injuries, brain injuries and burns with the addition of the Catastrophic Injury(CI) Program.

NTAF is pleased to report that the CI Program has grown continuously since its inception. To date, we have assisted 190 catastrophic injury patients, and we are currently administering 164 CI fundraising campaigns.

CI Campaigns Opened Per FY



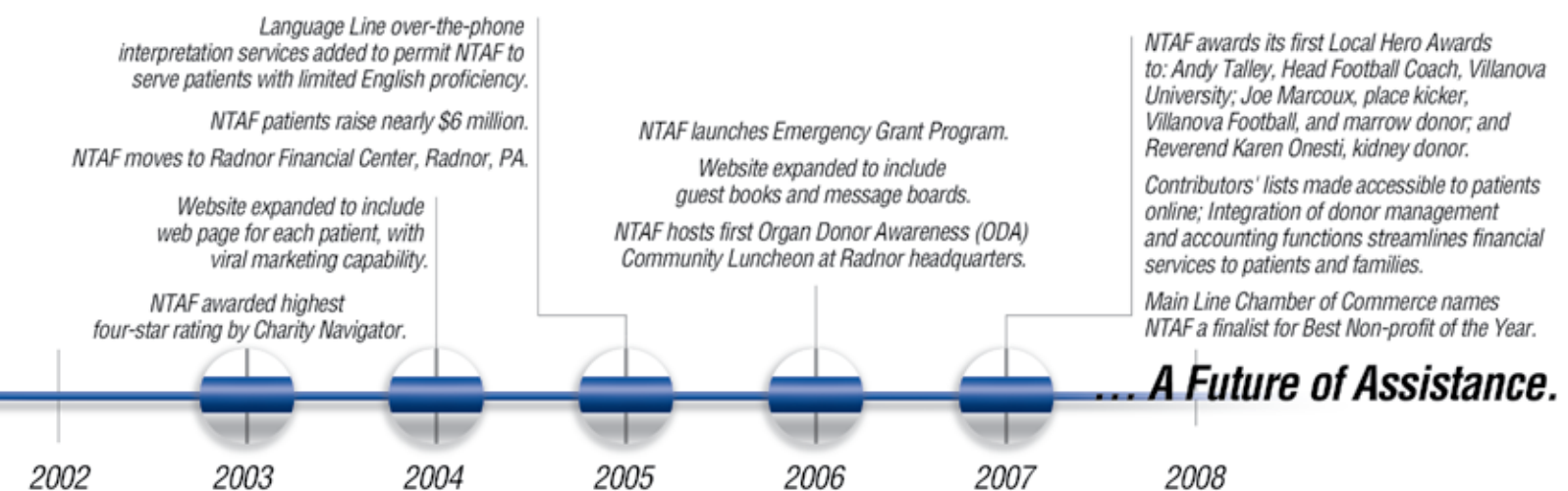
A special thanks to our funders...

Argent Mortgage Company
 Astellas Pharma U.S., Inc.
 The Barra Foundation
 The Bryn Mawr Trust Company
 Davenport Family Foundation
 DaVita, Inc.
 Dolfinger-McMahon Foundation
 Duffy & Keenan, Attorneys-at-Law
 Rollin M. Gerstacker Foundation
 Holt Family Foundation
 The Huston Foundation
 F.M. Kirby Foundation
 Magistro Family Foundation
 The McLean Contributionship
 Christopher and Dana Reeve Fdn.
 John A. Sellon Charitable Trust
 Samuel P. Mandell Family Fdn.
 The Mudra Foundation
 The Philadelphia Foundation
 Wyeth Pharmaceuticals

Thanks to Astellas Pharma U.S., Inc. for generously underwriting several issues of New Start News.

Since 2000, NTAF has helped CI patients and families raise more than \$2 million.

NTAF helped patients raise more than \$6.5 million in FY 2007!



Patient Services Survey

Thank you for agreeing to participate in this survey. We appreciate your feedback on what you found helpful and not helpful about our services. Participation is voluntary and will take about 5-10 minutes. If you choose to include your e-mail address or phone number, you will be entered to win a \$50 gift card to Barnes and Noble Booksellers. To assure confidentiality, contact information will not be linked to your responses. If you have any questions about this survey, please feel free to contact Shannon at **800-642-8399** or **smcmonagle@transplantfund.org**.

Thank you again for your time and participation.

