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Contact: Vanessa Schnaidt, 310-656-1001 x105, vschnaidt@hersheycause.com

## **2017 Donate Life Float Depicts Spectacular Polynesian Catamaran, Celebrates Organ Donors and Recipients as “Teammates In Life”**

*Float inspires Rose Parade viewers to register as organ, eye, and tissue donors and reminds us all that teamwork is the key to success*

LOS ANGELES, May 3, 2016 – On behalf of sponsors and honorees across the United States, last weekend at the Donate Life Run/Walk in Southern California OneLegacy unveiled the design for the Donate Life float that will be entered in the 2017 Tournament of Roses parade. The float is the centerpiece of a national effort of more than 50 organizations to reach a broad audience with the simple, life-giving message that organ, eye, and tissue donation saves and heals lives.

This year's entry, *Teammates in Life*, reflects the parade's theme “Echoes of Success” by reminding us that no one succeeds alone. We all thrive by working together and pulling in the same direction. Donors save the lives of grateful recipients and help families heal, and it is the large community of registered donors that makes it possible to save thousands of lives across the country each year.

The 2017 float depicts a spectacular Polynesian catamaran, which will be propelled by a team of 24 organ, eye, and tissue transplant recipients rowing in unison with strength gained from their donors. The sails of the vessel will feature 60 floral portraits of donors interwoven with Polynesian designs and patterns. Just as the donors' gifts empower the lives of others, the sails help power the catamaran on its journey. Twelve living donors will walk alongside the float carrying flowers in celebration of the life they have given to others and the quality of life they continue to enjoy themselves. The ocean waves will showcase 1,000 white Akito roses, individually dedicated in memory of specific donors. Vibrant i'iwi and 'amakihi birds perch amongst a lush landscape of tropical flowers and palm trees while a pair of tikis, representing light and life, abundance and peace, peer out of the jungle. The float will exude life with colorful, exotic blooms grown in Hawaii especially for the occasion.

The 14<sup>th</sup> annual Donate Life float is produced by OneLegacy, the Donate Life organization serving Southern California, and is enabled by nearly 100 sponsoring donation, transplant, healthcare, and family care organizations and individuals who help make donation and transplant possible across the country. Sponsors confirmed as of May 2, 2016 include Alabama Organ Center, American Donor Services, Axogen, Dignity Memorial, Donate Life Texas, Donor Alliance, Donor Network West, LifeShare of Oklahoma, Lifesharing, Lois Foxen, Louisiana Organ Procurement Agency, MTF, New Jersey Sharing Network, OneLegacy, OneLegacy Foundation, RTI Donor Services, SightLife, Southwest Transplant Alliance, UCLA Health, UNYTS and XTANT Medical.

While the float is built in Southern California, family and friends all over the nation will gather to celebrate and honor donors in their home towns as they put the finishing touches on their loved one's floral portrait that will adorn the catamaran's sails.

"The Rose Parade gives the organ, eye and tissue donation and transplantation community an opportunity to come together as a team to inspire millions of viewers to support their fellow Americans by registering as donors." said Tom Mone, Chairman of the Donate Life float committee and CEO of OneLegacy. "Millions of Rose Parade watchers will make an emotional connection to the ideals of community and cooperation our float will depict. There is a clear symbolic association between the team effort needed to propel the catamaran and the selflessness of deceased donors and their families providing life-saving gifts to grateful recipients. Organ donation and transplantation is truly a team effort, and our 2017 float conveys that beautifully."

In the United States today there are over 123,000 people waiting for a life saving organ, and hundreds of thousands more whose lives could be healed through eye and tissue transplantation. A single organ and tissue donor can save up to eight lives and heal as many as 100 more. Anyone can register when renewing a driver's license or state ID, or by visiting [www.donatelifeamerica.org](http://www.donatelifeamerica.org). Further information about the Donate Life float, decorating, and facts about donation and transplantation can be found at [www.donatelifefloat.org](http://www.donatelifefloat.org).

The float was designed by Charles Meier, who received some of the Tournament's most prestigious awards for all four floats he designed in the 2016 Rose Parade, including the Donate Life float. The float will be built by Paradiso Parade Floats. Once completed thanks to the efforts of more than a thousand volunteers, it will sail down the streets of Pasadena during the 128<sup>th</sup> Rose Parade presented by Honda on Monday, January 2, 2017 at 8 a.m. (PST). For additional information on the Tournament of Roses please visit the official website at [www.tournamentofroses.com](http://www.tournamentofroses.com).

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