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Eye Donor Month: Are You Registered to Give the Gift of Sight?

During Eye Donor Month in March, the Michigan Eye-Bank is working to promote donation of eyes, organs and tissues, by asking everyone to join the Michigan Donor Registry.

“When I die, my family could be left with a difficult decision about whether I would want to donate my eyes, organs or tissues,” said Kevin Ross, President and CEO of Midwest Eye-Banks. “Through the Michigan Organ Donor Registry, I can express my commitment to donation, for my family, and for others considering how the gift of life fits in with their values. I believe eye, organ and tissue donation is something we should all be ready to do for each other.”

Here are some common reasons cited for *not* joining the Michigan Donor Registry:

- I'm too old.
- I may not get life-saving treatment if I'm registered.
- Wealthy people get first access.
- My body will not be suitable for burial.
- My religion does not allow it.

"These myths and fears are unfounded, but they prevent people from making a commitment to the donor registry," explained Ross. "The fact is your decision to become a potential organ and tissue donor could save the lives of up to eight people and enhance the lives of 50 more.

Anyone with a driver's license or state ID can join the donor registry, giving consent for recovery of needed organs or tissues after death. To join the registry (or to find more information), visit www.giftoflifemichigan.org or any branch office of the Michigan Secretary of State.

"From the Eye-Bank perspective, your Gift of Sight will enable people of all ages to work and enjoy life as only vision allows." During 2007, 1,067 corneas were distributed to patients in Michigan through the Michigan Eye-Bank and the work of its affiliated surgeons.

The Michigan Eye-Bank is a 501(c)(3), independent, not-for-profit organization dedicated to the restoration of sight. It recovers, evaluates and distributes human eye tissue for transplantation. It also supports research into the causes and cures of blinding eye conditions, promotes donation awareness through public and professional education, and provides humanitarian aid to people in need of corneal transplantation throughout the world. For more information, visit the Michigan Eye-Bank online at www.michiganeyebank.org or call (800) 247-7250.