Pre-contact

- How were you referred to NTAF? Check all that apply.
 Internet/web search Friend/family Social worker/case manager/coordinator
 Hospital/transplant /rehab center
 Newspaper article or other news media (Please identify. _____)
 Organization (Please identify. _____)
 Other (Please specify. _____)
- At what point in the process of gathering information on financing treatment and other expenses would it be most helpful to learn about NTAF? Please Comment:

For the following, please circle the response that most closely represents how you feel.

Initial Contact and Processing

- Services were explained clearly during the initial contact.
 Strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 Strongly agree
- Brochures I received were clear.
 Strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 Strongly agree
- The application I received was clear.
 Strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 Strongly agree
- I found the initial packet of materials that I received to be overwhelming.
 Strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 Strongly agree
- I believe I would have felt as well-informed and ready to decide about NTAF given fewer materials and paperwork in the initial packet.
 Strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 Strongly agree
- Materials I received were helpful in deciding to work with NTAF.
 Strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 Strongly agree

Fundraising Guidance and Materials

- I received helpful fundraising guidance from NTAF.
 Strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 Strongly agree
- I received complete support from NTAF.
 Strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 Strongly agree

Overall Quality of Staff Interaction

- In thinking back on how I was treated by NTAF staff, overall I feel I was...
 Completely disrespected 1 2 3 4 5 6 Completely respected

12. In thinking back on how comfortable I was with the staff, overall I felt...

Very uncomfortable 1 2 3 4 5 6 Very comfortable

If you answered anything other than "very comfortable," what would you recommend we do to help clients feel more comfortable?

13. NTAF staff members were easy to reach.

Strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 Strongly agree

14. The staff responded quickly to questions.

Strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 Strongly agree

Bill Paying

15. Bill paying and reimbursement were conducted in a timely manner.

Strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 Strongly agree

16. The bill paying process was clear to me.

Strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 Strongly agree

17. The bill paying process ran smoothly.

Strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 Strongly agree

18. Fund balance was easily accessible to the appropriate persons.

Strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 Strongly agree

Web Page

19. The web page is useful for fundraising.

Strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 Strongly agree

20. The web page is informative.

Strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 Strongly agree

21. The web page is easy to use.

Strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 Strongly agree

22. The quality (attractiveness and clarity) of all print and electronic materials is very strong.

Strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 Strongly agree

General/conclusion

23. My expectations of the services that NTAF would provide were met.

Strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 Strongly agree

24. What other services could NTAF provide to be more helpful? Please specify.

25. I would recommend NTAF to another transplant or catastrophic injury patient.

Strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 Strongly agree

Meet the Millers: A Transplant Love Story

*Tony Miller shared his love story with us through a series of emails.
Adapted by Shannon McMonagle, New Start News Editor.*

When Sue Allen met Antonio Miller in 1986, she could not have foreseen the life-changing gifts he would one day give her-- gifts that would offer Sue both a second chance at life, and a second chance at love. This March, some 21 years after their first meeting, Sue and Tony will celebrate these gifts with back-to-back anniversaries.

March 24, 2008, will mark Sue and Tony's fifth post-transplant anniversary. (Tony was a living kidney donor for Sue in 2003.) The following day the pair will celebrate their second wedding anniversary.

Sue and Tony met at a church service where they connected as good friends. The pair often attended church functions together, and over the years their families grew close.

Tony was a friend to Sue and her family through difficult times. When Sue's mother grew ill with kidney disease, he helped care for her. When Sue's sister was diagnosed with breast cancer, Tony again stepped in to help. And when Sue's husband suffered several strokes and had to be placed in a nursing home, once again Tony lent a helping hand. It made perfect sense that in 2002 when Sue became ill with end-stage renal failure, Tony came to her side.

Tony knew it could take years for Sue to find a kidney donor. She had no family members who could donate, as her mother and sister had both passed a few years earlier.

"I have personally seen the effects of renal disease and how it kills," Tony wrote. "I refused to let another individual die, especially someone that I loved and cared about. ... Asking Sue to allow me to be her donor was an honor for me. She didn't take me seriously at first. However, after much talking, she reconsidered. Thank God she did."

Tony was tested, and was found to be a double match for Sue-- meaning four out of six cells matched rather than the required two. On March 24, 2003, Sue received Tony's first gift to her, the gift of life.

Sue's husband passed a couple of weeks pre-transplant and Hurricane Katrina hit post-transplant.

"We had a lot of trials," Tony wrote, who moved in

with Sue pre-transplant to help care for her while she underwent dialysis. "In the midst of losing our home and attempting to rebuild our lives with a place to live, I could no longer see my life without her as my wife.



Sue and Tony, just married, at the Holiday Inn Select in Baton Rouge, LA, on March 25, 2006.

"I thought of sharing not only my kidney, but also my heart and my life. I could not think of anyone else that I wanted to share the good, the bad and the challenging times with."

"The first time I thought about it was after surgery, while I was in the hospital and she came to visit me. When I saw her taking her steps to see me, I saw her complexion had cleared with the new kidney-- our kidney. ... I thought of sharing not only my kidney, but also my heart and my life. I could not think of anyone else that I wanted to share the good, the bad and the challenging times with."

A year later, Tony surprised Sue with his second gift to her, his heart. Tony got down on two knees-- he notes that Sue thought he was praying-- and asked for her hand in marriage. Though shocked at first, Sue happily accepted. The couple was married March 25, 2006, in Baton Rouge, LA, three years and a day post-transplant.

Spreading the word

The Millers are both ordained ministers in a nondenominational outreach ministry, where they help raise awareness about organ and tissue donation in the African-American community.

•"The thing that really makes me passionate," Tony wrote, "is that the African-American community has the highest percentage of renal failure, yet donation in this group is low. It's starting to make a slow turn because of knowledge. Not knowing the facts can be deadly."

•"When someone actually 'sees' someone who has given of themselves and someone who has received the gift, the audience is able to see that it can really work."

Sue and Tony have a monthly TV program called *Garment Praise*, through which they advocate love and use their transplant experience as one great example of love.

Continued on page 9

Waiting for Breath: Don Cotant's Story

Story submitted by Don Cotant, Jr. / Adapted and edited by Shannon McMonagle, New Start News Editor.

My name is Don and I was born and raised in Pocatello, Idaho; and I still reside there. I was born with cystic fibrosis (CF)-- a disease that creates abnormal amounts of mucus in the body. Its biggest impact is on the lungs.

... I was diagnosed at one year old, in and out of hospitals with complications of pneumonia. The doctors told my parents that I probably wouldn't live past six years old -- I did. ...

I've lived a fairly normal life with just a few exceptions. I was very small when growing up, and was often bullied and picked on.

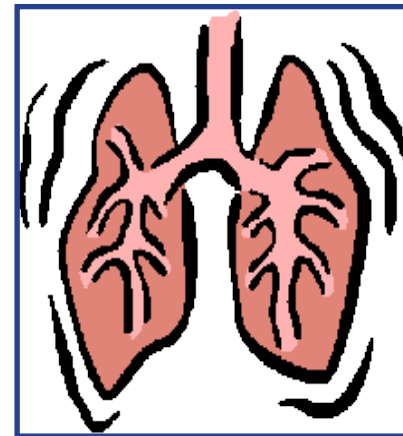
Being short-winded and having a chronic cough, I wasn't able to participate in school sports but still found ways to stay active. ... I'm an all around handy man-- it runs in the family.

I'm the second oldest from a family of five siblings. My older sister and younger sister were born without CF and my two younger brothers were born with CF. Both brothers have since passed. ...

When my youngest brother passed away on a ventilator at the University of Utah Medical Center in 1992, I knew that if I ever had the chance for a lung transplant, I would do it. At that time, I didn't even know if they did lung transplants, but knew it was for me if it was possible."

On July 4, 1998, while vacationing in the mountains, Don suffered a breathing attack after inhaling smoke from a campfire. He was rushed to the nearest hospital [an hour away] where the doctors placed him on supplemental oxygen. He would remain on oxygen continuously for years to come.

In 2000, Don was listed for a bilateral lung transplant. He relocated to Salt Lake City, Utah, and lived in a nine-foot camper trailer, in the University of Utah Medical Center's RV parking lot. He stayed there for 12 weeks at \$6 a day, alone except for a beeper, awaiting the call for his new lungs.



My wife and I communicated on cell phones. She would come down on weekends, when she could, and bring our dogs [Shasta, Tiki, and recently deceased Zackary]. Every time the hospital helicopters flew over head, I wondered if they were going to get my lungs.

After 12 weeks of waiting, Don had only received two calls-- both false alarms. Don was finally approached by his doctors to make a decision. He was told that new studies suggested the possibility that CF patients were being transplanted too early and were not receiving the full benefits of transplantation. Don was asked if he would prefer to wait a few years to be transplanted when it might be more beneficial.

I knew that the transplant wasn't going to happen yet. I knew I could wait longer.

Five years passed before Don was listed again.

Continued on page 9

Patient Services Survey response (2005)

"My name is Tara and my husband Craig has a fund with your wonderful organization. I wanted to take a moment and say thank you for all of the help that your organization has given me in coordinating fundraisers, managing his fund, and for the timely manner in which you process your funds. ...The thought of [my husband] undergoing a bone marrow transplant was overwhelming enough, but to think of the financial burden that it would place on our family just brought us to tears. ...Keep up the good work! Your organization is a security blanket for those who are faced with these sorts of obstacles."

-Tara C.,

***** (See page 5 to participate in this year's survey and enter to win a \$50 giftcard to Barnes and Noble) *****

Waiting for Breath continued from page 8

It was a long road in and out of the hospital. It was getting harder to breathe when seasons changed. ... The spring was bad for allergies from the pollen, mold and dust; the summer was nicer, but I had to stay in the air-conditioned house often. I couldn't travel to clinics and treatments without AC or without lugging my oxygen tanks with me everywhere. The fall was harvest time for wheat and potatoes, so it was dry and dusty; and the winter brought the cold, and smoke from wood burning stoves and inversions. ... The hospital was officially my second home.

On Tuesday at 7 p.m. MST July 11, 2005, I got a call on my pager but didn't recognize the number. ... It was Dr. Cahill calling from back East. Tauni, my lung transplant coordinator, said, "How fast can you get over to the hospital?" ... We were just a parking lot away. I said, "Is it a go?" and she said it was a go.

Don received his new lungs July 12, 2005, on his 44th birthday. Don says since his operation his breathing has been great.

Post-transplant, Don is now doing the things he loves: snow skiing, snow tubing and snow mobile sledding, dirt bike and mountain bike riding, and refurbishing things.

He recently remodeled the bathroom in his home, as well as an old dirt bike.

Another interest of Don's is running 5Ks! Don has run two 5Ks at Sugar House Park, Salt Lake City, post-transplant. In the 2007 run, he ran it in 34 minutes : 50 seconds!

In the future, Don plans to remodel the kitchen and restore a 1966 Chevelle.

My life has been given a second chance, and I'm taking advantage of it.



Don Cotant nearing the finish line of the 5K at Sugar House Park, Salt Lake City, Utah.

A poem by David Lee

double-lung transplant recipient (2001)

Bittersweet Breath

Like a butterfly soaring through clouds and mist,

Like the biting cold of a frosty wind full in the face,

Like the tingle of a first kiss, and the sorrow of a final goodbye,

Like watching a glorious sunrise from the top of a mountain, or a magnificent sunset over a balmy tropical sea, or counting millions of brilliant stars by the light of a full harvest moon,

Like nuzzling a baby with cooing caresses so close that you can feel its delicate heartbeat,

Like the sweetness of a warm stack of buttermilk pancakes topped with freshly picked raspberries, melting butter, drizzled with real maple syrup, and sprinkled with powdered sugar;

Like the silence after the last note of your favorite music is played, but before the applause begins, when you linger—suspended in the splendid performance,

All these "smooshed" together and rushing through my lungs – this is what breathing is like for me.

Like black licorice candy, both bitter and sweet –this is what breathing is like for me.

A Transplant Love Story continued from page 7

"Since the surgery and the marriage, we share everything, literally," Tony wrote, noting that he and Sue share the same food cravings, M&M Peanuts and Gatorade, which Sue disliked pre-transplant. The couple even have to use the bathroom at the same time, Tony wrote.

"Sometimes I say God has quite a sense of humor."



Looking for a meaningful gift alternative this holiday season?

You can “Light a Life” this holiday season by visiting the NTAF website www.transplantfund.org and clicking the “Light a Life” link.

You can print out tribute forms directly from the site, and add the name of the person you would like to honor.

Simply send the forms to NTAF, along with your check or credit card information. NTAF will take care of the rest, sending a prompt gift acknowledgment to your honoree.

Your “Light a Life” gift can truly make a difference:

- \$50 pays for parking at the hospital for one week
- \$100 pays for one week of immunosuppressant drugs
- \$250 pays for one week of lodging for a family
- \$500 pays for one week of home health care

Give the gift of health this holiday season!

All “Light a Life” gifts will benefit the NTAF Emergency Grant Program.

To make a donation, call 800-642-8399 or visit our website.



National Transplant Assistance Fund and
NTAF Catastrophic Injury Fund
150 N. Radnor Chester Road, Suite F-120
Radnor, PA 19087
800-642-8399

